

“Revival & the Sin of Adam” Pt 2

Romans the Gospel of God

Romans 5:12-21

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Jeff: Our gracious heavenly Father, we thank You for every good and blessed gift as it comes from above. Father, we thank You that You are God, and that You’ve revealed Yourself so dramatically, so wonderfully in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that You’ve given Your Holy Spirit to those for whom Christ died, that we might have our eyes opened, that we might understand the power of Your love toward us in Christ. So Father, as we gather, we gather right here today with a treasure in our midst—the Holy Spirit. And we give You thanks for Him.

Lord, as we gather we also give You thanks for the Word that He inspired. We know that this is direction for life. But we know that it’s more than just a good guide, for this is Your word. And it is indeed the word that You’ve given to guide Your people. And so Father, we pray that You would give us hearts and minds and attitudes to take it seriously—to love it, to treasure it and to read it, and to apply it to our lives, enabled by the Holy Spirit who indwells us.

Father, we ask that You will be with us as we continue our study through the book of Romans. We’re thankful for it. And Lord, we know that it applied so preciously to the first-century Christians, and yet it applies to every generation because it’s Your word that transcends time and culture. And it has applicability to the hearts of every person. And Lord, we ask that You will indeed make it a treasure to us.

Father, as we gather we also think of those who were mentioned. We think about Bruce. We think of him and this upcoming procedure, to have this pain blocker implanted into his spine. We ask, Lord, that this would be successful. Father, we ask that Your hand would be upon him even as he does the most simple things like attempting to swallow. We pray, Father, that You would bear witness with his spirit that he is Your child, that You love him. And Lord, we pray that he would not in these days reflect upon all that he has accomplished in this life. But we pray that he would reflect upon all that Christ has accomplished for him.

Father, we pray that Your hand would be upon our brother Sig. We pray that he would get well from the COVID. We ask that You would preserve his wife Nancy from it. Lord, we also pray that you would be with our brother Kevin. And we’re thankful for him, for his good testimony, for his obvious love for you. And we pray, Father, that You would see him well through this latest difficulty. Lord, we also anticipate with him the procedure to remove his teeth. And Lord, we certainly pray for his wife in these days, who has foregone surgery in order to care for him.

Lord, bless Gary, as in April his contract will come to an end. We certainly pray, Lord, that You will preserve him, that You will show Yourself faithful to him. And we pray that You will bring to him other work, and pray that it would be sooner rather than later. And Lord, we pray that You’ll make this day, this Friday morning a blessing to us; we’re thankful for it. Lord, we ask that You’d do it for Christ’s sake. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

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Jeff: Well, what I want us to do today to start off is to think about our last class together. I want us to condense a little bit of it though, because we need it as a bit of background in order to press further into Romans chapter 5 and verse 12. You remember that I talked to you about the realistic position. And the realistic position of the transmission of sin is talking about the solidarity that we have with Adam. And we’re asking the question: how is sin passed from one generation to the next? How is it passed from Adam to our children?

And the realistic position says that all of humanity is of one substance. And therefore when we have children, or when Adam had children, the substance is divided if you will, and continues to divide. We all share in that one substance.

Now I want you to think about that. It’s kind of interesting when you think about that in the way that it’s put forward because it does a lot of things. The questions that you have to ask yourself are things like well, what happens to personality if all of humanity is one substance? It asks the question: what really is the soul? Is the soul actually some substance?

And it really asks the question about sin. We would say that we are held responsible for Adam’s original sin. But if all sin is of one substance why aren’t we held accountable for the actual sins and not just the original sin? So there are a lot of questions that come out of the realistic position. But the realistic position says that sin is transmitted biologically. This position is called *traducianism*.

Ted Wood: So the realistic position is the same thing as traducianism?

Jeff: It’s not the same thing. The realistic position says that humanity is of one single substance. Traducianism says that it’s passed on biologically from that root of that single substance.

And then there’s something in the middle here. It’s called what is passed on mediately, that is through the mediation of something. And that mediation of something is biology.

Don Maurer: That’s *creationism*, right?

Jeff: No, that’s not creationism. Creationism is immediate; we’ll get to that. But here is just a simple illustration. If I were to say to Don, “Don, you can have my car; here are the keys,” and I throw them to him and Don catches them, then Don has them immediately, without a mediator. If I were to say, “Paul, give these keys to Don,” that’s mediate. In other words they go to Paul and then they go to Don.

And so for instance, we use that kind of language in other instances. When we talk about the revelation of God in creation we talk about it mediately. In other words, when I look at the creation—when I look at the trees around me, the starry host above—I see God’s handiwork. But I see it mediately, through the mediation of creation, okay?

So when we think about the realistic position which says that humanity is all of one substance and it is singular, and that it is now cursed with sin, tainted with sin because of Adam’s sin, it is passed on by way of biology. And that is called mediate. So it goes like this: realistic sin, mediate imputation of that sin, and traducianism is the name of the biological transmission of it.

And then there is the representative view. And the representative view basically says—and here’s where you are, Don—creationism. And this is not the creationism where God spoke all things into existence. Creationism basically says that God imputes or reckons or

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accounts the soul sinful in Adam, okay? And how is that done? It’s done immediately, or without a mediator.

So basically you have these two positions. Now when you get to the end, the question really is Christ, isn’t it? And so when you think about it, if sin is transmitted biologically, then what needs to happen? Well, the Roman Catholic Church for example says that Mary needs to be what?

Ted: Without sin.

Jeff: Sinless. Biologically there needs to be a step-in so that Mary can be sinless so that there can be a sinless Savior.

But with the representative view, the representative view simply says that the humanity of Christ was not reckoned with sin; it was not reckoned sinful, okay? So there’s a difference in the way that we would handle the sinlessness of Christ. Mary doesn’t need to be sinless in this position.

Jordan Obaker: I think I’ve heard before that the reason that there needed to be a virgin birth was that sin is passed down from Adam’s seed. So since there was no man involved in the birth, that would explain, at least in the realistic view, how God could do that without Mary being sinless.

Jeff: We all know that women are just as sinful, if not more so, than men. *(Laughter)* This is why we don’t invite our wives to this study, Roger. *(Laughter)* No. *(Laughter)* I know that’s one way to look at it or try to finesse the answer. But the fact of the matter is that women don’t escape. They bring half the chromosome package, and they are just as sinful as men are. That whole idea of sin, that it’s a biological view, is a twist on the realistic view. And it’s really kind of an interesting twist, because if it’s the realistic view—which it is—then the question is: do women not participate in the one singular substance that is humanity that was tainted?

Jordan: But isn’t there the idea that everyone came from man as Eve came from Adam? The only One who didn’t come from a man was Christ.

Jeff: Right. But the thing is, you have to ask yourself. And the realistic position is not going to espouse it; a nuance of this position is. But the nuanced position is going to have to say that women are sinless because they are not possessors of sin. How would they be? If the realistic view says that sin is one substance, that it’s singular—and there’s the lynch pin, right?—that the substance of humanity is singular, how then do women get excluded from that? That to me is a difficulty of that position. I’ve heard it before, but it doesn’t square with the realistic position.

David Miller: So is the Catholic doctrine that Mary’s parents were also sinless?

Don Maurer: No.

Jeff: No, just Mary.

David: How did she escape, being that her parents were sinners?

Jeff: Because it was a miracle. It was the immaculate conception, right? And what happened before that? Wasn’t there something before that? Is there anybody from a Roman Catholic background?

Ted: Anna the mother of Mary was with sin, but Mary was not.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: I don’t know, Is that the immaculate conception?

Gary Craig: The immaculate conception is the conception of Christ.

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Jeff: There’s something before that, but I can’t think of the name of it.

Don Maurer: The immaculate conception is not the conception of Christ; it’s the conception of Mary.

Ted: That’s right.

Don: Mary was sinless.

Jeff: Oh that’s it then; there you go.

Don: Yeah. There’s really no explanation of it other than it was a miracle and that God was pleased to do it. My problem, for example, is how can you have Mary say that Christ is her Savior, that God is her Savior?

Jeff: Sure.

Don: “I rejoice in God my Savior.” Also in Psalms 14 and 53 and Romans 3, “*None righteous; no, not one.*”

Ted: But Mary could have been unrighteous by the sins she committed, maybe not by the sin she—

Don: No; she’s sinless.

Jeff: Well ,we’re gonna—

Ted: Well, I’m just saying—

Jeff: We’re going to avoid Mary. *(Laughter)*

Don Maurer: All right.

Ted: No more about Mary.

Jeff: I’m just saying this is one way that it’s handled and this is another way it’s handled. But the way we’re going through the text I’m taking the representational, creational, immediately transmitted view. And I think you’ll see that up front; I’m going to point that out at crucial places as we go through it. Okay, yes?

Ted: Jeff, let me just raise the question.

Jeff: Sure.

Ted: Let me just raise the question.

Jeff: Sure.

Ted: I mean, you’re sharing this with everyone here. And I’m sure there are guys here who are saying, “Whatever.” I mean, this is pretty heavy stuff; I’ve never even thought about it. That’s not to say much. *(Laughter)* But if you were in a Bible study with other men, or preaching from the pulpit, I would venture to say this. I think the evidence of our sinfulness is so evident.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: It is just blatantly evident. And the problem I have was in kind of just listening to a sermon today that talked a lot about sin. But the preacher always referred to sin as being something that was done by those folks out there.

Jeff: Sure. Yeah, right.

Ted: And in that way he referred to the sinner. He used the first person plural: we, and the second person plural: you. It was never “me.”

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: I never had the sense that the preacher incorporated himself into stark rebellion against the Almighty God.

Jeff: Yeah, right.

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Ted: To me, on an existential basis, that seems to be the real issue amongst congregations. It’s the realization of their personal first-person sinfulness.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: It’s stark rebellion against the holy God.

Jeff: I agree. Here’s the reason why I bring this up with you. If I were preaching I don’t think that I would say this. I would? *(Laughter)* But in teaching, one of the questions that always comes up when you talk to people about the transmission of sin is: why should I be held accountable for Adam’s sin? And so these are the two going answers theologically to that. So I just want to put them out in front of you.

Ted: That’s fine.

Jeff: And say that it’s either biology or it’s imputation and reckoning—one or the other. Don?

Don Maurer: I think that it has to be dealt with because God deals with it. “Through one man’s sin death entered the world, and death through sin, and death spread to all men.” I mean, you just hear it all the time from people, the objection.

Jeff: Sure.

Don: How can I be held responsible for Adam’s sin? I think it should be dealt with.

Jeff: Yes. When you think about these things, what I think you’re going to hear in the background of Romans 4:12 ff. are these things—not in these words. But I think that the text is going to have answers that fit one of them. You were going to say something.

Ted: No, I’m nodding.

Jeff: Okay.

Ted: Don has spoken; there’s not much more you can say. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Okay, let’s read the text. Let’s read Romans 5, verses 12 and following. Listen to God’s word.

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—(For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. But sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the One who was to come.)

“But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one Man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation. But the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Man, Jesus Christ.

“Therefore, as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one Man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass. But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Don Maurer: This is the word of the Lord.

Brave Men: Thanks be to God.

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Jeff: Okay, let’s think about verse 12 for just a minute. There are a couple of things here that I think are really important. First of all the question: What is death? Now I’m not going to take a whole lot of time for us to think about that question because I think we all know it. Death, if we can put it very succinctly, is the curse. And the curse is death. Now death is a little more broad and a little larger in topic than just saying that it’s the curse, because when we think about death it isn’t just the point in time in which we die. But death is that pronouncement of sinfulness and the imputation of that sinfulness to us that was in Adam now to all of his posterity that affects us.

For instance, I want to give you just a way of thinking about this. Here is Adam, and let’s put his spirituality, in a sense, on a hill, right? He is probably at the height of his spiritual powers right before he sins.

Now he is then declared sinful. And what happens? He doesn’t go to the bottom of the hill. In one sense, immediately he does go to the bottom of the hill spiritually; that is to say, the curse of death is upon him. But what is already upon him is not yet worked out. In other words, it’s the same way that we think about salvation. We now possess all the benefits in Jesus Christ, and yet they’re not yet, right?

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: Now the curse that was placed upon Adam was his in its fullness. And yet all of its implications hadn’t been worked out.

Let me give you one instance of this. They don’t stop dropping over dead. They were supposed to live thousands of years, right? They don’t start dropping over at twenty and thirty and seventy. They’re still living till 900 years old; you know what I mean? Methuselah is 900-and-what years old, right? So the idea that sin immediately has the cataclysmic effect that we see today is not the way we should think about it. In other words, there was a gradual decline.

And here’s the interesting thing; notice this. Sin doesn’t affect age until Genesis chapter 6 when God says, “I’m not going to contend with man. I’m going to make his years a hundred and twenty.” In other words, it’s God who adjusts the life span, right? And what I want you to understand is this. I think this means that sin does have a leavening and a spreading influence. But I also think that the imputation of that sin by God is controlled by God. The effect of that is primarily in God’s hands.

It could have been that Adam and his posterity could have continued to live in the thousand-year range right?—800 to a thousand years old. But God mitigated that, okay? So death, when we think about it, is that curse. But we ought to think about it a little more broadly. Okay, go ahead.

Don Maurer: God said that man’s days shall be one hundred and twenty years. And yet after the Flood we read that people were living to three hundred or something like that.

Jeff: Sure. Yeah.

Don: How do you explain that?

Jeff: I do think that sin has a leavening effect. For instance, let’s talk about it like this. When people are living certain lifestyles years are shaved from their life.

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: Because of the lifestyle. So the consequence of actual sin is real, right?

Don: Yes.

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Jeff: So by the time you get to the Psalms, is it Psalm 90 where it says that if man has the strength he lives to his 70s, and if he really has strength he lives to his 80s? Right?

Don: Yes.

Ted: And we see that today despite what the society and the culture says. We say that behavior is sinful. And they say, “How can that be? We’ve done that and we see no bad consequences.”

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: And the culture and the society will line up lots of examples of how they’ve done what we call sin.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: And they’re going, “And things work out just fine.”

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: So we believe in the reality of the destructive nature of sin by faith.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: Just because God says this is what’s going to happen.

Jeff: Yes, it’s a good reminder.

Ted: It’s not by all the examples we can tote out.

Jeff: That’s a good word. We believe that the descent into sin as seen in age, for instance, is by faith. We have faith in God and in His word that this is the reason why this is happening.

Ted: I’m sorry. I mean, we see this with the Roman Empire going from a republic, which was a fairly ethical arrangement—

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: And how it degenerated. But it took what? Four- or five hundred years for that to happen.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: And then all of a sudden Barbarians would come in, and there’s nothing to stop them. And it all collapses.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right.

Don Maurer: I’ve heard an alternate explanation about the 120 years. God is saying, “I give man 120 more years and then I’m going to bring the flood,” which would have given Noah plenty of time to build the ark. I don’t know if you’ve ever heard that.

Jeff: I’ve not heard that, no. That’s interesting, but I think wrong. *(Laughter)* No, I’m just kidding. *(Laughter)* So the question is how did it spread? How did sin spread. Well that’s what we’ve been talking about. Here the Scriptures tell us that one man sinned, and that death, that curse, spread to all men. Now I’ve said to you that the going ways of understanding that are the realistic way and the representative way. And again I’m taking the representative way. I think the language of the text is going to move us in that direction. So let’s continue to think about it.

What’s going on here in this sentence? When you think about it, what’s happening here? Let me read it again. *“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.”* What’s going on here?

There’s a comparison going on here. And that *key utos*—that “and so” is the lynch pin of the comparison. This is Adam, and so this is all his posterity. There’s a comparison.

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Now what’s the comparison as it looks like when we unfold it? Take a look at this’ this is really interesting. Adam sinned; he died. All died; all sinned. That’s the comparison of the text when you break it out. Adam sinned; he died. All died; all sinned. The comparison is that when we think about how it was that this was passed on, it was passed on in Adam—not by genes, but by Adam’s one act of disobedience.

Take a look at verses 15 and 17 just for a minute. *“But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass.”* Through that trespass many died. It doesn’t say through, being biologically related to Adam we died. It says “through his trespass.”

Now that means that if it’s through his trespass, he represented us. And the guilt and the liability for punishment for that trespass is then passed on to us.

And look in verse 17; it’s the same thing. *“For if, because of one man’s trespass death reigned through that one man.”* So again it’s through the trespass; it’s not through the biology. It’s through his representation and us being those represented, right?

In other words, let me put it like this. We think about the president of the United States making a decision as our federal head. And that decision, whether we like it or not, represents us because we’re a represented body.

But when you think about it, we wouldn’t have a chimpanzee or a goat as a president. We may in about ten years, but not now. *(Laughter)* But we wouldn’t have a chimpanzee or a goat or a horse as a president, as a federal head; we have a human being. And so humanity is the basis for the representation. It is not the mechanism of transmission; that’s the idea. Okay, Don?

Don Maurer: I might be a little nitpicky here, but in verse 15 in my translation it says, *“The free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense.”* Is there a difference between “through” and “by?”

Jeff: It’s the same preposition, *dia*, and it can mean either.

Don: Okay.

Jeff: But I think it’s either by that offense, or it’s through that offense. You know, when you think about the idea of “by,” it’s a means of. “Through” seems transitory. The idea is the connection between him and those who come after him.

Don: Okay.

Jeff: It’s the sin through which he sinned, that idea.

Don: Okay.

Jeff: But it’s the same preposition. Now I want to just pause here because Paul takes a pause. I want to just stop and say what’s going on next. We already have a comparison. But now he gives us a parenthesis. And in some translations what you have is that you actually have these verses in parentheses—verses 13 and 14. Here’s the question. What is Paul doing here? Well, he’s basically explaining. He’s explaining from Adam through Moses, and from Moses to us.

And what is he doing? Well let me put it like this. Take a look at this. He says in verse 13: *“For indeed sin was in the world before the law was given. But sin is not counted where there is no law.”*

Now I want you to think about this for just a minute. This is another theological distinction that’s important that I think has been lost on us these days. And it’s the

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distinction between *condition* and *estate*. Now we put these two things together. We talk about condition and estate as if they were the same thing. They’re not the same thing.

One can be sinful as to condition, but guilty only as to estate. Now what’s the difference? For instance, one might be not sinful and innocent. What’s the difference?

I’ll tell you what the difference is. Condition speaks to humanity, and estate speaks to humanity under a judge. In other words, an estate is when you bring in a judicial factor. That is to say that man can be sinful. And yet if there is no judge, what difference does it make? But if there is a judge, then he’s guilty.

Now think about this text in relation to that distinction. It says: *“For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. But sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam until Moses.”* That is what he goes on to say in verse 14.

Now how do we understand this? I’ll tell you; this is how we understand it. Adam by his original sin was sinful, that is, his condition was sinful. But God was there, which means that he was guilty.

Ted: His estate.

Jeff: His estate.

Ted: His guilt.

Jeff: His guilt. What about this idea of the law before the law was given? Well he means the law of Moses.

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: He’s not talking about the law that was given in the garden to Adam. He’s talking about the law that was given to Moses. So when he’s talking about that there was sin before there was law, he’s talking about that there was sin before there was the law of Moses.

How do we know that? Because the judgment of God in the curse reigned from Adam to Moses. So the condition was sinful and the estate was guilt, not just to Adam but to all of Adam’s posterity. Does that make sense so far? I only see one person shaking his head. *(Laughter)* What questions do you have? I got a thumbs up, so that’s good.

Ted: I was going to say that I’m remembering now that there was a covenant with Abraham. The statement that God would make in that covenant was that if Abraham would walk before Him blamelessly, that’s the expression. “Blameless” must be walking according to a set of laws.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right.

Ted: Or expectation. So the law was before Moses; there was a law and a type.

Jeff: Yeah. And we have to remember that in Romans chapter 2 there was a law written on every man’s heart.

Ted: Okay; gotcha.

Jeff: Before it was given on stone to Moses.

Ted: Okay.

Jeff: Is everybody good so far? All right; okay.

Don Maurer: And not only that. For example Sodom and Gomorrah were held responsible for their sin, and Abimilech.

Jeff: Yes. Clearly there was a law, right? If you go back you can find the Ten Commandments transgressed in the transgression of Adam.

Don: Oh yeah.

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Jeff: The law was given on his heart. And then later that law was given on stone; I think it's very clear.

Now what about this? If we understand that, then what about this? From Adam to Moses sin reigned. But the sinning of the people in this time period from Adam to Moses was not like what? What does he say? Look at what he says: *“Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam.”*

What does he mean by that? Now to tell you what he means by that you have to think Biblically and theologically. Think about Adam's sin; I've talked to you about this before. The world is created, the garden is made. God makes Adam and He takes him outside of the garden. He puts him in the garden. He gives him a law, and tells him that if he keeps the law he can stay; if he doesn't, he's expelled.

We come over here to Moses. God gives them a land, the Promised Land. He creates Israel outside of the Promised Land in Egypt. He gives them the land and puts them in it. He gives them a law and says, “If you keep the law you can stay in the land. But if you don't keep the law you will be ejected from it.” They were rejected from it. It's a re-duplication; this is sin in the likeness of Adam.

Now death reigned until this likeness was given. That is to say that these people were guilty. But God gives us a picture of Adam's sin on a grander scale.

Why does He do this? He tells us. Look at the end, verse 20. He says: *“Now the law came”—*that is, the law of Moses came—*“to increase the trespass.”* Whose trespass? Adam's trespass. *“But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.”*

So in other words, why did God do this? Why did He give us a picture, this re-duplicated picture of Adam's sin? It was in order to increase the trespass. That is to say to draw out, to tease out our sinfulness, okay? So this is a picture for us to learn that man is sinful. Okay, does that make sense to everybody? Okay.

All right. So now we get to verse 14. Though verse 14 was a parenthesis, just giving us a picture of law and the law of Moses, and how it interacts and what about the people in the community, it's verse 14 that gives us the lynch pin that connects us to verse 15. And what is it?

I'll tell you what it is. It's Adam as a type of Christ. Now he's going to move in and he's going to make the comparison not between Adam and Moses, but between Adam and the second Adam, Jesus Christ. Okay, so we have Adam the first, and the second Adam. That's going to be the comparison, and that's going to take us to the next point: the sin of Adam and the condemnation of all.

I want you to notice. When we look at verses 15-17, notice the striking comparison. You have the repetition of words like death and judgment and condemnation for those who are under the curse. But “gift” and “grace” are mentioned seven times. When you read 15-17 you can't help stumbling over gift or grace, because it happens many times in those verses.

Now think about this. There's something interesting here that he's telling us. So we have one sin in Adam. It was followed by many transgressions. Justification for sins is a gift, and not something that we earn. In other words, that one sin led to many sins, and the justification that any one of us has who are related to Adam is a gift. That's the point of it. There's a compounding of sin. And if we're saved it's a gift.

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Now what’s the comparison here? Look at verses 16 and 18. What’s the comparison in these verses? Just take a look at them. *“And the free gift is not like the result of that one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass has brought condemnation. But the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.”*

The comparison is what we see in verse 18: *“through one trespass.”* Through one trespass, many transgressions. Through one act of obedience, through one act of righteousness, many justified. And again, the point is that I think that we’re dealing not with a biological transmission, but we’re dealing with a representative transmission. And we’re beginning to see that representative transmission not just in the transmission of sin, but in the transmission of grace. In other words, what you’re beginning to see is an analogy. That is to say, if sin is transmitted biologically, the question is why isn’t grace transmitted biologically? It’s because sin is transmitted by God reckoning it to the sinner. And grace is received by God reckoning it to the sinner, right? There’s a reckoning.

So the ground is the one trespass of Adam; that’s the ground of sin. And that’s the reason for our condemnation. I’m going to hasten through this because I think we’re on a good trajectory here. I want to just kind of at least finish this up.

So then, the sin of Adam and the sin of all. Look at verses 12 and 19: death and condemnation, grounded again upon the one trespass of Adam. That is to say, solidarity explains sin, not the process of hereditary corruption. Our genetic pool is basically the given, right? But it’s the imputation of sin, the one act of disobedience being reckoned to all posterity; that is the means.

Now that’s exactly what he says. He says that we were *“made sinners.”* He says that men were reckoned sinners.

Now on what basis were we reckoned? We were reckoned on the basis of Adam’s first sin. Now you know this language because this language is the language of imputation. When you think of the language that Protestants use for what we call the double exchange—that is, here we have one person’s account and this person’s account. He’s in debt. But we have this person’s account, and this is Christ. And He is rich. And this person’s debt is transferred to this person’s account. And this Person’s riches are transferred to him. That’s double imputation: our sin is imputed to Christ, and His righteousness is imputed to us.

And that’s what we see here in this text. Man is reckoned a sinner. God reckons or imputes or makes him, constitutes him a sinner when he is created, when his soul is created at birth. And that reckoning is the disobedience of one man.

And so when we think about it, let me just hasten ahead to one thing. Does it make sense when we think about it like this? Okay. So let’s just take a look at this: verse 18 and following. *“Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners,”*—reckoned to be sinners,—*“so by the one Man’s obedience the many will be made”*—or reckoned—*“righteous.”* And that’s the reckoning that we were talking about there: our sins reckoned to Christ’s account; His righteousness reckoned to our account.

Now when you think about this there’s an analogy here, and we shouldn’t let it pass us up. The righteousness is not wrought in righteousness in the believer by regeneration. In other words, it’s not by mediate imputation, that is, not by biology does the believer come

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into possession of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. That is to say the same thing. In Adam sin is reckoned, not passed along biologically. In Christ grace is reckoned, not passed along biologically. Okay, does that make sense? I feel that maybe we should just pause and talk about that for a minute; we’ve got a couple minutes. Yes?

David: One thing that people misunderstand right there is that sin is not just heinous crimes, but it’s also refusing to take up one’s cross daily and follow Him. (*Unclear*) And so therefore I think we’re all guilty not just by imputation but by actions.

Jeff: So here’s the difference, right? Paul is talking about what is called original sin.

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: And you’re talking about what’s called actual sin. And actual sins are what he’s going to deal with in chapter 6, because he’s going to talk about sanctification in chapter 6. But here he’s talking about why it is that we are sinners, why it is that Christ needed to come, that whole thing.

Gary Dunbar: I understand what you were talking about. But how do you tie in the nature? That’s an unrelated trapping.

Jeff: The nature?

Gary: I can feel my nature of sin. I don’t have to worry about Adam imputing it. Or it being imputed one way or the other; I have my own.

Jeff: Well you have your own because of Adam.

Gary: But where does the nature tie in to your explanation of what you’ve just gone through?

Jeff: The nature ties into it in this sense. If it’s in the realistic, the nature is from that one singular substance. And then the question is how do you talk about your individual nature? That’s a problem. But if it’s a representative view then God creates you individually and imputes your person, your soul, with sin. And your reckoned sin is from Adam. And you feel that in your own way because you have your own personality, your own nature. The things that tempt you don’t tempt me, and yet we’re both human. But you have an individual personality. Does that make sense?

Gary: I heard what you said.

Jeff: Okay. Yes, Don?

Don Maurer: Jeff, in verse 18 judgment came to all men and the free gift came to all men. Some people might misunderstand this as teaching universalism. How do you correct that from this verse?

Jeff: Please tell me what verse you’re thinking of again.

Don: Verse 18.

Jeff: Verse 18.

Don: *“Therefore as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men.”*

Transcriber’s Note: NKJV.

Jeff: So if you look in the very next verse—verse 19—the one Man’s obedience would be reckoned to the many. So yes, the first man’s disobedience is reckoned to all. Adam’s disobedience is all men’s disobedience, okay? So Christ’s righteousness in one sense is sufficient for all—just like the text says,—but is efficient for the elect, for the many. So that’s how I would say it.

Don: Okay.

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Ted: This “many” has bothered me for quite a while.

Jeff: Okay.

Ted: Because it says,—okay, let me see; I wrote it down here.

Jeff: Okay.

Ted: It’s like in verse 15: *“If many died through one man’s trespass.”* Well, it wasn’t many who died; it was all that died.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: I mean, Jesus says, “I give My life as a ransom for many.” Okay, I get that.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: But when we talk about sin, one man’s trespass leads to the condemnation for many, not all.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: And the Greek word clearly means many—multitudes, a high number—but not everybody.

Jeff: Yeah.

Ted: So I’ve always been troubled by the use of “many.”

Jeff: So when you look at this, then he says in verse 18, *“Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men,”* right?

Ted: Yes.

Jeff: And so he’s obviously playing with “one” and “many.” And so Don asked me from the passage how I would handle that. That’s how I would handle it. But if I would step back from this I would say that Paul is using the all and the many a little more loosely. For instance I think the many are the all with Adam.

Ted: Yeah.

Jeff: But the all and the many are different with Christ. That is to say that the all and the many are those who belong to Christ. The all and the many are those who belong to Adam. All belong to Adam; not all belong to Christ. That’s kind of how I view it.

Ted: I wish he hadn’t done that. *(Laughter)* People build a whole theology around that.

Jeff: I know they do.

Ted: Right on just that one word.

Jeff: Oh, sure.

Ted: I mean, I love it when Christ says that “I give My life as a ransom for many.” But—

Jeff: Yeah. I’ll tell you what; this is the thing when you think about that kind of thing—the many and the all—right? I mean, when I was an Arminian I was scouring that passage, trying to figure out how to make Arminianism work. When you’re a Calvinist it’s not a big deal. It isn’t a big deal for the Calvinist, but we still have to remember that the Arminian still has his shorts in a bunch over this. But in my mind the reconciliation of this is not that difficult. I’m speaking of the Calvinist. When I was an Arminian my shorts were just as much in a bunch. Yes, Don?

Don Bishop: It’s just like any interpretation. You have to take other Scriptures.

Jeff: Yes. So this was a little bit of a harder passage to work through. But I think it’s important for us to ask the question. Why are we responsible for Adam’s sin? How was it

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passed along? What does that mean? But in chapter 6 we’re going to move into some thinking about sanctification. So why don’t we pray as we close?

Father, thank You for this day and for the time You’ve given us. We ask that You’ll bless us now and strengthen us by Your hand of grace upon us, forgiving us all of our sins in Christ Jesus, reminding us that we are Your children and adopted to Your care. So we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. (*Applause*)