

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

Last Time: “Peace With God, Available by Faith Through Jesus Christ”

- ***Peace With God Transforms Us Through Our Faith-Based Justification***
 - ***God’s Grace Through Faith Shall Surely Build Our Faith Step by Step***
 - ***Our Firm Foundation Is Always Christ’s Sacrificial and Completed Work***
 - ***Much More, We Are Saved By Christ’s Life, Now and Forever — Rejoice!***
- ...
- ***Peace With God Therefore Is Available Through Our Faith In Jesus Christ***
 - ***Much More, We Are Saved By Christ’s Life, Now and Forever — Rejoice!***

Romans 5:9-11

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

- ***Today we have reached one of the most difficult sections of this letter, and one of the most blessed as well, I am convinced — if we take these verses one at a time and carefully reflect on what is written here. And this we will do, Lord willing, for our better understanding, I hope and pray.***
- ***It will take two sessions to finish this chapter. Today we will only look at the verses from the highest level; next time we will consider the details of what the apostle has written here. Also, we will only consider the first three points of our five point outline saving the remaining two for next week.***

This chapter is one of the most important in the Bible for us grace believers and is most critical for our understanding of the entire letter. For it explains so much about how God is working today under grace by especially focusing on the truths concerning the imputation of sin and of righteousness. Let’s consider that from the highest level then.

Our Outline Today: Two Men, Adam and Christ, Have Changed Everything

- ***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***

Next Time:

- *Two Heritages — By One Came Condemnation, By the Other, Justification*
- *Sin Abounded in Death, But Much More, Grace Abounded in Eternal Life*

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 just 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.

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

[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 stark reality. All sinners so far have endured it with nearly no exceptions (Enoch & Elijah being the only exceptions). But this verse says so much more. For it says that death comes from sin!*

And he adds that the sin came from Adam. We might indeed wonder how that can be. He seeks to explain that for us here in this chapter.

Well, elsewhere in scripture there is other teaching about that, isn't there? For through Adam's sin a curse came upon all of the creation and of course on Adam and Eve and their offspring as well. That answers the question of how Adam's sin affected their offspring — or does it? It was simply that God cursed mankind. So now there is a sin-nature in every person while previously there was not. Remember, they were not created with these faults and rebellious tendencies. But rather it was all good before the Fall, except, of course, for satan / Lucifer.

Romans 8:19-22

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

Genesis 3:17-19

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

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, for he wrote here in verse 12: "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned". We will go on to see his explanation:

- ***Verse 13: Notice the parentheses to verse 17 (added by translators so not inspired). 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 also learned something of this truth in relation to the Gentiles as Paul taught there on Mar's Hill, you will recall (Acts 17:30). For the Law was not given to the Gentiles. 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.***

But nevertheless death reigned over all even then! 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: "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 law) was not the cause of death therefore. Also, 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?***

The answer Paul gives here is that Adam's sin was imputed to their accounts!! 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! You now see how critically important his teaching is here in this chapter and how this provides a foundation upon which the teaching in the earlier chapters stands.

- ***Now for the explanation of these next three verses (but only at the highest level today) where the teaching leads dramatically to the final verses in the chapter:***

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

[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 there are comparisons showing similarities and also differences:***

- ***Verse 15a — “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift.”: First the similarity: from one to many. Then the dramatic, “much more”, difference which is in the outcome itself.***
- ***Verse 15b — The similarity is this, from one to many. Who is the “one” and who is the “many” and what is the consequence of the acts identified here?***
 - ***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!***
 - ***Here 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! Amen.***

This is explained further in the next verse:

- ***Verse 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.”: Again we see the similarity (each one’s act brought consequences) but the emphasis now 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”.

- *In the Greek language found here that is also a distinction between two words. The one is the common word for gift. But there is another word found here as well in verses 15 and 16. Here 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, using the common word for giving, of condemnation or judgment.*

Praise to God for the unspeakable gift, our Lord Jesus Christ!

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 Hebrews there is a mention of this in the case of the unredeemed:*

[READ] Hebrews 2:14-15

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

- *In the case of Adam’s sin, death dominates all sinners and has from the Fall. This is a general statement. However, now there is deliverance through faith in Christ.*
- *But there is more truth hidden in 5:17 as well — for the unsaved, all suffer in this life in the same way, whatever the specifics of their way of living might have been. 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 of reigning in life — and that promise blesses those who are saved cancelling the*

fear of death. That seems to be what the apostle is saying here. It is a precious and powerful promise indeed, isn't it? Amen.

- *But he is saying more as the rest of the verses here teach. But is this promise only a promise for our future reign in heaven's glory, or is it true also today?*
- *No, for it is true today as well, IF we receive this grace. That should be clear to all of us. Otherwise, if we do not, we will remain under the domination of sin and death — always!*

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.

NEXT TIME: We have some blessed promises indeed here as we will finish the chapter:

[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.

[READ] 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.

Conclusion & Application:

Our Outline Today: Two Men, Adam and Christ, Have Changed Everything for Sinners

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