

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – July 9, 2017
Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church
Pastor Charles Heup

Romans 5:12-15 NIV

Therefore, just as **sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned--** 13) To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. 14) 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 is a pattern of the one to come. **15) But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!**

Dear friends in Christ Jesus:

Like father – like son. These pictures help us to see and understand the meaning of that phrase. Like father – like son. We have other English phrases which mean about the same thing. A father who sees his son following in his footsteps pursuing the same career as the Father might proudly say, “He’s a chip off the ol’ block.” Sometimes if a child follows the bad example of a parent someone might say, “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.” We could say, “like father, like son.” It might have been possible to use any of those phrases as the theme for our sermon today but instead I decided to use words of a hymn (which we will sing during the Lord’s Supper) for the theme and parts of today’s message.

Theme: All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall

1. One common sin infects us all
2. Christ the second Adam came to bear the sins of all

Our sermon text speaks of our relationship to two “Adams” – the first Adam is the man whom God created at the beginning of time. We know that when God created Adam and his wife Eve that they were perfect – created in God’s image without sin. But this perfection did not last long. The devil came and convinced them to disobey God. When they fell into sin – God’s perfect creation was ruined. As our theme says: All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall.

Now after they fell into sin there were some immediate consequences for Adam and Eve as we read in Genesis 3:7-8 (NIV): **Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (8) Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**

After the fall into sin – Adam and Eve felt shame, they became afraid of God and ran from him. When God confronted them with their sins they pointed fingers at each other and at God for their failures. They stood in opposition to God treating him as an enemy.

And then there were consequences which weren’t so immediate. The first two sons that Adam and Eve had were named Cain and Abel. Cain had little or no respect for God. He did not get along with his brother and ultimately Cain killed his brother. Adam’s sinful nature and ways had been passed on to his children. That sinful nature is a characteristic of every single human being. One common sin infects us all. **Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.** Sin is responsible for the death that is a part of our world.

When we read in our Bibles there are some parts that are just naturally more interesting than others. In fact there are some chapters that we're tempted to skip over when we read from our Bibles. Genesis chapter five might be a chapter like that – it lists the generations of people from Adam to Noah. And as it does so we notice a rather common pattern.

(Genesis 5:1-5 NIV)

This is the written account of Adam's line.

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. (2) He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man." (3) When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.

(Genesis 5:5 NIV) Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:8 NIV) Altogether, Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:11 NIV) Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:14 NIV) Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:17 NIV) Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:20 NIV) Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

(Genesis 5:23-24 NIV) Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. 24) Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

(Genesis 5:27-31 NIV) Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died. 28) When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. 29) He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." 30) After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. 31) Altogether, Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.

Once we get over the shock of how long the people lived at that time we are confronted with the evidence of sin – ultimately no matter how long they lived we read, "and then he died." The only exception is Enoch whom the Lord took directly to heaven to live with him.

And our own family trees would be similar wouldn't they? After the names of each of our ancestors we can place a birth date and ultimately a date of death. And the same will be true one day for each of us and our children and grandchildren unless the Lord comes first.

The fact that death comes to all is evidence that all have sinned. **Death came to all men, because all sinned**, our text proclaims. All people fell in Adam's fall. He passed his sinful nature along to each of his descendants. One common sin infects us all. We call that sin original sin. Together with the psalmist David we confess: (Psalms 51:5 NIV) **Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.**

Because one common sin infects us all – no matter who we are or how old we are. Because we are all born sinful and subject to death – not just physical death but also the spiritual death of being separated from God forever we need someone to bear our sin and to provide us with the gift of life so that we do not have to face eternal death – separation from God and his blessings forever .

And so Jesus Christ the second Adam came to bear our sin. Sin entered the world through one man – salvation (the rescue from sin) would also come into the world through one man – the Lord Jesus Christ. In (1 Corinthians 15:21-22 NIV) Paul draws a comparison to Adam and Jesus. **For since death came through a**

man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22) For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Paul had those same thoughts in mind when he wrote the words of our text. In our text Paul describes Adam as a pattern of the one to come. That is why we sometimes call Jesus the second Adam. Adam passed along sin and death. Jesus fixed what Adam ruined. Christ passes along forgiveness and life – restoring sinful mankind to his place in God’s family and restoring in us the image of our creator. And amazingly this is given to us freely as a gift through faith in Christ Jesus.

But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! What a contrast there is between what Adam brought into the world and what Christ brought into the world. Adam rebelled against God and brought sin and death to all. Christ was obedient to God and brought forgiveness and life for all.

We are told the extent of Christ’s obedience in (Philippians 2:7-8 NIV) **he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8) And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!**

Christ Jesus is both God and true man born of the Virgin Mary. He was born holy and sinless because he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He remained perfectly sinless overcoming temptation and defeating sin and Satan for us. Then he offered his perfect life as the payment for sin.

His death took the place of the eternal death we deserved because of the common sin which infects us all. (Romans 5:18 NIV) **Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.**

And this forgiveness and life which overflows to the many – the same many who were affected by Adams fall -- is offered as a gift of grace. There is no way that sinners can take any credit for this blessing, no way we can earn it, no way we can deserve it. It is a gift received by faith as we are clearly taught in the book of Romans and elsewhere.

(Romans 3:23-24 NIV) **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24) and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.**

(Romans 3:28 NIV) **For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.**

Christ the second Adam came to bear the sins of all – sadly there are those who reject this gift of grace and so remain infected by sin because they have refused the cure. But God none-the-less will continue to call out to all with his Gospel message to comfort sinners who despair of their sins and long for his forgiveness.

Dear friends – it is humbling to confess that we together with all men were infected with sin through Adams fall but it is uplifting to hear that Christ the second Adam came to bear the sins of all. Let us praise God for his wonderful gift to us in Christ Jesus as we say together the words of verse 6 of hymn 378.

**We thank you Christ, new life is ours.
New light, new hope, new strength, new pow'rs
This grace our ev'ry way attend
Until we reach our journey's end.**