

Trapped on a cruise ship off the waters of Japan. Let me off this boat. Sorry, there are people infected on the ship with the Coronavirus. You have to wait at least a month or more with these sick people breathing around you, and coughing, before we let you off the ship. The stock market dives a 1000 points. My wife tells me that we get a lot of antibiotics and masks from China. Now those shipments to the US could be halted. But masks might not help you, since the virus travels in such small sizes that it can slip thru most masks. Plus, they are saying the virus can be active on a table top for up to 9 days. All you have to do is touch that table top, and touch around your mouth or nose, and boom, you get it. The virus is striking everywhere. 31 Countries already. The virus started out in Wuhan, China, perhaps in a lab, maybe some lab people took some bunny rabbits, or bats home and sold them in the local market place, and they were infected. Why is everyone so worked up about this virus? Because it makes you realize you could get it, and die. Most of us aren't planning to die for many more years right? Moving the date up is scary.

Why doesn't anyone want to talk about the problem of death? Two reasons, I believe. Reason number one: because there is no solution. No one will ever come up with a cure for death, a way to prevent it. If they come up with a vaccine for the Corona virus in 2 years, there will be another virus that will pop up or another type of cancer, that will bring death with it. Another reason people don't want to talk about death, is because no one really knows for sure what happens next. Is there really a heaven? Is there really a hell? Or, is it like in the movies – after you die you become a ghost and float around the earth? Or are you reincarnated and become a cat, or a tree? What happens after you die? There is great confusion, there is no solution, and because of that, no one wants to talk about it.

We live in a culture of denial. We pretend that death doesn't exist, but it does. Rather than live in denial, let's face this problem head-on this morning. Let's look in the Bible, and as we do, you might be surprised to find that there is a solution to the problem of death.

Our text for this morning acknowledges that death is a problem. In verse 12, it says that "death comes to all men." In verse 14, it says that "death reigns." But the Bible also tells us the cause of death. Perhaps if we knew the cause, we could find the solution. In verse 12, it says, "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." Sin is ultimately the cause of death. And it all began with one man – Adam.

In our Old Testament lesson for this morning, we see the biggest disaster in the history of the world – the fall into sin. Adam failed to obey God. And when that happened, sin entered the world. I don't think people really understand the magnitude of what happened that day in the Garden of Eden.

Imagine being at your home, and you're having a big get-together – family, friends. You receive a package, and on the package it says; "Anthrax – do not open." But you decide to open it anyway. You struggle to open it up, and then the package bursts open, anthrax everywhere! All your family, all your friends – they inhale the anthrax and die. Ultimately, who's fault is that? Yours!

When Adam sinned, thousands of years ago, it was as though he had opened a package he shouldn't have opened. When he disobeyed, sin entered his body, entered the world, and infected everything and everybody. Billions and billions of people have been infected by that one moment in the Garden of Eden. Spiritual anthrax – sin, entered the world. And it's lethal - it results in death. Because of what Adam did, our world has become one big spiritual Wuhan ground zero, in the eyes of God.

From that moment on, people were born with the problem of sin. There is a test you can perform on yourself to see if you've been infected. Let's do that this morning. Here it is – ask yourself – have I made any mistakes in the last week? Have I been selfish, even for a moment? Have I had any unkind thoughts? If you are honest, and answer yes to those questions, then you have been infected with the deadly corona of sin. And physical death is the least of our problems – Verse 18 tells us, “The result of one trespass was condemnation for all men.” When Adam sinned, he not only brought sin and physical death into the world. He also brought condemnation. Hell.

My friends, this problem is bigger than any of the financial or personal or health problems that you might have. The problem of death and eternal condemnation. Spiritually, we are living at ground zero, we are suffering the effects of Adam's sin from many year's ago. Do you see why most people don't like to talk about this subject? Where is the solution?

We find it right here. God intervenes. God is not some sort of aloof, faraway God that doesn't care. He comes to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ, our God, looks down at the world. He sees our problem. He loves us too much to let us suffer and die eternally. And so Christ our God steps into our world as a human being. He visits our ground zero as one of us. He sees how we all have been infected by Adam's sin. And he offers a solution, a way out, a way for you and me to escape. And here it is...He faces the Devil head-on, as we see in our Gospel lesson for this morning. He does what Adam and Eve couldn't do, and what we have failed to do all our lives. He resists temptation, as our Savior. And then he takes upon himself all of our sins and the sins of the whole world.

Imagine being in a room with all the anthrax ever made in the entire world – it's all right there in front of you. Imagine inhaling all of it, so that no one would ever have to worry about that sort of thing again. That's what Jesus did – he came into our world, and took all of the sins of the world and placed them on himself. And then he suffered the consequences, didn't he. That condemnation that is described here – that's what Jesus suffered when he went to the cross. Instead of us being condemned for our sins after we die, Jesus is condemned instead.

There was once a movie called the Last Emperor. The young child is anointed as the last emperor of China and lives a life of luxury with 1000 servants at his command. “What happens when you do wrong?” his brother asks. “When I do wrong, someone else is punished,” the boy replies. Then he demonstrates, by breaking a jar, and one of his servants is beaten. In Christianity, Jesus reverses that ancient pattern. When the servants (that's us) make a mistake, the King is punished. That's how it works. Instead of us being condemned eternally for our sins, Jesus is condemned instead.

That's the solution to the problem of sin and death! We read: "Just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification for all men." Because of what Jesus did, you are justified in the eyes of God. God looks at you and says, "Not guilty!"

Do you see how this can change your life, right now? It is true, that in the eyes of God, our world is one big Wuhan ground zero, because of all the sin and death that is here. And it is true that we as Christians will continue to have problems, because of the world in which we live. We'll still physically die. But now, because of what Jesus Christ has done, things can be different for you.

Now, you can be someone who has hope, someone who has peace. You can be someone who has confidence. When you think of death, whether it's the death of a loved one, or your own death, you no longer have to be afraid or confused. You no longer have to worry about condemnation for your sins. You can be someone who has peace, because you know that God will welcome you into heaven after you die. Your sins have been taken away.

You no longer have to wonder about the purpose of your life. Jesus has changed all that. Your purpose is to learn more about the God who has saved you. Your purpose is to help others in this world, to help others to find Christ, that they too might have the same comfort that you have.

Imagine wanting a gold medal in the Olympics. More than anything in your life, you want that gold medal. But, you have been born with all kinds of physical problems. And then, to top it off, you get into a car accident that paralyzes you. It seems that the Olympic gold is something you'll never have. But then, one of those athletes you see on TV visits you one day, and gives you his gold medal. He earned it, but he gives it to you, and you can't believe it. That's what Jesus has done. He comes to you and gives you that gold medal of peace and confidence and joy and hope. He assures you, because He lives you shall live. Your body is going to be 100 percent healthy. No need to panic or run for bottled water or groceries. AT Open Bible you receive weekly the Ultimate Vaccine! An injection with Jesus provides you a life that will never end.