

Introduction

- <https://golf.com/instruction/rules/rory-mcilroy-banana-peel-relief/> Rory's unfortunate golf shot due to a banana peel - doubled bogey on hole - affected amount of money he would win.
- One fan's choice affected Rory's golf score. Doesn't seem fair but those are the rules. How often in life have you been affected by the choices of others? A bad financial choice by your spouse can affect if you can buy groceries or not. A bad choice by your children can affect if you're going to sleep well tonight. A bad choice by your coworker can affect if you have to work overtime instead of getting to go home early. Like it or not, fair or unfair, the choices of others can drastically affect your life.
- If you think about it, the direction of your life before you came to Jesus was affected by a choice one man made thousands of years ago. In the Garden of Eden, when Adam sinned, it had a drastic affect on your life.
- The choice Adam made affected your life, and the choices you make are affected by the choice of Adam.
- If we're honest, that doesn't feel fair.
Why should the mistake of one person so long ago shape my life today?
- But [Romans 5:12-21](#) tells us we can't escape the ripple effects of Adam's decision—broken relationships, sickness, conflict, and death all trace back to him.
- But there's good news—**Christmas is the story of another Man whose choice affects you even more powerfully than Adam's.**

- While this isn't a passage we usually associate with Christmas, [Romans 5](#) explains *why Christmas had to happen*.
If Adam's choice shaped your life with sin and death, Jesus' choice to come into the world reshapes your life with grace and life.
- Two truths from this passage to help you find purpose and joy in the life of Jesus.

Your life has been profoundly shaped by the sin of Adam.

- A difficult but powerful passage. This passage challenges our idea of fairness, but at the same time, this passage gives us so much Gospel hope.
- Paul just told us that we've been reconciled to God. We have peace with God. In vs. 12-14, Paul wants to make sure that we know WHY we were not at peace with God and WHY we were under his wrath - it's all because of Adam.
- vs. 12 - Sin entered the world through one man. In the Garden of Eden, Adam had everything: intimacy with God, the provisions of God, a beautiful wife, a beautiful place to live. He had one command from God - a direct command - to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- To eat from that tree was to rebel against God's clear command. Would Adam and Eve trust God? Or, would they think they knew better than God?
- A clear choice for Adam in the garden - and Adam chose to rebel. He transgressed a clear command. In that moment, sin entered the world, and nothing was ever the same. The consequence of Adam's sin was death, and sin and death spread to all men.

- vs. 13-14 - Sin in the world before God gave the Law. In other words, Adam and Eve had an explicit command. Israel would not be given explicit commands until Mt. Sinai, but that does not mean that sin did not abound before Mt. Sinai because everyone one has inherited a sinful nature.
- The doctrine of inherited/original sin - the moral corruption we possess as a consequence of Adam's sin - a sinful disposition towards God manifesting in habitually sinful behavior - that's what we inherited from Adam ([Psalm 51:5](#)).
- Example: Cain's sin nature on display in [Gen. 4](#). Cain murdered Abel before any written law existed, proving sin was already alive in the human heart.
- Another example: Humanity grew so wicked God sent the flood. Before the Law, people were living for themselves; not God. Sin and death reigned.
- vs. 13- Sin was not "charged" to a person's account before the law - Sin was still sin, but there was not the written law to expose sin. When God gave the law, sin was clearly defined as lawbreaking. The Law exposed how sinful we are so we could see our condition. We KNEW in black and white that we had crossed the line. The law turns sin into transgression - KNOWINGLY crossing the line.
- vs. 14 - Between Adam and Moses, no written law of God, but people still died. Why? Death reigned even though they did not sin like Adam (violate a direct command.) Adam's sin charged to the account of all humanity because of humanity was IN Adam when he sinned.
- Federal headship - Adam represented us. (Think about how elected officials represent us. They lobby for us, or they're supposed to lobby for their constituents.) Adam acted on our behalf. His guilt is our guilt, his death is our death, his sin nature becomes our sin nature.

- Federal headship means it's not because of your personal acts that you are a sinner, it's because you are born in Adam - you sin because of your nature. You weren't born innocent.
- Objection: "That's not fair!" Ok - what if it had been you? Do you think you would have done better? Who would you have put your money on to represent you instead of Adam? Do you think someone else would have done better than Adam? I'm your pastor. Would you have rather had me? (Bad news - I would have done what Adam did.)
- **Your deepest problem is one that you cannot fix.** Bad news - but our reality - you can't change your nature ([Ephesians 2:3](#)).
- **Your deepest problem has profoundly shaped your life.**
 - Because of our sin nature:
 - We live in constant fear.
 - We feel the guilt of our sin.
 - We struggle with frustration over life.
 - We constantly crave the approval of others.
 - We embrace selfishness.
 - We can't escape the brokenness of this world and how it affects us emotionally, spiritually, physically. (We're worn down by sin.)

Your life can be profoundly reshaped by the sinless life of Jesus.

- vs. 14 - Adam a TYPE of the Coming One. Adam points us to a better Federal Head - One that represents us to impute righteousness to our lives INSTEAD of sin.

- vs. 15 - the gift is NOT like the trespass. Adam's trespass wreaked havoc on the entire human race where God's gift of His Son brings life **INSTEAD OF DEATH** for all who believe. Imagery - grace overflows to the many - grace that does not run out - grace that is sufficient to overcome your sin nature so you can have a new nature.
- Jesus changes our status before God as well as our eternal destiny.
- vs. 16 - In Adam, we have judgement, condemnation. In Jesus, justification (declared righteousness.)
- vs. 17-18 - Through one representative, death reigned. How much more through the incarnate Son of God might life reign. So much so, that when Christ returns there will be no more death. Jesus will put death to death once and for all.
- Life for everyone = everyone who believes. You have to choose who will represent you before the God of all creation - Adam or Jesus? (vs. 19 - many will be made righteous)
- vs. 19-21 - Adam's act was disastrous, but the act of Jesus was saved us.
- Through one man's obedience the curse of Adam was reversed. Theologians like to talk about the active obedience of Jesus. Active obedience of Jesus refers to His entire life of perfect, sinless obedience to God's law for us. We could not be given the gift of the righteousness of Jesus unless He was actually righteous - unless He actually did what Adam was unable to do.
- Theologians also talk about the passive obedience of Jesus. Passive obedience was Jesus' willingness to surrender to His Father's plan of death on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins.
- At the cross, the **ONE** who represents us as our federal head - took the curse of Adam upon Himself. In an act of rebellion, Adam ate of a tree because he did not trust that God's will for his life was good. In

an act of obedience, Jesus said to His Father, “Not my will, but your will be done,” and willingly hung on the tree to take on the curse of death so that ultimately the curse could be reversed.

- vs. 20-21 - The law came along to multiply the trespass. The law did not create sin, but it intensified sin by making it obvious. In a sense, it “multiplies” the obviousness of sin. However, Jesus came to make the grace of God even more obvious than the depths of sin. Jesus “multiplies” the obviousness of God’s grace. Grace “super-multiplies.”
- Glorious truth demonstrated to us in our Federal Head - Jesus Christ - you cannot out-sin the grace of God.
- In God’s grace, we see that God not only forgives, He reigns, and He invites you into His gracious reign as He gives you new life, a new nature, new hope, new desires, a new identity, and ultimately eternal life. This is all a gift from God through Jesus, our representative.
- This is the Christmas story - the WORD became flesh and dwelt among us. The CREATOR came into HIS creation that we broke, and He came with ONE purpose - to restore what we broke - to set it all right. He died on the sixth day (the same day of the week Adam was created). He rose on the first day (the day the earth was created) pointing to Jesus as the author of new life and new creation. The Christmas story had to happen so we could be gloriously saved.
- Our Savior King will return for His people and bring us into a new heaven and new earth. Someday, the curse of sin and death will finally be gone.
- **Grace can’t reshape you if you don’t receive it.** God’s grace available to all but not received by all. Unfortunately, this free gift is often rejected. What about you? Have you received this free gift of grace? Again, you will either choose to follow Adam (the way to death) or Jesus (the way to life). What will you choose? Today, will

you choose to repent of your sins and place your faith in the One who lived, died, and rose again for you?

- **Grace can't reshape you if you don't let it train you ([Titus 2:11-12](#)).**
- Grace is NOT just a past event. It's the ongoing unmerited favor of God in your life. Never a day where you don't need grace, and never a day where grace is not active in your life pointing you to Jesus.
- In God's grace, He gives you daily opportunity to live for Him by the power of His Spirit.
- How do you let grace train you?
 - **Develop the habit of perspective.** What do you tell yourself about who you are and what God has done for you? (I'm guilty vs. I'm free. I'm fearful vs. I have nothing to fear. I need approval vs. I am approved.)
 - **Develop the habit of immersion.** You will either immerse yourself in the stench of death or the aroma of life. This is why Paul tells us to think on the things of God ([Philippians 4:8-9](#)). Some of us claim Christ but smell like death. What do you need to flee from? What do you need to turn off? What do you need to turn to? What needs to be silenced in your life?
 - **Develop the habit of confession.** Don't overlook your sin. When you choose to sin, you are running back to what Jesus died for. You're going back to Adam instead of remaining in Christ. When you sin, confess it. The habit of confession grows you in dependency and intimacy with the Lord.
 - **Develop the habit of presence.** Who you spend the most time with will be who you become like. This is why you need time with the Lord and time with believers who are passionate about pursuing Him. What if you read through one of the Gospels this

Christmas? What if you finally joined that Life Connection Group? What if you intentionally prayed for a missionary family or someone on your oikos every day? What if you developed the habit of actually being with God just for the sake of intimacy with Him?

- Follower of Jesus, what habits do you need to develop that will help you grow in the grace that God has given you in Jesus Christ?