

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

We Reap What Adam Sowed – The Curse/Chapter One: Our Human Condition

When Adam and Eve sinned against God, the impact was negative and comprehensive. The change for the worse which took place was both internal as well as external, physical and spiritual, vertical and horizontal. Internally, Adam and Eve became sinful in their very nature, resulting in a spiritual deadness that alienated them in their relationship with God (Genesis 3:8). Externally, their sin caused a curse to be placed upon the environment in which they lived (Genesis 3:17-19). Physically, they became subject to a deteriorating condition, resulting in death (Genesis 2:17; 5:5). If all of the above were not bad enough, their fallen condition also created the potential for a horizontal alienation with each other, as it did vertically with God.

All of this change for the worse isn't limited to Adam and Eve. It is conveyed to each of us as their descendants. The specific mechanism for how this takes place isn't known with any degree of certainty. However, based on two passages from the Old Testament, it is reasonable to assume that we inherit our human condition genetically. In Psalm 51:5 and 58:3, we read this –

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

“The wicked are estranged from the womb; these who speak lies go astray from birth.”

However, when it comes to the sin nature, the organic connection that exists between ourselves and Adam contains an important distinction. For Adam and Eve, a specific decision to sin resulted in their general condition of sin. For the rest of us it is reversed. As we are born into a general condition of sin; this results in specific decisions to sin. In other words, Adam and Eve sinned, and became sinners. In contrast, we are born sinners; consequently, we sin. You don't think so? Are you a parent? Did you ever have to teach your child to disobey? A vivid description of our fallen human condition and its adverse impact upon all of us is provided by the apostle Paul in Romans 3:9-18, where we read the following –

“What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, ‘There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their paths, and the path of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

In light of our human condition, the question everyone seems to ask at least once is this: “How can a loving God allow such evil to exist, continue and even grow?” God is love, but He is also a God of justice. His justice requires Him to impose and enforce the curse against each of us. In His love, God will one day lift the curse and the suffering that goes with it. Until then, one ugly reality of our cursed existence is that as fallen human beings, we are more than ready, willing and able, in word and in deed, to sinfully impose suffering upon one another.