

“Death to Sin”
‘Who is Jesus?’ Part 3.

Romans 5:1-21
Rev. Bruce Stanley

Introduction: TBC

Romans 5 is about sin first entering our world.

Step 1:

The first step is that sin entered our world through one man, Adam.

Verse 12:

***12** Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—*

This is what happened in the Garden of Eden. Adam sinned. Adam said to God: “I choose to do something ELSE, instead of following what YOU say.” This was a BIG act of rebellion. This was the first man, created by God, saying to God: “No!”

Sin entered the world through this one man. This is what we call ORIGINAL SIN. Once it entered, it would not leave. And that was stage 1. Verse 12: *“sin entered the world through one man”*

Stage 2:

The second stage was that **death came in** through that sin.

Paul says that when SIN entered the world, DEATH entered the world THROUGH sin. Death is the consequence of sin. Verse 12: *“And death through sin”*

III – Imagine a farmer releasing pollution into a river. What happens? ONE farmer can pollute a WHOLE river. And the result of that pollution is that it can kill ALL of the fish. ONE farmer. ONE act of rebellion. And it poisons everything. Through sin, DEATH enters. And it affects the whole of creation.

Stage 3.

Then stage 3:

Verse 12: *“Death came to **all people**, because all sinned”*

And the end of verse 14 says that *“Adam... is a pattern of the one to come.”*

Adam is the pattern we follow. Adam is our representative. We follow his lead. We all rebel. We all sin. Without even trying, we hurt people, even when we KNOW it’s wrong. And Paul says he feels this personally **every day**.

In Romans 7:15 Paul writes:

***15** I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.”*

And in verse 17:

***17** As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.*

Paul, like us, is a prisoner to following Adam. We naturally do evil. We naturally sin.

We don’t WANT to sin. But we just DO. We go against our desire to be obedient to God. Evil thoughts, sexual immorality, malice, deceit, slander, arrogance, violence – they come NATURALLY to us! Even as babies, our natural desire is to be selfish and to just look after ourselves. You don’t need to train a child to be selfish!

III – A couple of months ago, my neighbour knocked on our door at 3am in the morning, because our dog was barking. He was not happy. He yelled and swore at me. And I will tell you the truth here: I wanted to be violent. I was outraged that he could wake up our whole family and swear at me. And I wanted to punch him. Let me be honest with you about that. That was my desire. And no, I didn't act on it. But I **thought** it. That was my **human** desire. My human instinct. At 3am in the morning.

You see, Adam is our representative. When HE sinned, WE sinned. HIS fall is OUR fall. HIS disobedience was OUR disobedience. Adam represents humanity. Adam represents you and me.

III – You might have noticed that Australia did not win the Soccer world cup. **WE** did not win. That soccer team REPRESENTED us – well, some of us – as a nation. When they lose, WE lose. And I can guarantee you, if I was actually on the Australian Soccer team for the world cup **myself**, we would still **not** have won. In fact, we probably would have done a lot worse! When they lose, we lose, because they represent us.

Verse 12 again:

***12** Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—*

Adam sinned. We sinned. All sinned. And since death entered the world through sin, since the whole river was poisoned and all the fish died, we all face death.

III – Death

This week, one of the guys from my year at high school lost his daughter. She had been sick for a long time. And last week she died.

Around the corner from us here two weeks ago, a lady named Priya died, when a truck toppled over on top of her. She leaves behind her young son and husband.

Not one week will go past without death. Not one day. Not one hour without the reminder that death is a part of our world. And it is there because of sin. It is there because sin entered the world in the very beginning. The river was poisoned.

And it is not good. But let me suggest this to you today about death – Do NOT get used to it. Do NOT get used to death - because of Romans 5:

Just as sin ENTERED the world through one man, Adam, LIFE has now come through ONE man... Jesus. Verse 18:

***18** Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. **19** For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

One man, Adam, represented us – SIN entered the world. And DEATH followed.

But now, ANOTHER representative, Jesus, has entered. And where Adam brought SIN into the world as our representative, Jesus brings LIFE into the world as our representative.

So what did Jesus BRING to give us life? To reverse the effects of Adam? To offer us LIFE and put an end to DEATH? Verse 17:

***17** For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the **gift of righteousness** reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!*

What do we RECEIVE to deliver us from sin and death? To deliver us from Adam's representation?

The “gift of righteousness”.

When our representative becomes Jesus, death is no longer our expectation. Because **righteousness** is the new place we stand in.

III – I remember one day standing outside the church here when it started to hail. Big chunks of ice falling down on me. On my head, my arms, my legs. Bruising me, hurting me. And what do you think I did? After I covered up my car... I moved under cover myself. I moved to a place of protection. Because I would be a bit silly to continue to stand out in the place of **pain** when there is a place of **protection**.

The place we USED to stand, without Jesus, is the place of condemnation. We used to stand as an ENEMY of God. We used to stand in the place of the condemned. On death row. Judged and guilty. Ready for sentencing. We used to stand unprotected.

But to be given the GIFT of righteousness, means that we are given a NEW place to stand. A place of protection. We move to a place where we are seen by God as ***innocent***. A place where we are FREE. A place where we are now called FRIENDS of God. The gift of righteousness that Paul is talking about is the gift of “BEING RIGHT” with God – the gift of having a ***safe place*** to stand before God. A place where our representative is Jesus, instead of Adam.

And the reason we can move to that place is because Jesus offers to stand in OUR place of judgement. Jesus stands unprotected. Jesus takes the beating, the punishment, the DEATH that we deserve, so we can move to HIS place of righteousness and protection.

III – Kangaroo birth (video?)

I watched a documentary on how kangaroos are born this week. And I was quite amazed. When a baby kangaroo is born, it comes out of the uterus as this little worm like thing. But in order to live, and not die, it must then crawl up the front of the mother, through it's hairy body, which takes about 3 minutes, into the pouch of the mother. If it falls to the ground, that's it. The mother can't pick it up. It's destined to die. It MUST make it to the pouch. And it stays there for about 9 months. And when it finally comes out of the pouch, as a joey, it's described as being like a “second birth”.

Unless it makes it to the pouch, it cannot survive. It cannot be *born again*.

Jesus is the one who takes us from the birthplace that is destined for death, to a second birthplace that gives us life. He moves us from one place to the other. From condemnation to freedom, from death to life.

And this is grace. Not that Jesus says: “Here you go” and gives us a boost. He does it by saying: “I will stand in ***your*** place. ***You*** stand in ***mine***. I will take your condemnation. I will become the enemy of God. I will face the punishment of death FOR YOU. And he did that for us on the cross. Verse 8:

8 *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

This is the heart of chapter 5. And it simply says this: we do not deserve this gift of righteousness. Not yesterday. Not today. Not ever. Yet it is ours. Jesus' died for us. He traded places with us.

Do not get used to death. Always be shocked by it. Saddened by it. Grieved by it. Hurt by it. Always hate it. Because it is a reminder that unless we MOVE to the protection of Jesus, we will face eternal death ourselves. It is a reminder of God's grace – that we are offered what we don't deserve.

5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. **7** Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. **8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! **10** For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! **11** Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. **14** Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! **16** Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. **19** For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

20 The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, **21** so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.