

The Reign of Grace Romans 5:16-21

April 23, 2020

Review

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

1:18-3:20 The universality of _____.

3:21-4:25 The gospel (good news) as _____.

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

5:1-11 Blessed results of justification

5:12-21 Comparison and contrast between the impact of Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience

The main points of 5:12-15 were:

1. Sin came into the world through the one man Adam, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned in Adam (12)
2. Even before the Law of Moses was given, death reigned over all men (13-14)
3. Adam as the head of mankind, was a type of Christ as the head of all who are in Him. But the free gift in Christ is far greater than the trespass in Adam (14b-15a)
4. If the many in Adam died through his one trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abounded for the many in Christ (15b)

STAND, Romans 5:16-21

Question: Find each place in this passage where something or someone is said to reign. Why does Paul use this word 'reign'? What does it signify? How do these truths give us hope?

Question: Find each occurrence of the word 'more' in this passage and verse 15. What is the apostle saying in each of these places? What is the significance of these statements?

16a "And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin."

1. The free gift is spoken of as having "brought justification" (16b)
2. The free gift is referred to as "the free gift of righteousness" (17b)

16b “For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.”

1. “condemnation” is God’s judicial sentence upon all who are in Adam. It will be publicly issued at the final judgment (2:3-11), but is already certain.
2. Adam’s trespass and the free gift bring results that are exact opposites
3. Christ’s act was far greater in magnitude than Adam’s
4. Christ’s great act has dealt with, and provided pardon for, “many trespasses”

17 “For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.”

1. “death reigned” means it exercised power over people. It had its way with them.
2. *The idea:* If because of Adam’s trespass death reigned through Adam, **how much more certain it is** that those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness will reign in life (opposite of death) through Christ
3. “reign in life”

18 “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.”

1. For all men in Adam, and then for all men in Christ
2. “one act of righteousness”
 - Views the righteousness of Christ throughout His earthly life and obedient death as a compact unity.¹
 - All the righteous acts of the God-man before His exaltation, culminating in His righteous act of offering Himself as the propitiation for our sins.

19 “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”

1. Christ’s “one act of righteousness” is now called His “obedience”
 - **John 6:38**
 - **John 10:17-18**
 - **Philippians 2:7-8**
 - Christ’s fulfillment of the totality of the Father’s will for His first coming
2. The many in Adam were made sinners by the imputation of his disobedience

¹ John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*: 1:201,

3. Likewise, the many in Christ are made righteous by the imputation of His obedience
4. Imputation means something is reckoned to our count, counted as ours
5. This happens by virtue of union with our head

20a “Now the law came in to increase the trespass,”

1. To highlight the sin of all men
2. The more explicit the revelation of God’s law, the more heinous man’s trespass is
3. The more explicit the revelation of God’s law, the more provoked man is to sin

20b “but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,”

1. God gave the law which made sin to abound. But then God gave in Christ grace which abounded all the more
2. KJV “grace did much more abound”
3. Grace superabounded

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

1. The power of God’s grace in Christ is far greater than the power of sin
2. God’s grace in Christ frees the one who is in Christ from the power of sin and death
3. Grace reigns “through righteousness”
 - Through the “one act of righteousness” (18) that has been imputed to all men in Christ
4. “leading to eternal life”
 - The gift of Christ’s righteousness results in the reception of eternal life
 - Justification transfers the sinner from death to life
5. Grace reigns “through Jesus Christ our Lord”

This is why justification results in the “the hope of the glory of God” (5:2)