

Romans 05 - The Sequence to Maturity; Standing in Grace; Santification

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(a) First Adam brought condemnation; Last Adam brought justification (5:18)

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Romans 5

(3) Gospel benefits (5:1-11)

(A) Our present position (5:1a)

(B) Six benefits (5:1b-11)

(a) Peace with God (5:1b)

1 Therefore, having been **justified by faith**, **we have peace with** God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

1 Therefore being justified by faith, [let us to go on so that] we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

- This passage (v1-11) can be titled: Membership has its benefits. Paul will outline the benefits that trusting in Christ offers the believer, and they are so much better than any benefits a business or credit card company can provide.

- "Therefore" - concluding from the foregoing; what follows rests on what has preceded

- "...justified" - if we are in Christ, this is our theological reality; we are declared not guilty by a holy God, in spite of our sin, because of our standing in Christ Jesus

— Justification is a declarative act. It is something that doesn't come *from* man, but something that is declared *of* man. It does not *make* someone righteous (imputation does that), but rather simply *declares* that they are righteous.

— Justification is a judicial act of God in which He declares, on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that all the claims of the law are satisfied with respect to the sinner. It is unique in the application of the work of redemption in that it is a judicial act of God, a declaration respecting the sinner, and not an act or process of renewal such as regeneration, conversion, and sanctification.

- "...by faith" - the means of our justification...faith alone in Christ alone, not by keeping the Law, circumcision, or works (Cf. 4:4-16)

- "...have" - *echō*, after we're justified by faith, we have (present tense) peace with God NOW...we don't wait until we die to see if we really have peace with God

— *"In Paul, we first find...a legal use. The wicked are justified by faith on the basis of God's gracious action in Christ. This justifying is a saving acquittal which takes place in the present...a present act of grace through Christ. Once-for-all justification at the cross and*

personal justification in faith go together. Justification is a finished work of grace..."

[Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the NT*, 175]

— Membership in Christ has many benefits. Paul gives us six benefits of our justification here:

1. Peace with God (v1b)
2. Hope of future glory (v2)
3. Benefits strengthened by trials (v3-5)
4. Christ's atonement demonstrating love (v6-8)
5. Saved from God's wrath (v9)
6. Reconciliation (v10-11)

- "...peace with God" - before we came to Christ, we were enemies of God (v10; Cf. John 3:36), but after coming to Christ, there is peace between us and God

— Prior to us coming to Christ, the sword of His wrath was ready to fall on us at any moment; we were at enmity with God

— We were born into this world with a nature that is at war against God (8:7-8). As children, we did not need to be taught how to sin, that was our normal behavior.

— Once we're in Christ, a cessation to the conflict has been called; a ceasefire has been put in place

- We don't obtain this peace with God because we're beautiful, because we did something special, because we're apple of God's eye, or because we're even capable of doing something pleasing to God. We obtain this peace solely "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

— The only way by which we have a ceasefire with God is based on what Jesus did to take the punishment I deserved for my sin in my place

(b) Hope of future glory (5:2)

2 through whom we also **have obtained** our **introduction** by faith into this grace **in which we stand**; and we **celebrate** in **hope of the glory of God**.

2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace by which we have been established, and we boast because of our hope in God's glory.

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- "...have obtained" - we possess something by way of faith, which is the grace of God

— The verb is in the perfect tense, meaning completed in the past, with results that continue on or have a present significance; nothing can change it

— Because I am in Christ Jesus, I have obtained and now possess the unmerited favor of God. I don't deserve this favor, but it is accrued to me, given to me, because of my trust in

what Jesus Christ has done for me.

— It is clear that our access is not due to work of our own; we “have obtained” access into the depths of God’s grace because of what God has done

- “...introduction” - *prosagoge*, privilege of approach; the right to enter

- “...in which we stand” - go on standing (present tense, continuing on); we have it now, and the benefit of it continues on; it can’t be taken away

- “...celebrate” - *kauchometha*, boast. Same Greek word translated as “boast” (Cf. 2:17,23; 3:27; 4:2), where it is used in a bad sense of selfish, boastful confidence

— Here it means triumphant, rejoicing confidence

- “...hope of the glory of God” - the glory of God is what humanity lost when sin entered the world. Our “hope” is His promise to restore His people and His creation to glory (8:17-21).

— “hope” - *elpís*, not anxious wishing or uncertainty, but rather confident assurance of something yet future

— We often think of “hope” as a weak word (“hope for the best”; being cautiously optimistic); the Bible speaks of hope far differently. It's not an “I hope so” attitude, it's an “I know so” attitude.

— We do not yet fully possess what we hope for, but our hope is certain (Acts 2:26-27; 1 Cor 13:12; Titus 1:2; 2:13; Heb 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:3)

- Rom 5:1-2 jumps from justification (v1) to glorification (v2b), with no mention of life in between (sanctification - how God transforms our character in Christ)

— Rom 8:18-39 does the same thing. These passages are “bookends” of chapters that focus on sanctification.

(c) Benefits strengthened by trials (5:3-5)

3 And not only *this*, but we also **celebrate** in our **tribulations**, **knowing** that tribulation brings about **perseverance**;

3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;

3 Not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

- “...celebrate” - “leaping for joy” - present, continuing, tense

— We can rejoice in tribulations because God has revealed that He uses them to produce steadfast endurance (“patience”) and proven “character” (v4) in those who relate to their sufferings properly (Cf. Job 23:10; James 1:2-4; Heb 12)

— We are to celebrate these because God's promises that He will use these tribulations to bring about something good in our lives. They are used by God in a special way in our lives

to take the blessings we already have and to develop them further.

— It starts a chain reaction, according to v3-4

— Every Christian needs to know the value of suffering

— Peace with God does not always result in peace with other people. Nevertheless, the fact that we have peace with God and a relationship with Him, with assurance of standing acceptable in His presence, enables us to view present difficulties with joy.

- "...tribulations" - *thlipsis*, plural, referring to our daily trials and tribulations, not "the" Tribulation period (Cf. John 16:33; Acts 14:22)

— *thlipsis* generally has two meanings in Scripture:

1. It can refer to "tribulation" or "trouble" generally (here; John 16:33, Acts 14:22; Rom 12:12)

2. It can refer to the seven years of Daniel's 70th Week ("the beginning of sorrows") (Jer 30:7-9; Dan 9:24-27; 12:1; Matt 24:21)

- "...knowing" - *eido*, perceive, notice, discern, discover...the most important word in this verse

— It produces patience (perseverance, endurance) (Cf. Rom 15:5-6; James 1:3-4)

— The knowledge that gives us joy is not knowing God's purpose in a specific situation.

God asks us to trust Him and His Word (Deut 29:29). We can glory in our trials not because we understand their purpose, but because we know that we can always trust our faithful and good God.

— We cannot know everything about a specific trial, nor can we know all there is about suffering in general. But we know our God, and we can trust that in our Father's hands, our suffering is of lasting value (2 Cor 4:16-18).

- "...perseverance" - *hypomonē*, endurance; the mindset that says I'm going to continue to trust in God no matter what I'm going through, and not quit

— Christians should not try to escape difficulties in sinful ways. But God also does not ask us to smile and say, "I'm fine" or grit our teeth and somehow get through suffering. Instead, God lovingly says, "Trust me, child" (Ps 56:3-4; 116:10; 143:8; Prov 3:5-6; Is 26:3; Rom 15:13).

Peace with God (v1) and standing in grace (v2) are not simply pleasant ideas. They translate into the ability to find joy—"to glory in" (v3)—our trials.

4 and perseverance, **proven character**; and proven character, **hope**;

4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

4 endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

- "...proven character" - *dokimē*, a specimen of tried worth; tested or approved

- The result is Christlikeness; we are already Christlike in our position, but our practice often needs to catch up with our position
- Trials in our life produce Christlikeness in our character. God uses tribulations in our lives to conform our lives to the life of Christ.
- This is more than mere stoic endurance of troubles, even though endurance or steadfastness is the first result in a chain-reaction outgrowth from distress.
- This is spiritual glorying in afflictions because of having come to know (from *oida*, "to know by perception") that the end product of this chain reaction (that begins with distress) is hope.
- "...hope" - the desire for the future glory that we will receive (glorification)
- Tribulations today produce hope for future glory because as we're going through suffering on earth, we long for/eagerly await a time when sufferings and tribulations are things of the past, when the effects of sin are completely removed from us and our surroundings.
- The climax of spiritual maturity is Hope. When we get upset, frustrated, it demonstrates that we've lost our hope. It shows that we've forgotten our hope; we care too much.

If you squeeze a lemon, you get lemon juice. If you squeeze an orange, you get orange juice. If you squeeze a Christian, you should get Christ. — John Peterson

Why do Christians Have Trials?

1. To glorify God (Dan 3:16-18,24-25)
2. Discipline for known sin (Heb 12:5-11; James 4:17; Rom 14:23; 1 John 1:9)
3. To prevent us from falling into sin (1 Peter 4:1-2)
4. To keep us from Pride. Paul was kept from pride by his "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor 12:7-10); Was it his eyes? (Gal 4:15; 6:11)
5. To build faith (1 Peter 1:6-7)
6. To cause growth (Rom 5:3-5)
7. To teach obedience and discipline (Acts 9:15-16; Phil 4:11-13)
8. To equip us to comfort others (2 Cor 1:3-4)
9. To prove the reality of Christ in us (2 Cor 4:7-11)
10. For testimony to the angels (Job 1:8; Eph 3:8-11; 1 Peter 1:12)

5 and hope does not disappoint, because the **love of God** has been **poured out** within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who **was given** to us.

5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

5 Now this hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by [through] the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

- We know that our future glorification is guaranteed because of the down payment God has given us in the Holy Spirit "within our hearts" (Eph 1:13-14)

- Paul says here that with the indwelling Holy Spirit, the "love of God has been poured out in our hearts." The Holy Spirit perpetually reminds me of God's love for me, and give me the ability to love other people (even [especially] the unlovable).

- "...love of God" - subjective genitive; the ability to comprehend the love that He has for us

- "...poured out" - perfect tense, keep on, continuously

- "...was given" - aorist tense: once and for all

- This ministry of the Holy Spirit is related to His presence in believers as the seal of God (Eph 4:30), and as the earnest or down payment of their inheritance in glory (2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 1:13-14).

- Each believer has the Spirit of Christ (8:9) and he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

- See note: **Indwelling of the Holy Spirit** in John 7:39; also see [Holy Spirit](#) for a complete explanation of the ministries of the Holy Spirit.

If we don't have trials in our lives, God cannot develop in us perseverance, He cannot develop Christlike character, and He cannot develop our hope (optimism) for future glory. If you find a person who does not go through tribulations in life, you've found a person who does not have perseverance, has not developed a Christlike character, and has no hope of future glory. Part of the blessings God has given to us is the benefits we derive from our suffering. God does the deepest work in our character in the deepest valleys of life.

(d) Christ's atonement demonstrating love (5:6-8)

(i) Atonement described (5:6)

6 For while we were still **helpless, at the right time** Christ died for the **ungodly**.

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

6 For at just the right time, while we were still powerless, the Messiah died for the ungodly.

6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

- "For" - to explain the logic of how great that love is. Substantiated by the kind of people he died for:

- "...helpless" - *asthenon*, morally powerless; where you can do nothing to help yourself; the idea expressed is that we were "incapable of working out any righteousness for

ourselves"

— If Rom 1:18—3:20 (the sin section) communicates anything, it communicates that the human race is helpless and hopeless without Jesus Christ, in a state of bondage, unable to fix our root problem

— We live in a self-help culture, but the Bible tells us that we are powerless and helpless to help ourselves, even if we wanted to

- "...at *the* right time" - *kairos*, the opportune or seasonable time; the right time

— Gal 4:4 says that "when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son...". "Time" here is *chronos*, referring to the specific time appointed by the Father (Cf. Gal 4:2).

- "...died for the ungodly" - Jesus didn't come at the right time to show the human race how to live a sacrificial life (although He did); He came to absorb the wrath of God the Father on sin, in my place

— You can never remove the word substitute in the definition of atonement. If you do, you don't understand the atonement.

— Unbelievers display their ungodliness in the following ways:

1. God is sovereign, but people oppose His sovereignty. They want to do what they want to do.
2. God is Creator, but people refuse to accept that they are His creatures. They want to define their own identity and determine their own limits.
3. God is holy, but people reject His holiness. They do not want Him to question their sinful desires.
4. God is omniscient, but people hate His perfect knowledge. They are angry that He knows all they think or do.
5. God is immutable, but people deny His unchangeable nature. They want a God who changes to suit their whims and desires.

(ii) Atonement demonstrating divine love (5:7-8)

(a) Someone will die for a good man (5:7)

7 For one will hardly die for a **righteous** person; though perhaps for the **good person** someone would even dare to die.

7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

7 For it is rare for anyone to die for a righteous person, though somebody might be brave enough to die for a good person.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

- "...righteous" - used here in the general sense of an upright person, not in the theological sense of a person made right with God

- "...good person" - carries the idea of one who is not only upright, but loved for it because they reach out to help others

(b) Christ died for enemies (5:8)

8 But God **demonstrates** His own love toward us, in that while we were still **sinners**, Christ died for us.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

8 But God demonstrates his love for us by the fact that the Messiah died for us while we were still sinners.

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

- Maybe someone, at some point in history, would've sacrificially died for a good/righteous person, but Christ came to die for His enemies, those who hated His very existence

- "...demonstrates" - *sunistao*, prove in action; His death was a demonstration of His love for us (His enemies)

— The atonement for the enemies of God is the tangible manifestation of His love for the human race

— The love of God is not demonstrated toward us when we get that new job, when we get the favorable report from the doctor, or when we get that desired promotion. If you view God's love for you by the lack of adversity in your life, then the only conclusion you can come to is that God doesn't love you.

— You know that God loves you because Jesus Christ, at the perfect time in history, showed up and took the punishment I deserve for my sin, in my place, so I didn't have to

— ***God doesn't demonstrate His love for us through our favorable circumstances, but through the atonement***

- "...sinners" - *hamartolos*, to defiantly rebel against, with scorn

— Paul is contrasting the worth of the life laid down (Jesus' life), and the unworthiness of those who benefit from His sacrifice

(e) Saved from God's wrath (5:9)

9 Much more then, having now been justified by **His blood**, we shall be saved from the **wrath of God** through Him.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

9 Now that we have been justified by his blood, how much more will we be saved from wrath through him!

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

- "...His blood" - both the symbol of His death and the literal expression of His life poured out as a sacrifice (Cf. 3:25)

— Having done the harder thing (justifying us while we were still sinners, v8), how much more will He do the easier thing (deliver us from coming wrath)? How then can one be ever, once saved, be lost?

- "...wrath" - *orgē*, from this Greek word, we get all sorts of sexual terms; it means uncontrolled, unbridled passion. Here it's not used in the sexual sense, but in the emotional sense.

— When God looks at the state of mankind without His Son, He has uncontrolled, unbridled anger, which is building up and cannot be controlled much longer

— However, for those in Christ, the Bible tells us over and over again that we are not candidates for God's wrath (1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Rom 8:1; Rev 3:10)

— This exemption for believers from God's divine wrath (*orgē*) is a wonderful promise, but it does not exempt us from Satan's wrath, man's wrath, or the normal and ordinary trials of life

— Because of the sacrificial atonement of Christ for me, and the satisfaction of His *orgē* toward me, the only other attribute God has to display to me is His love. The holiness aspect of God toward sin has been satisfied by Christ in my place.

There is no clearer passage in Scripture on the difference between justification and sanctification than v9-10. One (justification) is an objective fact accomplished without us. The other (sanctification) is a change operated within us. Both, through different ways, proceed from Christ.

(f) Reconciliation (5:10-11)

10 For if while we were **enemies** we were **reconciled** to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we **shall be saved** by His life.

10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life!

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.

- "...we were enemies" - unbelievers are the enemies of God

— The 4th (and worst) term used to describe those for whom Christ died: helpless (v6), ungodly (v6), sinners (v8) (Cf. Rom 8:7; James 4:4)

— If God loved you enough in that condition, what about now that you are his child (John 1:12)? How then can one be lost after having been saved?

- "...reconciled to God" - *katallassō*, aorist passive indicative, meaning an action that happened in the past (aorist), the subject ("we" meaning believers, including Paul) is the recipient of the action (passive), a statement of fact (indicative)

— Reconciliation is a change in relationship from one of hostility to one of peace; two parties (us and God) were at war with each other, now the relationship has changed and the two parties are at peace with each other.

— Sometimes the word is used to refer to person to personal reconciliation (Cf. Matt 5:24) or reconciliation in marriage (1 Cor 7:11), but most often when the word is used it's talking about man being reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18,19,20)

— Jesus' death reconciled us to God (Cf. 2 Cor 5:18; Col 1:21-22). Scripture always speaks of man being reconciled to God, never God being reconciled to man. Man is who departed from the relationship, thus requires reconciliation to restore it.

— There are two aspects of reconciliation: one for all mankind (2 Cor 5:19) and one for the believer (2 Cor 5:20). Jesus' death put mankind in a savable condition, but people still need to experience full reconciliation with God by believing in His Son.

— Religion is man's attempt to reconcile himself to God. He can't...remember Gethsemane...He died down here to save us; He lives in heaven to keep us saved!

— How did this reconciliation between us and God occur? Imputation, where the righteousness of God is transferred to me positionally (added to my account). This is what Martin Luther called the "Great Exchange" where my unrighteousness is exchanged for the righteousness of Christ (Cf. Phil 3:9). Thus God the Father now looks at me as if I was as pure and flawless as His Son.

- This great triumvirate...

- Redemption (Rom 3:24; 1 Cor 1:30; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7)
- Propitiation (Rom 3:25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10)
- Reconciliation (Rom 5:10-11; 2 Cor 5:18-20; Col 1:22)

...is totally the work of God, accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ.

— Redemption pertains to sin (Rom 3:24), propitiation (or satisfaction) pertains to God (Rom 3:25), and reconciliation is for us.

- "...we shall be saved" - *sōzō*, future tense, referring to our glorification

— Sanctification and glorification were not the direct results of His death, but they are consequences of His life after death and His resurrection (Cf. 6:8-13)

— We have salvation in the present and in the future because our Savior lives. He is still saving us. This verse also shows that our salvation (all 3 aspects) are eternally secure.

Verses 8-10, along with Rom 8:32, are unanswerable texts for those who deny Christ's substitutionary atonement. These passages state plainly that, if Jesus gave Himself for us in atonement, everything else must follow because, having done the most that He could do in dying as our substitute, the lesser things—such as conviction of sin, repentance, effectual grace, faith—must inevitably follow.

11 And not only *this*, but we also **celebrate** in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we **havenowreceived** the reconciliation.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

11 Not only that, but we also continue to boast about God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah, through whom we have now been reconciled.

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

- "...celebrate" - 3x used in this passage. We "celebrate" (exalt):

1. The hope of future glory (v2)
2. In our tribulations, because of the tangible benefits we get from them (v3)
3. Our reconciliation to God, the fact that we are no longer enemies of God (v11)

- "...have now received" - *finished* work

— Jesus' death reconciled us to God with the effect that one day in the future we will stand before Him complete. However, we also enter into the benefits of that reconciliation now.

— We were saved by His death in the past; we will be saved by His life in the future

Sanctification?

The remainder of this chapter can be labeled "potential sanctification." Justification does not *make* a person righteous. It means that before God's holy court, a lost sinner is now declared righteous, but his heart has not been changed. God also has a plan in salvation whereby He not only *declares* a sinner righteous, but He is also going to *make* a sinner righteous. That is, God provides a way that a sinner may grow in grace and *become* sanctified (set apart) for God.

Two Heads: Adam and Christ

Paul viewed Adam and Christ as federal heads of two groups of people. A federal head is a person who acts as the representative of many others, and whose actions result in consequences that the individuals he represents inevitably experience. The power of Christ's act of obedience to overcome Adam's act of disobedience is the great theme of this passage.

(4) The Gospel's universal applicability (5:12-21)

(A) Adam's sin brought sin and death for all (5:12)

12 Therefore, just as through **oneman** sin entered into the world, and **death** through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned—

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—

12 Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death resulted from sin, therefore everyone dies, because everyone has sinned.

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:

- This verse succinctly lays out the reason for the problems we have in this world...why this world is so messed up? Why are people dying? Why are there so many problems?

- "...one man" - Adam

— Sin and death entered the world due to what Adam did in the Garden of Eden

— What we are experiencing and seeing in this world today are far outside of God's original intent and design. These things came into existence because of an action and a rebellion by the First Adam.

— God created everything without death (Gen 1:31), and He will restore all things without death (Rev 21:4)

— This verse makes it clear that God cannot be blamed for the evil, sin and death that happen perpetually around the clock in the world today. Rather, the blame lies in the sin and rebellion of God's creature, the First Adam, and every other person following him who has ever lived.

— There are many theories about Gen 1-2 that do not reconcile with Rom 5:12...the gap theory, which postulates that Satan fell between Gen 1:1 and 1:2, and the rest of Gen 1 is God "cleaning up the mess." However, that theory does not reconcile with the fact that Paul here traces the beginning of sin and chaos on earth not with the fall of Satan, but with the sin of Adam.

- "...death" - *thanatos*, refers to death itself (in contrast to *nekros*); it is the condition of being dead, the event of dying, or personified death (a power or force). Pertains to both physical death (separation of soul and body) and spiritual death (separation of soul from God).

— Death in the Bible never means non-existent; it always means "separation"—either separation of the soul from the body (physical death) or separation of the soul from God (eternal or second death). See extensive notes on "death" (*nekros*) in Eph 2:1

— When Adam sinned, "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The point is not that all people sin, though they do. "Because all sinned" means "because all sinned in Adam." His choice to disobey counted for all his descendants.

Adam Responsible

Why did God (and Paul) hold Adam responsible for the sinfulness of the race when it was really Eve who sinned first? They did so because Adam was the person in authority over, and therefore responsible for, Eve (Gen 2:18-23; 1 Cor 11:3). Further, Eve was deceived (2 Cor 11:3), but Adam sinned deliberately (Cf. 1 Tim 2:14).

We Are Sinners Four Ways

1. We are sinners because we commit acts of sin
2. We are sinners by nature (sin doesn't make us sinners, but we sin because we have that nature)
3. We are in the state of sin. God has declared the entire human family under sin.
4. You and I are also sinners by imputation. That is, Adam acted for the human race because he was the head of it.

(B) Adam's sin explains sin and death before giving of the Law (5:13-14)

(a) Law's function (5:13)

13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not counted against *anyone* when there is no law.

13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

13 Certainly sin was in the world before the Law was given, but no record of sin is kept when there is no Law.

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

- Verses 13-17 are a parenthesis to explain the relationship between sin and the Law. Paul returns to the thought begun in v12 in v18.

- In this section (v13-17) Paul answers the question: Since death is the penalty for transgression of the law, why did people die before the law was given?

— The answer: They died because they sinned "in" Adam. Adam broke God's law in the Garden, and since that time, his descendants have broken God's moral law (their conscience).

— Paul is making an interesting point here...sin existed with Adam, but it was not counted against anyone because the Law (God's standard of righteousness) had not been given to mankind yet

(b) Sin and death reigned: Adam to Christ (5:14a)

(c) Adam is a type of Christ (5:14b)

14 Nevertheless death reigned **from Adam until Moses**, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the violation *committed* by Adam, who is a type of Him who was to

come.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

14 Nevertheless, death ruled from the time of Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the same way Adam did when he disobeyed. He is a foreshadowing of the one who would come.

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 a question might arise: If the Law was not given until the time of Moses, and the Law points out sin, was there no sin between Adam and Moses? Paul's answer is: No.

— Paul is saying that because death reigned from Adam until Moses, it is wrong to say that sin came through the Law. Sin was present since Adam because death reigned between the time of Adam and Moses, and death is the consequence for sin.

— Why did people die from Adam to Moses? They did not die for their personal sin—they died because Adam's sin was imputed to them.

— Adam had rejected God's warning: "Dying you shall surely die" = 2 deaths (Jude 12; Rev 2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8)

— We all have to suffer the punishment for our sins ultimately, not only because Adam sinned, but because we all commit acts of sin. However, God has promised not to punish those who trust in His Son (2 Cor 5:19).

- Paul begins to develop an analogy between the First Adam (and what he did) and the Last Adam (and what He did)

— Paul's point will be that the First Adam, through one act of disobedience, brought universal (negative) consequences to the human race; conversely, the one act of obedience by the Last Adam, His death on the cross 2000 years ago, and His bodily resurrection from the dead, in the same way brought universal (positive) consequences to a sinful world.

— Paul will explain a simple axiom of life: as human beings, we are under one of these two heads, either we're under the First Adam and are liable for the eternal consequences of our sin, or we're under the Last Adam, by faith, and experience all of the blessings that He brought to the world.

— Adam is the only OT character who is explicitly identified as a type of Christ in the NT

— Adam's act had universal impact, and prefigured Christ's act, which also had universal impact. The point of similarity is that what each did affected many others.

The rest of this chapter develops seven contrasts (one per verse) between Adam's act of sin and Christ's act of salvation.

(C) Adam's sin is surpassed only by Christ's obedience (5:15-17)

(a) First Adam brought death; Last Adam brought grace (5:15)

15 But the gracious gift is not like the offense. For if by the offense of the one the **many** died, **muchmore** did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the **many**.

15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

15 But God's free gift is not like Adam's offense. For if many people died as the result of one man's offense, how much more have God's grace and the free gift given through the kindness of one man, Jesus the Messiah, been showered on many people!

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, muchmore the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

- Paul warns us to not think of the First Adam and Last Adam as equals...the First Adam got us into this mess, and the Last Adam provided an escape

- What Christ did was not like what the First Adam did, which universally cursed all of us. By contrast, what Jesus Christ did, His one act of obedience to die on the cross, universally blessed all of us because it brought forth God's grace.

- Two opposing sources, and results accordingly

- "...many" [2x] - in the case of Adam, "many" means all people; in the case of Christ, "many" means all who receive the benefit of His saving act by faith (namely, all believers)

- The benefits of Christ's obedience extend to all men *potentially*

- "...much more" - the effects of Jesus' act on people was completely different from that of Adam's, and vastly superior to it

- Jesus did not only cancel the effects of Adam's sin, but He provided more than Adam lost or even possessed before the Fall, namely, the righteousness of God.

(b) First Adam brought condemnation; Last Adam brought justification (5:16)

16 The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *offense*, resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the gracious gift *arose* from many offenses, resulting in **justification**.

16 The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification.

16 Nor can the free gift be compared to what came through the man who sinned. For the sentence that followed one man's offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift brought justification, even after many offenses.

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, Paul stresses that what Jesus did is not like what the First Adam did...

— The First Adam's one act of rebellion brought universal judgment and condemnation onto the world. If you are still in the First Adam, you are already condemned.

— By contrast, Jesus Christ's one act of obedience (His sacrificial death on the cross) universally brought justification (the announcement of innocence that one receives the moment they put their faith in Christ).

- "...justification" - *dikaioo*, a forensic (legal) term, similar to a jury verdict

— When a defendant is on trial, after jury deliberation they come back with a verdict of "not guilty"

— The moment they hear the "not guilty" verdict is the same moment the accused is very relieved

— This is the same thing that happened to you the moment you trusted in Christ...you were justified before God, and there was a forensic legal heavenly declaration of that, and the verdict was announced "not guilty"

(c) First Adam brought death; Last Adam brought life (5:17)

17 For if by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more will those who **receive** the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

17 For if, through one man, death ruled because of that man's offense, how much more will those who receive such overflowing grace and the gift of righteousness rule in life because of one man, Jesus the Messiah!

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.)

- If death reigned (had authority) over everyone based on the sin of one man (Adam), how much more those who are in Christ "reign in life" through Jesus Christ?

— The consequence of Adam's sin was death reigning over mankind; the consequence of Christ's obedience was mankind reigning over death.

— One day, Christians will be the ones reigning with Christ in authority, just like death reigns in authority in the world today

— In the one case people are dying victims under a ruthless ruler; in the other they themselves become the rulers (Cf. Rev 1:6) whose kingdom is one of life!

— Death and life are the contrasting consequences of Adam's act and Christ's act

- Death reigns over unbelievers, because without God's Word, no one knows what happens after someone dies. But Jesus came into the world to take death for every man (Heb 2:9), thus He has taken away from us the fear of death.
- If I'm a believer in Christ, if I'm in Christ, I do not need to fear what will happen after my death. Paul had no fear of death (2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:21-23).
- "...receive" - something has to happen in my life in order to move from being in the First Adam to being in the Last Adam: I need to trust/believe in the promise of God regarding His Son and my sin
- In John 1:12, "receive" and "believe" are synonyms

(D) Adam's sin and Christ's obedience brings universal consequences (5:18-19)

(a) First Adam brought condemnation; Last Adam brought justification (5:18)

18 So then, as through one offense the result was condemnation to all mankind, so also through one act of righteousness the result was justification of life to all mankind.

18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

18 Consequently, just as one offense resulted in condemnation for everyone, so one act of righteousness results in justification and life for everyone.

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.

- Both the act of disobedience by the First Adam and the act of obedience by the Last Adam have universal consequences

— The sin of the First Adam resulted in universal condemnation; the obedience of the Last Adam resulted in universal justification

— This verse contrasts the *extents* of Adam's act and Christ's act: condemnation came upon "all men," and justification came upon "all men" (who believe in Christ)

— Our predicament derived from one man, Adam; our salvation is the result of one man, Christ

- "...by the righteousness of one" [KJV] - *dikaïoma*, better translated "one act of righteousness" (see NASB20, NASB95, ISV)

— Reformed theologians latch onto the KJV translation of this verse to refer to the righteous and perfect life that Christ lived prior to the cross. They believe this righteousness becomes imputed to us by faith, which provides for our justification (also see notes on v19).

— Verses 6-10 above are clear, multiple times, that it was the death of Christ that secured our justification, not His perfect life:

6 For while we were still helpless, at *the* right time Christ **died** for the ungodly.

7 For one will hardly **die** for a righteous person; though perhaps for the good person someone would even dare to **die**.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ **died** for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by **His blood**, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

10 For if while we were enemies **we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son**, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved [glorified] by His life.

— Other than v18-19 here, Reformed theologians struggle to find any clear and unambiguous support for this view of justification. And you don't have to look too closely at this verse to understand that it's not referring to Christ's righteous life, but rather to His one act of obedience, referring to the cross, as the basis for our justification.

— The Bible simply never teaches anywhere that we are justified by the righteous life of Christ, but rather by the righteous act (singular) of Christ on the cross, which permitted God to pour out His wrath against sin.

— See <https://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/vicarlaw.htm> for more information about this false doctrine.

The key thing to understand about justification is that it is a declarative act that takes place once at a specific point in time, as opposed to something that takes place as a process over a long period of time as a person who becomes more righteous ((John 5:24; Rom 4:5; 8:30; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; 1 John 5:4,12-13). This is the whole basis for the Protestant Reformation. The Roman Catholic church teaches that salvation comes over a period of time through good works.

(b) First Adam made many sinners; Last Adam made many righteous (5:19)

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were **made** sinners, so also through the obedience of the One the many will **be made righteous**.

19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

19 For just as through one man's disobedience many people were made sinners, so also through one man's obedience many people will be made righteous.

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

- The contrast in this verse is between Adam's one act of disobedience, which plunged the entire human race into sin, and Christ's one act of obedience (the cross), which provided salvation for all

- "...be made righteous" - *dikaïos*, they are not simply declared righteous (the verb for impute is not used here), but they will be "made righteous" in the process of sanctification, culminating in glorification in God's presence

— The disobedient act of the First Adam created many sinners, but through the obedient act of the Last Adam, many will be made righteous (via imputation)

— "made" [2x] - *kathistemi*, means "stand constituted as" and is the same verb used in the first half of v19 in the words "were made sinners"

— We sin because we are sinners. ("He wasn't a horse thief because he stole a horse. He stole a horse because he's a horse thief!") Did you ever have to teach a child to be bad?

- Reformed theology has misinterpreted this verse (since the Reformation) by saying that the obedience of Christ mentioned in this verse refers to His obedience throughout His life in keeping the Law perfectly. This doctrine is sometimes called the Doctrine of Vicarious Law-Keeping.

— And while the Jesus did keep every jot and tittle of the Law perfectly, the obedience spoken of in this verse is the same obedience referred to in Phil 2:8, namely Christ's obedience to the Father's will by going to the cross. It refers to His one act of redemption which took place on Calvary's cross.

Phil 2:8: And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross.

— Reformed theologians say that Christ not only died for us as our Substitute (which is 100% true), but that Christ also lived for us (during His pre-cross days) and kept God's commandments for us as our Substitute. In fact, R.C. Sproul asserted that the cross alone was insufficient to justify us, and that both the life and death of Christ are on equal footing in the work of justification and redemption. He believed that without the redemptive life of Christ, the death of Christ alone could not justify the believer.

— They teach that the debt man owed to God was paid and fully satisfied *not only* by Christ's substitutionary death *but also* by the obedience of His life (which they call Christ's "active righteousness")

— They teach that justification is grounded not only in Christ's death on the cross, where He bore the penalty of God's judgment against us, but it also is grounded in Christ's lifelong obedience in which He fulfilled the precepts of God's law for us

— They assert and maintain that Christ atoned by His life as well as by His death, and that this was absolutely necessary and essential in procuring our righteousness. They say that when we get saved, God imputes to us the law-keeping righteousness of Christ.

- In answering this unbiblical doctrine, it must be stated that Jesus Christ lived a perfect, sinless life and that He perfectly obeyed God's commandments, always doing those things that pleased the Father. He was the spotless, sinless Lamb of God. These facts are indisputable. He kept the law perfectly.

— However, the righteousness by which we are justified does not flow from the perfect life Jesus lived, but instead because of the risen and glorified Son of God and our union with Him. Note Rom 4:25:

He who was delivered over because of our wrongdoings, and was raised because of our justification.

— Reformed theology adds "who obeyed the law" to "raised" which Paul didn't (and never does) teach. They are looking for righteousness on the wrong side of the cross. We do not find our righteousness in the law or even in Christ's keeping of the law, but we find our righteousness only **in Him**, the risen Christ.

2 Cor 5:21: He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

— Other verses that counter this unbiblical doctrine:

- Our righteous standing in Christ is due to the fact that we have been united to the risen Christ, and He has become our righteousness (1 Cor 1:30)
- The righteousness of God, which we receive by faith, is "without [apart from] the law" (Rom 3:22), and has no legal basis whatsoever
- The basis of our justification is found at Calvary (Rom 3:24); it says nothing of His law-keeping as being the basis for our justification
- We are justified by His blood, not by his pre-cross obedience (Rom 5:9)

— If Christ had not been raised from the dead, we would still be in our sins (1 Cor 15:17), in spite of Christ's perfect pre-cross obedience

(E) Adam's sin and the Law's revelation of sin is surpassed by God's grace (5:20-21)

(a) Law's function (5:20a)

(b) Grace increased all the more (5:20b)

20 The Law came in so that the offense would increase; but where sin increased, **grace abounded all the more**,

20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

20 Now the Law crept in so that the offense would increase. But where sin increased, grace increased even more,

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

- The Law was not given to be a stairway to heaven, it was given to make man aware of his need for a Savior

— This is even more so when we understand that the Law not only sits in judgment of what we do, but also what we think

- One of the purposes of the Mosaic Law was to illuminate the sinfulness of people. It did this by exposing the behavior that was until then not obviously contrary to God's will.
- Sin was a terrible thing, but God through the Last Adam brought in an abundance of grace, overshadowing the consequences introduced by the First Adam
- The contrast in this verse deals with the *significance* of Adam's act and Christ's act: the Law showed the significance of Adam's sin more clearly, and God's provision of Christ showed the significance of God's grace more clearly.
- "...grace abounded all the more" - when God provided Jesus, He provided "grace" (favor) that far exceeded the sin that He exposed when He provided the Law.
- "abounded" - *hupereperisseusen*, super-abounded; abounded more exceedingly

Though sin is shown to be wide and deep, thank God his grace is wider and deeper still.
[J.B. Philips]

There is more grace in Him than there is sin in you.

(c) Although sin reigned in death; grace reigned in righteousness; eternal life
(5:21)

21 so that, as sin reigned in death, so also grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

21 so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

21 so that, just as sin ruled by bringing death, so also grace might rule by bringing justification that results in eternal life through Jesus the Messiah, our Lord.

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

- Sin reigned in death, but fortunately the Last Adam brought in grace, which reigned all the more

- This verse contrasts the *dominion* of Adam's act and Christ's act: sin reigning in death and grace reigning to eternal life.

Contrast of Two Unions

| <u>One Man (Adam)</u> | <u>One Man (Christ)</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 15 One man's offense | One Man's free gift |
| — many died | — righteousness to many |
| 16 One (Adam) | For many offences |
| — judgment, condemnation | — gift of justification |
| 17 Through one man | Through one Man |

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| — death reigns | — believers reign in life |
| 18 One man's offence | Righteousness of One |
| — condemnation to all | — justification offered all |
| 19 Disobedience of one | Obedience of One |
| — many made sinners | — many made righteous |
| 21 Sin reigned in death! | Grace reigns in eternal life! |

- Two Men: Adam & Christ
- Two Acts: Sin in the Garden & obedience on the Cross
- Two Results: Condemnation, guilt and death & justification, life and kingship
- Two Differences:
 - In Degree: Sin abounds & Grace super-abounds
 - In Operation: One sin resulting in condemnation and reign of death for all & many sins on Christ resulting in justification and reigning in life for believers
- Two Kings: Sin reigning through death & Grace reigning through righteousness
- Two Abundances: Grace and the Gift of Righteousness
- Two Contrasting States: Condemned people slaves of sin & Justified people reigning in life

Application

Rom 5 concludes the arguments for salvation (justification). How then should I live? Rom 6-8 will lay that out clearly!

- Rom 5: Two heads—Adam and Christ
- Rom 6: Two masters— Sin personified and God as revealed in Jesus
- Rom 7: Two husbands—The Law and Christ Risen

Pride and insecurity grow if we think God loves us for anything we do or are. God's great and unchangeable love is our true security.

Are you at peace with God? God wrote the peace treaty with the blood of His Son and will not go to war against us again.

Are you suffering? God rarely has only one purpose in any one thing He does. Refinement through suffering is your privilege as God's child (Heb 12:4-11) your opportunity to strengthen other Christians (Luke 22:31-32; Heb 12:12-13), your preparation to comfort others.