



Romans 5:12-21

There Are Only Two Kinds of People in the World

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.

15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.

17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

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.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There are only two groups in this world, and no I do not mean the Welsh and everybody else.

I am referring to the great division that Paul speaks of here. It is the most important division there is, it is more important than divisions according to sex, or race, or language, or nation, or class. On judgment day it is the only division that will matter. We can express this most important division in many different ways. It is the division between the sheep and the goats, the elect and the reprobate, the saved and the damned, the believing and the unbelieving. But here Paul expresses it in terms of two representatives, two federal heads who represent everyone else in those groups. And those heads are Adam and Jesus Christ.

As Thomas Goodwin put it so well, *“In God’s sight there are only two men – Adam and Jesus Christ and these two men have every other man hanging on their belts.”*

Now Paul before had spoken of the work that Christ had done in reconciling believers to the Father, 10
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.”***

But why do we need that reconciling work? It is because in our first Father Adam, we had all fallen. He is the one man spoken of in verse 12.

Now, perhaps you are thinking to yourself at this point, **“Tee-hee, he said Adam. He believes in Adam and Even and the Garden of Eden and the Fall of Man. He must never have heard of evolution.”** No, I have. It’s a bankrupt theory that cannot explain the data that we have. It cannot for instance, explain the origin of the information contained in one strand of DNA in the simplest of cells, much less the incredibly complex information contained in your DNA. That DNA tells us we all descended from one woman. Science calls her “Mitochondrial Eve” we can be a little simpler and drop the mitochondrial part.

At this point, evolution is not a theory, it is a dogmatic and fanatical faith that exists solely to try explain how we could have creation without a creator. The perverse thing is, it is only because of our Fallen and Rebellious nature that it is still considered reasonable. Let me give you an analog. If the theory of evolution were applied to English Literature, we would have English professors spending most of their time explaining **not** what Hamlet means, but trying to explain the existence of Hamlet without Shakespeare or **any** human author. And then when they got to ***Pride and Prejudice***, they’d explain that Jane Austen was a ridiculous myth, and that ***Pride and Prejudice*** had actually evolved from the ***Taming of the Shrew*** and ***A Midsummer Nights dream***.

But honestly if you are a Christian struggling with this, are you seriously telling me you can believe in God, the Devil, Angels, Demons, Heaven, Hell, Noah, Jonah, Christ and the Resurrection. And yet Adam is too much of a stretch for you? Christ believed in Adam, and explained your origins in terms of Adam and Eve and Creation: ***Matt. 19:4 And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'***

The argument here and indeed throughout the Bible rests on the idea that just as Jesus was a historical person so Adam was a historical person. Adam is just as essential to Christian theology as Jesus. You see, Jesus did not come into the world to die in order to undo the harm done by A MYTH. He came into the world to undo the harm done by the real Adam.

What did Adam do? Adam was created in a state of probation. He was Created in the image of God, without sin, and placed in a perfect environment. One over which God Himself had pronounced **VERY GOOD**. But He failed the test He sinned, and fell from his original estate of righteousness, and all of his merely human descendents sinned in him and with him, and so His ORIGINAL sin was imputed to all of us. The evidence of the universality of that sin can be seen in the wages of sin which is death. If you believe that all men are innocent when they are born into this world, rather than conceived in sin and iniquity and fallen from the very beginning of their existence as David declared in Psalm 51. You only have to look at the fact that all men die. And for millennia the greater part of men actually died in their infancy, before they had time to commit deliberate sins of their own. We sin, brothers and sisters, because we are sinners from birth. When we are born into this world, Adam is our representative, and a failed one at that and His SIN is IMPUTED that is transferred to every one of us.

That is why we needed another representative, one who was tested as Adam was and yet passed so that his OBEDIENCE could be transferred to us. We need that one Man, who could take away the stain of our failure and give us a new obedience. That is why Christ came to do. Where Adam failed Jesus succeeded for instance:

Adam was tempted by the Devil and failed in the Garden, he had every possible physical advantage, all of his needs were taken care of, and only the fruit of one tree was forbidden him. And yet he still couldn't pass the test. Christ on the other hand, you will remember from Matthew 4 and Luke 4 wasn't tempted by the Devil in the midst of a flourishing garden surrounded by all the good things a person could need or want, he was tempted in the wilderness by the Devil, and that after fasting for 40 days. In one of the greatest understatement in scripture Matthew 4:2 tells us, **"afterward He was hungry."** So in the midst of that lack and hunger the first thing that the Devil attempted to tempt Jesus with was not some exotic fruit, but simple bread. And yet Christ passed that test and two other even harder temptations. Adam failed the first time, Christ passed three times.

But Jesus didn't just come to succeed where Adam failed, He came to die in our place, that was the Righteous ACT that was spoken of in verse 18, his willingness to suffer the penalty for our sins, and then give us the FREE GIFT of His own righteousness that we might be justified.

For you see, God grace doesn't just cover our sin, it isn't just sufficient to remove our punishment. It doesn't just patch us up, say do better next time and send us on our way. It doesn't put us back into the same situation that Adam was in the garden. You see God's grace is infinitely greater than man's sin, no matter how great that sin is God's grace in Christ is infinitely better. "where sin abounded, grace abounded much more" So if we are in Christ we have been made more than just not sinful, but righteous, and through the righteousness of Christ we Have been given the gift of ETERNAL LIFE. We are COHEIRS with Christ. Never again can we fall or lose that salvation once it has been given to us.

Now what do have to do to switch from being in Adam to in Christ? How do we change representatives? Is it by being good, keeping the commandments of God, obeying the moral law? Do I have to prove myself worthy of having Jesus as my Federal Head by doing good works? No if that was the case then salvation would not be the free gift that Paul speaks of in these verses, it would be something we earned. And as we have seen, no man can keep the Law, only Jesus could. In fact, verse 20 tells us that the role of the Law of the LAW was actually to show us the extent our sin so that the way that the offense abounded might be seen. What does that mean? It means that the law is like a mirror, we see the righteous demands of a Holy God and we see how we have failed to meet them, we see how we have lied, and coveted, and lusted, and hated, and blasphemed, and we see how the due penalty for those sins is death. And as result the law sends us fleeing by faith to Christ. Paul makes that point in Gal. 3:24:

Gal. 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

But that leads to the most important question. Have you fled to Christ by Faith? Are you in Him or are you still in Adam. There is no third group, no undecided. You are either saved and therefore in Christ, or you are STILL dead in trespasses and sins and therefore in Adam.

Matt. 25:32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

...

41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Now perhaps you are thinking, I'm not sure, maybe if I stick with Adam it will work out.

Children, if you are doing that then you are like the Blacksmith in a story that was told long ago. There was once a blacksmith who labored for a noble and good Lord but the Blacksmith thought he worked too hard and didn't get paid enough. A man who looked very rich once came one day to the blacksmith and said I have a proposition for you, stop serving your master, and serve me instead I will pay you much better than he does, and all I want you to do is forge for me a good long chain. Once you have done that, I will give you as much wealth as you could desire... It's not long enough yet...

Bound him in the chain and threw him into the furnace.

Now in that allegory, the rich man is the devil and the chain is sin.