

The Impact of Adam and the Greater Impact of Christ Romans 5:12-15

April 16, 2020

Review

Theme of Romans: The gospel of God (1:16-17)

1:18-3:20 The universality of sin and condemnation (the universal need for the gospel)

3:21-4:25 The gospel (good news) as the righteousness of God by faith

Chs 5-8 The gospel and the sure hope it gives

5:1-11 Blessed results of justification

- Peace with God (1)
- Access into the presence of God, who has given us His grace in which we stand secure before Him (2a)
- Hope of seeing the glory of God and being conformed to His glorious character, a hope in which we rejoice (2b)
- Rejoicing in our sufferings, knowing our Heavenly Father uses our sufferings to produce in us spiritual endurance, and in turn, proven character, and in this way stronger hope (3-4)
- The pouring of God's love into our hearts through the indwelling Holy Spirit (5)
- Assurance that God showed His love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us (6-8)
- Certainty that we will be saved from God's wrath (9-10)
- Rejoicing in God through Christ (11)

Question: What stands out to you in 5:12-15?

Death through Adam (12-14)

12 "Therefore"

1. Starts a new subsection that goes through the end of the chapter
2. Looks back to everything Paul has taught from 1:18-5:11, in order to explain more fully condemnation and salvation

3. Especially looks back to 5:10 "...much more...shall we be saved by his life"
4. The main point Paul is now seeking to make is seen in 5:17-21
5. The believer was united to Adam, but has now been united to the risen Christ. Therefore the believer's hope of the glory of God is absolutely certain!

12 "...just as sin came into the world through one man..."

1. It was not Eve's sin that impacted the whole world, but Adam's
2. 5:12-21 shows that Adam was the head of the human race
 - **Gen. 5:1-2** This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and **named them Man** [Hebrew, *Adam*] when they were created.

12 "...and death through sin..."

1. Death is the most unnatural thing in the world
2. 6:23
3. Both physical and spiritual death
 - **Gen. 2:17** "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."
 - Paul connects "death" with "condemnation" (16b, 18a), and contrasts it with "eternal life" (21)

12b "and so death spread to all men because all sinned—"

1. Here, "all sinned" means that all sinned in Adam, that Adam's sin was counted as ours
 - This is made clear by the rest of this tightly-knit section (vv 15, 17, 18, **19**)
 - **1 Cor. 15:22** "For as **in Adam all die**, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."
2. Because all sinned in Adam, all are under death

13a "for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given"

1. Sin is not limited to transgression of the written Law
2. **Gen. 6:5** "The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

13b "but sin is not counted where there is no law."

1. Means sin is not considered transgression of written, or verbally given, law
2. **2:12** "For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law."

verse 14

“...those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam...”

- Adam transgressed a specific, verbally-given commandment of God (Gen 2:17)

“Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses...”

1. In spite of sin not being counted “where there is no law”
2. The repeated refrain in Genesis 5
 - **Gen. 5:5** “Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, **and he died.**”
3. Death is a power that reigns and rules over all in Adam, and there is nothing we can do to escape its clutches
4. The reign of death shows that all sinned in Adam

“Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.”

1. A type of Christ (15)
2. The word ‘type’ can refer to an impression, stamp, form, outline, pattern, or model¹
3. Adam as the head of all who are in him, is a picture of Christ as the head of all who are in Him
4. Just as Adam’s act changed the status of all in him, so Christ’s act changes the status of all in Him

We have hope because of the One who was to come!

- 1 Cor 15:45 “the last Adam”

The free gift through Jesus Christ (15)

15a “But the free gift is not like the trespass.”

1. “free gift” is translated from the Greek word, *charisma*, which comes from the same root as “grace”
2. Relates to the grace of God that comes through Christ, that Paul has been emphasizing since **3:24** “and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”
3. Though Adam is a type of Christ, Christ and His act and its effect are far greater!

¹ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 279.

15b “For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.”

1. “many died” is literally, “the many died,” referring to the many who are in Adam
2. “the grace of that one man Jesus Christ” refers to His great act of grace spoken of in verses 18 & 19
3. “the free gift” brought justification by grace (16), which has been emphasized since 3:21
4. “much more have...abounded for many”
 - The many who are in Christ, including both Jewish and Gentile believers
 - Christ’s act is vastly greater and goes far deeper than Adam’s
 - Christ’s act of grace conquered and reversed to the uttermost the consequences of Adam’s act of disobedience, for all who are in Christ
5. “that one man Jesus Christ”
 - He had to be a man to represent us
 - One Man’s gracious act has brought God’s grace and free gift to many!
6. We might have expected Paul to say, “much more has **eternal life** abounded for many,” an expected contrast with what was just stated, that “many **died** through one man’s trespass”
 - But instead Paul emphasizes the gracious nature of what God has done through Christ
 - “much more have **the grace of God** and **the free gift** by **the grace of that one man Jesus Christ**”
7. Believers who have received this grace in Christ can be certain that sin and death will never triumph over them!

Conclusion

Question: How can we apply this passage to our lives?