

## Romans

Romans Chapter Five

Romans 5:12-21

January 31, 2010

This is lesson number **26** in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

### The Theme of the Letter

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

### Title: “Law”

*“...and thus death spread to all men, for {because} all 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 those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

Sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Therefore, there must be “law” that all men transgress.

We all sinned in Adam, but men also sinned personally from Adam to Moses. We are considering the period of time from Adam in Genesis 3, through Cain and Abel, Noah and the universal flood, the Tower of Babel, the call of Abraham, the times of Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph; the time of the Hebrews in Egypt, the burning bush, the deliverance from Egypt, the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, until finally the Law is given to Moses.

*Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses.*

Note: The Bible names two men who did not die - Enoch and Elijah.

There is what is called natural law that Paul introduced in Romans 2:14-16. All men are accountable to the law that they have, natural law or the written word of God.

But we will see that the reason men died from Adam to Moses, and the reason men die today, is because of the **one sin of the one man** - Adam.

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Until the law was given to Moses at Mt. Sinai, sin was in the world...

But sin is not **imputed** when there is no law...

Here is an example of why expository preaching and sound exegesis are so important: The word for “not imputed” in verse 5:13 is not the same word that Paul uses in 4:23 where he is writing about justification. In 4:23 and other such verses the word translated “imputed” means “reckoned” or “charged.” The word translated “not imputed” in verse 5:13 means “not recorded,” as in a ledger. Sin is indeed sin, but it is not recorded in the ledger until sin is clearly defined by the law. One purpose of the law was to define sin. We will deal with the purpose of the law when we come to 5:20.

We will take a few minutes to discuss the **principle of sin and natural law before** the law was given in the form of the “Ten Commandments.”

The following line of thought was “stolen” from Ernest Reisinger’s book: The Law and the Gospel.

In Romans 2:14-16, we are given the concept of “natural law”; that even those who never heard of the Ten Commandments were justly condemned by natural law.

Romans 2:14-16

14 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, 15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) 16 {all this will become clear} in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Ernest Reisinger suggests the following parallels to the **Ten Commandments** from the moral principles found in the **Genesis** record:

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Exodus 20:1-17

20:1 And God spoke all these words, saying:

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

13 "You shall not murder.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

First Commandment: no other gods...

Exodus 20:2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 You shall have **no other gods** before Me.

**Genesis 35:1-4**

35:1 Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother." 2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the **foreign gods** that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." 4 So they gave Jacob all the **foreign gods** which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.

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### Second Commandment: no images of God...

Exodus 20:4 "You shall not make for yourself a **carved image**, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

#### **Genesis 31:17-20**

17 Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan. 19 Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the **household idols** that were her father's.

### Third Commandment: oaths...

Exodus 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God **in vain**, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

#### **Genesis 24:1-5**

24:1 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please, put your hand under my thigh, 3 and I will make you **swear by the LORD**, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; 4 but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."

### Fourth Commandment: sabbath keeping...

Exodus 20:8 "Remember the **Sabbath** day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

#### **Genesis 2:1-3**

2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God **blessed the seventh day and sanctified** it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

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### Fifth Commandment: honor your father and mother...

Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

#### **Genesis 27:41**

41 So Esau hated Jacob **because of the blessing** with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob."

### Sixth Commandment: murder...

Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder.

#### **Genesis 4:7-10**

8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and **killed** him. 9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.

### Seventh Commandment: adultery...

Exodus 20:14 "You shall not commit adultery

#### **Genesis 39:7-9**

7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this **great wickedness, and sin against God?**"

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### Eighth Commandment: stealing...

Exodus 20:15 "You shall not steal.

#### **Genesis 44:1-5**

44:1 And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. 2 Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. 3 As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. 4 And when they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? 5 Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? **You have done evil in so doing.**'"

### Ninth Commandment: lying...

Exodus 20:16 "You shall not bear **false witness** against your neighbor

#### **Genesis 39:10-18**

10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. 11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, 14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. 15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside." 16 So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "**The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; 18 so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside.**"

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### Tenth Commandment: coveteousness ...

Exodus 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

#### **Genesis 12:14-20**

14 So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. 15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels. 17 But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way." 20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

#### **Genesis 20:1-4**

20:1 And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. 2 Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. 3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."

So we can see that the **principle** behind each of the Ten Commandments is embodied in the "natural law." The people in Genesis had no written "law" but they instinctively knew what was right and what was wrong.

Cf. Romans 2:14-16

But I need to make the argument, that while men sinned and ...

... nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses...

... even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam...

... that men died because of the one sin of the one man - Adam.

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In order to establish that all men die because of the **one sin of the one man**, we need to keep in mind that the **whole point** of this passage is the **comparison** between Adam and the Lord Jesus Christ. Adam is the type of Him who was to come. What is true of us in Adam is true of us in Christ.

There are at least **three viable explanations** of why men die who have not sinned after the likeness of the transgression of Adam.

{Pelagianism and other similar heresies simply deny that the sin of Adam has anything to do directly with the human race.}

The **first** explanation says that men died because of sin against **natural law**.

It was established that the underlying principle of each of the Ten Commandments can be found in the Genesis record before the law was given to Moses.

While it is true that men sinned and were treated as sinners by God, the comparison of Adam and Christ is invalid as to natural law. What Adam did was to **disobey a specific command, not a sin principle**.

The **second** explanation says that men die because of a **sinful nature** inherited from Adam and that explains the death of infants. The death of infants and imbeciles is not explained by the sin against natural law, but a sinful nature explains the death of rational men, infants, and imbeciles.

At this point I am once again going to, “open a window” to deal with an issue raised by this passage. What has the “reign of death” to do with those who are mentally incompetent either by age or mental defect:  
Infants and Imbeciles.

“Original Sin,” and guilt by imputation, is the reason why infants and others who are mentally incompetent die.

But what is the eternal state of the mentally incompetent? What about the millions of babies who have been sacrificed to the false god of convenience in the abortion chambers? What about stillborn babies? Crib deaths, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome?

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Please listen carefully to what I am teaching. I know a preacher in South Alabama that was slandered by his enemies who said that he teaches that God sends babies to hell. I don't believe that and neither does he. But that is what his enemies have spread about him.

The truth is they despise the message of sovereign grace that he preaches.

Here is what I believe about the eternal state of the mentally incompetent -  
Infants and Imbeciles:

1. There are some things that we do not know. As believers, we must , like Job, trust God, especially in the face of overwhelming difficulty.

Deut 29: 29 {The context is the forfeiture of the land due to breaking the covenant. }

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

2. God is holy and just and whatever God does is right. What God does is right because He does it. There can be no standard, other than Himself, by which God is measured. It is an awful sin to accuse God of being unfair.

### **Hosea 14:9**

9 Who is wise?

Let him understand these things.

Who is prudent?

Let him know them.

**For the ways of the LORD are right;**

The righteous walk in them,

But transgressors stumble in them.

### **Genesis 18:25**

Shall not the Judge of all the earth **do right**?

3. We do have the comfort of the Scripture regarding infants.

2 Samuel 12:18-23

18 Then on the seventh day it came to pass that the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. For they said, "Indeed, while the child was alive, we spoke to him, and he would not heed our voice. How can we tell him that the child is dead? He may do some harm!" 19 When David saw that his servants were whispering, David perceived that the child was dead.

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Therefore David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." 20 So David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house; and when he requested, they set food before him, and he ate. 21 Then his servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food." 22 And he said, "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' 23 "But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Therefore, I believe that those who die as infants are safe in the mercy of God. And, although I have no other Scripture to back this up, I do believe this applies to others who are mentally incompetent, i.e., Imbeciles, and that whatever God does will be right and that I do not have to know, nor do I have to understand everything.

### **But the real issue is between those who are not Infants and Imbeciles!**

If you are not a committed believer in Jesus Christ, why?

Let's close this "window" on Infants and Imbeciles and return to our argument that the reason that men die is not because we **became** sinners, but we were born sinners.

The reason this **second** explanation {inherited or sinful nature} fails is because the verse does not say "all men became sinners," but that "all sinned."

The main reason we reject the explanation that men die because we all **become** sinners is again that the comparison between Adam and Christ becomes invalid.

**If we die because we personally become sinful, then we would be justified because we personally become righteous.**

God justifies the ungodly!

If we reject the **first** explanation: that all men die because of sin against natural law, or actual sin; and the **second** explanation: that all men die because of inherited sin, how **do** we explain why men die?

What is the **Third** explanation?

Just believe what the apostle wrote: "all sinned." All sinned in Adam.

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That is the only explanation that maintains the **comparison** between Adam as a type of Christ. The **one sin of the one man** constitutes those whom he represented as condemned. We will see {D.V.} how the free gift of grace compares with the condemnation in future lessons.

We are dealing with “things hard to be understood,” such as the atonement, election, predestination, reprobation, perseverance, et al.

This is the Gospel: God saves sinners. God justifies the ungodly.

There is nothing in the Gospel that prevents anyone from coming to Christ.

If a person goes to hell they will not be able to say truthfully, “God did not choose me, and so I would not come to Jesus.”

All the person in hell can say is that he suppressed the knowledge of God that is revealed in creation and nature. And all the one who has heard this Gospel preached, can say truthfully is: “I did not want to come to Jesus in repentance and faith, I loved my sin too much to give it up.”

Can you trust Jesus only?

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