

Grace Abounding

In The Grip of Grace - 7

According to Greek legend, Zeus--the most powerful of all the ancient Greek gods--gave a beautiful box to Pandora, the first mortal female. When Pandora opened the box, however, a host of plagues escaped to harass mankind. Pandora managed to close the lid when only Hope was left inside.

Although mythological, the far-reaching consequences of evil is a truth expressed in the physical world around us. It is just as true in the spiritual world. One man's disobedience resulted in universal death. Someone left the screen door open, as it were. A tiger wandered inside and devoured its first victim. From that point on, everyone inside the house stands in great danger: It is only a matter of time until all are consumed.

As bleak as the picture might be, however, it illuminates the even further-reaching consequences of another man's obedience (Romans 5:15-17)! There is always hope, regardless of how much death might seem to dog one's steps. Being "in Christ" offers a way out of the house. One man brought certain death; the other offers certain life (1 Corinthians 15:22).

LOOKING BACK:

What quirks did you inherit from each of your parents?

How do you see yourself reflected in your own children?

LOOKING DEEP:

Read Romans 5:12-19

- 1. When have you made a decision that affected others in a bad way? How does this help you understand the point of verse 12?*
- 2. What comparisons and contrasts are drawn between Adam and Christ? How does this relate to the point of the passage (vss 18-19)?*
- 3. What are the consequences of being "in Adam" (vss 12-14)? What are the consequences of being "in Christ" (vss 15-19; also 1 Cor. 15:22)? How does one move from being "in Adam" to being "in Christ?"*
- 4. Have you ever felt (for yourself or someone else) the "reign of death" described in this passage? Explain.*
- 5. Respond to the following statement: "When it's sin versus grace, grace wins hands down." Do you agree or disagree?*

***PRAYER REQUESTS
AND REFLECTIONS***