

Through Adam, Death

Romans 5:12–14

¹² Therefore, just as through one-man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—¹³ (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. (Romans 5:12–14)

- The Bible calls **death the king of terrors**, Job, chapter 18, verse 14.
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14 “Man who is born of woman
Is of few days and full of trouble.

² He comes forth like a flower and fades away;
He flees like a shadow and does not continue.

¹⁴ If a man dies, shall he live again?
All the days of my hard service I will wait,
Till my change comes. (Job 14:1–2, 14)

- Death is the **king over the whole human race**.
 - **Everyone dies.**
 - In fact, life itself is a **steady movement** toward death.
 - It’s as if your life is a **candle lit when you’re born**, and eventually **burning itself out**.
 - We’re **all made from dust** and to dust we return.
- The **ultimate sovereign** in the world **then is death**.
 - Death **reigns**.
 - **We know** that.
 - We’re **all dying**.
 - We have death **thrown in our face every single day**.
- In one way or another, we are **aware of the tragedy** and the **reality** of death.

- We make much when people **die suddenly** at the hands of
 - a **terrorist** or
 - an **airplane** crash or
 - some **kind of physical** calamity,
- but nobody died in any of those events **that wasn't going to die anyway**.
- It's just that **we're not in control** of it.
- **But why?**
 - **Why does death reign** in the world?
 - Why is death **the final judge**?
 - Why is death **the ultimate sovereign**?
 - **What has caused** this?
- I want to **direct your attention to the 5th chapter** of Romans.
 - **Romans, chapter 5**, where we have **the answer to that query**.
 - Romans, chapter 5, and I want us just to look at **verses 12 through 14**, listen to **Romans 5:12-14**,

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned – for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.”

- Here is **the answer to why** there is death in the world.
 - Death reigns **because of the presence of sin**.
 - Sin exists **because of the sin of one man**.
 - **Through one man** sin entered into the world.
 - **The whole complex of sin, death, condemnation – all of it came through one man**.
 - In fact, **one man's one act**.
 - **The reign of death** over the human race is **the result of Adam's sin**.

1. Now there are four sequential realities in the verses that I read to you,

- and they **explain why** the world is the way it is,
 - and **why we're all dying**;
 - and this is **the only explanation that is true**, the only one.
 - **Let's look** at those **four sequential realities**.

A. Number One: Sin entered the world through one man, verse 12:

“Just as through one man sin entered into the world.”

- That is **explicit**.
 - With that truth, **all the misery of the world is explained**.
 - Death is **laid bare** as to its root.
 - And the **key to understanding** human behavior is placed in our hands **by that one statement**:

“Sin entered the world through one man, one man.”

- Sin **came into** the human race **through that one man who is identified**, in verse 14, **named Adam**.
 - **The end of the verse it speaks of the transgression or the offense of Adam.**
- Now **Adam was not the originator** of sin.
 - **1st John 3:8** says,

“For the devil sinned from the beginning.”

- The devil instituted sin, inaugurated sin, launched sin with the rebellion in heaven; but Adam, succumbing to the devil's temptations, introduced sin into humanity.
 - Acting as if he were an agent to the devil, carrying the devil's rebellion into the world, Adam sinned.
- We know the story way back in Genesis, chapter 2, verse 15-17:

“The Lord God took the man, put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden

you may freely eat; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

- Well, regarding the Temptation and Fall of Man, Genesis 3:1–7 says:

3 *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”*

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ”

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

- But Even ate first.
 - If so, then why does it say, “*As in Adam all died*”?
 - Why was it the transgression of Adam?
 - Because Adam was the head,
 - Adam was the head.
 - Adam was the responsible one.
- The result of that sin; curse, after curse, after curse.

“To the woman I will multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain will you bring forth children. Your desire will be to overpower your husband, and he will dominate you.”

- To the man He said,

“Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall

grow. You will eat of the plants of the field by the sweat of your face. You will eat bread until you return to the ground, because you're taken from dust, and to dust you will return."

- In Romans, chapter 8, it says the entire creation was subjected to emptiness, futility.
 - The whole point is that Adam was a real man –
 - a real, genuine, true, historical person; not mythical, not symbolic; a real person, the first man –
 - not some kind of collective man at the end of some evolutionary process,
 - not some kind of symbolic man,
 - not some mythical man,
 - not some fabricated, poetic man; but a real man.
- Adam is a real man, and that is essential to Christian truth in an understanding of the world and the way it is.
 - He is a real man as Jesus Christ was a real man,
 - and it is Jesus Christ who is called the second Adam and the last Adam.
 - And we need to face the fact that any evolutionary lies that seek to eliminate Adam as a historical person are guilty of a destructive assault on the gospel and on Scripture.
- Sin entered the world through one man.
 - There was no sin before that one man sinned.
 - There was no one before that one man was created.
 - His one sin doomed the race.
- God only gave Adam one prohibition, but it was enough to cause selfishness to rise in his heart,
 - and he disobeyed without being deceived.
 - Paul tells us in Timothy he willfully disobeyed as the representative, the God-appointed representative of man.
- The immediate effect was to produce a degeneration in Adam's nature, a change in his constitution.
 - Death hit him and he began to die.
 - He fell from purity; he fell from innocence; he fell into corruption; he fell into guilt.

- In fact, it's summed up very simply:

“Through one man sin entered into the world.”

- Not sins, not behaviors; but nature, sin as an entity.
 - Adam was mankind.
 - He was the representative of all humanity.
 - He acted for all the rest.
 - His fall took down the entire human race into corruption, and the whole creation has suffered because of it.
 - Again, Paul in Romans 8 says the entire creation groans under the weight of this curse.
 - Now we can understand how one man acts for all for whom he is responsible.
 - A father acts and his family is affected by his actions.
 - A general acts and his troops are affected by his action.
 - A judge acts and all who come under the law are affected by his action.
 - A government acts for the people and what it does affects all the people.
 - So with Adam. He was appointed the representative of man, and when Adam sinned, the whole human race was subject to the effect. He was polluted and the whole race in his loins was polluted as well.
 - Genesis 3 then tells us essentially why human history is the way it is.
 - Adam acts as man for man.
 - When he sinned, did evil, rebelled, expressed selfishness, it flooded the entire human stream and everyone was polluted.
 - In other words, Adam sinned and we're all born sinners.
 - We have all inherited his corruption.
- B. There's a second reality here: Death entered the human race through sin.**
- Death entered the human race through sin.

- Sin entered the human race through one man, and death entered the human race through that one man's sin.
- Back to verse 12: *"Death through sin."*
- Simple statement: *"Death through sin."*
- There's a sense in which death is not natural to the original nature of man as created in God's image.
 - Death is the penal consequence of sin.
 - Death is the penal consequence of sin meted out by God.
 - If Adam hadn't sinned, he wouldn't have died.
 - Death was the divine penalty for his sin.
 - And 1 Corinthians 15:22 says,

"In Adam all die, all die."

- And we need to note that this not the death that is inflicted as a result of the Judgment at the Throne of God at the time of the very end...
- There will be such a "death", but this is not referring to the last judgement.
- Death and the decay that leads to death are the direct result of the poison that destroyed Adam's nature, and then spread to all human beings.
 - It doesn't take long to see the spread in the book of Genesis.
 - You have the fall of Adam in chapter 3,
 - and then in chapter 5 you read this:

"This is the book of the generations of Adam.

In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.

He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created."

- And then we read this about Adam:
 - *"And he died."*
 - About Seth: *"And he died."*
 - Enosh: *"And he died."*
 - Kenan, *"And he died."*

- Mahalalel, “*And he died.*”
- Jared, “*And he died.*”
- Only Enoch didn’t die:
- “*He walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*”
- Methuselah, 969 years and he died,
- and the whole genealogy of chapter 5 is marked by,
- “*and he died, and he died,*”
- All of this to show the spread of death through the sin of Adam.
- Solidarity in guilt implies solidarity in penalty.
 - There is no separation between sin and death, they necessarily go together.
 - Adam sinned; Adam died.
 - We are the product of Adam caught up in his sin, and the death sentence is pronounced on us.
 - That’s why Hebrews 9:27 says,

“It’s appointed unto man once to die.”

- Just exactly, “*What does that **death** mean?*”
 1. *Well, it encompasses **spiritual death**,*
 - which means you are cut off from the life of God dead in any ability to communicate with God;
 - you are as dead to God as if you were a corpse – spiritual death, separation from God’s life.
 2. ***Physical death** separated from the living.*
 3. *And finally **eternal death** which is separation from God and the spiritually living,*
 - being **consigned to hell forever**.
- The Bible calls this in **Revelation 21:8 the second death**.

⁸ *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”*

- All who **die the second death** **end up in the lake of fire and brimstone**.

- Sin came through one man; one man, one sin; and sin came to all.
- **Death came** through that sin.
- Then Paul says in another very, very simple statement, thirdly:
 - **C. Death spread to all men.**
 - **Death spread** to all men.
 - **Back to Rom. 5:12:** “So death spread to all men.”
 - **No one** escapes, no one.
 - **How** do you **prove that**?
 - **How do you prove** death spread to all men?
 - **Pretty simple**, because **everybody** what; **dies**.
 - **Death spread to all men.**
 - What’s the **proof**?
 - We **all die**.
 - And **even before we die**, back to **verse 12**, “*because all sinned.*”
 - We **all demonstrate** that we have **Adam’s corruption**,
 - **because** we **all die**;
 - and **death is the penalty**,
 - the **wages** for our sin.
 - **Even little babies** in the womb **die when they haven’t committed** an act of sin,
 - they **haven’t had** a sinful thought.
 - But the **corruption** of Adam’s sin and the **reality** of death abides **in their very being**.
 - We **all die**.
 - We **all possess a sinful disposition**, a sinful nature.
 - **Jesus said** in teaching this **principle**.
 - He said,

¹⁵ *There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. (Mark 7:15)*

- We are **defiled on the inside**.
- This is **the depravity of the human race**.

- **How do we prove human depravity?**
 - We **all die**, and **on the way** to death, we **all sin**.
 - So **Adam's act of defiance and willful rebellion**,
 - **transferring his allegiance** from God to Satan,
 - **brought death into the world** and made us **all born, conceived as sinners.**
- **God could have killed** Adam and Eve then **and ended** human history.
 - He **didn't do that** because He had a **redemptive plan.**
 - He had a **plan to save sinners** out of the human race
 - **so that He could take them** to heaven to glorify and praise Him forever and ever.
- He **could have done** what He did **with the rebel angels.**
 - He **provided no salvation for them.**
 - **Lucifer and the angels that fell with him are forever corrupt,**
 - and a **lake of fire is prepared** for them,
 - and they **will all be sent to hell** forever.
 - **But** in the case of man, God set out to redeem, to redeem.
- So **what do we learn** then **about the way the world is?**
 - The world is **full of death**, we **all die**, and **on the way** we **all sin.**
 - We **all have the sin principle** which demonstrates itself in death:

“The wages of sin is death.”

- The **curse of death** has come **from Adam on us all**,
 - This curse **demonstrated “race” nature** of this curse **throughout the Bible:**
 - like the **curse on Cain** fell **on his descendants**,
 - like **Pharaoh sinned** and the **whole Egyptian** army got **drowned.**
 - Moab and Amalek were **all destroyed** for the **transgressions of their fathers.**

- The **leprosy of Naaman** was to **cling to Gehazi** and his seed.
- The Lord **declared guilt** for the **blood of all the prophets on the apostate Jews of his generation.**
- **In the Law**, we read that **the sins of the people are visited** unto **the third and fourth generation.**
- This is **how God operates** – **one sin; all become sinners; all die.**
- Proof; we're all sinners.
- Now **with that starts Paul** his argument about **how one man can have an extensive impact.**
- **Paul stops**, leaving the statement **incomplete** as we read it.
- You see **a line, a dash** in most Bibles at **the end of verse 12.**
- The **specific line** of reasoning doesn't really **get picked up until verse 18.**

¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. (Romans 5:18)

- It **basically picks up** the end of verse 12 and **what Paul said in verse 13-17.**
 - There's **a parenthesis** here, but that **parenthesis is very important.**
- And **for us**, at least for **this morning**, I want to bring you **one more and a fourth point.**
 - Sin entered the world through **one man**, **death by sin**, **all have sinned.**

D. Fourth point: History proves it. History proves it:

“For until the law was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.” (Rom. 5:13-14)

- **Whether** you sinned in the **likeness of the offense** of Adam or not –
 - and the “**not**” could certainly **apply to a baby or child**,
 - an **infant** in the womb,
 - or **other transgressions** that are **unlike that of Adam**,
 - although they would be all like it in some sense.
- But the **point** that he’s **making here** is the law **didn’t come until Moses**.
 - The law didn’t come until Moses, **which means** that **from Adam to Moses, there was no written law**,
 - but there **was sin everywhere**.
 - And so Paul says, “*Until the law, sin was in the world.*”
- Yeah, you better believe **it was in the world**.
 - In fact, it so **dominated** the world that **in Genesis, chapter 6**,
 - God **sets out**, pronounces **judgment**, and literally **drowns the entire** human race
 - **long before** there was **any** Mosaic law,
 - and **sin is not imputed when** there is **no law**.
 - So even **though there wasn’t** the law of Moses, there **had to be a law to impute sin**.
- **What was that law?**
 - **Romans 2**, it was a law of God **written on the heart**.

¹² For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³ (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; ¹⁴ for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) ¹⁶ in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

The Jews Guilty as the Gentiles

¹⁷ Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, (Romans 2:12–17)

- But **mankind broke that law**, so, **verse 14**,
-

“death reigned, death reigned, even from Adam until Moses.”

- The divine **condemnation was in effect**, because the **penalty was already on everyone**, and **all human beings were law breakers**.
 - Man **didn’t become sinful** when God gave him **rules to break**,
 - man **was always sinful**; death **reigned from Adam on**.
- **One man’s sin destroyed the human race**.
 - People **may hate the doctrine of total depravity**,
 - they **may resent** the claim that they were **born sinners**;
 - but the **protest is useless** because they **all die**, they all die.

2. So is there any hope for us?

- Is there **any hope**?
 - Is there any hope that we could escape death?
 - There is, if you go back to verse 6,
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“While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ – ”

- what? “ –
 - **died for the ungodly**. (Romans 5:7–11)
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⁷ For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also rejoice in God

through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

- You have **some statements** there that are **pretty important**:
 - “Christ **died for the ungodly**. (v8)
 - Christ **died for us**. (v8)
 - We are **justified by His blood**. (v9)
 - We’re **reconciled to God by the death of His Son**.” (v11)
- That is **what our thoughts turn to**, as believers, **when** we are **confronted by the death of a loved one**, isn’t it?
 1. Jesus **died our death**,
 2. bore our **punishment**,
 3. **died in our place**
 - that we might be **declared righteous and reconciled to God**.
 - He **took up the judgment for all the sins** of all who would ever believe,
 - and **paid in full the price** that God demanded.
- The **whole world** lives under Adam
 - and the **reign of death**.
- Everybody in the world is **born under Adam**.
 - **Everybody now is either in Adam and the reign** of death
 - or **in Christ and the reign of life**.
- We’re **all headed for death**.
 - **The gospel is Jesus died** our spiritual death and **rescued us from eternal death**
 - so that **physical death is simply an entrance** into glory.
- And that’s **why Paul says**,

⁵⁵ *“O Death, where is your sting?
O Hades, where is your victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55)*

- **That sting and that victory. That used to belong to death - is gone.**
- Let’s bow together in prayer.

3. Closing Prayer

- Father, as we think about what we are as a race, cursed with sin and death, we are so grateful, so very grateful beyond words for what our Savior has done.
 - That's why we're here, to celebrate the fact that He died for us. He took our place and died under Your divine judgment. He took the curse for us.
 - He became sin for us. He bore in His body our sins on the cross, dying our death.
 - Help us to see what was going on the cross.
- How staggering is it to think that one sin by one man could damn the whole human race.
 - One sin by one man had the power to damn the whole human race, and yet Christ bore all the sins of all the people through all of human history who would come to believe in Him.
 - A massive, incomprehensible weight of sin – one sin can damn the whole human race.
 - And yet He took all our sins and paid in full the penalty that you exacted from Him.
 - These things we pray for Your glory alone, amen.