

**I. Introduction and review: Why is sin in the world? A theological and practical challenge**

**II. Sin and death entered the world through Adam's transgression.**

**A. Sin entered the world through one man, Adam. v. 12a**

1. Adam is an historical figure, not a mythological character. I Ti. 2:13-14 Jude 14
  - a. Affirmation in the rest of Scripture. Lu. 3:38 Mt. 19:4 I Chr. 1:1f Hos. 6:7
  - b. All of humanity descended from Adam. Acts 17:26
  - c. The explanation of sin in the world. 5:12 Js. 1:17
  - d. The parallel between Adam and Christ. v. 14c-15 I Co. 15:22,45
2. Humankind fell in Adam (not Eve). Ge. 3:9 I Ti. 2:14
3. Human sin has an historic origin. Ecc. 7:29 Jo. 8:44 Isa. 14:12f

**B. Death entered the world as a result of sin. v. 12b 6:23 Ezek. 18:4**

1. Death is also an unnatural intrusion into God's creation.
2. Death is separation from God. Ge. 2:17 3:19,22-24 I Co. 15:21-22
  - a. Spiritual death. Adam immediately died spiritually. Gen. 2:17 Eph. 2:1
  - b. Physical death. Adam became subject to physical death. Ge. 3:19
  - c. Eternal death. Rev. 20:11-15 21:8
3. Christ has come to deliver us from death. Ge. 3:15 Heb. 2:14-15 I Co. 15:54-56

**C. Death has spread to all men because of Adam's sin. v. 12c, 15-19**

**D. Death reigns over all humanity as the result of Adam's one sin. v. 13-14**

1. Those living prior to Moses could not be charged with personal sin deserving death because they could not violate God's explicit commandment. v. 13 4:15
2. This is not to say that people were without personal sin before the giving of the Mosaic law. v. 13a Ro. 1:32 2:14-15 3:10f
3. Those who hadn't sinned like Adam experienced the penalty of Adam's sin. v. 14
4. This proves death comes not as judgment of personal sin, but because of our sin in Adam, our representative. I Co. 15:22 (Infants also die)
5. In the same way life reigns, not because of our deeds of righteousness, but because of Christ's righteousness imputed to us. v. 18

**E. God treats all people, from the first moment of their existence, as out of fellowship with Himself: guilty, under wrath and corrupt. 3:10f 8:7-8 Ge. 6:5 8:21 Ps. 51:5 58:3**

**III. In what sense did *all sin* in Adam? v. 12d A theological battlefield**

**A. Paul cannot mean that *all sin* in imitation of Adam's sin (Pelagianism).**

1. Pelagius denied original sin, claiming that it would be unfair for God to charge us for the sin committed by someone else.
2. He says that rather than sinning *in and with* Adam we sin *like* Adam. 3:23
3. Problems with this view.
  - a. Clearly the sin which brings death is the sinful act of the one man Adam, not our own sin. v. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19
  - b. People who have not personally sinned in the likeness of Adam still receive the penalty of sin (death). v. 13-14
  - c. It would destroy the parallel between Adam and Christ. If Christ's work is like Adam's, then Christ would save us by setting a good example.
  - d. Our salvation would then depend upon how well we imitate Jesus.

**B. Nor is it that we were all genetically present in Adam (Realism).**

1. Some claim that we all sinned in Adam because we were all seminally in Adam. *Adam was mankind. When Adam sinned mankind sinned.* Heb. 7:9-10
2. Problems with this view.
  - a. Wouldn't this approach make us guilty of *all* of the sins of Adam and all of our other ancestors? The guilt passed down to us is due to Adam's one sin.
  - b. Paul repeatedly makes it clear that all are condemned for the act of one man (not the act of all of us). v. 15,16,17,18,19
  - c. This view destroys the parallel between Adam and Christ: We are not united to Christ seminally, but through His representation.
  - d. Salvation would then come through our reception of His nature, rather than to be declared righteous through imputation. 4:5

**C. Adam was our representative whose sin was imputed to us (Immediate Imputation).**

1. God appointed Adam as the representative (Federal) head of all humanity. A Covenant of Works? Two parties, a condition, a promise, a penalty.
2. Adam acted on our behalf. His act was our act. His sin is our sin. 5:12,19
3. All people die because all are held guilty of Adam's sin. v. 13-14
4. This view fits the context: the one act of one (representative) man has resulted in sin and death to all those he represented. v. 15-19
5. This perfectly fits the parallel with Christ: The one act of one representative man has resulted in righteousness and life being imputed to all those he represented. 4:3,6 I Co. 15:21-22,45 Titus 3:5 II Co. 5:15

**D. Many objections are raised against the biblical doctrine of original sin:**

Is God unfair? How can we be blamed for the act of another?

1. God commonly deals with men according to the principle of representation. Ex. 20:5-6 Ezek. 18:2 Josh. 7:11
2. We experience the principle of representation in every-day life.
3. The circumstances ordained by God for our representative's probation were fair.
4. God has the right to establish any arrangement which pleases Him. 11:33-36
  - a. There are many mysteries which are beyond our comprehension. Deut. 29:29
  - b. God's plan is the best possible plan.
  - c. It is not our place to challenge Him. 9:20
5. We are still justly held accountable for our sin. 3:19 2:1-6
6. God had a good purpose in allowing the fall. The Last Adam has restored what the First Adam had lost, on the same principle of representation and imputation.
7. God the Son has taken our human misery upon Himself! II Co. 5:21 Phil. 3:9
8. Adam's act is not the final determinant of your spiritual destiny.

**IV. Adam provides the pattern for Christ. v. 14c**

**A. How are Adam and Christ alike? I Co. 15:21-22,45,47**

1. Each was appointed by God to represent a multitude. 5:19 I Co. 15:47 He. 10:5-7
2. Each passes on the fruit and effects of his work to his people.

**B. There are also important contrasts. v. 15-19**

**V. Concluding Applications.**

**A. Three great imputations**

1. Adam's sin to all humanity. I Co. 15:21-22 Ro. 5:12
2. The sin of all those who would believe (God's elect) to Christ Who bore the penalty on the cross. II Co. 5:21 Ga. 3:13
3. Christ's righteousness to all believers. 3:24-26 4:1-8

**B. Are you in Adam or in Christ?**

**Discussion questions for family worship.**

1. How do we explain the existence of evil in the world?
2. Why is death “unnatural”?
3. Why ultimately do people (even babies) die?
4. What are the different aspects of death?
5. Why is it important to believe Adam was an historical figure (and not a myth)?
6. In what sense did all sin when Adam sinned?
7. What is the relationship between Adam and his descendants?
8. How is it fair that we should be blamed and penalized for what Adam did?
9. How is Adam a type (pattern) of the Lord Jesus Christ?
10. How is Christ different from Adam?

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