

# The Deadly Invasion of Sin

By David Harrell

Romans 5:12-14

For a number of months now we have been making our way through Paul's epistle to the Romans. If you will take your Bibles and turn there we will continue our study of this great text by looking at Romans chapter five verses 12 through 14. And I have entitled my discourse to you this morning, "The Deadly Invasion of Sin."

Let me read this text to you.

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.<sup>1</sup>

A passage of Scripture that many believe is, perhaps, the most complicated and difficult to interpret in all of the book of Romans. I believe, however, that if we take it at face value it is very easy to understand. And I will endeavor to explain it to you to the best of my ability by the power of the Spirit.

Before we look at it closely, think with me. Any honest person will acknowledge that there are two universal problems in the world in which we live. There is the problem in the human condition of sin and of death.

Now most who deny God and hold to an evolutionary understanding of human life would reject this whole notion of sin. They would say man is not sinful, because that implies some standard of morality based on absolute truth. And we know that there is no such thing as absolute truth. And of that we are absolutely certain. Man is merely driven by animal instincts. We are still evolving. As he learns to reason and understand better, he will eventually develop into a creature that no longer does things that are harmful to himself and harmful to other people and society and the environment.

Now others reject the notion of sin, especially the idea of a sin nature and they would say that man is basically good, that children are born innocent with a natural predisposition to ultimately become a good, moral upstanding citizen of the human race. But the reason good people do bad things is because bad things happen to good people. They would argue that it is one's environment that shapes us into what we are, not our nature. And if you give people enough love and education and a good job and health care, et cetera, et cetera, eventually your true nature will show.

For them man is deprived, not depraved. For them it is nurture, not nature that shapes a man. But even with all those who reject the Word of God and his truth on this matter,

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 5:12-14.

they will admit that people do bad things and this causes enormous problems in the world and that sin, therefore, is universal, even though they might call it something different.

Now the question is: Why is this? Where did man's bent for evil come from? What is the effect of it? What is the remedy?

Not only would people agree that sin is a universal problem, but so, too, is death. All we have to do is look around and we see cemeteries wherever we go. All of us are in the process of dying.

Now the question is: Is death just a natural part of life? Is it just the way things are, the way they have always been, the way they always will be? Or is it something that is unnatural, that is, something foreign to the way things were originally intended, which obviously implies there must be a Creator?

I must say that biblically—and we will understand this more as our time goes on this morning—death is not natural. Death is not rooted in the nature of the universe. It is not simply an expression of the way things are, because God did not create us to die, but to live. And here in Romans chapter five in verses 12 all the way through verse 21 the Spirit of God answers these questions with startling clarity.

Again, verse 12 he says, "...through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."<sup>2</sup>

Now this morning I wish to examine just verses 12 through 14, but because this whole section is so important to Christian theology and because there are so many issues that flow out of a misunderstanding of these concepts, I wish to step back for a few minutes and give you the big picture of how this theology has been distorted and misunderstood and you will see that the implications are staggering.

Now, first of all, I want to remind you that if we look at Scripture we will soon discover that sin is basically man's innate inability to conform to the moral character and desires of God. Paul has made it clear in the earlier portions of this epistle. He has helped us understand that sin is the defining disposition of man's very nature. Sin is intrinsic to us. It defines the essence of our character. It is both deceptive as well as deadly and it is infinitely more offensive to our holy God than we can ever possibly imagine. It is manifested, primarily, in human self will which is really the essence of all sin and it is often fueled by our cherished lies of justified rebellion against God.

We see this in Solomon's ancient analysis of man's depraved condition in Ecclesiastes chapter nine verse three. There he declared, "The hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Romans 5:12.

<sup>3</sup> Ecclesiastes 9:3.

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You see, the testimony of Scripture is that man prefers to obey his will rather than God's will and this is portrayed in Scripture as the deeds of the flesh. Galatians five verses 19 through 21 speak to this. And that would include things like immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing and things like these. And the apostle went on to say, "Those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup>

Biblically, we discover that man is innately a slave to sin. Romans chapter six verses 16 through 20 speaks to that. He rejects his Creator and, therefore, he gradually abandons all that is true and God gradually abandons him, he gives him over to the lusts of his heart to eventually experience the devastating consequences of his iniquities which will either bring him to ruin or bring him to repentance.

But not all Christians see it this way and, as a result, there are many different denominations, varying ways of conducting ministries. Frankly, there is much controversy in Christian theology revolving around the issues of the origin of sin. Where did it come from? Did it come from Adam and if so how? What effect does it have on us?

Think of our precious children at birth. There is really three ways people will have a tendency to view their nature. Some would say that they are born innocent, that they are born capable of obedience and righteousness. Others who say, "No, no, no, no. I... I...I... think they are born with a tendency to sin, but they are not sinful. They are not guilty before God until they actually personally and consciously commit sin." And others would say, "No, children are born with a totally depraved nature. They are offensive to the holiness of God and all that they do, all that they are, they are entirely unable to please God. They are born both guilty and condemned. They are, by nature, a child of wrath," as Paul says in Ephesians 2:3.

So you can think of it this way as we begin to frame Paul's argument here. When a child is born, are they born morally and spiritually well meaning they are healthy or are they born sick or are they born dead? Three very easy ways of thinking about it. Are they born well, sick or dead?

Well, if we look at Christian theology we see that these are three basic schools of thought. Let me give you a little history lesson. One man that taught that we are born morally and spiritually well was a man by the name Pelagius. He was a monk in about the third or fourth century. He was popular, a very popular Christian teacher in Rome and he lived like most monks would live, a very austere, a very self disciplined lifestyle. And he believed that man is fully equipped by nature to achieve the righteousness of God through a disciplined life, through obedience by his own power. Therefore he believed, he taught

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<sup>4</sup> Galatians 5:21.

that every child is born in innocent, in the same state as Adam before the fall. And, thus, capable of obedience and righteousness and he merely exercised his will appropriately.

So we are not born with any kind of innate predisposition toward rebellion or wickedness.

For Pelagius, Adam's sin only affected Adam. It had no effect at all on his posterity. When men sin they are merely following Adam's bad example. Men can be saved, according to Pelagius, but following godly examples, the godly example, especially of Christ and, thus, merit acceptance before God. And if you fail, you can always trust in the gospel which will rescue men from sin.

Some of the contemporary advocates of what we call Pelagianism would be the theological liberals, Roman Catholics, Unitarians and so forth.

Now, another school of thought would be that man is not born well, but he is born sick, morally and spiritually sick. This is sometimes called semi-Pelagianism or Arminianism because it really originated, it was systematized by a man by the name of James Arminius and he lived from 1560 to 1609. He was a professor at the University of Leyden in the Netherlands.

He would argue that men enter this life fallen in the sense that they are moral and they are blinded to truth. But God has graciously created within man a rational capacity to cooperate with the Spirit and to follow God in his own strength. For Arminius Adam's sin resulted in physical as well as intellectual corruption. Physically we are subject to death. Intellectually we are unable to know God without revelation. But he would argue that there is no guilt. There is no condemnation visited upon Adam's posterity as a result of Adam's sin.

He would argue that all men consciously and deliberately sin in spite of the fact that God has given them the Spirit to help them obey his law. He would say that men become sinners when they commit acts of unrighteousness, not because they are sinners by nature. But until they sin, they are neither guilt worthy nor are they condemned. A man is saved, he would argue by cooperating in his own strength with the work of God through the Spirit, lending his strength to the Spirit of God and, thus, he is able to give himself to God.

Arminius taught that God has decreed to reward faith, not to originate it. And, therefore, in churches that would hold to this view—and some very precious friends of mine do—you will hear them talk much about making a decision for Christ, about being a soul winner. People will talk about how that I gave my heart to the Lord, versus the Holy Spirit convicted me of sin and renewed my heart.

You will see them have things like altar calls and so forth. And in many cases, sadly, there is the profound hatred for the doctrines of total depravity or total inability of man to do anything to save himself and they will also in many cases hate the idea of the doctrine

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of the sovereignty of God in election and predestination and so forth. And some of the primary advocates of Arminianism would be Methodists, Nazarenes, Free Will Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Pentecostals and most contemporary Southern Baptists today, although that was not at all the doctrine that they held originally.

The final position is not that man was born well, nor was he born sick, but that he was born dead, spiritually and morally dead. I believe that this originated from the Word of God and is revealed in his Word, but it has been a doctrine that has been hated throughout history. In fact, when Jesus taught it, we learn in John 6:66 that most all of his disciples left him. They would have nothing to do with him. And for this reason Paul had to make it abundantly clear in this text and in many others that, indeed, man is born spiritually dead.

But the great fifth century theologian Augustine really helped systemize these truths along with others came behind him like John Calvin and many others. Unlike Pelagianism and Arminianism, Augustine argued from Scripture that men enter into this world totally depraved, totally dead in sin, offensive to the holiness of God and all that they do and all that they are, that they enter into this world completely unable in any way to please God, therefore guilty and condemned, that they are, indeed, by nature, the children of wrath.

He taught that all Adam's posterity are considered guilty, very important concept. They are considered guilty and condemned as a result of Adam's sin. But I would make the distinction, I believe, as do others, that Adam's posterity are not just considered guilty and condemned as a result of Adam's sin, but rather, in some inscrutable sense, all men, save Jesus Christ, actually sinned in Adam, not personally, but really. The sin thus committed by each person was imputed to each one. Therefore every person at birth stands guilty and condemned before God. All men were not merely accounted as sinners, but actually took part in Adam's sin. And, I believe, that is what this text teaches as I will reveal more in a moment.

Now, with this historical and theological and hopefully not too boring background, we can examine this text more closely. We are going to find the answer to really three very important questions. Number one, how did sin enter the world? Number two, what is the effect of sin? And, thirdly, why is this important?

As we begin this journey to understand Paul's inspired argument, I would like for you to keep three very simple concepts in mind. He is going to compare and contrast really three things: two men, two acts and two results. The two men are Adam and Christ. He is going to compare and contrast them. He is going to compare and contrast two acts which would be sin and righteousness and two results, death and life.

Now bear in mind that the apostle, thus far in this epistle has endeavored to really discuss and articulate the doctrines of condemnation and justification and so it is very important

that he continues on with this argument. We are all condemned in Adam, but everyone who places their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified in Christ.

So now as we come to verses 12 through 21, having dealt with condemnation and justification, Paul is going to demonstrate how our justification is exceedingly greater in Christ than was our condemnation in Adam.

So, number one, how did sin enter the world? Notice verse 12. It begins with the word “therefore.” In other words, he is saying, “In light of what has been established in verses eight through 11, that God’s love has been demonstrated to us through the sacrifice of his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is through him that we as enemies are now reconciled to God, therefore in light of that he says, “Just as ...” Notice, “Just as...” really indicates that a profound comparison is about to be made.

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world...”<sup>5</sup>

There it is. Let’s stop. There is the answer. How did sin enter the world? Through one man. Who was the one man? Verse 14 tells us it was Adam.

Now I want you to notice very carefully here, we have got to make an observation. Paul is not saying that sin originated in Adam, but only that it entered into the realm of humanity through Adam.

We know, according to 1 John 3:8 that the devil has sinned from the beginning, referring to the first time he rebelled against God, even before man was even created. Jesus tells us in John 8:44, that Satan, “was a murderer from the beginning [and that he is] the father of lies.”<sup>6</sup>

So as we look at Scripture we see that sometimes subsequent to his creation, but before he created man, Satan, along with other angels, chose to sin and rebel against God. We see this in Isaiah chapter 14. We see it in 2 Peter two verse four. We see it in Jude verse six. We see it in Revelation 12 and verse four. So God has revealed to us that he ordained Satan and sin to enter into his perfect universe through the voluntary choices of moral creatures in order to dramatically display his glory through his holiness, through his wrath and through his mercy, grace, love and power. So sin did not originate with Adam, but it entered into the realm of humanity through Adam when he sinned in the garden.

Now you will remember what happened in the garden in Genesis chapter two verses 15 through 17. We read the Lord’s commandment to him.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and

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<sup>5</sup> Romans 5:12.

<sup>6</sup> John 8:44.

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evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."<sup>7</sup>

Very simple to understand, very simple. Obey and you will live, disobey and you will die. And as the story goes on we read that Satan tempts Eve and she sins and she induces her husband to do the same, but since Adam was the primary one that God had given this prohibition to and since he failed to shepherd his wife, he failed to exercise headship over her as he was commanded to do and insist that she not doubt God and that she not disobey God, it is Adam that received the primary blame for the sin.

So his sin and Eve's sin was a deliberate and knowledgeable sin that resulted in sin entering into their lives. Suddenly they lost their innocence and replaced it with guilt and shame.

As you read the story you will remember that they frantically tried in vain to soothe their conscience by covering themselves with the fig leaves of their own efforts. And God cursed them and all that would come from them. Although Adam and Eve should have died at that very moment, God was merciful. And he set into motion his grace and his mercy at that moment. In fact, in Genesis 3:21 we read "And the LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them."<sup>8</sup>

You see, man could not cover his sin on his own. His very best efforts will never do. It would never satisfy divine justice. So there we have a picture of a substitute that needed to die to cover sin, a substitute that had to die to appease the wrath of God, an innocent substitute. And with that first sacrifice we see a shadow of a coming redeemer that would one day make full atonement for sin. God provided a substitute, an innocent animal that was killed. And as its blood was spilt upon the ground, his great mercy and grace was first pictured. There God provided a garment to cover their guilt and shame.

Can you imagine the astonishment in the eyes of Adam and Eve as they saw the first blood spilt of an innocent creature, the first death that they witnessed, the first innocent death? Can you imagine what it would have been like to have seen that crimson stain that was required for their sin, a picture of a coming lamb that would take away sin for all who place their faith in his sacrifice?

And, thus, dear friends, the glorious story of redemption was set into motion on that day, a plan that God had sovereignly ordained and decreed in eternity past before time began. And all through Scripture we see the scarlet thread of redemption. It is woven through every story. It is the theme of every song. What a glorious thought to know that although our sins may be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

Indeed, beloved, we are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. That is the picture.

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<sup>7</sup> Genesis 2:16-17.

<sup>8</sup> Genesis 3:21.

Now notice, again, verse 12. He says, "... through one man sin entered into the world."<sup>9</sup>

Will you notice that sin is singular. It is not plural. It does not say sins. It does not say acts of unrighteousness and rebellion. It is sin, singular. This is very important.

In other words, a propensity to rebel against God, a sin nature entered into the world through this one man. Sin is personified. It is as though it is saying sin found a way in through Adam's disobedience. That was the door that it entered. The word "entered" translates the Greek verb *eisercomai* (ice-er'-khom-ahee) and in this context it carries the sense of an invasion, of a possession. In fact, it is used in Mark 9:25 to describe a demon possessing someone's body as their dwelling. It is used in Mark five and verse 12 to describe demons entering into and taking possession of swine. It is used in John 13:27 by Jesus to describe Satan entering into Judas.

So here is the point. When Adam sinned, sin took possession of him, not acts of sin, not acts of unrighteousness, but sin, that dreadful essence. It invaded him. It intruded into his very being like a deadly virus. And prior to that sin was nowhere to be found in God's paradise. But suddenly by the act of one man, sin entered into the world.

Now what is the effect of sin, number two? Again, notice the text.

"through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."<sup>10</sup>

As we read the Genesis account of all that happened in that original sin and after that original sin in particular, we discover that everything changed. Suddenly joy turned to sorrow. Suddenly fellowship turned to separation. Suddenly man's innocence turned to guilt and to shame. Suddenly divine blessing shifted over to divine curses.

But the ultimately, most devastating effect of sin is death. Now this refers, primarily to physical death, because we were not created to die, but we were created to live. My friend, death is unnatural. As we see here, it was brought on mankind by one shattering event that absolutely shook the material universe. It so profoundly impacted all of creation that we still continue to experience the consequences of it. We see the ravages of sin in everything that we encounter. And we all experience death. And it warped human nature so as to affect the experience of every person ever born. Death is a result of sin first committed in the garden of paradise.

Now I would hasten to add that there are three kinds of death as we look at Scripture. There is, first of all, physical death. That is a separation of the soul from physical life. And we all know that the process of death actually begins when we are born and this occurred immediately after Adam's sin. He then began to move down that pathway of

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<sup>9</sup> Romans 5:12.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



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death until eventually he died. Every time a person dies we are reminded of the effects of sin, are we not?

But there is also spiritual death, biblically. That is a separation from God. Ephesians 2:1 indicates that an unsaved man is, quote, dead in his trespasses and sins. In other words, before man comes to Christ he is a spiritual corpse. He is unable to respond to spiritual truth apart from the regeneration work of the Holy Spirit. We read in Ephesians 4:18 that he is excluded from the life of God. And in 1 Corinthians 2:14 we read that the natural man, in other words, the unsaved man, does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. He will have nothing to do with it. It goes on to say, "...for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."<sup>11</sup>

In other words, they have no capacity to understand spiritual truth revealed by God. But there is a third kind of death and that is eternal death. We read about that, for example, in Revelation 21 verse eight where it is referred to as the second death. That is eternal separation from God in hell, a place where Jesus said in Matthew 25 an unbeliever will experience, quote "everlasting punishment," a place where he said, quote, "is everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

So, my friends, these are the terrifying consequences of this deadly invasion of sin. But I must pause and give you the good news of the gospel, lest you forget. You see, all who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, all who have been justified, all who have been declared righteous have been given spiritual life. They have been born again and they will never experience that second death. But at the moment of their physical death they instantly be ushered into the presence of God. And it for this reason that, as believers, we have no reason to fear death, no reason to fear it. Christ has delivered us from that fear as we read in Hebrews two and verse 15.

In 2 Corinthians five verse eight Paul said, "We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."<sup>12</sup>

And in Philippians 1:21 you will remember that he said, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."<sup>13</sup>

So Paul makes it clear that death is the result of this invasion of sin.

Notice at the end of verse 12 he says, "...and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."<sup>14</sup>

You see, the principle of death is in every man because all sin. Now it is fascinating. This is a big technical, but it is crucial for our understanding of this passage. The phrase"

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<sup>11</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:14.

<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:8.

<sup>13</sup> Philippians 1:21.

<sup>14</sup> Romans 5:12.

All sinned, is what we call an aorist indicative verb in the Greek grammar. And it basically indicates completed past action, very simple. It is completed past action.

Paul is saying here that something happened and it was completed in the past. What is it that happened? What is it that was completed in the past? All men sinned. All men sinned. We sinned in Adam.

Now some will say, “Well, wait a minute. I wasn’t there when Adam sinned.”

And I would say, “Nor was I.”

But what Paul is saying is this. In the past when Adam sinned, something was completed. Namely, all men sinned in Adam and God considered it true that all of us sinned in him when he sinned.

“Well, that is not fair,” somebody will say.

My friend, let me tell you. I don’t want fair. I don’t want fair. I want mercy. If you want fair, then Adam and Eve would have died instantly and experienced everlasting punishment. Fair would mean that the same fate would befall you and befall me.

While we may not fully understand the mind of God, you must know that he is holy. He is just. He is perfect in all that he does. So in the mind of God, all men sinned in Adam. And, as I said earlier, Adam’s posterity are not just considered guilty and condemned as a result of Adam’s sin. But, again, in some inscrutable way that we could never possibly comprehend, all men save Jesus Christ actually sinned in Adam, not personally, but really. It is completed past action. Thus, that sin was committed by each person and it was imputed to each of us and, thus, every man stands before God guilty and condemned even at birth. All men were not merely accounted as sinners, but we actually sinned in Adam. We took part in his sin.

This is why babies die, because we have all got a sin nature, even those precious little babies. The wages of sin is death.

You see, a little child that dies has not committed any kind of sin, but his nature is corrupt, because he sinned in Adam. But while a child is not guilty of any kind of personal sin, he is guilty of the act that brought sin into the world, the sin of Adam because all men sinned in Adam.

Now, as a footnote, I know some are thinking, “Well, what happens to babies when they die if they are born with a sin nature?”

Well, an infant with a sin nature will, indeed, experience physical death because that is part of the consequences of sin. You must understand that biblically the basis of the second death, the basis of eternal condemnation is not the sin nature, but willful rebellion and unbelief, something that a little child never committed. Nowhere in Scripture is

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anyone threatened with eternal condemnation on the basis of the guilt that they inherited from Adam. You don't find that anywhere in Scripture. It is always on the basis of willful acts of sin in unbelief and rebellion.

And that record of rebellion and unbelief is going to be revealed one day at the great white throne judgment. And little children will have no such record, therefore they will not be condemned. So when a child goes they go instantly to heaven.

We read in other passages how God takes full ownership of the innocents as they are called in Jeremiah 2:34. So babies who die are recipients of sovereign grace like all of us and immediately they enter into the presence of the lover of their souls. So there is no need for confusion here.

Back to Paul's argument. Sin invaded the realm of humanity through Adam's sin in which we all participated in God's economy of justice and, thus, Adam's sin was imputed to his posterity and each one of us is born with a sin nature.

David spoke of this in Psalm 51 verse five. He confessed, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me."<sup>15</sup>

My friends, bare in mind that sin has penetrated and corrupted the whole of man's being, his body, his mind, his will, his heart. Each man is capable of committing the very worst of sins. And apart from the transforming grace of the Spirit of God, he could do that. And even the unsaved man that does right, that does good things does so with motivations other than to glorify God, making even his best actions displeasing to God.

You see, we have in our culture, in particular, such a profoundly shallow understanding of the holiness of God. Our God is very little and we are very good. But if you understand it biblically God is so transcendently holy that we cannot even begin to imagine that we are more wretched than we can possibly understand.

Worse yet, the unsaved man is utterly bereft of that love for God necessary to fill the most basic requirement of God's law and that is to love him supremely. God has made it clear in his Word that the unsaved man will continue to spiral downward morally and spiritually. And there is no possible means of salvation or recovery in himself.

Once, again, salvation is always a work of grace from beginning to end.

Now notice how Paul validates his argument that death is the result of sin and both sin and death are universal, verses 13 and 14. He says:

...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

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<sup>15</sup> Psalm 51:5.

those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.<sup>16</sup>

So what is he saying here? He is saying that, indeed, all men sinned in Adam even those who lived before the law. You see, prior to the law given to Moses at Sinai sin was not charged to man as some specific violation of God's law because there was no law. Yet God's standard still existed. It had not yet been revealed to Moses, to his people, but it was revealed in their hearts as Paul has made clear in Romans chapter two verses 14 and 15. The law of God is written on the heart of every man.

So specific acts of disobedience were not imputed to sinful man during that period of time between Adam and Moses, nevertheless, sin is sin. It is still offensive to God, proven by the fact that even before the law what happened to man? They died. That is Paul's point. Why? Because of their sin nature, because they all sinned in Adam.

And this is why, as Paul says, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses."<sup>17</sup>

He goes on in verse 14, speaking of death even reigned, he says, "...over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam."<sup>18</sup>

See, that would include all men after Adam. Why? Because all men sinned in Adam once again. You see, after Adam and Eve sinned, we know that God evicted them from the garden and so neither they nor any of their posterity could ever again have access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and partake of its forbidden fruit.

Nevertheless, we know that, still, all men sinned in Adam even though they didn't partake of the fruit, you see. So Paul has answered the question: How did sin enter the world? And what is the effect of sin? And, finally, why is this important?

And, beloved, here is where it gets exciting. And this morning we will look at this briefly and elaborate on it in the days to come. Where is Paul going with all of this? Well, the secret is unlocked just a little bit in the final phrase of verse 14. Notice he says, "Adam who is a type of Christ."

Well, what does this mean? Oh, beloved, this little phrase here will lead to this magnificent comparison and contrast between Adam and Christ, between condemnation and justification, between death and life, between sin and righteousness. And this is absolutely crucial to Paul's whole argument here. This is fundamental to the glorious gospel of grace.

Notice he uses this word "type" **τυπος** (too'-pos) in the original language. And here it speaks of an example, a pattern, a form. You see, God intended for Adam to correspond to or resemble Christ. As we look at it technically, we would see Adam as the type and

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<sup>16</sup> Romans 5:13-14.

<sup>17</sup> Romans 5:14.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

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Christ is the antitype. And in biblical typology the antitype is always greater than the type. We see this all through Scripture. There is an increase in the antitype. There is a heightening and what we see here is that there is greater exaltation in what Christ has done. Christ is superior to Adam. And this is the heart of Paul's argument.

It could be put this way. Even as Adam's sin was imputed to all men because he is our representative, resulting in death, so, too, Christ's righteousness is imputed to all men who believe in him because he represents all believers in righteousness resulting in life.

The apostle now is going to go on to show that Christ's work, the antitype is exceedingly, far beyond, more profound in its effect than the work of Adam.

Three times he is going to indicate how much more it is. In verse 15 he is going to talk about how much more did the grace of God and in verse 17 much more he talks about the abundance of grace and in verse 20 he talks about how though sin increased, grace abounded all the more. So these are the wonderful truths that Paul is now going to elaborate upon. Again, as I said earlier, the inspired apostle is setting forth a glorious comparison and contrasting of two men, two acts and to results.

Let me close with a quote, part of which I have given you in your bulletin if you would like to read it. It was written by John Piper. He said this, quote, "Just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin and death spread to all who are in Adam, because all sinned in Adam and his sin was imputed to them, so also through one man, Jesus Christ, righteousness entered the world and life through righteousness and life spread to all who are in Christ because all were righteous in him and his righteousness is imputed to them. That," he goes on to say, "I believe, is the glory of justification by grace through faith that Paul wants us to see in this text, the basis of our justification before God is a divine righteousness that comes to us in a way analogous to the way Adam's sin came to us. As we were in him and share in his sin, so we are in Christ and share in his righteousness," end quote.

Oh, child of God, may we all rejoice in the gospel of God that the inspired apostle so clearly reveals to us. Whereas there was once a deadly invasion, because of Christ we can enjoy a glorious salvation. If you are here today and you do not know Christ, if you have never placed your faith in him, I would plead with you as a minister of the gospel that you examine your heart and that you would believe in him, that you would trust him, repent of your sins and enter in through that glorious door of grace while you still have a chance.

Let's pray together.

*Father, these are marvelous truths and we thank you for revealing them to us, because had you not done so, we would have no earthly idea what you are up to. So, Lord, we thank you for the provision of your grace. We are such debtors to it. May what has been*

*said here today bear much fruit in our lives for your glory and for our good I pray in Christ's name. Amen.*

We pray you have been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to pastor, Bible teacher and author David Harrell. For more information or to order additional tapes or CDs of pastor Harrell's messages, please visit [OliveTreeResources.org](http://OliveTreeResources.org).

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