

In one hand I hold a DVD. In the other a VHS tape. Right away you probably recognize some similarities. They're the same movie, they both serve as mediums to hold that movie so it can be watched later, and they both have sound and video recorded on them. But that's where the similarities end. They're completely different ways of recording. Don't ask me to explain it, but it's clear they use different technologies. They're different sizes, play in different machines, and are manipulated differently. While at first you notice things the same, really they're very different.

Paul this morning takes two well known Biblical characters, Adam and Jesus, and compares them. On the surface they have some similarities which he goes into. But their differences are much more important. In truth we have more in common with Adam than does Jesus. We live today following in the same footsteps that Adam took into sin. We feel the weight of God's demands and the guilt of not living up to them. Paul in his letter to the Romans explains how what happened in the garden with Adam and Eve reached all the way to March 13th, 2011. We see that by...

Comparing two Adams
Both have universal effects
One saves

Just about everyone here has used a copy machine. If you haven't you kind of know how one works. Whatever you put on the glass is going to be what comes out. So you can't put a sheet of paper with a mistake on the glass and hope that the copy won't have the mistake. The machine copies everything including the mistakes. Adam and Eve were formed and fashioned by God and placed into the garden. They were perfect. Because they were the first two people they served as the copy master for all the people that would follow after them.

Tragedy struck and Adam fell into sin. This ruined the perfection of the copy master. Now sinful, Adam and Eve would pass on to their children what they were. They were the copy master and all the copies of them after would be tainted. **"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned..."** It wasn't sin alone that Adam brought into the world. The second tragedy Paul points out was that he brought death in as well. In the blink of an eye every man, woman, and child that would come after Adam was infected with sin and destined to die. Adam's actions had universal effects.

We live with those universal effects every day. Our acts of disobedience mirror the disobedience of our first father Adam. To demonstrate how far we've fallen from God and how broken our relationship is with him Paul pointed to the people who lived after Adam but before Moses. **"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..."** These people had no laws to break and yet they sinned and died. Adam's sin brought total damnation to the entire human race of people all the way down to you and me. The long lasting effects of his sin are seen in every funeral you've ever been to. Death will claim each of us someday. A daily reminder we live under the curse of Adam. Sin is inherited and it's passed down without question. Adam's sin had universal consequences and it brought universal ruin.

Like Windows 7 replaced Windows Vista, Christ Jesus is like Adam 2.0. The second Adam arrived in the world with some parallels to the first. But the second was much better for he would be what the first Adam never could be. **"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."** Paul demonstrated that 100% of people die. Save for Enoch and Elijah every last person has perished in death. That's what the trespass of the one man did. But how much better is the gift of God's grace? So much that this gift overflows to the very same group that is condemned by the sin of the one man. 100% of people die. The grace brought by the one man, Jesus Christ, overflows to the same 100% of people. The second Adam's actions had the same universal effect as the first, but to an even higher degree.

Joyfully we count ourselves among that 100% that have received God's grace and are forgiven by the actions of the second Adam, Christ. We know that the sin inherited and passed down by the first Adam has been completely paid for by the second Adam. We did nothing to become sinners from birth yet we were, then we added to those sins plenty during a lifetime of sin. But Christ came and we did nothing to become forgiven or declared righteous. God declared us forgiven and made a promise we trust. We rejoice to live under the full and free forgiveness as God's wonderful love overflows to us who didn't deserve it.

There are times when lawmakers put together legislation that has far reaching applications. In fact it touches every single one of the citizens of this country. Those are usually the amendments and the rights given in the constitution and bill of rights. These have universal application. But then there are those laws which legislators put together that are written for certain segments of people. Both Adam and Christ Jesus did actions that had universal effects. But only one took the next step and actually had a positive impact because only Jesus saves.

Paul's letter to the Romans takes us right back to the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve first did battle with that sly snake called Satan. You remember how that battle ended? **"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it."** It ended with total and complete defeat for the good guys. Adam and Eve didn't stand a chance going it alone. They didn't stand a chance against the lies and half truths of Satan without God. So Adam brought sin and death into the world. God would have to do something to get them out.

The second battle with Satan recorded in the Scriptures was what we heard in the gospel. It was Jesus standing all alone on the battlefield with Satan. Satan on the offensive and his temptations sound eerily similar to ones we've heard, **"If you are...if you are...all this I'll give you if you'll..."** The first Adam caved when Satan said similar things to him and brought sin and death to all. Judgment came after just one sin. The second Adam stood up to Satan's attacks. Jesus won the victory even after a great many sins had already been piled up. So many sins it seemed nothing could forgive them. **"The gift followed many trespasses and brought justification."** Satan was defeated and Jesus was victorious.

The hardest thing to believe is that you're a believer. Some of you are probably struggling with that thought right now? How can I know this all applies to me? What if Jesus missed some of my sins? It all sounds good, but almost too good to be true. Paul knows what you're thinking. **"Death reigned through one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace...reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. One trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. Through the disobedience of one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."** How many ways can God tell you that you're not guilty. That statement is true whether you believe it or not. Faith granted by the Holy Spirit finds a way to say even in spite of everything pointing to the contrary, I am not guilty because of what Christ has done. God's grace is in such abundance that it overwhelms and wins us to forgiveness and wins our hearts to faith and trust.

Back in 2004 the US Mint said that it minted 65 to 80 million coins a day. To accomplish this they needed copy masters. If even one detail was off hundreds of thousands of coins would be ruined very quickly. Adam started off perfect but became ruined. Because he was the copy master for the human race every last human being after him, including you and me was sinful. Not just a defect that could be erased, but a destructive flaw that brought death. God reassured us this could be reversed but it would take another Adam, a second Adam better than the first. His life and death had universal effects in that it provided forgiveness of sins and salvation for everyone. Jesus was that second Adam. Compare and see that God's grace is greater than our sin. Compare the two and see that Jesus is the Adam we needed to be saved.