

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God's holiness – man's sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical:** 12:1-15:33 (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

In the book of Romans Paul first establishes that all are under the condemnation of sin. Then he establishes that justification is by faith alone in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 2
Justification by Faith Alone...

Stated... Rom. 3:21-31
Illustrated... Rom. 4:1-22
Applied... Rom. 4:23-25
Built on... Rom. 5:1-11

Romans 5:12-21 is commonly said to be one of the most important and, at the same time, one of the most difficult passages in the whole Bible. The main points are clear, but there are various details and nuances that are often debated and mused over at great length.

Here, Paul presents the great contrast between death and life related to the two representative heads of the human race, namely Adam and Christ. Paul here shows that what we lost in Adam has been far surpassed by what we, as believers, have now gained in Christ. Where Adam failed miserably, Christ has succeeded exceedingly.

Paul has just emphasized the truth of the believer's reconciliation through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is where he left off at Romans 5:11.

Now, in survey fashion, Paul summarizes where we were before Christ and how we got there, and now where we as believers are in Christ and how we got here.

Romans 5:12–17 (NKJV)

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

The word “**Therefore**” builds on what he has previously said in the chapter. Paul has emphasized justification by faith and reconciliation with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 3

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

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

Romans 5:11 (NKJV)

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

How can it be that ALL the reconciled can be made right with God through ONE person? How does that work? This is the question that Paul answers in Romans 5:12-21.

To help us understand, he backs up and shows how we are all sinners on the basis of our solidarity with Adam. In like manner, we as believers are now in solidarity with Jesus Christ.

If I was to ask you why are you a sinner? You would probably say, “Because I sin”. Yes, that is true, but it goes much deeper than that. Your identification with sin goes back to your solidarity with Adam. We are born sinners by nature and then by choice.

Paul begins verse 12 by drawing a parallel that he doesn’t finish until he gets to verse 18.

Verse 12 begins with, “***Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world***”. The world here is talking about the world of humanity. Sin was already a reality before it entered the world. Sin actually began in heaven with the revolt of Satan, and then through his conniving, it was brought to the world of humanity through “one man” – namely Adam.

Notice it does not say sin entered through one couple; it does not say through one woman; but rather through ONE MAN. This man is clearly shown to be Adam as seen in verse 14.

Eve actually sinned first – so why does it say sin entered through ONE MAN? Why is the man held culpable with no mention of Eve?

Adam was created first and had headship responsibility. Actually, it was only Adam who directly received the command from God not to partake of the forbidden fruit and that happened even before Eve was created (Gen. 2:17). Adam knew full well what he was doing and deliberately sinned, but in contrast Eve was deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). Hence, the responsibility for the fall rests singularly on Adam’s shoulders.

It was through Adam’s sin that death entered in and “thus spread to all men”. The consequence of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). God had clearly warned Adam...

Slide # 4

Genesis 2:17 (NKJV)

17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in **the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**”

The word death means “separation” (Ja. 2:26). The Bible speaks of three aspects of death.

Slide # 5

1. ***Spiritual Death*** = separation of relationship from God
2. ***Physical Death*** = separation of soul/spirit from the body
3. ***Second (Eternal) Death*** = separation of body/soul eternally from God in hell

The very day Adam sinned, that very day he experienced spiritual alienation and separation from God – he died spiritually and began to die physically. And the Bible teaches that if we die in sin without being reconciled to God we will be forever separated from God in hell.

Through the one man, Adam, sin and death entered the world, and in that event, death came to all people because “**all sinned**”. Note through ONE man sin entered but at the same time ALL sinned. In Adam’s sin, we all sinned. You say, “That doesn’t sound fair – I wasn’t ever there”. Oh, but you were. You were in Adam and you were there! And you are implicated in his sin.

Five times in verses 15-19 Paul emphasizes that it was the offence/disobedience of one man that brought death/judgment/condemnation to all men. Clearly, ONE MAN is responsible for this and yet we are all represented in that ONE man.

The next two verses (Rom. 5:13-14) go on to show that it was Adam’s sin that was responsible for the death of the whole of humanity. Thus, universal death is attributed to a single, solitary sin of ONE MAN!

In verses 12-19 we have the word “one” found 12 times.

There have been two main ways of explaining how the entire human race participated in Adam’s original sin.

1. **Representative Headship view:** This view says that Adam represented and acted for the whole human race and that is why Christ is spoken of as the 2nd Adam who could also represent the whole human race (cf. 1 Cor. 15:22).
2. **Seminal Headship view:** This view says because the whole human race is tied back to the seed of Adam, thus we were all physically/organically/seminally represented in the seed of Adam (cf. Heb. 7:9-10).

Slide # 6

Perhaps there is a combination of both views involved.

Adam represented us – **Representative Headship**

Adam contained us – **Seminal Headship**

All mankind actually sinned in Adam. In some sense, we were in Adam. We are all a part of Adam. Adam in some sense is us, and we are Adam. As Adam we sinned. In view is a corporate solidarity in Adam.

The meaning of SOLIDARITY is defined as a **unity or a union of a group or class of people who are bound together in what they share in common.**

Very simply we were unified with and in union with Adam in his sin! His sin was our sin!

Slide # 7



This is a fitting analogy because it pictures UNIFIED rebellion against the authority of God. In Adam we were all in on this! All of his descendants are a chip off the old block. We all come with the definance of Adam.

As we move to the next 2 verses, we see clearly that the imputation of sin is what is in view. The Bible teaches three basic imputations.

Slide # 8

THREE KEY IMPUTATIONS...

The imputation of Adam's sin to the human race (Rom. 5:12-21).

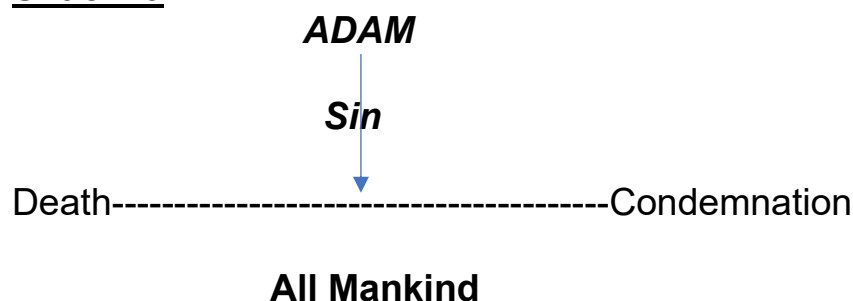
The imputation of humanities sin to Christ (2 Cor. 5:19).

The imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers (2 Cor. 5:21).

To impute something means to put it to one's account.

The dash at the end of verse 12 indicates that the comparison Paul has begun to make is not carried through on. He doesn't resume his thought until he gets to verse 18 – which Lord willing we will get to next week.

Slide # 9



No Man Is an Island (John Donne)

*No man is an island,
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.*

....
*Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee.*

Our sinful solidarity with Adam is profound – going to the very core of our being. It is all about who we are – naturally speaking.

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

Paul here is making a point. Adam defied a clear law of God. God clearly commanded him not to eat of the forbidden fruit. But then, from Adam to Moses, there was no formal law code. And sin is not imputed (put to one's account) where there is no law.

Clearly, sin was in the world as seen in the LORD seeing that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and *“that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”* (Gen. 6:5). It is seen in the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11). It is seen the fact that the men of Sodom *“were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD”* (Gen. 13:13).

Certainly, there was *“the work of the law written in their hearts”* – the law of conscience (Rom. 2:15), but Paul is not dealing with that here (cf. Rom. 2:12). His point here is that at this time there was no formal law and therefore sin was not imputed on that basis (cf. Rom. 4:15).

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

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses – but on what basis? Since death is the penalty for breaking God's law, then these people died on the basis of someone else breaking the law – namely ADAM! That is Paul's point!

Yes, they sinned but not in the exact manner as Adam. Adam flagrantly broke the law of God in the garden, but they didn't. Since death is for breaking God's law they died because of their solidarity with Adam in his sin.

Slide # 10

Since death is the penalty for transgression of law, why did those people die? The answer is they died because they sinned "in" Adam. Adam transgressed God's law in the Garden of Eden, and ever since his descendants have transgressed God's law, not just the Mosaic Law. This accounts for the universality of death.

– **Thomas Constable**

Adam is described as a type of Him who was to come; namely Christ. What Paul is presenting is a comparison and a contrast between Adam and Christ. Both through ONE ACT affected the whole of humanity. That is the key point of Adam being a type.

Slide # 11

1 Corinthians 15:22 (NKJV)

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

Jesus in 1 Cor. 15:45 is called "**The last Adam**". Both Adam and Christ are representatives of the entire race and their actions affect the entire human race.

Adam's one act determined the character of the world; Christ's one act determined the character of eternity.

– **Life Application Bible Commentary**

Paul's main point in these two verses [Rom. 5:13-14] is that death passed to all men (v.12), not because they sinned, but because Adam sinned. It was Adam's sin that brought death upon humanity.

– **Middletown Bible Commentary**

We might here use the illustration of infants who die. These babies know nothing of right or wrong and yet they die (cf. Isa. 7:16). Why? Because of their solidarity with Adam. When Adam sinned, his sin was credited to every one of his descendants without exception. Again, theologians call this the imputation of Adam's sin to the entire human race.

Not only was Adam's sin imputed to us but so also the condemnation for Adam's sin.

Slide # 12

Romans 5:18 (NKJV)

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

When Adam sinned the penalty was death and we now all share in that death penalty as Adam's offspring. Understand that Adam's sin and condemnation have been imputed to the entire human race. There is no such thing as an innocent person or an innocent baby. That is why all DIE!

Not only are we all sinners by way of imputation, but all people also have inherited a sin nature which is also traced back to Adam. We all come with a nature that is bent towards evil. Every child is born with this reality. We are born sinners who come in the nature of Adam.

At the moment of conception we were instantly corrupted by sin. We might compare this to a defective sin gene that has been passed down from Adam through our parents.

Slide # 13

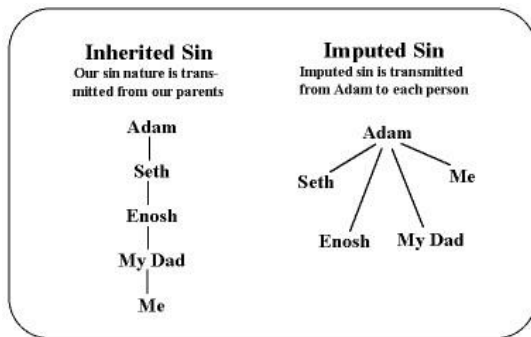
Psalms 51:5 (NKJV)

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin, my mother conceived me.

David is not saying there is something sinful about conception. It was God who commanded mankind to be fruitful and multiply. God would never tell people to sin (cf. Gen. 1:28). David, in Psalm 51:5, was referring to the sinful nature that was inherent within him from the moment of conception.

David understood that from the moment of conception, he was a sinner by nature (cf. Jer. 17:9). Thus, he was born a sinner!

Slide # 14



So what are we saying then? Are babies condemned to hell simply because of their solidarity with Adam's sin? NO! The Bible nowhere indicates that people go to hell simply because of imputed sin from Adam or because of an inherited sinful nature.

The Bible speaks of a number of future judgments, whether it be the Bema Seat judgment, the judgment of the sheep and goats at Christ's Second Coming, and the great white throne judgment of all the lost at the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ.

The pattern in all these judgments is that judgment before God is always based on a person's works – not on a person's nature.

Slide # 15

Revelation 20:11–13 (NKJV)

11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged **according to their works**, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, **each one according to his works**.

The judgments of Scripture are based on works which shows responsibility and accountability for choices and actions. On this basis babies or people who die before the condition of accountability would have no basis to be judged. They have done no works! They have done nothing in terms of works for which they might be held accountable.

The fact that judgment is based on works indicates that people at the judgment were able to make responsible decisions for which they are held accountable.

So my view is that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to those who never reach a condition of accountability.

Slide # 16

Romans 5:19 (NKJV)

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

Just as Adam's sin was imputed to all people, so likewise God's provision of imputed righteousness has been made available to all people (1 Jn. 2:2). This righteousness is received by faith, and people are accountable to believe (Jn. 3:18). But for those who cannot believe I take it that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them on the sheer basis of GRACE!

Keep in mind that "***justification by faith***" applies to those who have the ability to believe. Paul talks about the obedience of faith in both Romans 1:5 and 16:26. In Romans 6:17, he says, "*You obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.*" Being justified by faith implies a certain level of responsibility and accountability.

Yes, there is the reality of imputed sin from Adam, but there is also the reality of the cross where the sin of humanity was imputed to Christ (2 Cor. 5:19). What people are now accountable for is personal sin, and for what they do with the truth of Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:18; Rev. 20:11-15).

Slide # 17

We "all" sinned [in Adam] as our representative, and as a consequence the guilt of Adam's sin was imputed to all of us. But Christ's death canceled this and released the human race from this judicial guilt (Rom. 5:18-19). Even so, those who attain the age [condition] of accountability are responsible for personal sin and therefore are justly condemned. – ***Norman Geisler & Thomas Howe***

15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Paul here is making a contrast emphasizing the abounding superiority of what Jesus did. Yes, the effects of Adam's one sin were great – but the effects of what Christ did are even greater – only in a positive direction.

It was by Adam's “**one**” offense that many died. That impacted MANY in a very negative way. However, “***much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.***”

What each one did (Adam and Christ) affected MANY, however, the enormity of what Christ did overshadows the negative effects of Adam's offense.

Note the tremendous emphasis on GIFT/GRACE here in Romans 5:15...

Slide # 18

Romans 5:15...

Free gift
Grace of God
Gift
Grace

Yes, it was terrible what Adam brought about but in contrast God's grace has super abounded to many.

The idea of “gift” (Gk. dorea) signifies “freeness”. In the NT this word is used only in reference to God's good gifts to people. Freeness linked with grace makes the emphasis especially strong. Grace also essentially means “gift” – literally meaning “unmerited favor”.

The offense of original sin came by ONE and the free gift of grace also came by ONE. And the action of each ONE has affected MANY.

“God's grace and the gift” by means of “grace” abound in the sense of reaching and being available to all people, but not necessarily being appropriated by all. – ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. The judgment that came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift that came from many offenses resulted in justification.

Paul here makes a contrast between the ONE offense (Adam's single sin) that resulted in the condemnation of the entire human race, with free gift that cancelled out MANY offenses resulting in justification.

Think about it the ONE single sin of Adam is responsible for the death and condemnation of the whole of humanity. One sin resulted in the FALL of mankind in total. Have you seen the death and destruction brought about by that ONE sin? Have you seen starving children? Have you seen the rot of sickness and disease that takes your breath away? Have you seen the slow painful deteriorating death people? It isn't pretty!

It is incredible the awful consequences of sin – all brought about by the SIN of one man!

As a young man I well remember the murder of my cousin. She was a beautiful young woman in her early 20s. The funeral was terrible. The mourning was surreal. I remember thinking to myself, *"How terrible is this thing called sin and how horrendous is the reality of death"*.

But I want you to try and get your head around the fact that it was ONE offense that brought this condemnation down on the whole of humanity. It wasn't a whole bunch of sins – but ONE! That's what the text says, ***"one offense resulted in condemnation"***.

The question of pain and suffering is one that the world seems to wrestle with more than any other. They want to know WHY a good God would allow this? Well, in the garden of Eden God allowed FREE CHOICE and Adam freely chose to defy God and this is the result! The whole of human pain and suffering can be traced back to the FALL. And the fallout of the FALL has been horrific beyond description! But the culpability lies with man himself – not with God!

The problem with the natural (unsaved man) is that he has a very LOW view of God and way too high a view of self. To start with who are we to judge God? A proper view of God sees Him as so HOLY that the DEATH consequences of even ONE sin and its misery are totally justified. It speaks to the HIGH HOLINESS of God and WHY even a single sin is so very deadly serious! We need a HIGH view of God!

The question is asked: “***Why do bad things happen to good people?***”
But even the question is wrong.

There are no good people as Paul has clearly shown. In Romans 3:10 he said “there is none righteous” – in 3:12 “there is none who does good”. A better question is: “***Why does anything good ever happen to anyone?***”
We all deserve to go to the unending tortures of hell immediately!

But here is the point: If ONE single sin caused this much misery what does this say about the magnitude of the SIN DEBT and its SERIOUSNESS that is upon the head of each and every one of us?

How many sins have you – just you committed? There are billions of people on the planet and each of us has committed MANY sins.

If one SIN brought this much misery, pain, death, and destruction, just think about the immeasurable amount of horror that our collective SIN DEBT deserves to bring upon the human race – individually and collectively.

ONE sin brought about death, sorrow, misery, mourning, and pain. But now the free gift of God’s GRACE has taken care of the MANY OFFENSES resulting in justification.

Jesus didn’t just take care of the original sin but also of ALL the sins that have accumulated since then.

Condemnation was for ONE sin, but God’s GIFT has taken care of MANY offenses to the end that we as believers are now declared righteous before God singularly on the basis of God’s GRACE through FAITH.

This speaks to the indescribable awesomeness of Christ’s sacrifice which allows God to FREELY forgive ALL sin and reconcile the ungodly who come to faith in Him.

It took only ONE sin to condemn the entire human race, but in Christ provision was made for MANY acts of sin. Christ paid for Adam’s sin, and for all of mine, and for all of yours, and for the sin of the entire world in total!

Slide # 19

John 1:29 (NKJV)

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said,
“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

1 John 2:2 (NKJV)

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Slide # 20

Representative Adam: ONE sin = Condemnation

Representative Christ: ALL sin paid for = Justification

Adam = Bad News

Christ = Super Abounding GOOD NEWS

Sin is not the last word, for the gift alters the sinner's entire situation.

– ***Leon Morris***

That one single misdeed should be answered by judgment is perfectly understandable: that the accumulated sins and guilt of all the ages should be answered by God's free gift, this is the miracle of miracles, utterly beyond human comprehension. – ***Charles Cranfield***

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

Through one man's offense death reigned. Note the double emphasis on THE ONE. This all happened because of the sin of the ONE – namely ADAM!

The representation of Adam has been a disaster resulting in the long reign of death. This is Adam's legacy! "Death!" Death has reigned as king over Adam's race. Death reigns in every era of human history. It reigns supreme. All fear it! No one escapes its rule.

"The Appointment in Samarra"

(as retold by W. Somerset Maugham [1933]) - The speaker is Death

*There was a merchant in Bagdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the marketplace I was jostled by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture, now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate.

I will go to Samarra and there Death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs in its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the marketplace and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said, Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning? That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Bagdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.*

There is no escaping death: “It is appointed for men to die...” (Heb. 9:27). The world “is a place of cemeteries” – thanks to the ONE man’s offense.

Death is a tyrant, ruling over people and bringing every person under its fear and into its grip (cf. Heb. 2:15).

– *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*

However, the reign of death is met by the “***much more***” of those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness”.

All the way through the emphasis is on the severity of Adam’s ONE sin, but that is contrasted with the MUCH MORE that we as believers now have in Christ. Sin and its effects was HORRIBLE, but the effects of what Christ has done for us FAR outstrip this in terms of glorious benefits.

Slide # 21

“**much more** the grace of God and gift by grace” – v. 15

“**much more** those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness”

“grace abounded **much more**” – v. 20

Sin abounded, but grace has abounded MUCH MORE!

But note this very carefully, this only applies to “***those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness***”. This grace – this gift must be received! God has made provision for all, but it must be personally received.

Slide # 22

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV)

1 We then, as workers together with Him also **plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.**

2 For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

John 1:12 (NKJV)

12 But **as many as received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

One has to receive the grace of God (the gift provided) and the way one does this is by faith – by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

Don't overlook the word “**receive**” it is the difference between the reign of death and the reign of life.

There is a qualifying expression, “they that receive.” That is Paul's answer. Receive! Receive! That is what man must do in order to be saved. – **Alva McClain**

This life is available only to those who “receive” the gift (v. 17). In this way Paul recalls all he has taught about the indispensability of faith (chap. 4). The entire passage (vv. 12-21) neither teaches universalism nor strict individualism but representationalism with individual responsibility. We got into this mess not by individual decision alone but by relationship to our old head, Adam; we get out of the mess not by individual decision alone but by relationship to our new head, Christ. – **Alan Johnson**

The lavishness of God's grace has been provided in Jesus – “**the abundance of grace**” but it must be received by FAITH alone (Rom. 5:1). And this grace is further qualified to be “**the gift of righteousness**”. This is the GIFT of being right with God on the basis of what Jesus did for us.

Note the emphasis throughout on this being a FREE GIFT based on the work of the ONE Man, Jesus Christ.

Slide # 23

- v. 15 – “the free gift”
 - v. 15 – “the gift by grace”
 - v. 16 – “the gift”
 - v. 16 – “the free gift”
 - v. 17 – “the gift”
- “of the one Man” – v. 15
 - “through the One, Jesus Christ” – v. 17

Those that receive this gift of grace – namely the gift of righteousness “will reign in life through One, Jesus Christ.”

Paul twice speaks of death reigning as seen in verses 14 and 17. But here he speaks of believers reigning in life. Note we might expect Paul to speak of “**life reigning**” as a parallel to death reigning, but instead, he says that believers will reign – they will reign in life.

Instead of death reigning over us, now believers will reign over it in life – all made possible “**through the One, Jesus Christ.**”

Christ did not just exchange death’s reign with life’s reign. No, He has done much more in so radically delivering us from death as to now cause us to rule over it.

God has now given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We need no longer fear death. The sting has been removed. Yes, the remnants of the old man “Adam” still have a hold on us physically, but we now “stand, and rejoice in the HOPE of the glory of God” as Paul says in verse 2. We now await the day when death will be swallowed up in resurrection victory (1 Cor. 15:51-57).

Because of Christ we as believers are now reconciled to God. We now share in Christ’s righteousness. We now share in His life. We now stand in absolute solidarity with Jesus as our new head. All that is His we now share in. We are now “**joint heirs with Christ**” (Rom. 8:17). In Christ God has freely given us all things (Rom. 8:32).

Slide # 24

Revelation 21:7 (NKJV)

7 He who overcomes **shall inherit all things**, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Revelation 22:5 (NKJV)

5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. **And they shall reign forever and ever.**

Understand that the MAIN idea throughout this whole context is **solidarity**. As the natural born descendants of Adam we have experienced solidarity with him as our representative – which has involved our unity with him in sin and death. But now, as believers, we know solidarity with Christ, our new head. In Christ everything is BETTER. It is glorious beyond compare and the best is yet to be.

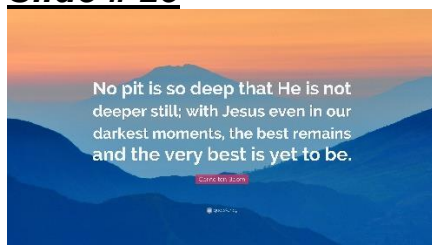
This theme of solidarity is important to get down, because this is what Paul builds on in Romans 6 when he talks about being baptized into Christ's death and so forth. The idea is that we are now totally UNITED to Christ so much so that we share in all He is and all that He is about. Just as what applied to Adam applies to us – so now in Christ what applies to Him – applies to us!

In Christ, we have exchanged the “*reign of death*” for “*reigning in life*”. Even now we enjoy the spiritual life of God. We have come to have life in Christ and that “more abundantly” (Jn. 10:10). We now know the fruit of the Spirit involving love, joy, and peace. And we have HOPE – a resurrection HOPE – a HOPE for the glory of God that we will yet share in fully.

Here we are on the cusp of a new year! What awaits us? What will the new year bring? Will it bring hardship and heartache? Will we know great joy and success? Only God knows what the immediate future may bring.

Corrie Ten Boom, survived the horror of a Nazi Concentration Camp in World War 2. She saw firsthand the “reign of death” all around her but she also knew the reality of “reigning in life” through Jesus Christ.

Slide # 25



Praise God the last word on death for the believer is LIFE! Through Jesus, we reign in life, and the VERY BEST is yet to be!