

“Jesus Heals our Sin-Sickness” - Romans 5:12-15

Today our meditation is from the Epistle to the Romans 5:12-15, which was read before. Let us pray: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, Oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.” Amen

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Dear friends in Christ in June 2015, “The Canadian Red Cross Society pleaded guilty in Ontario Superior Court to distributing blood tainted with HIV virus and Hepatitis C virus to hemophilia patients in 1980's and early 1990s. As estimated, as many as 1000 patients got infected with HIV and more than 20,000 with Hepatitis C as a result of using the tainted blood. The tainted blood is believed to have killed about 3,000 patients.” In our day and age we are more aware of diseases passed on by bacteria and viruses and the like than ever before. Today, we understand well how these things get “passed on.” In fact, there seems to be something mentioned in the news everyday about some disease or outbreak.

Yes, we are very aware of how disease gets passed along. If you have a cold or flu you do your best to stay away from friends, co-workers and spouses. When my wife or I had a cold I always go to sleep to another room, and avoid each other as much as we can, but we still get sick. When I go to visit a member at the hospital sometimes I need to wear a gown, a mask and gloves to enter the room where the patient is lying on bed.

I think you know that mosquitos not only are annoying, and they bite you and your skin become itchy, but they can also spread chikungunya, Zika or dengue viruses after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Speaking about Chikungunya virus, it appears that this virus, transmitted by mosquitos, seldom harm infants of mothers infected early in pregnancy, but can it frequently cause serious problems, including lasting brain injury, in babies born to mothers who acquire the virus near the time of delivery.

The Apostle Paul says in the text of today: **Romans 5:12** *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned”* Through Adam the deadly disease of sin was brought into the world and into humanity. This sin separated humanity from God.

So, what does this mean? Well friends, let's get personal. Through Adam the deadly disease of sin has been passed on to YOU. This sin has separated YOU from God. YOU have this deadly disease. In God's eyes you are tainted. In God's eyes you are sick and

diseased. In God's eyes you are untouchable. In God's eyes you are deserving of death and eternal punishment. Now, some choose to deny this biblical truth. There are some churches that wrongly deny that the Bible teaches this. But I do not want to dwell on that this morning, although it is very important and it is very dangerous to deny something that the Bible clearly teaches.

This morning I want us to consider how this happens even among ourselves. We think to ourselves: I'm not sick with sin, I will just try harder. I go to church every week, I'm not that bad. Come on, we are not all that bad. Are not we encouraged to put our trust in the innate goodness of mankind? We all seem to think this way. We seem to naturally rebel and reject the truth that we are sin-sick. I do. You do.

If you are unsure, if you doubt what I am saying, I want you to try this little test this week: I want you to pledge this week to be more virtuous. I mean to really try to: Love one another. Do not even think badly of someone. To be selfless. I want you to truly, truly try to be more virtuous. You will find, as did C.S. Lewis did who did this, that you have this terrible sin-disease and it influences in every way and in ways in which you are unaware. I am not saying that we should not try to be virtuous. I am saying that we should realize that we are not on our own virtuous.

And about the innate goodness of mankind. Talk to someone who survived the Holocaust. Talk to someone from Syria, Ukraine, Africa, from all those countries ravaged by war. Talk to someone in Iraq both pre and post Sadam Hussein. Read a little history and you will find that history is made up mainly of mankind doing dreadful things to one another.

Friends, the terrible truth, the naked fact, is this: We are all tainted with sin. We are all dying of this terrible disease. You and I have this disease and are dying from sin. And Yes, children also have this disease called sin. The King David writes in Psalm 51:5: **Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.**" We adults, to mention one example, have difficulty in sharing things with others. Children do the same. They have a difficult time to share toys with others. "They are equip with the strong, built in "want" quality. They have a strong sense of what is "mine" and they think everything is theirs." There is no difference in how they behave and us.

However, unlike the tragedy of those who were infected by HIV and Hepatitis C tainted blood and died without a cure. We by the grace of God have been given a cure for the terrible disease of sin. By the grace of God through the Law we are aware of our sin-

disease and our need for healing. When you come to this realization, this understanding of your sin-sickness... rejoice! For this is the work of the Holy Spirit in you making you aware of your need for healing.

Friends, you will not seek a cure if you do not know you are sick. The Holy Spirit through God's Word works in your heart to make you aware of your need. We read in Matthew 9:10-13: *"While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and 'sinners' came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?' On hearing this, Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"*

Here we see our Lord making use of sarcasm! He says *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick"* and *"For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."* There are no healthy! There are no righteous! This is our Lord's point! However, if a person thinks they are healthy, if a person thinks they are righteous, they will have no use for Jesus.

So, if you realize you are sick with sin, if you realize that you need forgiveness, then give thanks to God! For as Jesus says, He has come for you! That is what St. Paul is telling us this morning! Jesus came to heal us of our sin-sickness. Jesus came to kill death. How? He became sick. He took within Himself all the bacteria, all the virus of sin, and took it with Him to the grave. Only Jesus rose from the dead, sin and death did not! The disease of sin has been cured and this "medicine of immortality" is made available to all! To you and to me. Thanks be to God.

We live in a world where there are more and more drugs available for more and more ailments. Just watch TV some night and watch how many ads are for new drugs to heal you of some ailment. As many of you are aware, prescription drugs are very costly. There are some who are unable to afford the cost. However, this cure for sin, this cure for death, is free! It is given freely by Jesus. We receive it through faith! And it is given to all who are made of human flesh. Through faith we receive this blessed medicine in: Word, Sacrament, and Church. That is why we gather here each week: To receive the medicine we all desperately need.

We do not gather here to be entertained. We do not gather to hear about 10 ways to be a better mother or father or about better finance. We come here each and every

Sunday because each and every Sunday our Lord gives to us His life giving and life-saving medicine through His Word and Sacraments.

This is not play time...this is serious stuff. Indeed, this is a matter of life and death. EVERY Sunday is a matter of life and death. We are taught as preachers to preach every sermon as if it will be the last sermon you will hear. As your pastor I do not want the last sermon you hear to be about 10 steps to be a better neighbour or how to grow vegetables in the backyard, or how to be successful at work. I want you to hear about Jesus and His life giving forgiveness! You can hear about being a better neighbour or better finances or being successful at work anywhere, for example, Home Depot provides workshop and home improvement training.

Friends, the Church of Christ has been created by God for you for only one thing: to give out, to dispense, the forgiveness of sins in Jesus and eternal life. This is a matter of life and death! For those of you who have struggled or are struggling with cancer, for those of you who have lost a loved one to cancer. Can you imagine the joy, the relief, the gratitude you would feel if a doctor came into the room and announced a cure was available? Sadly, we are all painfully aware that this is not the case.

We all have lost loved ones to cancer or some other incurable disease. We all will one day face the death of the body. But this day I have the privilege of being the one to announce to you there is a cure for the sickness we all share. There is a cure for your sin-sickness. There is a cure for your death. Jesus is the one who gives the cure! Through His: Life, Death, and Resurrection. There is a cure! And it is for you! This cure is yours through faith in Jesus! It is His free gift to you out of His great love for you.

Therefore, We can live in peace, We can live with joy, We live with, gratitude, We sing songs of joy, of praise, of thanksgiving. Indeed, we overflow with thanksgiving and praise so that others may know of this Good News! By the grace of God in Jesus, you have been healed of your sin-sickness. You have been cured from death and eternal life is yours. Amen

“The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding keeps your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour”. Amen