

“Two Men, Adam and Christ, Have Changed Everything, Part 2”

Introduction:

At the highest level what we have in the Romans is the doctrinal teaching of the entire plan of redemption. Several dispensations are included here but not all. And some are only described in passing with just a verse or two. The central teaching of the Romans is in three parts, firstly, the accountability of all persons to a holy and righteous God who created them, secondly, the provision by the creator for deliverance from the eternal curse through the God-Man, the Seed of the Woman, Christ Jesus, and thirdly, the distinctive message of salvation by grace through faith with its radical dynamic of the gift of life under the abundance of grace and how that message is both similar to but different from the various methods and means of salvation down through the ages since the Garden.

The heart of the message of grace is all about the righteousness of God and its imputation to believers by grace through faith alone, independently of any and all works. And that is where we have come here in our study of the Romans, Dispensationally Considered. Now looking into chapter 5 further we have come to verses 12-14 where the apostle further explains verses 9 - 11 which we have read again to set the context for our study today. Here he sets the context for the rest of the chapter with its final words which are incomprehensible apart from his teachings here and earlier in this letter:

Romans 5:20-21

20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Outline Today: “Two Men, Adam and Christ, Changed Everything, Part 2”

- ***Through Adam Came Sin and Death, for Now and Forever***
- ***Through Jesus Christ Came Justification of Life, for Now and Forever***
- ***Two Reignings — By Adam’s Fall, Death, Through the Grace of Christ, Life***
- ***Two Heritages — By One Came Condemnation, By the Other, Justification***
- ***Sin Abounded in Death, But Much More, Grace Abounded in Eternal Life***

I. Through Adam Came Sin and Death, for Now and Forever:

- *The fact is that all die with so far only two known exceptions. Sin is stated here as the reason, pure and simple. But, sin, apart from Law, is not imputed. Therefore the apostle concludes that it was not transgressions under law, or even acts of disobedience like Adam's had transgressed, that brought death. Rather, it was the sin of one man itself, which was imputed to the accounts of all men ...*

Paul is providing here the theological basis of the teaching in chapter 4 regarding the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Adam's sin is the analogue with similarities and profound differences. The issue before us in the Romans is how the Lord God sees sinful man, not how sinful man may with his religious mind see himself.

[READ] Romans 5:12-14

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

- *Verse 12: Death is a reality all must endure. All sinners so far have endured it with nearly no exceptions (Enoch & Elijah being the only exceptions). But here in verse 12 so much more is revealed for our understanding. For it says that death comes from sin! And Paul adds then that the sin came in some way from Adam or because of Adam. In this chapter he explains what that means and it is critically important that we understand it well for that is necessary if we would desire to understand our justification as stated so boldly at the end of the previous chapter:*

Romans 4:23-25

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

- *Of course we know from Genesis 3 that through Adam's sin a curse came upon all of the creation and therefore on Adam and Eve and their offspring as well. Some would say that answers fully answers*

the question of how Adam's sin affected their offspring but does it? Was it simply that God cursed mankind through the provision of a sin-nature in every person where previously there had not been, since as we well remember, God had said after his creation of Adam and Eve that it what he had made was "very good". So they were not created with these faults and rebellious tendencies. But rather it was all good before the Fall, until of course, rebellion was found in satan / Lucifer.

- ***But there is more: for Paul singles out sin as the cause of death, doesn't he? "so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And it is not a "nature of sin" that he is writing about, but an act of sin, for he wrote here in verse 12: "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned". We continue to see his explanation as he continues:***
- ***Verse 13: Notice the parentheses to verse 17 (added by translators so not inspired as the word itself was). But let's ignore them for now. Here Paul adds an interesting wrinkle indeed to this amazing story: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." We must take note of this profound truth as revealed here most assuredly by the apostle. This is the Lord God's view of mankind living before or apart from the Law. It is so important if we would understand the mind of God and the essence of salvation by grace, and that is ultimately why Paul is writing this letter, of course. And as we study this letter and see its "dispensational" content properly, we cannot move ahead too quickly but must again today dwell on his teaching here in this chapter. What does he write here?***

But nevertheless death reigned over all even over those to whom the Law was not given meaning all Gentiles, but more, even over all "before the Law" was even given through Moses. This is astounding and demands explanation, doesn't it? And yet the commentators often skip by all of this with no comment or only a few words that do not address the apostle's teaching well at all. We must continue:

- ***Verse 14 reveals something more about the relationship between law and sin. For death is by sin but since sin is not imputed when there is no law, one would expect that there would also not be the death of sinners when there was no law to establish God's holy and righteous demands. So individual acts of sin are not the reason for death, since those acts were not imputed, not counted, in other words apart from law. But we are so close now to knowing exactly what the apostle is saying in verse 12 where he wrote "... for that all***

have sinned". The tense of the verb here indicates a single act in the past, by the way. But now Paul eliminates an additional possibility:

- ***Verse 14:*** "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." ***So the breaking of the Law (or any legal requirement, such as Adam's transgression to the revealed word of God as given in the Garden) was not the cause of death therefore. The bottom line is this therefore: death reigned over all those before Moses gave the Law, even over those that did not sin as Adam did.***
- ***So why therefore were all under the bondage of sin and death then? What was the sin that had enslaved them and destined them to death? The answer Paul gives here is that it was not an act of sin on our parts at all, but rather Adam's sin itself that was imputed or counted for our own!! And in that way he was "the figure of him that was to come", Christ Jesus, whose righteousness was imputed to our accounts. Praise God! Oh, the word of God has such perfection written in ever line, every word.***

You now see how critically important his teaching is here in this chapter and how this provides a foundation upon which the teaching about our justification given in the earlier chapters stands.

- ***The next three verses provide us then with the teaching needed to understand all of this and lead us dramatically into the final verses concluding the chapter.***

II. Through Jesus Christ Came Justification of Life, for Now and Forever:

- ***These verses are key to understanding both the essence and the scope of imputation, whether of Adam's sin, or of Christ's righteousness. For, as we have titled our teaching again today, all was changed for mankind by two men, Adam firstly and then Christ.***

Let's continue to look at this teaching noticing today details we may have missed before:

[READ] Romans 5:15-16

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more, the grace of God, and the

gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

- *There is perhaps some difficult wording here for us to consider, for these are comparisons showing both similarity and also difference:*
 - ***The similarity is the one to many relationship.*** “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift” ***or***, “and not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift”. ***In the first case, the offense of one brought judgment and death to many while in the second case many offenses brought with it one declaration of righteousness, the justification of the sinner and the free gift of God, which we will see is the opposite of death, life.***
 - ***Then the “much more”, emphasizes the dramatic difference in the outcome itself. For death is not to be compared with life, though its extent may be greater numerically, God sees righteousness and life as “far more” for it is indeed glorious. More words cannot add more power to his words here.***
 - ***And all of this is through Jesus Christ and according to the grace of God. Amen.***
 - ***So Adam’s sin is contrasted with the grace of God through Christ’s righteous and sacrificial act. By implication that act is his perfect sacrifice for all of us sinners. And we know from the end of chapter 4 that the free gift is Christ’s righteousness imputed to our accounts. This is such wonderful and good news indeed!***
 - ***From the first man, Adam, through his offense, many died, BUT from our Lord Jesus Christ, much more, through the grace of God, the gift by grace has abounded to many! So the “many” is the scope of these broad and inclusive statements. Amen.***

This is explained further in the next verse:

- ***And there is one more aspect of this to take note of, for now the emphasis is not on the “many” as before but rather on***

what was “given”, in the one case, condemnation, while in the other justification. In both cases interestingly, the result was a “gift”, though the one was most negative indeed and the other most positive. Praise God.

- ***In the Greek language found here there is also a distinction between two words used. The one is the common word for gift. But there is another word found here as well in verses 15 and 16 and also in verse 18. That word is translated “free gift”. Literally, it is “grace gift”. That is our gift, as contrasted as completely as possible from the other gift, where we see the common word for giving, with the result of condemnation or judgment.***
- ***So, to summarize so far: What hath these two men wrought?***
 - ***From Adam’s transgression sin came on “the many”. This was by imputation of Adam’s sin. And through this one sin death came as well.***
 - ***From Christ’s act of righteousness in giving himself as our substitute, righteousness came upon “the many”. This was by imputation of Christ’s righteous act. And through this act of righteousness the free gift came as well.***
 - ***Praise to God for the unspeakable gift by grace, our Lord Jesus Christ! Such great blessing have come through him. Amen.***

III. Two Reignings — By Adam’s Fall, Death, Through the Grace of Christ, Life:

[READ] Romans 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

- ***Now we get to something more: What is reigning now, what is dominating the lives of all persons, that is the question? In the case of Adam’s sin, death rules over all sinners and has since the Fall. This is a general statement. For the unsaved, all suffer in this life in the same way, whatever the specifics of their way of living might be.***

- *But for the believer, on the other hand, those that have received this outpouring of God's love and grace, they have in the place of this fear of dying a promise here of reigning in life — and that promise blesses those who are saved cancelling the fear of death. Now that is a precious and powerful promise indeed, isn't it? Amen.*
- *But he is saying more as the rest of the verses here teach. This promise is not only a promise for our future reign in heaven's glory, but is true also today as the present tense indicates. It is true today as well, IF we receive this abundance of grace. That should be clear to all of us. Otherwise, if we do not, we will in our daily living miss the blessings of reigning in his resurrection life! This is the challenge for all believers today. Will be continually receiving this abundance or will we fall back and simply live as if we were not truly saved after all. We may be religious but will we be enjoying the Lord of glory as he works in us to enjoy and glorify him? That is a serious question indeed for all of us, isn't it?*

The next verses are all about the federal headship of Adam and of Christ. They are further explanatory of verses 12 - 17 and are most important to establish this most critical teaching, without which the teaching of the entire letter to the Romans cannot be understood, no matter how much we might try.

IV. Two Heritages — By One Came Condemnation, By the Other, Justification:

- *Now we reach where the apostles teaching is concerning the end point of this life and the eternal "heritage" of those that have one one hand, believed God, and, on the other hand, not believed. For the former our heritage is eternal life with God, while, for the other, that 'heritage' is eternal death and judgment separated from the Lord God forever.*

[READ] Romans 5:18-19

18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment* came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift* came upon all men unto justification of life.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

- *Verse 18: There is a challenge here for us in the wording of the apostle, for there are no verbs in the Greek text. The English*

translators added verbs to make the meaning clearer, but in so doing they confused, I think, the teaching here. The actual verbs and the contexts of those verbs in verses 15-17 establish the same for the additional truth expressed here where no verbs are present. If verse 17 is parenthetical, then verses 15-16 are the relevant ones.

- *This is all about two “heritages”. But during our short lives here our heritage is not truly established until our lives here have ended. So the meaning here depends on the meaning of the Greek preposition εἰς. The meaning of that word is usually translated “unto” which is fine, or, it could also be translated “with reference or respect to”. The apostle is reflecting here on the end point or final condition which established the heritage of the person. It is all about the two possible end points.*
- *The two “alls” here are actually in the text. Both “alls” cannot true at the same time so the apostle is declaring the possibilities, as it were. The next verse says more and it does include verbs establishing a reality to be taken to heart indeed, for the two endpoints are dramatically different.*
- *Verse 19: This verse has the verbs “made” or “constituted”, “or declared” and they are governed by subjects that do determine the scope of their application. If the “alls” of verse 18 were repeated here, there would be an impossible conflict with BOTH all lost AND all saved eternally. But again the apostle goes back to the “many” to define the future condition of the lost and the saved.*

To restate again my conviction, here the apostle is looking at the final determination as to one’s eternal destination while in verse 18 it is the potential end that is considered. All potentially due to Adam’s imputed sin have an eternal lost condition in view, while the alternative is also offered to all. But until death the condition of the lost is still undetermined. But in the final analysis, at the end point all is determined forever. But then the lost will surely have their future established as separated from God always, while the saved are promised glory and honor eternally in the Lord’s presence. Amen.

This brings us to the culminating and final verses in the chapter, and they are glorious but also sobering indeed:

V. Sin Abounded in Death, But Much More, Grace Abounded in Eternal Life:

[READ] Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

- ***In verse 20 a deep and surprising revelation is found, that the law was given in order that “the offense might abound”. But he adds an equally astounding statement, “But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound”! In other words, in the plan of Almighty God the magnitude of the grace of God is always highlighted by reference to the magnitude of sin. In God’s view therefore, God’s grace toward sinners and their sin will always surpass man’s rebellion and sin. This is surely something to spend a lifetime considering.***

The Lord God’s view is of utmost importance, isn’t it? He allowed sin and sin of the worst sort. But he also engineered a plan whereby sinners of that sort might be saved. Even the most despicable of sinners such as the apostle Paul was saved therefore as our example or type (that is the very Greek word in the text here):

[READ] 1 Timothy 1:12-16

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

- ***This is most wonderful teaching indeed. Paul’s letter to the Romans, Dispensationally Considered, is amplified of course in it teaching by his other letters, and here in 1 Timothy the apostle remarks concerning his own salvation that his salvation is a type of how all are now saved in this dispensation of God’s abundant grace. The Lord of glory intersected in Saul of Tarsus that day and drew him to himself most graciously indeed. And so it is true of all of us today as well. One can also from this teaching here conclude assuredly that the church the Body of Christ was formed as a new and distinctive spiritual organism beginning on that day and that Saul was its first member. Amen.***

- ***Now to conclude. The apostle ends the teaching here with these words that give the divine perspective on it so powerfully:***

[READ] Romans 5:21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

- ***“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”. He is doing for us what he did for the sinner named Saul of Tarsus, ordained as our apostle...***

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift, Christ Jesus!