

Leader's Guide

LESSON 8

Dr. Jerry Nelson

In response to the sermon on October 28

Romans 5:12-21

Death Through Adam—Life Through Christ

Key Points

In this passage we find the juxtaposition of the sin of Adam and work of Christ. The sin of Adam resulted in condemnation and death, as opposed to the death of a sinless Christ, resulting in justification and life. Note the following:

Adam

- Sinned
- One man sinned and all died
- Adam's sin resulted in condemnation
- Disobedience of one man in the sin of all
- Sin reigned in death
- Adam's sin brought death

Christ

- Was sinless
- One Man died, and grace came to many
- Jesus' death resulted in justification
- Obedience of one Man resulted in the justification of many
- Grace reigned in righteousness
- Jesus' death brought life

These truths are foundational to our understanding of the consequences of sin and the amazing grace of God. Our challenge this week is to help our group understand how these truths intersect their lives. What difference do they make? They ultimately shape our view of God which, in turn, effects the way we relate to Him. Understood and embraced, a life of gratitude, worship and loving obedience are the hallmarks of a life lived with an experiential understanding of these doctrinal truths. In contrast, without an understanding of God's great love for us (as was expressed in this passage), we may relate to God out of fear, guilt, entitlement or anger. What is God's desire for the way we relate to Him?

Personal Reflection:

- Take time this week to meditate on this passage. Be aware of the spiritual death you could be experiencing without Christ, and the life God has given to you.
- Spend some time expressing your gratitude to God (maybe journal) for the indescribable “gift” of Jesus Christ. Express your gratitude to Jesus for His obedience to the Father and the gift of salvation. Then, throughout the week, note how many ways these truths have given you new life rather than being held captive to sin, which produces death.

Discussion Questions

1. How has the sin of Adam affected us? Is our sin an imitation of Adam (he sinned, we sin)? Is our sin the result of an “infection” passed on to us by Adam so that we continue to sin? Was Adam’s sin imputed to us (we sinned when Adam did)? Is this text describing imitation, infection or imputation? Do other Bible passages describe other results in us of Adam’s sin (Romans 3:23)?
2. How you answer question 1 has implications for your relationship to Jesus. What are they? Is Christ’s righteousness imitated in you, infecting you or imputed to you?
3. How do you answer the charge that this text teaches that “all” will be saved (universalism)?¹ (*Who is in Christ? Those who believe. Who is in Adam? All who are born.*)
4. From chapter five, what do you see that God has done through Jesus Christ for us? How does this add to your understanding of God’s grace (vv.1, 15, 17, 20-21)?
5. Does justification merely cancel the ill effects of sin or does it do much more? What are the implications for evangelism and missions? What should we expect God to do in the world in the future (v15 “overflowing;” v17 “abundant”)?
6. At what point in your life did you realize God’s love for you?
7. Does the gospel message excite you as it does Paul? Why or why not? If not, What could help you to experience its life and vitality again?

¹ NIV Application Commentary pg. 192-193