

# Begotten Sons

*Radio Broadcast*

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## **Shreveport Grace Church**

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Welcome to the Grace Abounding Broadcast brought to you by the congregation of the Shreveport Grace Church that meets at 2970 Baird Road in Shreveport, LA. My name is Ken Wimer and it is my privilege to bring to you today a message that seeks to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious person and finished work of salvation accomplished for sinners at the cross. Please stay tuned.

I want to speak with you today on what it is to be born in the image and likeness of Adam. Adam was the very first man that God created and when God first made him, he made Adam, the Scriptures say, in the likeness of God, in other words, perfect and upright even as God has a mind and a will. And Scriptures describe even emotion with regard to the being of God. He exercises his justice and his wrath, he loves. These are all described as attributes of God and so it was that Adam was made in his likeness, but then we read that Adam fell and when he fell, those that would be born of his seed could no longer be born perfect or upright. Scripture says, "Can anything pure come out of that which is impure?" and the answer is no.

But we see this in Genesis 5, beginning with verse 1 and reading down to verse 4. Notice the contrast. Verse 1 says, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him." If you like to underscore certain key verses or words in Scripture, this would be a good one to underscore. Adam was created in the likeness of God, but as we read on further down in verse 4, we see the contrast. It says, "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters." So Adam was caused to live a long time and to beget sons and daughters, but the verse previous, verse 3 says, "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth." So we can see that his descendants were not in the image of God but in Adam's image after the likeness of himself. You say, "What kind of image was that?" Well, that was an image of death; that was an image of sin; that was a spirit that was apostate, fallen from God and cursed and wicked and vile. I don't believe there are enough descriptive words to describe how great that fall.

When you come over to Romans 5 this is confirmed and so, dear friend, the notion that somehow children are born into this world innocent, what some of the philosophers call a *tabula rasa*, in other words, a blank slate, and depending on how circumstances or individuals will write on that slate determines the outcome of that individual. Not so. Scripture declares all who are born into this world to be sinners, in fact, even stronger language is used in the book of Jude to describe natural minded people as being full of filthy lusts of a brute beast; nothing better than a wild animal. What an awful difference between God's creation and man's procreation.

But here in Romans 5 it's declared to be so, verse 12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." That word "passed upon" is a term of legal justice. It was determined that as a result of Adam's fall, the sentence of death should be executed upon all men and it says "for that all have sinned." All did sin. You can't escape the fact of being a child of Adam. If I'm speaking to you today, it is as one who was born in this world as a child of Adam. If you're hearing me today, it's because you are a child of Adam.

So there are several lessons, I believe, that we want to take away from this truth as we see it here in Scripture that the Holy Spirit himself has recorded for our instruction and the first thing that I would have you to note is that all who are born in this world were shapen in iniquity. If you'll take a look at Psalm 51:5 in your Bible, here again is a passage of Scripture that, if the Lord so directs, you should underscore it because any that think that children are born in innocency, they have not read the Scriptures. Psalm 51:5, David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." That word "shapen" means just in even the formation of the fetus in the womb. As the fetus is being formed by God, it was as a sinner that that fetus was being shaped and born. Such is the judgment that God himself rendered upon all those who should be sons of Adam. Such was the nature of his fall, by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death by sin. That's why babies die. If they were not sinners, then they would not die. Even Job declared this in Job 14, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" So, dear friend, there is no escaping the fact that we are born sinners. We sin because we're sinners and we are born such.

But secondly, when we read here that we were born in the likeness of Adam, it's not only to be begotten sinners but it is to be born under condemnation of God and that is evidenced even as we read in Romans, again, chapter 3. The fact that we're sons of Adam means that we're worthy of condemnation. A lot of people do not like to admit that. They won't. They won't confess it unless God himself is pleased to do a work of grace in their heart and cause them to see who they are. Many are proud of their heritage. Many are proud of coming from a so-called Christian family and background. The Jews were proud of their heritage and yet Paul, writing here in Romans 3:9 says, "What then? are we better than they?" I'd like you to think about this the next time you hear of some atrocity on the news as has been of recent days and continues to be every time you turn on the news. We

can either hear of things taking place of murders and atrocities and we're appalled and yet remember, we're no better than they. Paul says, "No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." This is our nature of being in the likeness of Adam.

Verse 10 says, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." None can say that they're any better than another. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:12 says, "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." That should be evidenced just in the fact that when a baby is born, as soon as it's born and we get all excited because he starts to grow up and talk and walk and become an adult, and yet every breath is one breath closer to being put back in the dust, to dying. This is the consequence of being sons of Adam and being born in his likeness.

The third thing that I must bring out though here concerning being born sons of Adam is that the root is in ourselves. My purpose in telling you that we're all born in the likeness of Adam is not to point the finger at Adam. Some would like to do that. You don't have to trace the dirty steam of corruption of sin any further than yourself. Consider what's in your flesh. Our Lord told Nicodemus that as he was speaking to him about what it is to be born again, the necessity of being born again. In John 3:6, he said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." You don't have to look any further than your own flesh. I don't have to look any further than my own flesh to trace the root of sin. I am what I am. I'm a sinner, and were God to leave me to my own understanding, if he were to leave me to this flesh, I should have died the death of the condemned, of the unrighteous.

But in verse 6 it says, "and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There is a natural birth, dear friend, and there is a spiritual birth that is described in Scripture. Those of natural birth are described as earthy, as sensual, even as devilish. I know people like to talk about the devil, but in our sin nature, we're fallen creatures. We're no better than the devil himself who is a fallen creature. The only difference is that God in his mercy and grace has purposed a redemption through his Son for fallen creatures such as we are but has not so purposed for Satan and his fallen angels. He has completely passed them by in his sovereignty and he is just in doing so. He would have been just in passing by all of fallen humanity. Let's not wonder or marvel that God sends sinners to hell. He sends them to hell because they're sinners; they're rebels by nature and deserving of condemnation. What ought to cause us to marvel is that he would save anyone, especially such as we are. Oh, how that should humble us.

So the third point here is to see that as far as the root of sin, we need not go back any further than our own nature. And even when the Spirit of God is pleased to regenerate a sinner and to give him life, to live, to see Christ and to be drawn to him as their Savior and substitute, the sin nature does not change. Here again, I believe there is great misunderstanding in people's minds and I believe it comes from preachers. It doesn't come from the word. The word is clear but from preachers. I would have you consider the testimony of the Apostle Paul himself and this is as a converted sinner, one converted to Christ by the Spirit of God, yet as he looks within himself in Romans 7:14, beginning

there he describes this struggle. He says, "For we know that the law is spiritual." There is nothing wrong with the commandments of God. They are holy and just. The word is true. You say, "Where's the problem? Why is it that we're not obedient?" Well, in verse 14 of Romans 7, Paul says, "I am carnal, sold under sin." Now he's speaking here as one of the Lord's. He doesn't say, "I was carnal. I had been sold under sin." He says, "I am carnal, sold under sin." And he testifies to what you and I know to be true. We're the Lord's. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." Such is the conflict that we have. We determine one thing and do another or we know something's wrong and we do it anyway.

He says in verse 16, "If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good." In other words, the law is just in condemning me. "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." We cannot claim any glory for any good that we feel that we have done. If it's been good, it's been God himself that has caused us to do it to the glory and honor of his Son and that's it.

Paul says in verse 19, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." You see, dear friend, that's what the word "depravity" means, "to be depraved." It doesn't mean that you can be as evil as you could be, none of us are. The restraining hand of God keeps us from being so, but nonetheless, it means that every part of our flesh is tainted and condemned by sin even now. And so even what we call good is evil because it is affected by our sin nature. Don't ever expect that old nature to be exchanged for a new one or somehow taken out and somehow then you can live in perfection.

There are some preachers that have this false view of themselves and they're proud of it. I hear people talking all the time about how they got victory over sin. Have you ever heard that expressed? Well, such people are deluded. In fact, John in 1 John wrote that "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." No, dear friends, so long as we're in this flesh, we are what we are: sinners by nature and that's the lesson that we need to learn. We don't try to hide it. We don't try to cover it up. We don't even take this flesh and try to reform it. The only thing that Scripture says to do is to mortify it, consider it dead because that's what it is. It's deadness and we carry it about in our body.

You say, "Well, is that all you have to tell us?" No, the fourth point is the one I wanted to get to but we have to hear the bad news before we get to the good news, but here's the good news, in all of this, the lesson that we learn is that the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners. Think of that sheep that has fallen over the ledge and yet not completely fallen, the Lord has purposed that that sheep be caught and stopped. We are not of those that fall back into perdition. God's restraining hand in grace and mercy has kept many such as I and I trust yourself if you're one of the Lord's, from falling into perdition, being condemned with the rest.

But it's not that he just decided to show us some favor apart from justice being satisfied. God can never show mercy at the expense of his justice and so when we talk about the Lord being merciful to sinners and Christ coming into the world to save sinners, to recover them from that fallen state much as a shepherd takes that sheep that is lost and draws it to himself, but he purposed that it should be done through the work of his Son.

Now, here's an interesting use of words and language in Scripture. I began by telling you that we, as sinners, have been begotten of our father Adam in his own likeness, but as we come to the New Testament and this was foretold in the Old Testament but made plain in the New, we find that God purposed that sinners such as we be begotten again in his Son to be born again. And most relate that today, sadly, to something man does: walks an aisle; says a prayer; confesses their sin to a preacher and, in essence, turns over a new leaf. Dear friend, that's nothing but religious delusion. That is not what it is to be born again. There was a begetting again of sinners that God purposed to save when Christ died and rose again.

Now, this is not my interpretation of it, it's the Scriptures. In Acts 13, I'll read for you the message that was preached by the apostles where they talk in Acts 13 about God having raised up from David's seed a son and that when all was fulfilled that was written of him, starting in verse 29 of Acts 13, they crucified him, "they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre." But it says, "God raised him from the dead." Now, here's the explanation of that in verse 31, "And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings," that's the word "good news." Remember I said I had to tell you the bad news before the good? Well, this is it. "How that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm," Psalm 2, "Thou art my Son, this day have I," here's the word, "begotten thee."

Now, many people read that and think, "Oh, that talks about the day that he was born." The context here is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that when Christ died and rose again he was begotten again and verse 34 confirms it. "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

You say, "Well, how does that apply to sinners such as we are?" Well, when Christ came, he came with a purpose of delivering fallen sinners who were born in the likeness of Adam. He came with a purpose of causing them to be born again in the likeness of God and that took place when the Lord Jesus Christ died. Peter in 1 Peter in his epistle, wrote of this as well, what it is to be begotten again to a lively hope. In 1 Peter 1:3 we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again." Oh, how precious those words. Yes, begotten originally in the likeness and the image of Adam, but now in Christ that the Scriptures declare to be the last Adam, begotten again "unto a lively hope," it says, "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

If you're just born once, then you will die the death of Adam's race, that is, eternal condemnation. But to be born again, to be begotten again, that is, in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, to have died with him as the substitute and raised again with him as the justifier, therein is the believer's hope. Peter describes it as being begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ and it is in this that God has been pleased to make a difference. Apart from the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, dear friend, there is no hope.

How vital is that work of the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, down at the end of the chapter, this work of Christ is described as a new creation. I read for you in the beginning of how God created Adam upright in the image of God, well, with regard to salvation, it takes a new creation, but that new creation is described as being accomplished in the work that the Lord Jesus Christ did when he laid down his life and rose again. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." In other words, if Christ died for all, that is all of his race just like Adam, his sin affected all his race, so Christ's death, Christ's obedience unto death has an effect for all his race. But if it required Christ to die, verse 14 is saying, then we're all dead. If Christ died for you and for me, it's not because we were righteous and therefore he laid down his life. No, we were just as dead as any others: we were dead in sin; dead spiritually; dead in condemnation.

Then verse 15 says, "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." To die for means to die in the place of. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." In other words, Christ came, lived, died, and rose again. He's no longer walking on this earth to where somebody can know him after the flesh. He is seated in the heavenlies.

But what did he accomplish? Listen to verse 17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," the original says "a new creation," "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Now, it doesn't mean that you don't have that sin nature anymore, but you're a new creation. The old things that have passed away are that justice has been satisfied. Sin has been put away on your behalf if Christ died for you and therefore the new creation is to be declared holy and just and righteous in him. And it says, "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

Dear friend, there is no better and more blessed state than that, than that Christ has died and if he has died for us, although we were begotten in Adam's image and likeness, yet Christ has begotten us again when he was begotten again, when he died and rose again, and being in him, our standing with him is that of holiness and righteousness and justice. Actually, a better position than Adam himself could ever have enjoyed because he was fallible. He was created upright but likely to fall, but those begotten again in Christ can never, never lose that righteousness which he has obtained on their behalf. Oh, what a glorious message of salvation.

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