

Romans (5:12-14)

Adam's Family

Part 18 - November 14, 2004

SIN'S ROOTS & RESULTS

Every one of us, at times, has desires and impulses that (if acted on) would destroy our marriages, careers, and reputations. And sadly, there are times when we do choose to act on them.

Q: Why is that?

A: The answer is in today's passage.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned – for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. – Romans 5:12-14 NIV

Paul wants to show that the damage done by Adam's sin affects every human being.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man ... – Romans 5:12a NIV

And not only through one man, but through the *first* man. The man who carried the spiritual genes of all humanity. When Adam committed that sin it was like dumping toxic pollution into the head of a river - it affected everything "downstream".

Q: What is cuter than an "innocent" little baby?

A: I'll tell you what: nothing!

Q: But have you noticed they come ... "preprogrammed"?

Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it: his bottle, his mother's attention, his uncle's watch, his playmate's toy. Deny him these wants and he'll seethe with rage and impulsive hostility, which would be murderous, were he not so tiny and helpless! – (Para.) Ray Stedman's: *From Guilt to Glory* (pg. 131)

Because of this hereditary "sin-toxin" that courses through our veins, we are born with a natural drive toward evil.

Q: Whose likeness was Adam created in?

God created man in His own image ... - Genesis 1:27 NAS

Q: But, whose image have you and I been created in?

[Adam] became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image ...
- Genesis 5:3 NAS

Adam's family no longer bears the unadulterated image of God, but the tainted and corrupted likeness and image of Adam.

- Adam's sin infected everyone "downstream"

And that's everyone who has ever existed, because Jew or Gentile, male or female, we're all part of Adam's family.

SIN'S REALITY

... and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men ... - Romans 5:12b NIV

Q: Did you know there are three types of death?

1. Spiritual Death

This is "death through sin"; it's another way describing our *soiled* separation from a pure and holy God.

- The moment Adam sinned this separation occurred.

2. Physical Death

This "curse of death" comes not only to all of mankind, but to every living thing as well.

Whenever something or someone we love dies, we feel the anguish that God felt when Adam was separated from Him through sin.

3. Eternal Death

This refers to the extended anguish of an eternal separation from the presence of God. Rev. 20:14 labels it: The Second Death

- Spiritual death + physical death = eternal death

There're only two destinations: eternal *life* or eternal *death*.

Those who are in Christ have *already* "crossed over from death to life" (*John 5:24*). And will not face the "second death".

- Still, we'll have to pass through physical death.

... because all sinned ... - Romans 5:12c NIV

Q: Why do we still have wars after thousands of years and thousands of peace treaties?

A: Because the human sin-nature hasn't changed since Adam.

Even when we know the consequences of our actions - even when it goes against our own best interest - we still want and do things that are wrong and bad and wicked and evil. That is simply the reality of our sin-nature.

Think of an apple tree. It isn't an apple tree *because* it grows apples; it grows apples *because* it's an apple tree. There's a subtle but significant difference here.

When Paul says, "because all sinned" he's not saying that we're sinners *because* we commit individual sins ... he's saying that we all commit sins *because* we're already sinners (through Adam).

But Paul's audience may not have bought into this theory; which is why he quickly offers the following sidebar:

... for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam ... - Romans 5:14a NIV

Q: What is Paul saying here? What does he want us to see?

- A. Before the law was given, sin was in the world

Before the laws of Moses, people sinned. Okay; that's obvious.

- B. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law

God doesn't punish people for breaking laws they haven't received.

- C. Nevertheless, death reigned from ... Adam to ... Moses

But everybody *died!* Everybody received the *punishment* for sin.

- Even those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam
 - Even people who sinned inadvertently.
 - Even people who had mental handicaps.
 - Even children, infants, and newborns.

Here's Paul's point: If they didn't die because of their own sin, then it must have been because of something deeper; something already inside of them: a sin-nature (from Adam).

Q: So, how in the world is that fair? I wasn't there. I didn't say, "Hey, let's break the *only* rule!"

A: We're not punished *for*, but we're affected *by* Adam's sin.

If you inherited cancer from your mother, it's not retribution; it's just the fact that you carry her genetic makeup.

- And, to Paul, this is not only fair, it's very *good* news.

SIN'S REMEDY

It's right at this point, that Paul says:

... Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. – Romans 5:14 NIV

Paul wants us to see a connection between Adam and Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians 15:45 Paul refers to Jesus as the, "Last Adam" because Christ came to finish what the "First Adam" started.

- Jesus came to earth to undo what Adam did

And because Adam is the father of everyone, everywhere ... then Jesus Christ is the universal Savior of *all* mankind.

- If our sin-nature can come through Adam's disobedience.
- Then, our *new-nature* can come through Jesus' obedience.

If *sin* was transmitted to all men through one man, then it stands to reason that the remedy of *righteousness* would come through one man as well.

- Our sin-nature is replaced with a new nature in Christ!