

The offence of one

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Date: 01 January 2000

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- [0 : 00] Now let us turn our thoughts this morning to Romans chapter 5. For guiding our thoughts we take verse 18. Romans chapter 5 verse 18.
- Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. Even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.
- Now as we read through the Bible it tells us about God. And the Bible reveals to us who God is, what kind of a God he is.
- It shows to us how God is the creator of our universe. And how God has made each one of us. Now when we study the doctrine of God in his creative activity.
- We discover that when God made man. God made man vastly different from what man is like today. We must always remember that when God makes anything.
- [1 : 12] He makes it perfect. There is never a flaw in anything that God makes. And when you and I look at the world today and we see its imperfections.
- Let us remember that these imperfections in the world are the results of sin. And when we look at men in their physical constitution.
- They are vastly different today from what Adam was like when he was first made by God. Because within us all, even from the youngest, right on to the oldest, within us all there are the seeds of death.
- We look at a tiny infant and we may say to ourselves, well what perfection. You look at the tiny hands, the tiny feet, the tiny head, the tiny body.
- You say to yourself, as you look at its skin so new, so unmarked, so unlined. What perfection. And yet you know that within that tiny infant there are the seeds of mortality.
- [2 : 21] It's going to die. Sooner or later it's going to die like the rest. Now why is there this imperfection? Well it's all, it all goes back, you see, to the scarring that sin has done to the world and to the world of men.
- At the very beginning, when we read the story of God's creative activity, after he had finished the work of creation, the work of men, it says God saw everything that he had made.
- And behold it was very good. Adam was a miniature of God himself.
- Adam was a miniature of God himself. Think of what it says in the short of catechism. I think that it's because we've probably got away from the short of catechism and away from the instructive teaching of the catechism that we are so hopelessly at sea sometimes in our theological thinking.
- But let's go back to what it says in the short of catechism about the creation of man. This is what the short of catechism says. That man at the beginning was created in knowledge, in righteousness and holiness with dominion over the creature.
- [4 : 00] Now when you consider all these statements, man, knowledge, righteousness, holiness, superiority, dominion over the creature, don't you see that he's just a miniature of God?

Because this is precisely what God is like in his character. God is a God of knowledge. God is a God of righteousness.

God is a God of holiness. God is a God of superiority, having dominion over all things. And when these Westminster divines frame the answer to the question about man, how correct they were, as they summed up what man was like, he was just like God himself at the very beginning.

Man was perfect. He wasn't a half human, half brute creature, that the evolutionist of today declares him to have been.

When you and I go and look at the school books of today, or perhaps the texts that are on some walls, I'm not saying all schools are like this, but some schools are, the picture that is given to you of man is that here he is, he's half a brute.

[5 : 34] A revolting sort of creature. And he has evolved from this primitive pattern upwards to what he's like today. That's not what the Bible says.

The Bible says that man today is half. Indeed he's not even half of what he was like at the beginning. You see, at the beginning man's physique was perfect.

We sometimes look at a great athlete who's trained himself to almost what we would call perfection. Here he is, he's got a magnificent body, he's got tremendous reserves of energy.

You watch and he walks out onto the track there and you say to yourself, my, isn't he a perfect specimen of manhood? But he's nothing like what Adam was at the beginning.

Remember that. Or again we might admire some man as we consider how great he is in his faculties.

[6 : 50] Might be he's got a tremendous brain, tremendous thinking capacity, tremendous capacity for various things, a disposition for various things to do in life.

Makes him a great person. He can give a great contribution to society. But let's remember that no matter how great he is as you and I look at him today, he's nothing to what Adam was like at the beginning.

As it tells us in the book of Ecclesiastes and it's the wise man writing there, he says, God made man upright. In every sense of the word upright, God made man upright.

But they have sought out many inventions. Well, God's work in the creation of man at the beginning was that man was created in man.

moral excellence. But you see, man has unmade himself through sin. And man has involved himself in the consequences, the disastrous consequences of sin.

[8 : 09] Now here is Paul and he is speaking to us about man, the fall of man. He is telling us, you see, that man has fallen in Adam.

That one man is responsible for the damage that is done to the world of men today. But he is also speaking to us here of our restoration in Christ.

Let's look at it. Therefore he says in his argument, as by the offence of one, it was one man's offence, as by the offence of one, of one man's disobedience, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.

You see, judgment came because of that one man's offence. Judgment came to condemnation. Even so, is Paul's argument, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

Now let's think of that. Here is Paul and he is speaking about our fall in Adam. We go back now. We go back to the story of man at the beginning which is recorded for us in the third chapter of the book of Genesis.

- [9 : 41] Now in that story of Adam in the book of Genesis, let's remember this, that Adam at that stage wasn't like us. There was nothing in the mind of Adam in his innocence.
- To move him to do an evil action more than a good one. Adam at that period in his life was in a state of ethical and moral excellence.
- His faculties weren't depraved. You see, with regard to you and with regard to myself, there is a disposition in us to do evil.
- As we have said on many occasions we don't have to teach our children to sin, do we? Here's a little child. You don't have to teach this child to sin. The child will come to sin itself in time.
- It won't be very long as that child develops before it will show you tendencies within it to violence. It won't be very long before you will see within that child the tendencies to lie, to disobey.
- [11 : 05] And this is because there is something wrong with the child. There is a disposition in the child to do wrong. But you see, it wasn't like that with Adam.
- There was no disposition in his inner being to do anything wrong. No tendency, no pull. You see, this is the thing about sin.
- You know, it's like a magnet. Boys know what magnets are. And I suppose all the men folks here would know what it was like when they were boys.
- They had magnets. Brown piece of metal. Metal which set up a force that attracted other metals to it. And as you took little pieces of filings or other things that might be nails, you took the magnet and you hovered the magnet over these things and suddenly there was an attraction.
- These filings, these nails were suddenly attracted by this force that had been set up above them and they were drawn till they stuck together.
- [12 : 19] You see, that's what it's like with sin. It has a magnetic tendency. It draws us and we have pulled towards it.
- But with Adam there was no pull. And in the garden of paradise where God set him, God imposed upon him a test of obedience and it was a very simple test.
- There was nothing complicated in the test. test. There was nothing beyond the capacity or the ability of Adam in the test. It was a simple test.
- A test of obedience. Here in this garden God said to him you are allowed unlimited scope and freedom in this garden to eat of the many trees that are here.
- But God said you see this tree? Now you mustn't touch it. The test is as simple as that. You mustn't touch that tree. On the day you eat thereof you will die.
- [13 : 30] In other words God is saying to Adam I demand from you Adam implicit obedience. You mustn't transgress. You mustn't overstep the bounds.
- You must keep within what I say. Now this is what we call the covenant of works in theology. And had Adam succeeded the gains would have been immeasurable.
- He would have secured for himself an existence without impediment or without termination. But Adam failed the God imposed test.
- He gave way to the voice of the devil. And once you see Adam gave way to the voice of the devil he ceased to be a miniature of God.
- He ceased to be like God. He now became more like the devil. The image you see was marred beyond recognition.
- [14 : 48] God had made man in his own image. But once man had given way to the voice of the devil, he ceased to be like God. The image was marred.

Marred beyond recognition. And you know the results. Adam was driven from the garden. God said Adam, I gave you life.

I put you here and I gave you life, but now you have destroyed it. You die. And to the woman I gave you to be his companion, I asked you to be fruitful, to multiply, to bring forth a race.

But now in labor you will bring forth children in pain, in distress. And to the serpent that was used by the devil, God says to it, Upon thy belly shalt thou go, dust shalt thou eat all the days of your life.

And the very ground is cursed. It was disastrous you see what had happened in the garden of paradise.

[16 : 07] The existence of man was now placed within severe restrictions. The existence of man was now subject to misery and to pain.

Life on earth was to terminate in death. And so from a state of pristine glory man was reduced to a condition of ratcheadness and despair.

But you will say what has Adam's sin got to do with me? I wasn't there. Why tie me up with Adam?

Well you see Paul tells us this that Adam's sin has got everything to do with us. Now for Paul Adam was no myth.

Adam as many people are saying Adam is today. Adam was a real historical figure. Adam was the first man.

[17 : 13] He was more than that. He was mankind. In other words all humanity is linked to Adam, is descended from Adam.

And more than that all humanity was in Adam when Adam rebelled and when Adam sinned. Just as Abraham carried the children of Israel in his loins before the children of Israel were ever there.

And when God made a covenant you see with Abraham it wasn't just with Abraham he made the covenant it was with the descendants of Abraham. And in the same way when God made a covenant with Adam it wasn't just for Adam God made the covenant it was for all his descendants for the whole human race.

And because of what Adam did sin invaded the world and consequently sin brought ruin and death to all.

Now how do we know that we are all linked together in a common bond with Adam and that we are all in this ruined condition? Well Paul argues it here from the case of the infant.

[18 : 41] Now let's go back to the infant we were speaking about the infant earlier on. Here is an infant. You see it in its cot and this tiny infant has never lifted up its fist in any act of violence.

It hasn't uttered a word that you could say is sinful. In its tiny brain it hasn't thought evil thoughts as you think evil thoughts and as I think evil thoughts.

And to all intents and purposes this infant is innocent innocent of practical sin. But unfortunately this infant suffers.

It's in pain. You see it in pain. Why is it in pain? Unfortunately it may be even worse than that this tiny infant dies.

It's a very distressing thing to be at a death where an infant is involved and to see a father carrying this tiny white casket in his arms as he goes to the cemetery to lay to rest.

[20 : 13] You feel heart sorry for him. Why is it then that this infant dies?

If it hasn't sinned in a practical sense in the way other people like ourselves have sinned, why is it that it dies? It must be guilty of some sin. What sin is it guilty of?

It's guilty of the sin which we call original sin. The sin of Adam. You know, if you were in the company of Roman Catholics for a while, you would be amazed at the knowledge that a Catholic boy or girl has of original sin.

This is where I think that we failed in the Protestant church. You don't need to tell. You take for instance a little Protestant boy going to school there, one of the schools in Inverness.

You think he would know better, but here he is, he goes to the schools in Inverness and you say to this little boy, do you know what original sin is? He looks at you. He hardly knows what sin is, let alone original sin.

[21 : 39] But you ask a little Catholic boy, do you know what original sin is? He'll tell you. So you see, we come back to the doctrine of original sin.

And this tiny infant has died because it is guilty of sin. It's guilty of the sin that it committed in Adam. You see, I find that difficult to understand.

Nonetheless, it's true. There are many things that we don't understand but they're true nonetheless. Now, none of us are guilty of the various sins that Adam committed after his disaster in the Garden of Eden.

He is alone responsible for these sins. But we are all involved with Adam in that first transgression and we suffer the inevitable consequences condemnation and death.

And from the time of the fall in the Garden of Eden Adam could only produce a fallen humanity and this is what David laments he says behold he says I was shaped in in in in in in in in sin did my mother conceive me and as I have said on other occasions David is not saying that his mother because she conceived a child was a sinner there's no sin in conceiving children that's not what David was lamenting David was lamenting the fact that his mother was a fallen daughter of Adam and because she was a fallen daughter of Adam she could only produce a fallen son like himself like David was you go back to the story in the book of Genesis and you know after the fall this is what you read

[23 : 50] Adam it says begat a son and note this Adam begat a son in his own likeness after his image you see it doesn't say that Adam begat a son in the image of God that was the image in which he had been created he couldn't produce a son in the image of God now that he had lost the image and so it says Adam produced a son in his own likeness after his image and it's the same with us all we have children we have families we produce these families and what are they like they're just like ourselves fallen sinful Paul then says that we are involved with

Adam in his offense with Adam we stand before God condemned through Adam we consequently die it's the doctrine of the solidarity of human race in Adam we are not like islands in isolation on our own we are all linked together in a common bond as the apostle Paul tells us we are all made of one blood God made all nations of one blood so whether we are black whether we are white whether we are red whatever the color of our skin may be we're still one blood and we all stand before God condemned and condemned not only for being estranged from God through Adam but condemned now more so for the sins that we have committed in ourselves sins that we have done willingly sins that we have taken pleasure in doing you see this is the thing it's not that

I'm unwilling as a sinner to sin I'm willing all the time I'm perfectly willing to sin and it's not only that but I take pleasure in doing sin it's not that I hate doing this sinful thing only grace makes me hate doing sin but in my natural condition as a sinner I take pleasure in sinning and what is the condemnation well says God the soul that sinneth it shall die and so die we must as someone has put it I have a rendezvous with death I shall not fail my rendezvous but we go on from looking at our fallen Adam just to looking quickly at our restoration in Christ Paul says here as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation even so he says just in the same way as our condemnation took place in one man even so by the righteousness of one that is by the righteousness of another the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life now in the

Old Testament we notice that replacement takes place when important historical figures are removed from the earthly scene for instance David had two sons Cain and Abel now you know the story that Abel died who then takes Abel's place well Seth takes the place of Abel then we can think of Joshua and Moses now Moses dies who takes Moses place it's Joshua David replaces Saul Elisha replaces Elijah now the question is who replaces Adam and Paul's answer to that question is that it's Jesus Christ here is Adam he says no one can really take his place none of his children the one man who takes the place of

Adam is Jesus Christ we noted in connection with Adam how he failed miserably in the covenant of works by disobeying God by defying his creator and in defying his creator he became alienated from God consequently became the object of God's wrath and displeasure now Christ Jesus is as Paul tells us the last Adam the second man to Paul there are only two men the first man and the second man Adam and Jesus Christ Jesus Christ then is the last Adam and he came to fulfill the covenant of grace and he did this magnificently he came to put right the damage that had been caused by the first Adam the first

[29 : 41] Adam you see was disobedient to God failed to render the obedience that was necessary now what did Jesus Christ do he fulfilled the obedience of God to do thy will says Christ as we were singing that psalm to do thy will I take delight O thou my God that art I delight to do thy will O my God yea thy law is within my heart you know if you take the ten commandments which we all ought to obey but which we can't obey because of our fallen nature you know that these commandments are the ten basic principles for governing human life you look at each of these ten commandments and you will come to this conclusion that these are the ten things that we ought to do these are the ten controlling principles and these are the ten controlling principles that

God gave us at the beginning long before Moses God placed them in the heart of Adam but these are the ten principles that we break thou shalt have no other gods beside me we've broken it we've had other gods thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image but we've had graven images we've been idolaters thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain but we have taken God's name in vain remember the sabbath day to keep it holy but we've broken the sabbath day honor thy father and thy mother have we honored our fathers and mothers thou shalt not kill whosoever hateth his brother murder we have hated haven't we thou shalt not commit adultery

Jesus says whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart we have committed adultery thou shalt not steal we have stolen in one form or another thou shalt not covet but we have coveted so you see here are these ten basic principles and as we examine them and as we say to ourselves we kept them we have broken them ah but look at Christ he kept them all and that is our righteousness this is the righteousness of Christ which is handed over to us if we come to him and having broken God's law you see we have got to die but thank

God that this is why Christ died on the cross to make satisfaction for our infringement for God's broken law and when Christ died on that cross he died upon that cross because he was dying your death and my death if we belong to Christ and that's what Paul means when he says I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ lives in me now once I'm in Christ God sees me as having fulfilled his law in his son God sees me as having met the requirements of that broken law in his son after a person has been found guilty of something and made satisfaction for it the law can't come along and say to that person now you didn't really satisfy me at all so we'll put you back into prison no the law is satisfied that's the end of it and in the same way when we come to

Christ this is what God says he says now that's the end of it you are in my son in my son you've made satisfaction for all that you have had to make satisfaction for as far as the broken law is concerned you've given obedience to the law as far as God is concerned this is what Paul is arguing even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men and of course there is a qualification on the all men here upon all men unto justification of life just as there was a solidarity of the human race with Adam in his transgressions so there is a solidarity of the elect people of God with Christ and his righteousness what a transfer then takes place in the case of God's elect people through their union with Christ their sins

[35 : 24] God's elect people their sins are imputed to Christ and his righteousness is imputed to them this is the transfer you see their sins their unrighteousness it goes to him his righteousness his perfection goes to them and so they are justified before God pronounced as free from sin as the shorter catechism puts it with regard to justification justification is an act of God's free grace wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of

Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone how beautifully these Westminster divines put it the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone well we must really come to a close through our union with Adam we are constituted sinners not only some but all we are all members of an apostate race we are all children of rebellious parents we are all estranged from God from the womb no race can claim superiority over another race as far as godliness is concerned all races are the same because all have the same origin the apostasy is the same the disposition is the same but through our union with

Christ the elect people of God are constituted righteous and they are seen without spot in the eyes of God they are members of God's kingdom they belong to a new race a new humanity instead of self being at the center of their lives God God is now at the center Thomas Chambers the great free church leader used to put it like this the expulsive power of a new affection takes over the expulsive power of a new affection the all goes out a new power and a new affection comes in and so we now have a disposition God works there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in

Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit or you might say well why is it that Christian people God's people have to die if that's the case why you see it's like the seed which you cast into the ground which comes up into new life here you see is the farmer he goes out there in the spring he casts the seed in the field here is this seed and it falls into the ground and it dies is no because you see when the harvest comes round look do you see the golden sheaves waving in the autumn breeze so it is with the Christian his worn out body dies but that worn out body is replaced by newness of life and then at the resurrection the body that was sown in dishonor is raised in glory it was sown in mortality it's raised in power you see what was lost by us in

Adam has been recovered and indeed much more in Christ Jesus for if by one man so thanks death reign by one much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ you know Thomas Goodwin was a Puritan and he tells us that in the eyes of God there are two men Adam and Jesus Christ these two men says Thomas Goodwin have all other men hanging at their girdle strings now the question for you and for me today is this to whom do you belong Adam the first are you dangling as it were at his girdle strings or

[41 : 09] Adam the second are you in Christ if you are in old Adam oh well what's left for you death the grave damnation that's all but if you are in Christ what's left for you life life more abundant resurrection glory who wants to be in old Adam my friend make your calling and election sure by seeing to it that you are in Christ let us pray oh lord our god we thank thee for thy word of truth we bless thee for every encouragement given to those dead in trespasses and sins to close in with the offer of peace that thou art making to men in

Christ thy son come unto me all ye that weary and are heavy laden and I will give you rest thou art saying to us as thou didst say to thine ancient people of old why will ye die O house of Israel return unto me and I will return unto you we pray thee O Lord to be with us throughout the remainder of thy day and when we gather here in the evening may we have thy blessing resting upon us at the evening service and pardon we pray our sins for Jesus sake Amen