

# SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

## *In The Grip of God's Grace*

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

### Romans 5:12-21 - "Grace Abounding"

It is universally agreed that the passage before us is one of the greatest theological sections in the entire Bible.

Romans 5:12-21, *"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: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 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. 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. 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. 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.) 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. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.."*

Romans 5:12-21, summarizes the theology of the preceding chapters about sin, condemnation and the lostness of man; about justification – how God saves or rescues man.

How does Paul summarize these two opposites? Condemnation and Justification?

He shows us that all of humanity is either ***in Adam***, under condemnation, or ***in Christ***, justified. Paul points out that our justification in Christ goes just as deep and is really far greater than our condemnation in Adam.

In verses 1-11, Paul answered the question: What are the blessings of our justification.

- Peace with God (vs. 1)
- Access to God (vs. 2)
- Rejoice in the Hope of the Glory of God (vs. 2)
- Rejoicing in our tribulations (vs. 3-4)

- The love of God poured into our hearts (vs. 5-8)
- Saved from the wrath of God (vs. 9-10)
- Rejoicing in God. (vs. 11)

There's a second question that needs to be answered – can we be sure that justification will last?

The answer is yes! Because its based on my union with Christ.

The Scottish pastor and theologian James S. Stewart called union with Christ “the heart of Paul’s religion,” adding that “this more than any other conception --- more than justification, more than sanctification, more even than reconciliation --- is the key which unlocks the secrets of his soul.” John Murray went even further, saying, “Union with Christ is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation.”

*James S. Stewart, A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion* (New York: Harper and Brothers, n.d.). p. 147

John Murray, *Religion Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1955), p/ 170.

Yet the biblical teaching on the believer’s union with Christ, and the believers position in Christ is widely neglected by many.

Why?

It’s to hard to understand – but its very important and it’s clearly taught in scripture.

The Bible teaches that at the moment you were justified, you were also united to Christ in a mystical union.

Illustrations from Scripture:

- The persons of the Godhead
- The two natures of Christ
- Marriage – a picture of Christ and the church

*Ephesians 5:31, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”*

In this passage Paul says that the entire human race is either in Adam or in Christ.

The text divides into three short paragraphs, in each Adam and Christ are related to each other, although with significant differences.

I. Adam and Christ are introduced (vs. 12-14)

Romans 5:12-14, "*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: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 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.*"

In these verses we see man's ruin.

We see how sin entered the world.

How?

1. Sin entered the human family through one man. (VS. 12)

It's Adam – he was a real person in history

Where did evil come from? - Adam's son of obedience

The reasons for all our problems

2. Death then entered the world through sin (vs. 2)

- death – an unwelcome parasite
- both – physical and spiritual
- death is the penalty for sin
- it's man's great enemy.

3. Death came to all men (or mankind) because all sinned.

You say, "But that's not fair, why should we be punished for Adam's sin?"

Young children that haven't sinned – die – that's not fair either.

Notice that verse two tells us the, "all have sinned."

It's a concept that's foreign to the mindset of western individualism, but its seen clearly in scripture.

*Hebrews:7:1-4, "For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils."*

– Abrahams paid tithes to Melchisedec

Romans 6:3-4, *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."*

Romans 6:13-14, *"(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 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."*

Adam's imputation of sin!

Was Adam a "type" of Christ?

Like Adam, Christ is the head of a whole new humanity.

## II. Adam and Christ are contrasted (vs. 15-17)

Romans 5:15-17, *"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. 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. 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.)"*

Notice the contrast:

(vs. 15) – Adam's sin – Christ free gift – the cross

We gain "much more" in Christ than we ever lost in Adam.

Ray Stedman – The sin of Adam brought death --- decaying degenerative force. But grace brought a far more dynamic power --- life. It not only did away with death, but restored what had been destroyed. Moreover, "the trespass of Adam brought death once, the sacrifice and death of Jesus brings life a thousand times."

The nature of their actions was different.

The effect of their actions was different (vs. 16)

- Adam brought condemnation
- Christ brought justification

(vs. 17) If death reigned through Adam,... *"much more" they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*

Notice three key words:

1. One – used 11 times (identification with Adam or Christ)
2. Reign – used 5 times – two kingdoms
3. Much More – used 5 times – mankind's rescue.

### III. Adam and Christ are compared (vs. 18-21)

Romans 5:18-21, "*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. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

- A. The immediate results of Adams sin – judgment and condemnation.

The immediate results of Christ's righteousness (the cross) the free gift of justification and life.

Will all men be saved?

No, notice verse 17, "...receive abundance of grace..."

- B. The nature of the two actions (vs. 19)

Adams – disobedience (Genesis 2 – Paradise lost!)

Christ - Obedience (the cross)

Praise God that Jesus obeyed – Paradise found

Warren W. Wiersbe – Adam was tested in a garden, surrounded by beauty and love; Jesus was tempted in a wilderness, and He died on a cruel cross surrounded by hatred and ugliness. Adam was a thief. And was cast out of Paradise" (Luke 23:43). The Old Testament is "the book of the generations of Adam" (Gen. 5:1) and it ends with "a curse" (Mal. 4:6). The New Testament is "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ" (Matt. 1:1) and it ends with "no more curse" (Rev. 22:3).

What does Paul mean by, "...disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (vs. 19)

It's declared or legally constituted.

It's the ground of being placed in the category of sinners or righteous,

### C. The purpose of the law (vs. 20)

Romans 3:20, *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."*

Galatians 3:24, *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*

The law is not designed to make you righteous

God made ample provision for the increase of sin.

The law turns sin into transgression.

By the increase of Grace

Romans 5:20, *"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (or overflow):"*

God's Abounding Grace

- the greatness of our "ruin"
- the greatness of our "rescue"
- the greatness of our "reign" (vs. 21)

In and through Christ we reign in life by God's grace.

John R. W. Stott, "Nothing could sum up better the blessing of being in Christ than the expression 'the reign of grace'. For grace forgives sin through the cross, and bestows on the sinner both righteousness and eternal life. Grace satisfies the thirsty soul and fills the hungry with good things. Grace sanctifies sinners, shaping them into the image of Christ. Grace perseveres. --- And one day grace will destroy death and consummate the kingdom. So when we are destroyed death and consummate the kingdom. So when we are convinced that 'grace reigns', we will remember that God's throne is a 'throne of grace' and will come to it boldly to receive mercy and to find grace for every need. And all this is through Jesus Christ our Lord, that is through his death and resurrection"

Are you in Adam, or, in Christ?

You cannot help being , 'in Adam., for this came by your first birth over which you had no control. But you can help *staying* "in Adam," for you can experience a second birth --- a new birth from above that will put

you 'in Christ." This is why Jesus said, "Ye must be born again, (John 3:7)

How?

What must I do?