“One Sin Versus One Act of Obedience”

April 29, 2018

Genesis 3:1-9

Find a Bible and please open with me to the 5th chapter of Romans. In a moment we will read three verses from it.

This is Crystal Paine. A few years back Crystal and her husband Jesse had planned to have friends over for dessert. Around 5:30 p.m. that day, Crystal cooked a meal for her family, cleaned things up and decided to take a shower before their friends arrived. Here’s what she says as she began.

“There was water in the tub from the kid’s baths much earlier in the day and when I went to pull the plug, instead of draining out like usual, the water backed up into the shower in *our* bathroom. That was problem number one. Next, the water began to flood both the shower and the bathroom floor. That was problem number two.

As I realized what was happening, I quickly mopped up the water that had flooded out onto the bathroom floor and hollered to my husband Jesse to come figure out how to drain out the tub and shower, which he finally did by sending snake down the drain. Ah! Problem solved. Right?

We hoped, of course, that we had prevented anything from leaking through the ceiling because we caught it as quickly as we did. And besides, we’d mopped it up right away. One more problem to solve.

Once that crisis was diverted, I finished getting ready — just minutes before our friends arrived for dessert.

Shortly after they got to our house, we noticed a drip of water onto the living room couch. Then, the ceiling in the living room beginning to bubble up. Then it began to drip a bit more seriously — right where we were all sitting!

At first it was just a slow drip, but then it started dripping at a faster rate. Pretty soon, we had towels and buckets and anything else we could find to catch the water. Jesse even stood on a chair and held a towel up on the ceiling for a while to catch a lot of the water dripping down.

I just stood there and smiled, laughed, and encouraged Jesse… because what else can you do when your ceiling is raining while you have company over and you’re not handy at all?

Then, problem number four; tearing pieces of the living room ceiling down. Finally, post-adventure, we got the dripping to stop and went back to our chatting, laughing, and dessert-eating.” [Found on <http://moneysavingmom.com> by Crystal Paine “A Day In My Life: Flooded Bathrooms, etc.”

Cute story. But one that has been repeated time and again when a bathtub or shower overflowed. I imagine you’ve got your own leaking bathtub story to tell.

So, today I’d like to say a word about things that overflow.

Things that overflow [show bathtub overflowing].

Here are just a few things that might overflow:

1. Your bathtub, if you aren’t careful
2. A Fountain
3. A cup that is being filled with coffee might overflow.
4. Your bathroom sink has an overflow outlet at the top.
5. A dam on a river after a long, steady rain might overflow.

There’s a word in your Bible that means “overflow.” It also means “excess and overflow.” And it’s translated by this word in our English Bibles; “abundance” as it is here in II Corinthians. II Corinthians 8:1 *“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; (2) how that in a great trial of affliction the* ***abundance*** *of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”*

Now, did you notice the second word that is also “overflow”? It’s the word “abounded.” II Corinthians 8:1 *“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; (2) how that in a great trial of affliction the* ***abundance*** *of their joy and their deep poverty* ***abounded*** *unto the riches of their liberality.”*

The Christian Churches in Greece were in deep poverty. Yet, because of the overflow of their joy in Christ, they took up a collection for the even poorer Christians in Jerusalem.

Now, just one more passage on abundance. Do you remember what the disciples did after Jesus had miraculously fed fifteen thousand hungry people who had been listening to Him teach? Here’s what happened after they’d all eaten. Matthew 14:20 *“And they did all eat, and were filled: and they [the disciples] took up of the fragments* ***that remained*** *twelve baskets full.”*

Here’s the word “abundance” translated by “that remained.” The entire crowd had been fed with two small fish and five small barley loaves [show picture]. Yet the Bible says that there was so much left over, so many fragments of the bread and fish that the disciples filled twelve baskets full during the cleanup.

Oh, I have one more. Do you remember the story of the Prodigal Son? Here’s what he said when he was out in the world, out away from the homestead Luke 15:17 *“And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!”*

Now, here’s another way abundance is translated in our English Bible. Luke 15:17 *“And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread* ***enough and to spare****, and I perish with hunger!”*

So, what’s on my heart today is this; “overflow,” “excess.”

Now, look with me at three verses here in this fifth chapter of Romans. Romans 5:15 *“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,* ***hath abounded*** *unto many.*

*(16) And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. (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.)”*

There’s something that God did that should make you never look at sin again the same way.

I’ve titled today’s sermon “One Sin Versus One Act of Obedience.” Shall we pray?

Paul takes us back to the Garden of Eden to bring our attention to sin. Do you remember from Genesis three how God responded to the sin of Adam and Eve? Can you tell us in one word what that response was? Here it is. “Abundance.”

It wasn’t enough that God extended His forgiveness to Mr. and Mrs. Adam. It wasn’t enough that He let them continue to live. It wasn’t enough that He blessed them with many sons and daughters. Nope, not God.

Instead, God answered sin with one word “abundance.”

Now, I hope you think this is crazy because it really is. God could have said to Adam *“Look, I know you made a mistake. I know you didn’t realize what you were doing. So, I’ll let it go this time. Just be more careful when it comes to disobedience and sin.”*

No, not God. Instead, God overflowed onto Adam and his posterity the one thing we needed beyond everything else; His grace; “abundance of grace.” 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.)”*

Who, but God, could have answered sin with grace? Who, but God, could have not merely forgiven Adam, but instead, showered down the abundance of His grace? Who, but God, has enough grace in His eternal heart to deal with sinners in grace?

I know a family with an offense problem. Something of significance happened between two siblings. Whatever it was, they have very few words between them. Do you think they are able to show grace to each other? Do you think you might show grace to someone who’s offended you? Do you think you might show abundant grace when someone has hurt you or sinned against you?

Folks, the answer to sin is grace. Most of us think that answer is retaliation. After all, doesn’t the Bible say “an eye for an eye”? Sometime you need to read the context of “an eye for an eye.”

So, look with me at what the Apostle Paul says on this matter.

First, says Paul, everything about Adam and Jesus is the total opposite.

Look down through these few verses and see the terms the Holy Spirit uses with Adam.

1. Verse 15 – the offence. The word “offence” means “trespass” and “sin.”
2. Through the offence of one, many be dead.
3. Verse 16 – one that sinned; that one is Adam.
4. Verse 16 – judgment
5. Verse 16 – condemnation
6. And verse 17 – death reigned

All of this describes Adam. Now, do the same thing with the Person of Jesus.

1. Verse 15 – the free gift
2. Verse 15 – the grace of God
3. Verse 15 – the gift by grace
4. Verse 15 – abounded
5. Verse 16 – the free gift
6. Verse 16 – justification
7. Verse 17 – abundance of grace
8. Gift of righteousness
9. And “reign in life”

There’s no greater contrast anywhere. The greatest contrast in existence is the one between Adam and Jesus. Sin, judgment, condemnation, and the reign of death versus the grace of God, righteousness, the gift by grace, and life.

Whatever is going on in your life right now needs to be seen in light of this contrast. Everything about Adam versus everything about Jesus. And, by the way, you are in some way, affected by both.

First, everything about Adam and Jesus is the total opposite.

Second, God’s only answer to sin and its effects is abundance, the abundance of His grace.

What God has done with sin is this. It’s an overflow of His heart. What did He do in response to the sin that Adam brought down upon the human race?

Here’s what He did. He sent His Only Son into the world to become a man, someone just like Adam. And then His Only Son was betrayed by one of His own followers. And His Only Son endured the mockery of six nighttime trials. And His Only Son was crucified on totally trumped up charges. He had never once said or done anything wrong. And, on the day He was crucified, His Only Son became sin. He became sin for us, He Who no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

II Corinthians 5:21 *“For he [the Father] hath made him [the Son] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*

God’s answer to sin is abundance, the abundance of His grace.

Look again at verse fifteen. Romans 5:15 *“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,* ***hath abounded*** *unto many.*

His only answer; the only answer to sin and its effects is abundance, the abundance of His grace, the overflow; the excess of His grace.

Folks, if there’s a major problem in your life, it likely has to do with sin. Why? Because it’s your sin that separates you from God. Yet, most of the human race, from all I’ve seen in my life and all I’ve read, thinks that the way to God is to quote “work harder to please God; after all, if we do enough good works to out-weigh the bad ones, we’ll get into Heaven.”

Well, that is totally false. You could never do enough good things to out-run or out-weigh your sins. Or, you might hear this. “Oh, I’ll just wait until I die and let God sort it out.” Well, that might work. Except for one thing. God has already provided a way for you to, not only have your sins removed, but to have your position before Him completely changed. He’s made a way for you to be cleansed from every sin and made righteous. It’s like He starts you out all over again and this time with the gift of His own righteousness.

First, everything about Adam and Jesus is the total opposite.

Second, God’s only answer to sin and its effects is abundance, the abundance of His grace.

Third, and last, says Paul, God loves to give free gifts; verse fifteen. Notice how many times Paul refers to this gift.

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God loves to give gifts? He does. And how do we know that? Because that’s what’s grace really is. God is a God of His grace, He gives. James 1:17 *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness [no variation], neither shadow of turning [no shifting shadow].”*

Everyone here *loves* to get gifts. We *like* to give gifts. But, we *love* to receive them. Yet, this particular gift, this gift of righteousness, we spurn. That means, we reject it. By nature, we don’t think we need it. We prefer *our* sin to *His* gift. We prefer *our* darkness to *His* Light. We prefer our *selves* to Himself.

And what has God done in dealing with your sin? What does He do with your guilt, your judgment, and even your death? He answers all that with a gift; a gift out of His mighty heart of love. God loves to give us His gifts. And what is this gift that God offers?

He gives the gift of righteousness. And here’s how He does it. He deals with you as a descendant of Adam. And what did we receive from Adam? We received sin. We got judgment. We got condemnation. And we got death. That’s your connection to Adam. You are a sinner, under God’s just condemnation. He has spoken specifically when He told Adam *“if you eat of this one tree, you will die.”* Adam ate that fruit and down came the cascade of sin, judgment, condemnation, and death. That’s your connection to Adam.

You see, your connection to Adam is so strong that God has to break through it with His love to get to your heart. And He broke through it by sending Christ to die in your place. And in response, God undoes it all with the gift of His grace. And now, what’s your connection to Christ? In Christ sin is dealt with. Condemnation is removed. Death is defeated. And righteousness replaces your unrighteousness. That’s how we come to be connected with Christ.

He gives. We receive. And we receive by faith alone. He gives the free gift of His own righteousness; a gift that God only He can give.

So, have you received the gift? Romans 6:23 *“For the wages of sin is death; but* ***the gift of God is eternal life*** *through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

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.)”*

And why is it free? Because works is the complete opposite of grace. Romans 11:6 *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*

Folks, this is the one thing that distinguishes Christianity from every other religion I know of. If you and I could attain righteousness by our own effort, then we’d have something to boast about before God. If it was by your good works and your personal effort, you could say “Look at what I have done.” And there would be no need for Jesus Christ, for the Cross, for Jesus to have died or to have risen from the grave.

Do you know the name Michael Bloomberg? Michael Bloomberg used to be the mayor of New York City. And he certainly did a lot for New York. But here’s what he said as to why he did what he did as a public servant of New Yorkers. As he pointed out many of his accomplishments as Mayor, he added this *“I am telling you if there is a God, when I get to heaven I’m not stopping to be interviewed. I am heading straight in. I have earned my place in heaven. It’s not even close.”* [Found on <https://cosmoscon.com> “You Can’t Earn Your Way To Heaven” by G.D. Thorn].

Yet, here’s Titus 3:5 *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; …”*

And, folks, if you are among those who believe that you can do it on your own, God would have to grant you His righteousness based upon your goodness and your effort, which is the exact opposite of what He tells us in His Word. Romans 11:6 *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*

Now, how can I get it? The very same way you get anything else that is free. You receive it. God gives you the gift of righteousness the moment you believe on Christ alone. Romans 3:22 *“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: …”*

One sin versus one act of obedience; Adam brought sin and death into the world, and Jesus in His death, has brought righteousness and life into the world.

First, everything about Adam and Jesus is the total opposite.

Second, God’s only answer to sin and its effects is abundance, the abundance of His grace.

Third, says Paul, God loves to give free gifts;

So, what will it be for you?

Will you receive the gift of righteousness? Will you trust Christ alone for your eternal security? God’s way is the only way.

Today, you need to acknowledge that your sin is what separates you from God. And today you need to repent of your sins and believe on the LORD Jesus Christ. And when you do that, you will be saved.

* To Repent - to change your mind about God, Christ, your sin, and God’s free gift of salvation.
* To Believe - to simply trust Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for your sins.

Have you repented? Are you believing on Christ alone for your Eternal Security? If not, why not?

Jesus Christ paid the penalty for every sin you ever

committed. He became your Substitute on the day He died on Calvary two thousand years ago. And today He’s offering you remission. Your entire sin record expunged.

This is the greatest news in all the world. The Father gave Only His Son to pay the penalty for all your sins. Jesus died on the Cross as your Substitute and He wants to be your Savior today. Won’t you cry out to Him for His free gift of salvation? What could possibly hold you back from having a saving relationship with your Creator?

Think about the LORD as the One Who loves you and delights to have you as His Child and to have you know and understand Him. He delighted in purchasing salvation in order to bring His forgiveness into your heart. John 3:16 *“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

Would you pray this prayer today? The Sinner’s Prayer. *“Father, I realize I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen”*

Jesus said, Revelation 3:20 *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him and he with Me.”*

Shall we pray?

Hymn # 578 “Trusting Jesus”

Additional story to be encouraged by.

Let’s imagine, for just a moment, that you make a huge mistake with your newborn baby.

“On March 24, 1820, a little girl was born to a couple in Putnam, New York. Even though they were poor, when their six-week-old daughter developed a cold and eye infection, the parents called for the doctor. The family doctor couldn't come, but another was sent in the physician's stead. The man prescribed that the baby's infection be treated with hot poultices. It was a terrible decision as the little girl was soon declared to be irreversibly blind. That tragedy of infancy was doubled by the death of the girl's father before she was a year old.

Eventually, the bright, blind girl went to school, gradu-ated, and fell in love. She and her husband were thrilled when their marriage was blessed with a little girl whom they named Frances. The daughter, Frances, died when she was but a baby.

Blinded by a doctor's negligence, robbed of a parent and a child by death, this woman could have spent her years agonizing about life's injustice, shaking her fist at heaven's unfairness. She could have, but she didn't.

About the physician who had blinded her, she later said, "If I could meet him now, I would say 'Thank you, thank you,' over and over again for making me blind." Fanny Crosby felt that her blindness had been a gift from God to help her write the 8,000 hymns, which flowed from her pen. Trusting in the love of the Christ who had died so she might live forever, Fanny Crosby knew that her pains had come so God could make her better -- not bitter. That's why she could write,

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Perfect submission, perfect delight! Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;

Angels descending bring from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest! I in my Savior am happy and blest,

Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with his goodness, lost in His love."

Frances Jane Crosby understood a loving God remains in control. She believed Paul who wrote to the persecuted church in Rome that "we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." She knew -- as all of God's people should know -- God has shown His love for us through the sacrifice of His Son.

In Jesus all who believe are given forgiveness, salvation, hope, and eternal life. Christians have no immunity from the anguish and agony of life, nor do they live untouched by suffering and sorrow. For these things are common to all men, including those who are redeemed by the crucified and risen Christ. But they also know that if God is for them, no one can successfully be against them.” [Found on <https://www.learnoutloud.com> by Ken Klaus].