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Sermon Notes

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## **Sin and Death Dethroned; Grace and Life Enthroned**

### **Romans 5:18-21**

#### **I. The Terrible Tyrant Dethroned**

A. Illustrated: The Horrible Reign of Every Tyrant in History

B. The Even More Horrible Reign of Sin and Death

- How much damage has sin done?
- How many lives shredded by its tyrannical reign?
- How many

C. How We Came Under This Tyrant?

- Doctrine: original sin

D. The Greater Reign of Grace

#### **II. The Adam-Christ Parallel Restated**

Central idea:

Adam and Christ are similar and yet different.

One man Adam's sin condemned everyone in him to a sin nature and death; in the same way one man, Christ's righteous act justified everyone in Him resulting in righteousness and eternal life.

Key question: does God see you in Adam or in Christ?

A. Adam and Christ: Similar, Yet Different

1. Paul resumes his train of thought

vs. 12 *“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...”*

2. “Just as...” expects “so also”
3. Parallel completed in vss. 18 & 19

vs. 18-19 *Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

4. Why did he interrupt himself?? To explain “because all sinned...”
5. (vs. 13-14) What “because all sinned” DOESN’T MEAN

It doesn’t mean “because all sinned in the manner of Adam, by breaking a known command”

6. (vs. 15-17) Explains how Adam and Christ DIFFER
- Adam and Christ differ in **OUTCOME** for those they represent... as death differs from life, and as sin differs from righteousness
  - Adam and Christ differ in **HOW GREAT THE EFFECT** was on those they represented... as temporary differs from eternity... “HOW MUCH MORE” of a Savior was Christ than Adam was a condemner; Adam brought us to NEGATIVE TEN, Christ to POSITIVE INFINITY

Now, Paul resumes and completes His argument

B. Adam: One Man’s Sin Condemns Many

vs. 18-19 *Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

1. Adam stood as representative for human race; all of us united with him
2. When Adam ate that fruit, all humanity ate with him
3. Adam’s sin IMPUTED or credited to every one of us at that instant

4. All humanity immediately condemned with Adam BECAUSE of Adam's sin

C. Christ: One Man's Act of Righteousness Justifies Many

1. Christ stood as representative of a new humanity
2. Christ's one act of righteousness justified all He represented
3. BUT what was that one act?
  - a) "One act??" Most focus on death
  - b) but was death "one act"
  - c) lifetime of obedience "qualified Him"

***Baptism: "We must fulfill all righteousness"***

***Death: To obey His Father's will perfectly***

***In between: tempted, tried, tested day after day... perfect obedience to the Father***

***Hebrews 5:7-9 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. <sup>8</sup> Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered <sup>9</sup> and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him***

C. The Foundation of Our Justification

***vs. 18 Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.***

1. Justification has a foundation... it doesn't just hang out in space
2. Foundation: Christ's perfect righteousness
3. Christ's entire life a righteous act
4. All of that has been credited to your account!!

Summary: just as there was a union between Adam and all he represented, and just as Adam's sin was IMPUTED to all he represented, so there is a union between Christ and all He represents, and His righteousness is IMPUTED or credited to us

### III. Original Sin: “Made Sinners” By the Sin of Adam

#### A. Paul’s Statement

*vs. 12 “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...”*

*vs. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

#### B. “Original Sin”: Two Curses from Adam

1. Guilt of sin imputed to us... result: death penalty

Everybody dies physically because of union with Adam

2. Sin nature imputed to us... result: actual sins committed as soon as the law is understood

Everybody who understands law sins actually because of sin nature gotten through union with Adam

***Ephesians 2:3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature children of wrath.***

“by nature children of wrath...”

#### **A Police Study on Juvenile Delinquency:**

“Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered: he wants what he wants... his bottle, his mother’s attention, his playmate’s toys, his uncle’s watch, or whatever. Deny him these and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness which would be murderous were he not so helpless. He is dirty; he has no morals, no knowledge, and no developed skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, but all children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in their self-centered world of infancy, given free reign to their impulsive actions to satisfy every want, every child would grow up a criminal, a killer, a thief, and a rapist.”

Illus. Coin flip or Las Vegas dice roll

#### C. The Gospel: Two blessings in Christ

1. Imputed guilt from Adam met with imputed righteousness from Christ

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE APART FROM WORKS OF THE LAW

2. Received sin nature from Adam met with new nature in Christ & progressive growth in Christ

## SANCTIFICATION BY THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT BY FAITH AND BY EFFORT ON THE CHRISTIANS PART

### IV. Sin and Death Dethroned; Grace and Life Enthroned

#### A. The Purpose of the Law: The Increase of Sin

##### 1. Why did God choose the flow of history as it has gone?

- The fall of Adam
- The spread of sin... Cain & Abel; the wickedness of Noah's neighbors
- The flood of Noah
- The call of Abraham
- The slavery of the Jews in Egypt
- The exodus, the Law under Moses at Sinai
- The history of Israel... all those evil kings, all that rebellion
- The exiles to Assyria & Babylon
- The coming of Christ... all His suffering on earth
- The crucifixion... Christ's bloody death on the cross
- The resurrection
- The coming of the Holy Spirit
- 2000 years of church history... the faltering advance of the gospel by sinful Christians

Why not skip all that and go straight to the perfection of heaven?

Why not create perfect angels and perfect people, and just put them immediately in heaven?

Why all this history of sin?

Paul zeroes in on the purpose of the Law... why was it given?

**vs. 20 “The law was added so that the trespass might increase.”**

2. Paul states that the Law “came in alongside” to INCREASE the trespass
  - a. the more commands there are from God, the more opportunity for sin to reveal itself
  - b. law, a good gift from God, becomes an avenue for our sin nature to reveal itself fully
  - c. sin DID increase... more and more and more

From one single trespass in the Garden, to horrible perversions

Murder to honor an idol:

***2 Kings 21:6 [Manasseh] sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.***

Every kind of perversion imaginable, and even some you can't possibly imagine... the river of sin has flooded the earth; where God intended that the “earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea,” instead the earth is polluted with the wickedness of humanity

Sin has increased more and more and more

BUT...

Why would God want to increase the trespass?

3. Ultimate goals:

- 1) to reveal sin as utterly wicked

***Romans 7:13 “...through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.”***

- 2) to reveal His grace as completely triumphant

***vs. 21 “...where sin increased, grace increased all the more”***

God wanted the trespass to increase so that all His ransomed might understand how wicked is sin, how evil it is... that we might utterly repudiate sin forever from personal experience

By the time we get to heaven, we can personally testify to the absolute wickedness of sin, and can say from our hearts that we never want any more to do with it

## B. The Abundance of Grace

**vs. 21 “...where sin increased, grace increased all the more”**

Illus. John Bunyan *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*

Illus. John Newton, “Amazing grace”

1. Sin can never outdo grace
2. Grace can cover even the most wicked blasphemies and perversions

***Matthew 12:31 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men***

***1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders <sup>10</sup> nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.***

There is a bottomless ocean of God’s grace available through the blood of Jesus Christ to cover the river of sin that flows out of our lives

How many times have you confessed sin to God and asked Him to cleanse you again? How many times has His grace been sufficient for you

3. God’s grace is sufficient to cover your whole lifetime of sin and bring you home

## C. The Reign of Grace

**vs. 20-21 *But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

1. “So that”... the result of the abundance of grace is that it REIGNS
2. Grace is like an unconquerable King!!
3. Grace keeps ruling over you the way sin and death used to
4. Grace is a sovereign power controlling your life

***Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.***

***Romans 8:9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you.***

D. The Result of Grace: Eternal Life

***vs. 21 just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

1. The result of sin's rule: DEATH
2. The result of grace's rule: ETERNAL LIFE
3. NOTE two "throughs"

"through righteousness"

"through Jesus Christ our Lord"

4. Grace gives us the righteousness of Christ to cover our sins
5. Grace also works the righteousness of Christ in us day by day... GRACE REIGNS THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS
6. Grace only comes to us THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD

Everything in and through and by and for Jesus Christ... apart from Christ, we have nothing

Like Adam was for sin and death, Christ is our head for grace, righteousness, and eternal life

7. Result: NOT DEATH BUT LIFE... ETERNAL LIFE!!!

## V. Benefits of Understanding This Doctrine

Note: these are from John Piper

A. Humility: morally, intellectually

1. Not just "I do bad things" BUT "I am bad"

***“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is known by its fruits.”***

I must become an entirely new creation... not just rearrange things morally in my life!

And I CANNOT make myself an entirely new person... only God can do that!

2. Also: this doctrine brings us to the edge of what we can handle and pushes us beyond

“There’s a large dose of mystery here”... how are we connected to Adam?

B. Deepens Gratitude for Salvation

***Romans 6:17 “But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.”***

You take NO CREDIT whatsoever for your salvation

C. Explains the world we live in

“The ironic thing about the doctrine of original sin is that, while being one of the hardest doctrines to accept, it helps explain most of what we see: namely, the universality of evil. People who believe what the Bible teaches about this doctrine are not baffled about why history is strewn with corpses and why every society that has ever been has had to deal with the evil of its people.”

D. Insights into human government

1. G.K. Chesterton & C.S. Lewis: “doctrine of original sin the basis of a democratic form of government
2. power is spread over the people
3. NOT because the people are essentially good, but because people are essentially bad
4. therefore we shouldn’t trust a ruling elite with absolute power

E. Should produce compassion for others

Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin* : “This doctrine teaches us to think no worse of others than of ourselves: it teaches us that we are all, by nature, companions in a miserable helpless condition: which under a revelation of the divine mercy, tends to promote mutual compassion. And nothing has a greater tendency to promote those amiable dispositions of mercy, forbearance, longsuffering, gentleness, and forgiveness, than a sense of our own extreme unworthiness and misery, and the infinite need we have of a divine pity, forbearance and forgiveness, together with a hope of obtaining mercy.”

F. Motivates us in evangelism

1. No exceptions in the world
2. Everyone born in Adam, under sin
3. No escape except through second Adam, Christ
4. Life-changing message of the gospel the only hope

## VII. In Adam or In Christ?

A. Universalism: the Parallel pushed too far

1. Some have found that this passage teaches universalism... that everyone will be saved
2. Pushing the parallel

As in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive

ALL = every single human being on the face of the earth

All humans are subject to death, so therefore all humans will be saved through Christ

3. Basic principle of interpretation: scripture interprets scripture

Jesus taught an eternal hell... an actual people are going to spend eternity there

***Matthew 25:31-46 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.***

***"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' <sup>44</sup> "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' <sup>45</sup> "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' <sup>46</sup> "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."***

4. There IS a hell! All born in Adam die the moment they break God's holy law

5. Only one escape... faith in Christ!!

B. Are you “in Adam” or “in Christ”??

- “in Adam” = under the reign of sin and death
- “in Christ” = under the reign of grace, righteousness & eternal life