

**Subject: *Condemned in Adam and Justified in Christ***

**Scripture: *Romans 5:12-21***

The story of redemption centers around two people, Adam and Christ. Both of them are associated two key words, condemnation (Adam) and justification (Christ). So far in this epistle to the Romans Paul has dealt with man's sin and condemnation and God's grace and His gift of justification through faith in Christ.

In the first verse of Romans 5, there's the word "therefore" and then we see that word again in verse 12. Both of these verses point back to God's work in justification. In verses 1-11, Paul explains what it means now that we are justified. In verses 12-21, he explains how we are justified. Actually way by which we are condemned as sinners is the very same way by which we are justified before God. He draws our attention to two people, Adam and Christ. The main truth here is very simple: Adam is the reason we are condemned and Christ is the reason we are justified. Let's look at this under three headings:

### **1. ADAM AND CHRIST ARE INTRODUCED**

These verses focus on the first man Adam and Christ who is also called the last Adam. Everything in this passage rests on actual facts: two actual people, two historical actions, and two different results.

#### **A. Adam and Christ were real people in history**

We are dealing with facts, not theory or philosophical religious arguments. Have you ever wondered why there is so much doubt and controversy about the first chapters of Genesis? Some of us take this as literal history. It's written just like it happened. But many people don't believe it. Some people think Adam is just a symbol of mankind, just a religious way to explain the beginning of human life. Do you see the problem with that? If a person begins to question whether Adam was a real person, the next step is to question whether Jesus was a real person. Evolution is a convenient way to explain the origin of things, but it's a lie. Scientists have been searching for the "missing link" between man and animals. It's not a missing link, the whole chain is missing. Like a famous preacher once said, "Some of our ancestors may have hung by the neck, but none hung by the tail."

#### **B. The actions of Adam and Christ affected many others**

Adam's sin and disobedience brought sin and death on the whole human race, while Christ's obedience and sacrifice brought grace and life to all who believe. When Sir Winston Churchill referred to the bravery of armed forces in the war he famously said: "Never have so many people owed so much to so few." Based on Romans 5 we can say, "never have so many people owed so much to just two."

### **2. ADAM AND CHRIST ARE CONTRASTED**

You will notice the words in verses 15-17, "not as" and "much more."

#### **A. The nature of their actions was different**

On one hand we see Adam's trespass and self-will, but on the other hand we see Christ's obedience and submission.

B. The result of their actions was different

In verse 12 there is a downward progression from one man sinning to all men dying. Adam is responsible for the presence of sin ("by one man sin entered the world"), and he is responsible for the penalty of sin ("and death by sin"). He is also responsible for the power of sin (vs. 13-14) or the sin nature we all inherited from him. Because of Adam's sin and disobedience, sin and death reign over all people. Paul states five times in verses 15-19, that Adam's sin brought death and condemnation to all men.

**Romans 3:23** *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

**Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**Hebrews 9:27** *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

We see evidence all around us: every newspaper has obituaries; every cemetery and every funeral home remind us that we are in the land of the dying. One funeral director signs his letters, "Eventually yours."

Death involves three things:

- spiritual death – separation of the soul from God
- physical death – separation of the soul from the body
- eternal death – separation of the soul and body from God forever

We often refer to Adam's sin as the fall. It was the fall of mankind. Everybody was affected by Adam's sin. The child's poem says "Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall; and all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty together again." Adam's fall was a great fall. So great was the fall, it required God's only Son to rescue us and restore the damage.

Instead of guilt, He brought grace. Instead of death, He brought life. Instead of condemnation, He brought justification.

When the law came, that only made matters worse. It brought greater guilt and condemnation, just as it was designed to do. The Law revealed sin and even caused man to desire what was forbidden. But where sin abounded, grace abounded even more. Christ did more than remove the guilt of Adam's sin and the curse upon us. He also removed all of our personal sins and puts His righteousness on our account.

In Adam we were ruined, but in Christ we are redeemed.  
In Adam death reigns, but in Christ we reign in life with Him.

Look at a parallel passage. Paul describes the ultimate contrast between Adam and Christ is beyond this life

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22** <sup>21</sup> For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

**1 Corinthians 15:45-49** <sup>45</sup> And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. <sup>46</sup> Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

### **3. ADAM AND CHRIST ARE COMPARED**

You will notice the words in verses 18-21, “as” and “even so.”

We are saved exactly the same way we are lost. We are connected to Adam and when he sinned and fell, he was condemned and so was every other person.

We are connected to Christ and when He obeyed and died for our sins, His righteousness is credited to us (imputed).

Someone may object: “That’s not fair for God to condemn us and make us all die for something Adam did, is it?” No, it’s not, but it’s also not fair for God to justify us and give us eternal life based on something that Jesus did. The Bible tells us we gain more in Christ than we ever lost in Adam.

We are connected to Adam by birth. We are connected to Christ by faith.

We are sinners by default. We’re born that way. We are saved only if we repent of our sins and trust Christ to save us.

- The remedy for spiritual death – justification in Christ
- The remedy for physical death – resurrection in Christ
- The remedy for eternal death - NONE

Sin, condemnation, and death in Adam or forgiveness, justification, and life in Christ...what will it be for you?