

We left off last time at Ch. 5, vs. 12 – so lets read vs. 12-21 of chapter 5. – In these verses Paul writes about our solidarity in Adam and in Christ.

Vs. 12-14 – Paul compares Adam's life and the consequences of sin with Christ's life and the consequences of Jesus life and work. Let's turn to I Corinthians 15:21-23 and vs. 45-49 – (read these verses). Paul is saying in Romans 5:12-21 and in I Corinthians 15:22, and 45-49, that Adam is a prototype for all men, in that we are all sinners and the consequences for us is death. Adam came from dust and will return to dust. That is the fate of all men due to our disobedience, to our sin. But then Paul states that Jesus Christ is the Second Adam, the first born of a new man – spiritual one whose obedience to God makes possible new life and new results – He is not a man whose fate is a return to dust. He is the first fruits of a new life for us – which leads to eternal life in heaven.

So in Romans 5:12-14 – Paul says that all mankind was affected by Adam's sin. Vs. 13 – Sin was in the world before the law was given to Moses. But Adam did disobey God's one command in the garden – "Do not eat of the fruit of the tree of good and evil or you will die". Adam's disobedience, results in death, for all who follow. But with Christ a new possibility for man is now available for the human race. Adam is the Father of the race which leads to death. Jesus is the Father whole life and whose obedience makes possible a new race for all who desire and choose life, by God's grace.

Vs. 15-17 - The free gift is not like the trespass. Many died through Adam's disobedience, with Christ God's grace is offered to save us from death. It is a totally a gift of grace, that leads to our justification. Vs. 17 – If by Adam's trespass, death became the consequence for all mankind, much more will those who receive God's abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness, live. All of this comes as a free gift to us, through Jesus Christ's atoning death on the cross. It is interesting to note that in Vs. 12-19 of chapter 5, Paul uses the phrase "one man" 12 times. Adam and Christ – the two prototypes. Paul is saying – sin is the problem and sin was the problem from the very beginning. Adam's sin was a reflection of the human condition. A toddler born today doesn't know anything about the law, but they do know the feeling of "mine". They do know if they get 4 toys for Christmas, 5 is even better, then 6 is better. Toddlers and sadly many adults are not so good with the word "share". They like "mine" better.

Lets go back to Romans 2:12-16 (read it). When Paul contrasts the status of the Gentiles who do not have the Law of Moses, to the Jews- who do have the Law of Moses. Vs. 14-15 – the Gentiles, (so in other words all non-Jewish people) have the Law "written on their hearts". But toddlers have to learn what the word "share" means. So do the toddlers running around in their 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's, 60's until death comes calling. Some people never let go of liking the word "mine" best of all.

5:vs 14 – Paul tells us: death "reigned" due to and ever since Adam's sin. "Reigned is a very powerful word. Paul is saying that death rules over us. Death is our sovereign, apart from God's grace. Donald Trump is not our commander in chief, death is. In vs. 14 Paul doesn't give us an example of what he means when he says – "yet death reigned from Adam to Moses – even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam". In other words, Adam defied a direct command of God – do not eat of the fruit of this tree". But all of us, Paul says – have the Law of God in our hearts. We may not break a direct commandment of God as Adam did, but in our hearts we break them every day. We do well to remember the Seven Deadly Sins. Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath, Sloth. We are all guilty as charged. No I didn't defy a direct command of God to me as Adam did. But God cares as much IF NOT MORE about the health of my inner heart and life, as He does about my actions. And we all know it is the inner health or lack thereof, that leads to our actions. Our actions almost always a reflection of our inner spiritual health.

Vs. 17 – Paul contrasts our status and fate as descendants of Adam with our status in Christ! If death reigns over us – when Paul turns to Jesus work on the cross on our behalf – he says (read vs 17). The noteworthy phrase is: "much more will those... Paul is saying, if by sin death reigns over us, how much more will God's grace reign within us, we will be free from death's reign and have Christ's love reign in us. Life will now reign in us, not death. We will have a new

sovereign!!! The gift of righteousness, all through one man, Jesus the Christ. "O death where is thy victory, O death where is thy sting?" With God's grace comes a new status – RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Vs 18 – We are acquitted from the consequences of our sin. Death is replaced by life.

Vs. 19 – Puts this all so eloquently and with such extraordinary beauty. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous." We become righteous not by what we did but by what God did in Christ.

Vs. 20-21 – Paul sums this all up – "Law came in , to increase the trespass; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that as sin reigned in death, grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

It is interesting to note that in Paul's summary statement he drops out using Adam's name. He has used it repeatedly until now. But Paul ends by wanting to state only the name of Jesus, and to focus only upon Jesus work. For "in Christ" – grace now reigns through righteousness to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thanks be to God.

We will pick it up with chapter 6 next time.