**The Sunday after Pentecost**

**Sermon**

**Text:** Romans 5:12-15

***Theme:***God’s Gift of Salvation

 I started thinking about my Dad on Father’s Day. It has been almost one year since his passing. Then, last the weekend, my family had a very special family gathering at our cabin just on the other side of Crivitz. My brothers and their families , children, spouses, grand kids together with my mother met for the weekend. Lisa, Nathan and I went on Friday night. It was the first time in many years we were all together sitting around the fire pit that evening. But someone one was missing. Dad! As we sat chatting, laughing and telling stories around the fire, thunder began to rumble in the distance. My older brother jumped up and when to the garage. He came back with rope and a box of clear plastic. Some began to question what was going on, others laughed when someone said….”here comes the visqueen”. What is visqueen? Someone asked? That’s what Grandpa called it. The clear plastic used in construction projects. He always seemed to have rolls of it at home and took it camping. If there was rain, he would rope up the campsite, hang the visqueen and tarp the camp site with a hole in the middle for smoke from fire.

 So, the project began, suddenly I jumped up, my older brother and I was soon joined by my younger brother. We started to string up the visqueen. There was laughter, sarcastic comments on the project and a story telling about my Dad.

 We tried to imitate what had he done in the past. And there were the comments….”Just like their father”. Do you know the saying…”the apple doesn’t’ fall far from the tree! There was the laughter again when we finished, feeling proud in what we had accomplished, only to see that when the rain came there was only a few drops. We all laughed remembering Dad!

 I have been told many times I am turning into my father. I often would say no, there is a big difference between me and him, but I have been told I have the same mannerisms and often do the things he taught me to do…so I guess, it is true the “**apple does not fall far from the tree”.**

 In Romans today, we are reminded that the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Paul draws our attention to our first Father Adam. He shows what comes from the first man to each of us. But Paul also points out the contrast. This is between the first Adam and the second Adam, Jesus Christ. We will learn about the **gift of salvation.**  Paul will give us a big contrast, today, as we learn that “**The gift of salvation is not like the trespass!”**

To rightly understand ourselves, we must understand where we come from. I know I look and act like my Dad. In fact, my family may be convinced that this is a universal effect on my two brothers also. You are just like your father!

 But as far as Paul would be concerned here, we are all in the same boat on the question of where we come from. We are all descendants of Adam. **12So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned.**

 We are all “just like your father Adam. Though Adam was created in the image of God, as Genesis tells the generations after Adam, it makes it clear, were brought forth in Adam’s own (meaning, his sinful) image. And because of it we have death! But as far as God is concerned, we are all in the same boat.

 But there is a question you might have at this point , “what about Eve?”. Well, remember she too, came from Adam. But more importantly, Adam, as the head of the household, had the responsibility for his family. As the husband, he was to be the leader, protector, and provider. And in those responsibilities, he failed. He failed to stop Eve. He was right there with her. Listening to the devil!

 The thing is, no one escapes this. It is universal! All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God! Paul shows it with this. **13For even before the law was given, sin was in the world. Now, sin is not charged to one’s account if there is no law, 14and yet death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those whose sin was not like the transgression of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.** Even before the two stone tablets with the 10 commandments were given to Moses. We know there was sin in the world because death reigned. And now, even after the law is written, we still find ourselves born into the sin. It is inescapable, unavoidable, and completely predictable. We are just like our father Adam. Nobody is perfect. Everybody is a sinner. Like Father, like son and daughter. It’s the universal effect of Adam’s fall.

 Paul calls it a trespass. I noticed, here in our area, especially driving along roads in the north woods, you cannot throw a stone without hitting a “no-trespassing” sign. We all now what that means. “stay off my property”. But what does it mean when the bible uses it, or when we say it in the Lord’s Prayer?

 The Bible Dictionary explains trespass in this way. It is to pass over, to go beyond one's right in place, to injure another; any violation of law, civil or moral; it may relate to a person, a community, or the state, or to offenses against God.

 Just as Adam was a trespasser, going where he shouldn’t have gone, we too trespass God’s laws in our sin. And it’s not like we are born perfect and eventually become corrupted through life in this world. No, we are conceived in sin, born into it, and reek with it. It has become such a part of us that we can’t, imagine what it’s like to not be sinful. If there is a “no trespassing sign, our natural response in…yes I am going there!

 Now, what is the answer to the sin and death of the one man Adam? It is the one man Jesus Christ. **15But the gracious gift is not like Adam’s trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of this one man, it is even more certain that God’s grace, and the gift given by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, overflowed to the many!**

 I started the sermon talking about visqueen, and how my brothers and I seem to be so much like my father. We really love the things he passed down to us, yes even the visgueen. And it is a complement when someone says to me, you are like your father.

 Did you very notice this similarity between Adam and Jesus? Both Adam and Jesus Christ - the only two men -ever- not to have an earthly father. In both cases they have an universal effect. Adam’s sin affects everyone who is ever born. But Jesus’ universal effect is better – it is for everyone who ever was or will be born. This is the gift Christ brings- grace, mercy, peace – life in the face of death – forgiveness in the face of sin. **Thank God for this indescribable gift.** **Amen**

**Second Lesson**

**Romans 5:12–15**

12So then, just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned. 13For even before the law was given, sin was in the world. Now, sin is not charged to one’s account if there is no law, 14and yet death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those whose sin was not like the transgression of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

15But the gracious gift is not like Adam’s trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of this one man, it is even more certain that God’s grace, and the gift given by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ, overflowed to the many!