

WHY ME? HELP AND HOPE FOR THE HURTING: FACTOR ONE

We Reap What Adam Sowed – The Curse/A Foundational Premise (continued)

Genesis chapter three reveals Adam and Eve's failed response to the test of submission and accountability imposed upon them by their Creator. Due to the organic connection between them and us, *their* failure became *our* failure. When they sinned against God, so did we! The apostle Paul confirms this cause and effect dynamic in Romans 5:12 –

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned. . .”

Adam not only failed as our parent, but as our representative. Had he passed the test, his success would have become our success. His singular, positive response in that crucial moment of testing, would have produced a comprehensive and favorable ripple effect upon the rest of human history. Unfortunately, Adam's response was anything but positive, and its disastrous impact has been felt by every one of us ever since, as stated in Romans 5:18a –

“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men . . .”

If you find all of the above difficult to absorb and accept, then consider the following examples involving a parent and a leader. First, a young woman is pregnant. A physical relationship exists between mother and child. However, as she carries this precious gift of life within her womb, the mother selfishly chooses to partake of alcohol throughout her pregnancy. The end result is that her child is born with birth defects that are the direct result of the mother's behavior, which in turn will adversely affect that child for the rest of his or her life. Yet, the irresponsibility of that one mother, and its impact upon her child, pales in comparison to the sinful decision of Adam and its influence upon each of us. In both instances, the consequence of the connection was impossible to avoid.

Second, imagine the captain of a football team calling a coin toss “tails” when it turns out to be “heads.” The captain represents the entire team and the negative effect of that wrong call has a bearing upon the entire team, whether for good or for ill, whether his teammates like it or not. In the same way, Adam was designated by God to be the captain of a team known as the human race and he made the wrong call. He chose to disobey God rather than obey Him. We, as his human race teammates, have been experiencing the consequences of his decision ever since.

The great pitfall of dealing with factor one suffering is the burden of false guilt. We instinctively blame ourselves for our afflictions and in many instances, we should. Yet there will be times in our lives when our adversities are not self-imposed. They come to us due to our membership in a lost and fallen human race. We suffer because of our unfavorable and inescapable existence under God's curse. The better we understand “factor one” suffering, the better we can cope with it, when it becomes a part of our personal experience.