Sermon Highlights

Two Federal Heads: Adam's Fall and Christ's Redemption

Summary:

Drawing from Romans 5:12-21, this sermon examines Paul's argument that all of humanity stands under one of two representative heads: Adam, through whom sin and spiritual death entered the world, or Jesus Christ, through whom grace and righteousness are freely given. Pastor Bruce Gordon emphasizes that before a person can truly understand salvation, they must first reckon with the reality of sin and their inherited spiritual condition under Adam. Just as all humanity was plunged into spiritual death through Adam's disobedience, all who receive the free gift of grace are made righteous through Christ's obedience. The sermon stresses that righteousness is not achieved through personal effort or adherence to a sacrificial system, but is imputed to believers by virtue of their union with Christ as their new federal head. Grace, like death, reigns as an absolute monarch, but it is a beneficent reign that leads to eternal life.

Key Points:

- Sin and spiritual death entered the world through one man, Adam, who serves as the representative federal head of all humanity

- Spiritual death, not merely physical death, is the primary consequence of Adam's sin, evidenced by humanity's separation from God

- All people are born spiritually dead and guilty before God not only because of personal sins but because of their inherited standing under Adam's federal headship

- The moral law existed before the Mosaic law and demonstrated sin's reign by the universality of death even among those who lived between Adam and Moses

- Jesus Christ is the second federal head, and His perfect obedience provides righteousness that is imputed to all who receive Him by faith

- Righteousness before God is not earned but received as a free gift through union with Christ

- Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, demonstrating the sufficiency of Christ's atoning work

- Grace reigns as an absolute monarch, ultimately overcoming the reign of death and leading believers to eternal life

- A solid, disciplined engagement with the Word of God is essential for spiritual growth and for standing firm in an ungodly world

Scripture Reference:

- Romans 5:12-21, which contrasts the consequences of Adam's disobedience with the gift of righteousness through Jesus Christ

- Romans 6:23, which identifies death as the wage of sin and eternal life as the free gift of God in Christ Jesus

- 2 Corinthians 5, which describes believers as new creations in Christ

- 1 Corinthians 15, which speaks of death as the last enemy to be destroyed

- Genesis 3, which records the fall of Adam and Eve and God's pronouncement of consequences upon each of them

Stories:

- The account of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, in which Adam directly disobeyed God's command not to eat of the forbidden fruit, bringing spiritual death upon the entire human race, illustrated by their hiding from God and fashioning coverings for themselves

- The biblical account of Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek, used to illustrate the principle that an entire future race can be considered present and represented in their ancestor

- Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane, submitting His will to the Father and declaring "not my will, but thine be done," presented as the defining act of obedience that stands in direct contrast to Adam's act of disobedience