

Romans
Chapter 5:12-21
“The Adam Bomb”

All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid
Matthew W. Thoms, Pastor/Teacher
6 January 2019

There's a teaching that's taking root in some circles today called, "The Moral Government of God". And it falsely teaches that man is not sinful by nature, but sinful only by choice.

- That would mean that Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden affected only Adam.
- That there's no such thing as a sin nature passed down to us from Adam and ...
- That we are therefore ... not compelled to sin ... and yet we do.

So, in short, this false teaching called "The Moral Government of God" seeks to disconnect the sin of Adam from the sins of modern man.

But as we'll see ... it's just unbiblical!

Look with me at what God said to Adam right after he chose to rebel ...

Genesis 3:17 ... "Because you have ... eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. 18 "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you ...19 By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

So, if someone wants to hold to the idea that Adam's sin didn't affect us all these thousands of years later, then ...

- You're going to have to show me your weed free lawn and ...
- Your thistle free garden and ...
- You can never die ...

Because all of those things were curses hurled upon this world ... specifically because of Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden.

So that's the doctrine known as the "The Moral Government of God"

But there's another doctrine that comes up in **this chapter** that we should also discuss ...

called "The doctrine of Federal Headship" ... only ... this one's true!

Simply stated ... "Federal Headship" tells us that Adam was the representative of all mankind in the Garden of Eden.

And that truth is important to this morning's study because, as we see, all our problems did indeed begin with Adam's failure to obey God.

But having said that ... we must always be careful that we don't use that as an excuse. We can't get by with saying, "It's not my fault ... and therefore it's not fair that I'm blamed or have to suffer the consequences of Adam's blunder."

No ... Adam was indeed the prototype and it's true that he failed, but ... LISTEN ... he did better against Satan's wiles in the Garden of Eden than any single one of us would have done.

It's like the Super Bowl. None of us, could say with a straight face, that our team didn't win because they didn't let us play quarterback. We know that the person who quarterbacked the team was chosen over us because we're not even in the league.

Adam was the, hot off the press, champion of mankind so his loss only serves to illustrate that we don't stand a chance and that we desperately need the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the mercies of Jesus!

So that's the true doctrine of "Federal Headship".

Now there is one final doctrine that we'll be touching on this morning and that's the doctrine known as "Calvinism". But we're gonna wait and talk about that one as it comes up in the text.

So hold that thought and let's jump in ...

Verse 12: Two things we need to catch in **this verse**:

- 1.** First ... the word "therefore" and ...
- 2.** Second ... the phrase, "just as through".

"Therefore", as I reminded you last week ... points us back. It reminds us of what Paul just said ... specifically ... "That because of Christ, we have peace with ... access to ... and joy in ... the Father."

In contrast ... the second phrase, "just as through" points us forward. It sets the stage for what's to come.

In this case ... Paul's going to use the history of Adam and his original sin in the Garden

of Eden to prove that indeed ... one act, by one man, at one time can affect all of mankind for all time ... "just as through".

And just to remind you, this letter was written to a church that was 20 to 25 years old but had never really become a powerful or prolific body, and Paul knew that. It was especially striking against the backdrop of other churches of that time.

People throughout the region were generally receptive and great harvests were taking place ... but not in Rome. For some reason that church just didn't seem to be getting the message. And Paul obviously wanted to deal with that. So, led by the Holy Spirit, he seems to have zeroed in on the problem ... they weren't truly thankful and as a result ... they were rather apathetic.

I remember when I went through military basic training ... it took me a good two weeks to figure out what they were trying to do to us through all the misery. They were trying to take away our individuality.

Not just by dressing us all the same and giving us all the same haircut, but by breaking each of us down to the common dominator of base humanity. They removed our individuality by showing us that not a single one of us could live up to their standards.

We were all very much in the same boat and if you should accidentally meet their standard on some given day ... that standard will be changed by the next.

See ... they understand that without individuality ... there is absolutely no source for pride and no cause for quarrelling. So, to the extent possible ... they beat you down to what is common to all human beings.

But the US military gets no credit for originality ... they're just copying what the Apostle Paul's doing in this morning's text.

Paul knew that it would be difficult to convince the church in Rome that they were truly hopeless without Christ. Which is why he's been telling that over and over and over again in the last **couple of chapters**.

All have sinned and fall short of God's standard of perfection (**Romans 3:23**). It's a hard, but base truth for all mankind. The common denominator of mankind is depravity (**Jeremiah 17:9**).

And Paul addresses here, those who might be wondering how mankind got themselves into such a mess. And his answer of course is ... the failure of Adam.

God had said to Adam ...

Genesis 2:16 ... "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 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."

And, on the day that Adam ate of that tree he did indeed die ... not physically, but spiritually. Adam's spirit died. And as a spiritually dead man ... he could no longer pass on, through his genes ... spiritual life, because he didn't possess it.

All that Adam could pass on, was what he had ... a physical body with the capacity for a spiritual consciousness. But he couldn't pass on spiritual life through natural procreation because he no longer possessed it.

And by definition, as we all understand it ... if you don't have life ... you're dead. And Adam passed along that death (the absence of spiritual life), to all of us.

In his **letter to the Ephesian church**, Paul put it this way ...

2:1 ... you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

"**By nature ...**," he says. In other words, it was only natural that Adam passed along spiritual death to all his descendants. And we are all born, "Sons of Adam".

We can relate ...

Q. If your house became infested with cockroaches ... and you called the exterminator ... would you want them to capture each cockroach for interrogation? Would you want them to find out exactly how many Cheerios each cockroach ate so you could decide their fate? -- No ... you don't want them interrogated ... you want them exterminated ... all of them.

And it's not because they ate your pancake mix ... but because they were born a cockroach!

And likewise ... we're all are sinners ... not because we sin, but because we were born that way. Sinning doesn't make me a sinner, it only proves that I already was one. We sin because we're sinners by birth.

That's the common denominator of us all. That's the truth of our hopeless state and it highlights how thankful ... how grateful we ought to be for the grace of God by which our salvation is made possible.

Verses 13-14:

Q. Why Adam until Moses? -- Why not Adam until the present? -- Because between Adam and Moses there was no Law. It wasn't until the time of Moses that the Law of God was even given to man.

Which proves again what we've talked about before ... sin isn't bad for us because it's sin ... sin is sin because it's bad for us. Sin is sin because it's bad for us!

That's proven in that even before certain activities and attitudes were called sin ... they still brought about negative consequences.

Verses 15-17: Paul gives us here, three differences between His distribution of grace through Christ and the distribution of condemnation through Adam:

- 1.** **Verse 15** ... The grace of Christ is bigger than the sin of Adam could ever be.
- 2.** **Verse 16** ... What we inherited from Adam was singular ... we received the full load of his singular sin of rebellion against God. But through Christ our inheritance is plural to a high degree.

Q. Why? -- Because although we received our singular sin natures from Adam ... we've subsequently exercised those sin natures liberally and frequently. That's why Paul reminds us that "the many transgressions are justified".

- 3.** Also, in **verse 16** ... The sin of Adam isn't propagated in the same manner as salvation through Christ. You and I were born with the stain of Adam's sin ... we had no choice about whether or not we would inherit it.

But whether or not we'll accept the solution to that problem through Christ ... that's our choice!

Salvation is an individual and personally specific gift.

In referring to the sin of Adam, Paul says "**all received**" (**verse 18**). But when speaking of salvation through Christ (**Romans 10:9**), he says, "it's to those who willingly receive".

Verse 18: There's your common denominator ... were condemned, but offered eternal life in Christ.

So, here's where we get into the doctrine of "Calvinism" and what's known as "Limited Atonement".

If you're not familiar with it ... that doctrine teaches that Christ died, not for all men, but for a certain, select group only. That the atoning power of His blood is offered only to that unknown, but select group.

But the word “all” used here ... leaves no wiggle room that I can see. In both places the word is pas (pas) and it cannot have any other meaning other than ALL!

So, if indeed all are condemned by the sin nature inherited through Adam, then all are also offered salvation through Christ.

You can't accept the fact that all have sinned unless you also accept the fact that all can be saved. Not that all men are, or even will be, saved, but that they can be. “**One righteous act resulted in justification to all men**” Paul say.

Remember that by God's own decree ... the price of admission to Heaven is perfection. And as a just and righteous God, He will not simply turn His head or overlook those who fail to meet that standard. He's just and righteous and so there must be a righteous basis for our admission ... and that's Christ's atoning death.

Verses 19-21: Paul's not trying to pile on Adam here, but the point has to be made that just as through one man we're all lost ... through One Man, the God-Man, Jesus Christ, we can all be saved.

In **1st Corinthians 15:45**, Paul refers to Christ as the “Last Adam” because what the first Adam messed up for all of us ... the Last Adam came to fix.

- In **verse 18** here, Paul says that by Christ we are justified.
- In **verse 20**, he says that we're showered with grace because of Him and ...
- In **verse 21**, he reminds us that we're made righteous both positionally and practically by what He did on our behalf.

Conclusion: It was on the 6th of August 1945 that President Harry Truman ordered the atom bomb dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

And when that bomb was dropped, every building within 4.2 miles of the point of impact ... was leveled. That's an area about twice the size of the city of Enid. 93,000 People died instantly and more than 300,000 died eventually as a result of the nuclear fallout.

But that atom bomb and the death and destruction that it caused was nothing compared to what some have called the ultimate “Adam Bomb” ... When Adam bombed out in the Garden of Eden ... because the fallout of that one is still being felt all over the world to this vary day.

Yet, as devastating and widespread as the destruction from that “Adam Bomb” has been ... Christ is bigger!

Q. So, what's the take-home of all this then? -- Two things:

- 1.** First ... in recognizing the hopeless state that we were all born into and the depth from which we've been saved ... we should all be compelled with, and by, thankfulness.

Paul said in **verse 14** that Adam was a type of Him who was to come. Adam was a type of Jesus Christ. Not a type in comparison ... but in contrast.

Because where Adam blew it in the Garden of Eden ... Jesus came through in the Garden of Gethsemane. Adam chose his own will over the Father's, but Jesus cried out, "**Not My will, but Your will be done.**" (**Luke 22:42**).

From the First Adam we all inherited death, but by the Second Adam, we're all offered life.

- 2.** The second take-home point here is that the first point should effect the way we view and treat others ...

We need to realize and remember that everything that's wrong in this world ... everything that's wrong with me and everything that's wrong with you and everything that's wrong with the people around us ... started with the fall of Adam.

That means that the vileness of any neo-nazi or KKK member or pedophile ... their vileness comes from the same source as your vileness and my vileness. The only difference between them and us is what Christ has done.

It also means that the vileness of the unsaved should be viewed with the same kind of compassion we offer a baby born with any serious physical defect.

Because, in truth, we were all born with a very serious defect ... called spiritual death!

We've all been affected by the fall out of the ultimate Adam Bomb.

That's why when Jesus looked upon the multitudes in **Luke 10:33**... it says, "**He felt compassion**". He saw the fallout and knew exactly what they needed ... a Savior.

Now we have the privilege of introducing that multitude ... to that Savior.