



First Sunday in Lent
March 5, 2017 - 10:15 a.m.
Rev. Todd Goldschmidt, Pastor

Theme: Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ!

Sermon Text: Romans 5:12-19

¹²Therefore, 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—

¹³To 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.¹⁴Nevertheless, 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.

¹⁵But 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! ¹⁶Nor 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. ¹⁷For 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!

¹⁸Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. ¹⁹For 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.

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If you were in church this past Wednesday, you heard the echo of those words first spoken in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve: “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return” as you received the sign of the cross in ashes upon your forehead. When Adam fell into sin, he not only put himself under condemnation and plunged himself into death; he brought all of humanity—including you and me—with him. From that one act of disobedience onward, Adam was destined to die. And because our lives are inextricably bound up with his, we’re walking on the fatal trail he blazed. On this First Sunday in Lent in this, the 500th year of the Reformation, we focus our hearts of faith on **Romans 5:12-19** as we reflect on the words of a Reformation hymn that puts the truths of those verses into song.

Lazarus Spengler’s hymn “**All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall**” clearly reflect the significance of Adam’s disobedience and its tragic results for mankind. Spengler was a leader of the Reformation movement in Nuremberg, Germany and a close friend of Martin Luther—so close, in fact, that he was named in the same papal bull of excommunication that condemned Luther in 1521. Spengler was a delegate at both the diets of Worms and Augsburg. It was Spengler who sent Luther a sketch that became his seal—the famous “Luther Rose”—and Luther replied to Spengler that it had “hit the mark” of his theology. Spengler’s hymn was so highly regarded during the Reformation era that it’s cited twice in the *Formula of Concord*.



We’ll now sing verse 1 of “All Mankind Fell in Adam’s Fall” Hymn 378 . . .

**All mankind fell in Adam’s fall;
One common sin infects us all.
From one to all the curse descends,**

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And over all God's wrath impends.

Sin is never static. It has a life all its own. We see this in Genesis, as Eve is seduced into unbelief by the serpent. Adam—her husband and her head—who should've been her protector, remains silent in the face of Satan's temptation and is drawn into sin by his unwillingness to confront Satan's lies head on with the Word of God. He, too, ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil about which God had warned him, "when you eat of it you will surely die."

That curse did descend from our first parents to all of their offspring. Cain's slaughter of his brother, Abel, is proof enough. "Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

But mortality isn't our only problem. If it were, we wouldn't have much to worry about. If it were only a matter of dying—as though death was just a part of nature, just another turn in the inevitable circle of life then maybe we could meet death with a calm composure, albeit with some regrets. But death isn't natural.

God didn't create mankind in His holy image to then have to turn around and condemn us to death in short order. God created humans to live in blissful harmony with Him. But the righteous God had to punish Adam's and Eve's rebellion—and yours and mine as well. The prophet Ezekiel's curse—"The one who sins is the one who will die" (18:4)—embraces the whole world, for "there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins" (Eccl. 7:20). Such a death isn't simply the last event of our biological life. It's the shadow that casts a pall over every single step of every single soul's journey from the cradle to the grave.

We'll now sing verse 2 & 3 of "All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall" Hymn 378 . . .

**Through all our powers corruption creeps
And us in dreadful bondage keeps;
In guilt we draw our infant breath
And reap its fruits of woe and death.**

**From hearts depraved, to evil prone,
Flow thoughts and deeds of sin alone;
God's image lost, the darkened soul
Nor seeks nor finds is heavenly goal.**

Sin is devastating. It's "corruption creeps" as Spengler puts it, into every nook and cranny of our soul. It enslaved Adam and all of his descendants in a prison of sin and under a sentence of eternal death in hell from which there is no escape. "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:1) David wrote. What he said

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about himself applies equally to everyone born before or since his time. From the moment we're born, we lack the true fear of God; we neither trust God nor love Him in the least. It'd be nice if this was just a tendency toward sin on our part that we could overcome with our willpower or the persistent practice of a spiritual discipline like prayer. But **"the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure"** the prophet Jeremiah wrote (17:9). And Jesus Himself stated that the heart is a veritable cesspool out of which bubbles up lies, hatred, adultery and various other toxic symptoms of our inherent sin-disease.

We sin in thought, word and deed because we're sinners through and through. The image of God bestowed on Adam and Eve at the dawn of creation was lost completely; shattered when they succumbed to Satan's lies and ate the forbidden fruit.

Since that day, we live not only in a world darkened by their disobedience and subjected by its Maker to crumble into dust, but with a darkness in our soul so deep that we could never find our way back home to the Father's house.

We'll now sing verse 4 & 5 of "All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall" Hymn 378 . . .

**But Christ, the second Adam came
To bear our sin and woe and shame,
To be our life, our light, our way,
Our only hope, our only stay.**

**As by one man all mankind fell
And, born in sin, was doomed to hell,
So by one Man, who took our place,
We all are justified by grace.**

We're all too familiar with Adam's destiny, not only from Scripture, but also from life in this fallen world. Lichen-encrusted headstones in cemeteries are typically etched with the date of birth and the day of death for the mortal remains that lie beneath them. Death is a fact of life. But Paul testifies to another destiny—one of righteousness, grace and life! It's the destiny of **"the one man, Jesus Christ,"** thru whom **"God's grace and the gift that came by . . . grace"**—the free gift of everlasting life in heaven—**"overflow(s) to the many,"** including you, me and everyone in whom God dwells by His Spirit! Friends, **"the gift"** of Christ Jesus **"is not like the trespass"** of Adam, for the **"judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation"** on all mankind, **"but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification"** to all mankind, **"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus"** (Rom. 3:23-24). Jesus may be the 2nd Adam, but He is very different from the 1st one!

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The contrast between these two men couldn't be more pronounced. Adam stands at the head of humanity. He turned against God and in on himself. United to Adam, we'd have shared the fate that he deserved for his rebellion—eternal death in hell, forever separated from God and His good and gracious gifts—were it not for the “one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:5-6). He purchased and won Adam and all his descendants, “not with . . . silver or gold, but with [His] precious,” priceless “blood” (1 Pet. 1:18-19)!

In Christ Jesus, we have grace upon grace and blessing upon blessing! Adam brought death and condemnation to all. But Paul reassures us in [Romans 8:1](#) that “There is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Death asserted its lordship over Adam and over all who have followed in his fallen image. But in Christ, life reigns over death for Jesus is the King of Righteousness!

We'll now sing verse 6 of “All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall” Hymn 378 . . .

**We thank you, Christ; new life is ours,
New light, new hope, new strength, new powers;
This grace our every way attend
Until we reach our journey's end.**

Spengler's Reformation era hymn, like our text, ends with a doxology—a hymn of praise—for in Christ Jesus new life—abundant life—everlasting life—is ours! We are no longer under the reign of sin and death, cowering under God's wrath. We have another Lord who rules over us with His forgiveness, giving us reason to rejoice with “**new light, new hope, new strength (and) new powers.**” Adam's destiny was death, until God mercifully intervened by giving him the promise of a Savior to come. That Savior came in the person of God's Son, who took on our flesh and blood. In Christ, we have another destiny: His righteousness and His resurrection to a new and glorious life at His side in the mansions of His Father's heavenly home! Yes, “[thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!](#)” (1 Cor. 15:57). Amen.