

The Reign of Death

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[0:00] Romans 5 and I'm going to read starting with verse 12.

! That will be the subject tonight and partly next Sunday night and then we'll get into the reign of life. Both those things are put side by side in this chapter and thankfully so. God didn't leave us with the reign of death. Aren't you glad?

By His grace He sent His Son. And so the reign of death, reign of life. And verse 12, and I want to read the entire text which really takes us to the end of the chapter.

Though, and I sound like a broken record, we're not going to get that far tonight. Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin.

[1:20] And thus, death spread to all men because all sinned. For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

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, a type of Him who was to come.

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.

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. 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.

[2:40] By the way, that ends a parenthesis that started up there in verse 13. Just a little parenthesis, little thing, little chasing of a rabbit that he put in between verses 12 and 18.

Anyway. Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one man's righteousness, or righteous, one man's righteous act, excuse me, the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound.

But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. So that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So we have the reign of death and the reign of life. And there is just a whole lot in the latter part of that chapter. And even as I have read it to you, and you've been reading along in your Bibles, you sensed or had the feeling that some of this is just a little complicated.

[4:03] And hopefully we'll be able to work all that out as we work through these verses in this chapter. Tonight, the focus will be the reign of death.

And what Paul has to say about that. But before we do that, just kind of by way of introduction, just kind of set all this up. It's interesting that in just a few words, really, we could summarize everything that Paul said here in these verses that I've just read.

Really, it would be a summarizing of the entire book of Romans. But especially this part that he has just said, we could summarize it this way.

This thing of salvation, this reality, the great reality of salvation, is one man, Jesus Christ, by one work, one act, his death and resurrection, he accomplished eternal salvation for all who believe. That sums it up. That sums up what Paul's great point is and great truth is here. In fact, this pretty much, as I've said, pretty much the message of the entire epistle to the Romans is summed up in this.

[5:33] And we could expand a little bit on it because certainly Romans adds a little bit more to it. But because Romans begins with the problem of sin and the reality of sin and the judgment of sin.

And so we could sum it up that way. The problem of sin, it has brought ruin, wreck and ruin to all of humankind. And not only that, but has put all of humankind at war with God.

And the need, then, is forgiveness. Forgiveness and reconciliation with God our Creator. And that forgiveness and that reconciliation, resulting in access once again to God, comes through one person, Jesus Christ.

Now, that's a big problem with the world. That's why it's so important that we study these passages and understand the full reality of our salvation.

What is involved in that and so forth. Because we then need to have an answer to a world that does not believe this. And not only do they not believe it, but they have a big problem with it.

[6:55] I'm talking about the world in the sense of lost humanity. They have a big problem with it. It was a big problem for the Jews in Paul's day. Big problem.

Still a problem with the Jews today. The unbelieving Jews. But it's also a problem with all religions of today. Both formal or mainline religions as well as some of the peripheral ones.

And a kind of informal kind of religions that people hold to. Big problem with them. And the problem is, because it's built into fallen man, this notion that he will accomplish his salvation on his own.

Now, it's conceptualized in many different ways. And it's not that people have some kind of doctrinal framework that they work through and can kind of lay out on a piece of paper what they believe.

But what I'm talking about is a principle, a mindset, a part of the flesh, a propensity of the flesh that man wants to accomplish his salvation on his own.

[8:10] He does. Salvation is something I do for myself. It's basically it. And I do it through maybe a number of different ways.

Maybe virtuous living. Good living. Maybe through some point of personal goodness. You know, I'm not all bad. I mean, there's some good in me.

God's a gracious God and he sees that and understands that. And God's going to take that into consideration. I mean, I'm not all bad. You know what I'm talking about? Or through some religiosity.

I don't know if that's a word. You can look that up in your dictionary. It does communicate, doesn't it? You know what I'm talking about. So, I'm going to work out my salvation and obtain my salvation and earn my salvation through religious activity, rituals and ceremony or just simply being a member of that particular religious system.

And so, what are we talking about here? We're talking about a religion of works. A works salvation. A works salvation. And, you know, we can describe that and define that in some theological terms.

[9:34] Some definition for that. But the bottom line is people don't have a definition for it. This is just the way that they think. The way that they believe.

Whether they're part of some kind of formal religion or not. I mean, every non-Christian religion of the world, by the way. Those that are still in existence today. And those who are in the past and are dead and gone.

Been replaced by something else. But all non-Christian religions of the world operate according to this belief. This understanding. That salvation is something that is earned.

It's merited by my goodness or my works. Or some affiliation or whatever it may be. But it's all man-centered. All based upon man's own ability.

And effort and so forth. Or even worthiness. And even those who claim to have no religion at all. And there are those who do claim that.

[10:34] I don't believe in religion or have any use for religion. Organized or otherwise. And there are people who claim to have no religion at all. And even those people are counting on some form of human merit.

Some form of merit. Based upon themselves. To get them by. They're trusting in that. And so this whole notion that salvation can only be accomplished.

Forgiveness of sin can only be accomplished. Reconciliation with God and all that comes with that. Access to Him. Eternal life. All those things. Can only come through one man.

And what that one man did on the cross. And your belief in that. Without anything else. And that really is the message of Romans.

Quite frankly. From start to finish. It's reconciliation. Forgiveness. Reconciliation. Access to God. And His forgiveness for sin.

[11:35] And that is something that is not accomplished by work. You don't work for it. You don't earn it. You cannot contribute anything to it. Not anything. It is something that is accomplished.

And provided by one person. For all. Who believe. Plain and simple. Now I'm preaching to the choir. Here tonight. I mean this is bread and butter. For you.

You understand that don't you? Now getting to the text then. Romans 5. Two men. Are presented here. In these verses.

Two men. Take center stage. Two very important men. Are mentioned here. And these two men. Have affected all of mankind.

More than any other person. Has affected mankind. Or ever will. And not just affecting mankind. In their day. But affecting mankind.

[12:38] For eternity. Two men. I like the way MacArthur put it. He said in all of human history. Two men. In single acts. Have made a greater impact on the world.

Than all other people. In all other acts. Combined and multiplied. Infinitely. Who are these two men? Adam.

And Jesus. Alright. Pretty simple. How did they affect. Mankind. Profoundly. Adam brought. Death. Through Adam. Came death. Sin and death. Christ brought. Life. Life. Now it's bigger than that.

And more. And there's more to be said. About that. But basically. You can boil it down to that. Adam brought death. Jesus Christ. Brought life. Brought life.

[13:36] Through Adam. Commenced. A reign of death. That is still continuing today. Into our world today. Death is all around us. Through Christ.

Now in a spiritual sense. Has brought. Life. Life. Life eternal. Alright. So in the closing verses. Of chapter 5. Which I've read to you.

Paul takes these two men. And he compares these two men. And their eternal acts. He puts them side by side. And compares them. And teaches us something very profound.

That we already should know. And what we have in a sense. Though it's really. Much deeper than this.

Is. Kind of an analogy. Or Paul is just taking. Taking a spiritual reality. Using it as an analogy. It's not that the realities.

[14:33] Themselves. Are just symbolic. Or analogous. Of something. But he's using. These two men. And what they did. And what. What was the result.

And using this. As an analogy. To something. Well. Primarily. He's using Adam. As the analogy. Here. And Paul's purpose. Is to help his readers. Understand. About the death.

And resurrection. Of Jesus Christ. Which is what he's just. Been talking about. And the reality of that. And the life. That comes through that. And what that accomplished. And that was his subject. In the previous verses.

And so. Then he offers this analogy. To his readers. To. To in a sense. Answer a question. That may be on their minds. Or. Maybe on the minds.

Anyway. Of unbelievers. Who would. Look at the. The death. And resurrection. Of Jesus. And say. I just. You know. You know. I just don't think that happened. Or.

[15:25] Better yet. And more to the point here. Yeah. It happened. But. What you say. It accomplished. I just. I don't see that. I don't accomplish. I don't understand that. Comprehend that.

How this one man. Doing what he did. On the cross. As resurrection. Could accomplish.

Forgiveness. And reconciliation. With God. Could accomplish salvation. I just don't see that. And so.

He. Offers this analogy. And. Kind of. In effect. Saying. Are you. Questioning. The. Fact. That through. One act. Jesus Christ.

Could bring salvation. Then maybe. You ought to consider. Another man. In history. One who lived. A long time ago. Before Jesus. Long before Jesus. Maybe you ought to consider.

Him. And the one act. That he committed. That brought about. Death and damnation. So you see. He's using. What. Adam.

[16:20] What came. Through Adam. And what. Resulted. Through Adam's. Act of sin. Using that. To prove. In a sense. The truth.

Of what Jesus. Accomplished. Through his death. And his resurrection. Not complicated. I'm probably. Probably making it. It that way. All right. So let's begin with Adam. And that's where we'll

focus tonight.

And the reign of death. And there are really four things. That I want us to see here. And we're going to see one of them. No. I mean three of them. Okay. And they're found. All of them are found in verse 12.

So we're not going to get past verse 12. Aren't you glad? It's all right. Because verse 12 is crucial. Crucial. Not only understanding.

What. Paul's point is here. In relation to the. What the. One man Jesus Christ has accomplished. But in our understanding. Why the world is the way it is.

[17:22] Why. Things happen the way they happen. Why people die. Who seemingly are innocent. Why there is death.

And suffering. And illnesses. And so forth. Why there's so much corruption in our world. See. What we're going to learn here. In verse 12. And that's. That's where we're going to camp out. Going to explain everything. And I'm sure that. For. Maybe all of us in here. This is just going to be a refresher course. On the doctrine of original sin.

And that's basically what we have. Have here. All right. So look at verse 12 again. Therefore. Just as. Through. One man. Sin.

Into the world. And. Death. Through sin. And. Thus. Death. Death. That would. My page is cute. Thus death.

[18:20] Spread to all men. Because all sin. Now. There it is. That explains everything. Does it?

It really does. It explains everything. In our world today. It explains. World history. From the very beginning.

After the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. And everything that has transpired then. Sin. We know some of that history. Don't we? We can go back.

And we can. Read again. About. Historical events. That have taken place. In the world. What I've just read to you. What Paul just wrote here. Explains all of that.

Every bit of it. And the explanation is. Very simple. Sin. Sin is the explanation.

[19:26] So when someone asks you. You know. About their dead loved one. One who's just died. Maybe through some tragic accident. That was not their fault.

And they ask you. Why? Why did that happen? You can answer. Sin. No. I wouldn't. Wouldn't recommend that you do that.

No. That probably wouldn't be very encouraging. But it is the truth. It is the reality. And I think we'll understand that. As we go through this verse again.

Sin. Sin entered. The world. And here's the first thing. That we need to see. And we just kind of pick. Pick this verse apart. Just kind of take it.

Line by line. Or phrase by phrase. Because each one. Is. Step by step. Defining. For us. The origin of sin.

[20:29] Sin. Entered. The world. Through one. Man. Adam. That's the first place we start. Sin entered the world.

Through. Adam. That's how it all happened. That's how it all got started. Through Adam. Through one man. Sin. Entered. The world.

Sin. Now I want to. I want to. Really. Accentuate. Some of these words. Words here. Through. One man.

We know that's Adam. In verse 14. He's identified. Through. Do you understand? Through one man. Sin. Entered.

The world. All right. Brother Don. Why. What's the deal? The deal is. Adam. Did not. Create sin.

[21:29] Sin. Didn't. Begin. With Adam. In the sense. That it's. Origin. Is Adam. Now. For our part. And.

How it has affected us. It all started there. For us. But it really. Started before Adam. So. Sin. Was not something. Adam. Created. Or invented.

He didn't do that. Because sin. Was already in existence. Satan. Had already sinned. Sin. Came. To Adam. Through Satan. Adam. Did not. Create it. Satan. Had already sinned.

And sin. Entered. The human realm. Coming from. The angelic realm. Through. Adam. Into the human realm. You remember. How it all started. How it happened.

[22:24] In the garden of Eden. In Genesis chapter 3. And. God had created. That beautiful garden. For. Adam and Eve. And everything. Was there. For them. To enjoy. And he said.

You know. Paraphrasing. Look at all these. Wonderful trees. And all their luscious fruit. And you can eat. Of all of these trees. Look at all of them. I mean. There are some luscious. Pears over there. And look at these. Bananas over here. And plums. And peaches. And you know. Just. Have all you want. And enjoy. They are there for you.

To enjoy. But Adam. Don't. You see that tree over there. The tree of the knowledge. Of good and evil. Don't touch that one. Don't eat of it. Don't even touch it.

Then along came. The serpent. And. The serpent. Whispered. In Eve's ear. Eve.

[23 : 22] There's something not right here. God's not being fair with you. He's holding out on you. That's just not right.

That's just not fair. I mean. Who. Who does God think he is? You're his special. Beloved creation. And. And he said no. To that tree. And through his.

Temptation. He planted. Within the. Heart of Eve. This. Feeling of dissatisfaction.

Or even resentment. It's difficult to analyze. What the. The. The real sin is. I. I really think it's pride. And. Self-centeredness.

And somehow. Eve. Began to think. That God. Was not being good to her. And that she deserved that.

[24 : 22] That. That fruit of that tree. I know they say it was probably an apple. Some do. But I don't know what kind of fruit it was. And so.

She took of the apple. And she ate of it. It. It was. Kind of a tree. That God had set up there for. Kind of a. A test. For them. Though they had never sinned.

Adam and Eve. Not sinned. God allowed them. The potential to sin. Created them that way. So that they. Could choose. And he put that test tree.

Up there. And they sinned. They took of that tree and ate of that fruit. And they did so because, I think, because of pride and self-centeredness.

And I think that because that was Satan's sin, pride. We read about his fall from heaven in Isaiah chapter 14. And we have him quoted here.

[25 : 22] And he says, for you have said in your heart, speaking to Lucifer, Son of the morning, he said, you've said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.

I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farther side of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.

Let you, or yet you, he said, shall be brought down to Sheol to the lowest depths of the pit. You see, the pride, pride's what made the devil the devil.

I will, I will, I will. And now here's Eve and Adam. I will eat of that tree. And they did and they sinned. And when they did, something dramatic took place. I don't know that we really consider how dramatic was the change at that very moment.

[26 : 32] What took place right then. Something changed in Adam and Eve's being. Not just in their thinking.

In their very being. Very, very, very core and fiber of their being. Something dramatically changed. Something came into it that was not there before.

And it was unrighteousness. Unholiness. That was not there before.

And now it's not only there. It's part of them. It's in them now. Adam and Eve were at that moment degenerated. Degenerated.

And now notice, and you need to be careful here, to notice that the word sin here in the text is in the singular.

[27 : 36] All it took was one sin. Just one. I mean that, the singular form of the word sin means that if it means nothing else.

But it does mean more than that. It means that Adam, again, did not invent every kind of sin. And he certainly didn't commit every kind of sin.

Many, many new forms and types of sin have come on the scene within humankind since Adam. He didn't invent it.

Sin, you see, as a principle, entered Adam. Entered through Adam. Sin as a nature. Now was woven into his very soul.

And the corruption of that sin came into not only Adam, but all those who would follow him in the human stream.

[28:39] From there on out, Adam being the first man, Eve the first woman. And they had a child, and another child, and another child. And their children had children. And so they had children and grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren.

And on down the line, they were probably the only grandparents that had great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandchildren. Still alive when they were alive. And every one of them had that new, awful nature in them.

A pollution really is the best way to describe it. And how can that be? Because Adam, when he was in the garden, and even as he was expelled from the garden, he and his wife Eve expelled from the garden because of sin, all mankind was in them there.

I was there, in a sense. And you. Adam was all mankind. Now, I don't mean that Adam was just a kind of a descriptive word for mankind, that there never was a single person by the name of Adam. I believe there was. Adam was a real, live man, the very first one created. Not a generation or a representation of mankind. He was one man.

[30:08] And he was a real person. But all of mankind was present in him and Eve. And when sin then entered them there in the garden, it polluted, excuse me, polluted all of mankind that would one day come out of them.

And that includes you and me. We're all chips off the old block. Really.

All right, so then sin entered the world through Adam. Number two, death entered the world through sin. It's very logical, isn't it?

Well, it's logical and it's exactly what Paul said, too. Sin entered the world through Adam. Death then entered the world through sin. And death, he said, verse 12, and death through sin.

Death through sin. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 22, in Adam all die. Death is the result of sin.

[31:19] Remember what God said to Adam and Eve there in the garden when he told them of that tree, of the knowledge of good and evil, what he said to them, what he said would happen to them if they ate of that tree?

Remember what he said? You will surely die. And the day they ate of that tree, they did die.

Spiritually. But they would also one day die physically.

Something that was not in the original plan for them or for God's creation of man. That wasn't a part of the original plan.

Death wasn't. Death in that sense, in the beginning, man was not created for that. Death was a punishment for sin.

Ezekiel 18 and verse 4, the soul that sins, it will die. Romans 6.23, for the wages of sin is death.

[32:25] And here's what happened to Adam and Eve and to all of their progeny. You and me. Hebrews 9.27, And as it is appointed to men, once to die.

And after that, the judgment. You know what that means? Everybody dies. I know that's not a warm, fuzzy message, but it's the truth.

Everybody dies. Everybody dies. The statistics are still one out of one die. That hasn't changed.

There have been a couple of exceptions in history, but I don't think you or I are going to be the exceptions.

Everyone dies. As I heard about an undertaker, he usually signed his letters, eventually yours.

Think about that a while.

And by the way, death then, passed on all the creation as well, didn't it? That's why the Bible says that not only are we yearning and groaning for the coming of Christ, but so is all the creation.

[33:33] Because this death that passed upon all man also passed upon all the creation. There was no death prior to Adam and Eve's sin in the garden. No death. Death. Not a plant or animal.

I know that's hard to believe, but there was no death. Because how did death come into the world?

Sin. That's why I believe, by the way, in a literal six days of creation.

Sin. Now think about it. If man evolved over millions of years and all these things that we have now took billions and millions of years, and Adam, the Adam that sinned, maybe he was, you know, a thousand, maybe two thousand years after God began to create.

Because, you know, after all, a day is a thousand years to God and a thousand years is a day to God. And so we don't have literal 24-hour days. We might have ages and thousands of years. And so on the sixth day, God did create a man named Adam.

And he sinned. But then what's your answer for all of the fossil record that took place over the millions and years prior to the Adam that came along, the man that came along, because he, by the way, evolved eventually.

[34 : 52] How did we get all the fossil record if there was no death until after Adam sinned? Hmm, something to think about. Death passed upon all the creation.

There was no death prior to Adam and Eve sinning in the garden. The archaeologists that dig up fossils every day and sometimes find huge caches of fossils, they are proving the principle of sin and death.

And by the way, that car you drive around and the fuel you put in it, the oil that was pumped out of the ground and refined and made into gasoline so that you could drive your car, that proves the principle of sin and death.

Because all that stuff was made up of dead things. That's why we call them fossil fuels, you know. I mean, there are living things. They've died and have been buried and that's where oil comes from. Dead things both human and animal and plant. So sin entered the human realm through Adam and death entered the human realm through sin.

[36 : 03] And then third and finally tonight, sin and death, which we've really already said, but this caps it off, sin and death polluted all of mankind.

And thus death spread to all. All men. For all have sinned. See, here's how it works.

We're not made sinners when and because we sin. That is, you know, when you were born and at some point in your physical growth, whatever age it might have been, probably a lot earlier than you think, you committed your first sin.

That act of sin didn't make you a sinner at that point. You were a sinner right out of the womb because of the principle of sin and death.

It polluted all of mankind through Adam. Now, it's not always good to tell a young mother that her little baby is a little sinner.

[37 : 25] I've done that. It was a big mistake. But the reality is that that's true. We're born that way.

So we're not made sinners when and because we sin. We sin because in Adam we were all made sinners. And we were born that way.

I'm not a sinner because I sin. I sin because I was born a sinner. And because I was born a sinner the principle of sin and death operates in me. A man is dead spiritually cut off from God.

And one day he will die physically. And one day he may die eternally. Because of the principle of sin and death.

So sin came into the world through one man. And death came into the world through sin and death spread then to all mankind.

[38 : 28] So it's one man one time committed one sin and we all pay. We all pay. What's the proof of that?

Death. We die. We die. It's the proof of it. And I say that this answers a lot of questions about death that we experience.

People around us who die and death that's all around us. This explains a lot. Again a little baby dies in the womb or dies at birth or maybe dies days or weeks later through SIDS or some other terrible thing.

It happens all the time doesn't it? Has that baby committed an act of sin? No. Innocent people die. Christians suffer death.

Christians do. Christians die. Did you know that? Of course. Christians die and some of them die in terrible ways. And we find ourselves asking God why?

[39 : 42] How could this happen? It's because we're not in a perfect world. It's a world that's fallen because of sin. And because of that sin death has entered into it.

And it touches everything and everyone. And we're a part of that. We can't escape that. Now we can escape the eternal death through Jesus Christ.

The second Adam which will be our subject next week. but it's the principle of death. Sin and death. That's the answer and that principle operates in this world and there is death.

David wrote in Psalm 51 5 Behold I was shaped in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.

And you know he's not saying his mother was immoral.

He's talking about the way he came into the world and how did he come into the world? As a sinner. As a sinner. And every one of us come in that way. Come needing a Savior.

[40 : 52] Psalm 58 3 The wicked are estranged from the womb. Estranged from God. From the very womb. Jeremiah 17 9 The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Job 14 4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? He said what is a man that he should what is man that he should be clean?

Or who is born of a woman that he should be righteous? All these scriptures and others are pointing to the reality of original sin.

That we are born sinners. And the proof is we die. And we don't really just need that proof. All we have to do is just look around us.

Proof is everywhere we look. Because every man has sinned. And you can even look at your own life. We're all sinners.

[41 : 54] Now praise God I would say most of us in this room have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus. Paid the price for the penalty of the sin.

But that doesn't mean we stop sinning. It would be great if that were true. The fourth and final thing is what we'll start with next week and that is the proof in history of the reign of death.

The reign of sin and death. And we'll just spend a little time on that and then move right on in to the reign of life. And that is through Christ. The Thank you.