

From the April 4, 2010 Issue

St. John Chrysostom on Super Abundant Grace

In this passage from his sermon on Romans 5:12, St. John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407) explains how the “super abundant” grace of Jesus does far more than just deal with humanity’s problem of sin. Jesus certainly fixed our sin problem, but more than just restoring us to our pre-fall state, Jesus—by his resurrection and ascension—has also raised humanity up into our adoption as children of the Father.

What armed death against the world? The one man’s eating from the tree only. If then death attained so great power from one offence, when it is found that certain received a grace and righteousness out of all proportion to that sin, how shall they still be liable to death? And for this cause, he does not here say “grace,” but “super abundance of grace.” For it was not as much as we must have to do away the sin only, that we received of His grace, but even far more. For we were at once freed from punishment, and put off all iniquity, and were also born again from above (John 3:3) and rose again with the old man buried, and were redeemed, justified, led up to adoption, sanctified, made brothers of the Only-begotten, and joint heirs and of one Body with Him, and counted for His Flesh, and even as a Body with the Head, so were we united unto Him! All these things then Paul calls a “super abundance” of grace, showing that what we received was not a medicine only to countervail the wound, but even health, and comeliness, and honor, and glory and dignities far transcending our natural state. From *Homily on Romans 5:12*.