

## Romans 5:12-14 Part 1 The Principle of Sin

Romans chapter 5 verses 12 through 21. Both for you Bible buffs and Greek buffs Romans chapter 5 verses 12 to 21 is for many scholars the most difficult section of Scripture to deal with. And if you get into diagramming or even following the flow of thought you will know that there are just a lot of problems as we begin this section. In the book of Romans we are still in justification. In Galatians we are in sanctification, if you can keep that straight.

But in Romans chapter 5 verses 12 to 21, the seven comparisons of two people of the human race. In those two people - all of doctrine, all of spiritual truth is focused on Adam and on Christ. Adam, the first one made of the Lord, of God in creation. And of course Christ, our Lord. A person is either in Adam or in Christ and that is how the Scripture presents it.

This morning we will take 12 to 14. Verse 12 says, **Wherefore** (literally *on account of this*) **as by** (or *through*) **one man, sin** - and the word *sin* has the definite article. It is not just sin in general, it is the sin principle that we will get to in a second. **For just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so** (and the word *so* means *in this way*) **and so death has passed upon** (literally *passed through*) **all men, for that all have sinned:** (verse 13) **for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law.** Where no law exists, God does not impute sin. (verse 14) **Nevertheless death reigned** (or *ruled*) **from Adam until Moses, even over the ones that had not sinned after the similitude** (or *likeness*) **of Adam's transgression, who** (in speaking of Adam) **is the figure of Him that is to come.**

We have two here, two comparisons between two people. Verses 12 to 14 is actually the one section, many term it to be the introduction to this little section where it introduces these two principles and the two people that Paul wants to point attention to.

In Romans chapter 5 he is presenting to us that we who have been justified by faith, we have peace with God. That is the privileges of justification, we have peace with God. We also have access to this grace in which we have been standing. We have the love of God poured out upon us in the person of the Holy Spirit as well as the Holy Spirit himself. We boast over the hope that is coming in Christ, but not just the hope but also reconciliation.

And we left off with that last time, we now have through justification we have reconciliation. Now *reconciliation* means you bring two people together who are enemies, or at odds with one another, and bring them to unity. We hear it especially in marriage situations. Where two people are going through the reconciliation process, especially through a counselor or mediator, we are trying to bring both parties together and unite them again. So the Lord not only justified us, that is, made us right with God, and that is positionally and that is permanent. I am right with God through Jesus Christ. I have met all of God's requirements - not me, but Jesus did, but He put that on my account so that I can have access and be at peace with God. But it is not just a position, it is actually personal. Reconciliation is personal. It is a relationship. It is just not a doctrinal position for me to be in, it is a personal relationship where God has now

returned to me into fellowship with Himself. And it is a personal interaction. And I am to seek Him; and I am to learn from Him; and I am to follow Him.

And so in this section after speaking about reconciliation, he now talks about these seven comparisons between Adam and between Christ. And when we are through with this section we will see that Paul is presenting for us that a person is either in Adam - born with a sin nature that came from Adam's sin; or we are born from Christ - a spiritual birth which places us in Christ. We are either in Adam naturally, in our sins, or we are in Christ.

This Adam and Christ comparison is keyed upon one word and it is the word *one*. It is found twelve times in verses 12 to 21, the word *one*. Emphasizing to us in these comparisons that through one came sin, through one came death, and through his disobedience we fell. But then Christ comes and through His obedience we are received by the Father. Through His death we have forgiveness and justification. So we are standing between two presentations here of all that we are because of Adam, and all that we are because of Christ.

The first section is verses 12 and 13. Sin compared to law. And the title of this little section is The Principle of Sin. Very, very important. It says, **Wherefore**, or literally *on account of this*. On account of what? We have received reconciliation with God. We now have a personal relationship with Him. But he says, **as by** - or literally *through* - **one man sin entered in to the world**. One man.

Now, you and I when we were born, we were born with a sin nature. We will see in a moment that the sin nature has passed down through to all people just because of one person. There is not anything that you and I have done to become a sinner. In fact in Psalm 51 verse 5 David said, **In sin did my mother conceive me**. The very moment of conception a person inherits the sin nature that is brought along and born into every person that has been born since Adam. And so as children we suffer from sin, by our parents, relatives, friends, circumstances. We grow into young adulthood and we take all of the injuries and all of the things that have happened to us with us into young adulthood. And we are told that it is because of sin in the world.

But when I understand that it is through one man that sin entered into the world, and that I inherited the sin nature not because of anything that I did but because of what he did; you can see why people would say it is not fair. And I am going to be judged for that. Not because I inherited a sin nature, not because I am going to pay the penalty for my sins, but because I rejected God's solution. You have to understand this.

As I was mentioning Thursday night, you can say your mother and father picked you up and threw you on the ground because they were mad at you and broke your arm. And now thirty or forty years later somebody will say, "What happened to your arm?"

"Well, I broke it. My Mom and Dad picked me up and threw me down."

"Yeah? That is too bad. Is it still broken?"

"Yes."

"You never went to get it fixed?"

"No. See what my Mom and Dad did to me? See what sin has done to me? It destroyed me."

So when someone points out that you have a broken arm the best thing to do is go down and get it fixed. So the problem is not the problem. What we do about the problem is what we will be judged for.

That is why Jesus said in Matthew chapter 12, **All manner of sin shall be forgiven man except for one, and that is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.** All the excuses and all the things with anger and frustration that we level out at the Holy Spirit when He comes to us to convict us of our sin and of our need for Christ. Jesus is going to say, "Yes, I know all that happened you but guess what? I went to the cross and died for you for your healing and you refused it. You kept it going. You threw wood on the fire. Woe is you, but you never wanted to do anything about it."

So I am caught between two. I have inherited the sin nature through one – that was Adam, and by him sin entered into the world. The word *sin* has the definite article with it, which introduces for us - and we will see it more next Thursday night when we are Romans chapter 6 - that the sin principle is in the world. Now that might sound like some type of theological term but is actually the name of Satan.

In I John chapter 3 verse 8 John tells us that Jesus came into the world to loosen the works of the devil from a person's life and that he is the sinner from the beginning. Satan is the sinner. He energizes and gives people the opportunity to feed the flesh and to sin. Satan is the sin principle. When a person is saved they are delivered from the sin principle, Satan himself. Even though desires and things continue in my flesh. Again, we will see this Thursday night, that **In my flesh**, Paul is going to say, **in my flesh there is the law of sin.** Always will be. Christ came into my spirit. Yes, He dwells inside my body but He does not dwell in my flesh. And Paul says, "I found that the moment that I received Christ I entered into this struggle, this war that is going on. My flesh against God's Spirit because He wants to go right and I want to go left."

In fact Galatians chapter 5 verse 17 tells us that because of this battle, he says, **The flesh fights against the Spirit and the Spirit is against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you want.** Is that not interesting? God's Spirit is not only the guarantee that I belong to Christ but His Spirit is there to stop me from being carried away in the flesh and away from Christ.

The sin principle entered into the world through one man. And notice it says, that through one the sin principle *entered into the world*. Sin did not originate with Adam. Satan had rebelled against God and he was in the universe long before Adam was around. Sin entered the world, not originated. Originated here on the earth, yes, but not as far as existence goes.

That through one man the sin principle entered into the world. The word *world*, **κόσμος** (kosmos) is not making reference to the universe. It is making reference to the human world, the world of the human beings. And then it says, **Not only did sin enter into the world**, it says, **and death entered through sin**. Two things. Because we have both the cause of sin - the cause of sin is the sin principle, Satan himself. He was there tempting Eve, that is sin, that is evil, he is an evil person. And before Adam and Eve even sinned evil was there. Sin was in existence. And the cause of sin is because of the sin principle. And the word for *sin* is singular, again making reference not to just sins in general, but the sin principle itself.

But it was the conduct of Adam that brought sin into the world, caused the sin principle to come. In Genesis chapter 2 verses 16 and 17 God tells Adam, **Do not eat from the tree in the midst of the garden**, and that the day you eat you will die. Chapter 3 verse 19 it tells us that after they sinned He told him, **You will work the ground**, and **You are dust and you are going to return to the dust**. You are going to experience death. And death is the consequence of sin. The word *death* means *separation*.

When God made Adam and Eve - it is interesting that God only gave one command: do not eat from that one tree. Eat from all the others, just the one do not eat of it. Which means that he was free with this dominion that God gave to him over all the earth. Genesis chapter 1 verses 26 and 27 God gave him dominion over all the earth, all the animals, everything. All of creation here on the earth. He only commanded him not to do one thing. Everything else he is free to take care of things. And through Satan's deceit and lie through Eve they ate of the apple, or orange, or whatever it was. The Bible does not say *apple*, by the way.

So why was Eve not held responsible? Why is it *through one man*? Why is it not through both people that sin entered into the world? He is the head and representation of the human race. He is the one to whom God gave the command. He is the one to whom God gave the responsibility. And even if Eve was deceived, he still could have stopped from eating because she gave to him and he ate and he knew he was disobeying God.

I Timothy chapter 2 verse 14 tells us that she was deceived but Adam knew what he was doing. And so the sin principle entered into the world and death through sin. Separation. Death. Immediately Adam experienced spiritual death. Physically he did not die right away, but spiritually he did. Physically he functioned. But *death* means *separation*; immediately he experienced separation from God. Being dead to the things of God. Or as Paul said in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 1 that we were all dead in our trespasses and sins.

But also, physical death came upon the human race because of the sin principle that is in the world. [back to Romans 5:12] **Death passed upon all men for that all have sinned**. Very interesting principle here. The word *sinned* is what is called an aorist tense, a one-time thing. **All have sinned**, making reference to the sin nature.

You see I am not a sinner because I sin. I sin because I am a sinner. If I try to be good, I am still a sinner. I still have a sin nature that produces sin. Humanly I can discipline myself and give the appearance of being a good person, at least the best I can.

But here is the key. In John chapter 3 Jesus told Nicodemus, **As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up.** He is making reference back into Numbers, the book of Numbers. The children of Israel were traveling through the wilderness and they were complaining against God. So God had poisonous snakes come out of the rocks and bite them. And while they were suffering and dying, they cried out to Moses and cried out to God. They said to Moses, "Tell God we are sorry, we repent!" So Moses received the instructions to take a pole and take a brass snake and put it on the pole, and that everybody that looks to it by faith they will be healed from their snake bites. Which is an interesting analogy because in John chapter 3 with Nicodemus Jesus is saying, just as Moses put that snake on a pole and people looked to it by faith, so must the Son of Man be lifted up on the cross. And if you take all of the elements, the components of what happened in the book of Numbers and change it all into spiritual equivalents, you find that sin itself - it is not a religious problem, it is not a human problem, it is a spiritual disease.

As the serpent in Genesis chapter 3 basically bit Adam and Eve, they now have a sin nature. Not just sin in general, they now have a sin nature. There is something about the character of his human nature that was corrupted, where he passed that on from generation to generation. Or as Augustine once said, "Corruption begets corruption." We produce corruption. All of our children are born with sin natures. All people in the earth right now have a sin nature. But it is not a religious disease, it is not a human disease, it is a spiritual disease.

Now let us take the example of any kind of sickness or disease. We know of people that have been terminally ill and died. All of us probably know of a relative or close friend that contracted some kind of a disease and it was terminal. What would you say to them if they came to you and says, "I went to the doctor and the doctor says of only got two weeks to live?"

"Oh, yeah? That is too bad, I am sorry to hear that. Can I help you out?"

"Yeah, I want to reach as many people as I can to do good, so I will go to heaven and I will be healed of this sickness."

You cannot go out and join a church. You cannot do human good to other people and be healed from this terminal disease that you have. Sin is a spiritual disease. You cannot go out - in reverse of that - you cannot go out in the human and do good human things and heal the spiritual disease. Cannot do it.

I can think positive. I can do all I want to. Like the Christian Scientist that wound up in hell and he says, "I am not here and it is not hot." Positive thinking. We will still experience reality whether we want to entertain the reality or not.

So God has brought it down to one point: you and I exist today with a sin nature. And we stand as sinners in the sight of God, not because of what we do or do not do, but because of our sin nature. We are sinners. And there is only one cure for the spiritual disease that all of humankind (mankind) has, and that is Jesus Christ on the cross. He died for the penalty for that sin so that Isaiah chapter 53 can be available to me. Isaiah chapter 53 says that when he hung on

the cross he hung for our sicknesses and diseases. Those are not physical by the way. Both in the Hebrew and the Greek those are our spiritual diseases.

Peter took that text in his first letter and said that Isaiah chapter 53 is talking about God restoring you to the Bishop and Overseer of your soul. Salvation. He is the solution. He is the answer. He is the great physician. He is the only answer. And if you will not come through Him you will die in your sins.

Romans chapter 6 verse 23 says that: **The wages of sin is death.** So when Adam sinned everybody experienced spiritual and eventual physical death. By the way Romans chapter 6 verse 23 is not the first time it was told. In Ezekiel chapter 18 verse 4, that is where Paul got it from, Ezekiel chapter 18 verse 4. It says, **The soul that sins, it shall die.** The wages of sin is death. Separation. But through Christ we are healed. He is the only one that can heal us of the spiritual disease. Once a person receives Christ there is a healing that takes place in their spirit, not their flesh. And the flesh has been used to this disease being around for a long time. People serving the sin principle, the sin nature. But once Christ has come in my spirit my flesh is still going, "Hey, what happened? Where is the sin principle that used to feed me?" So then the battle, and the struggle, and the war begins.

Our focus is we struggle with what came into the world through one man and what came into the world through one Christ. And our struggle rages on. But this text is going to tell us our victory in Christ is much more than any sin nature we could inherit. Not only does the Lord win the victory over that sin nature but He defeats it soundly so that we walk in His power and His strength, which is much more powerful than anything Satan can level out.

So this week we have a little introduction. It is through one man the sin principle entered into the world, not in existence, but entered into this world. And death came through sin. And so death passed through all the men, for that all have sinned. Not all keep sinning, but all have sinned. We have a sin nature that is hostile against God. We do not even have to do anything, we have already sinned against Him. We just have to understand some of these elements and some of these principles that God has in place.

The problem is not the problem, how we handle the solution is the problem. And we can go around showing everybody our broken arm for forty or fifty years if we want to, but Jesus has already provided the answer. The solution for our healing and for protection from Satan and protection and guarantee to belong to Christ from now on. It will never go away. Spiritually we will be healed. But as we will study the flesh continues to be our opponent but it cannot stop us. Cannot stop us because we are in Christ.

Let's close with prayer.