

# BIBLICAL TRUTH ABOUT MAN, SIN, AND SALVATION

## Lesson 10: Original Sin

This is the third of six lessons on the biblical doctrine of sin (hamartiology, from Greek *hamartia*, sin).

### Lesson 10 – Central Truth Q and A

Question: How did Adam's sin affect all of mankind after him?

Answer: Adam's original sin means all human beings have sinful natures.

### Lesson 10 – Memory Verses

**Romans 5:12** *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.*

**Romans 5:17** *For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*

### Lesson 10 – Outline

Adam was the first human being God created, and he was also the representative of all human beings after him. As humanity's representative, Adam disobeyed God (Gen. 2:17) and sinned. His sin was imputed (counted against) to all mankind. The biblical doctrine of imputation teaches that God counts the original sin of Adam and its guilt to be our sin, and we all stand guilty before God. The doctrine of original sin teaches that Adam's sin is the reason that all other people have been born with a sin nature, the inborn tendency and desire to disobey God.

#### 1. Man's Representative in Sin – Adam

When Adam rebelled against God, sin entered the whole human race. Ever since then, all people, except Christ, inherited a sinful nature. David recognized this fact and wrote of the iniquity he had from his mother's womb (Ps. 51:5). Paul also wrote of the inherited sin nature and declared that all people were by nature "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). Scripture reveals the reality of this inherited sin nature in Cain's murder of his brother Abel (Gen. 4:-10), and the eventual sinfulness of all mankind before the worldwide flood in Noah's day (Gen. 6:1-7).

In Romans 5:12-21, Paul makes a parallel between Adam and Christ as representatives of mankind or those whose actions affected many others. Adam is the representative of all who descended from him by birth. He is the head of all people ruined by sin. On the other hand, Christ is the representative of all who repent of sin and trust in Him as Lord and Savior. He is the head of all people redeemed from sin.

Adam's one sin made all others who descended from him sinners, even though they did not sin in exactly the same way as Adam did (Rom. 5:14). This is because Adam acted as our representative and his guilt became our guilt. Adam's sin was imputed to (counted against) the whole human race. God views all humans guilty as Adam was. Adam's sinful nature was also passed down to us, and our

condemnation is like his condemnation. Adam was our representative, and therefore, sin and death entered the entire human race (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:22).

## **2. Man's Responsibility in Sin – All have sinned**

Scripture is clear that every one of us is guilty because of Adam's sin, and at the same time, every one of us is accountable to God for our own sins. Man does not become a sinner by sinning, but he sins because he is a sinner by nature. Just as a dog doesn't become a dog by barking; he barks because he is dog by nature. No one can blame external circumstances as the cause of his sin. Everyone sins because he desires to sin, and this desire comes from within his own nature. We are not passive participants in sin, mere victims of our sin nature. Our sinful nature causes us to desire sin, make a habit of sin, think lightly of sin, and live in sin. In short, we are slaves in bondage to sin. We must remember that our sinning includes sins of commission (doing what God forbids) and omission (failing to do what God commands). To claim that we have not actively participated in sin is to call God a liar (1 John 1:8-10).

All of us must acknowledge that we have willingly rebelled against God. Every person will stand before God as the Judge (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:1-11; Heb. 9:27). Those who trust in their own self-righteousness or religious works or who reject Christ and do not obey the Gospel will be judged as deserving God's eternal condemnation. Those who repent of sin and trust in Christ are justified by Christ's righteousness alone.

### **Summary Statement**

Scripture teaches that Adam was mankind's first representative and Christ is the representative for all who believe in him (Rom. 5:15, 19). God counts the human race as guilty because of Adam's sin. But the Gospel (Good News) is that God declares all those who believe in Christ to be righteous because of an alien righteousness (outside of themselves), the very righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

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The following notes are from a sermon preached by Pastor Stan in August 2018 entitled "Condemned in Adam and Justified in Christ."

**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 with two key words, condemnation (Adam) and justification (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 believers in Christ are justified. Then in verses 12-21, he explains how we are justified. The way by which we are condemned as sinners is the same way by which we are justified before God, namely the imputation of one person's action as our representative. He draws our attention to two people, Adam and Christ. The main truth here is very simple: Adam is the reason all people are condemned and Christ is the reason all believers 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 these facts: two real 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, as we should. 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.

### 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 in Him. 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 (Adam and Christ)."

## 2. ADAM AND CHRIST ARE *CONTRASTED*

Notice these important phrases 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.

**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 of death 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 signed his letters, “Eventually yours.” That may bring a smile, but it should also bring a tear. 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 sinful mankind 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 sins and credited His righteousness to our account. In Adam we are ruined, but in Christ we are redeemed. In Adam death reigns, but in Christ we reign in life with Him. Here is another text in which Paul describes the contrast between Adam and Christ.

**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 (people) die, even so in Christ shall all (believers) 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.” By physical birth we are connected to Adam and when he sinned and fell, he was condemned and so was every other person. By faith we are connected to Christ and when He obeyed the Father and died for our sins, His righteousness is credited (imputed) to us. 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. Salvation is not based on fairness; it is based on God’s righteousness and grace in Christ. By salvation in Christ we gain more than we ever lost in Adam’s sin. 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 is *justification in Christ (Romans 5:17-18)*.
- The remedy for physical death is *resurrection in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)*.
- The remedy for eternal death is *eternal life in Christ (Romans 5:21; 6:23)*.