

**Romans 5**  
**February 22, 2015**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

I bet everyone in this class utilizes products and services that you give you a certain level of benefits. But if you're like me, I bet we don't know all the benefits available to us because we haven't taken the time to really read the fine print. Let's see how well we know our benefits:

- For those who have 401K plans, what benefits do you receive? [Employer match, investment choices, room for higher levels of contributions vs private IRAs, Roth 401K options, loans allowed, lower expense structure on the funds you invest in.]
- For our AARP members in the house, what benefits or discounts do we have available to us? [Discounts at Hotels, car rentals, shopping sites, eyewear, technology devices, free donut with a large beverage at Dunkin' Donuts, etc ([http://www.aarp.org/benefits-discounts/services\\_discounts\\_list/](http://www.aarp.org/benefits-discounts/services_discounts_list/))]

Some of us have little understanding of our benefits, while others of you know them well. Let's try one more:

Q: Pop Quiz – Close book, turn phones face down – Name all your benefits that come through God's righteousness credited to you? [Justification (ongoing forgiveness), grace, access to God, eternal life, etc] Notice that everything you said was correct, but it just scratches the surface.

**Transition:** Today, we are going to continue our study in Romans, and we are going to see Paul address the benefits that come with being credited with God's righteousness. He really wants his readers to understand the benefits they have. So as we read today's text, I want you to consider that all Christians can experience the joy of their salvation by understanding the key BENEFITS that come through righteousness. So as we read Chapter 5, I invite you to explore the BENEFITS of God's righteousness and appreciate them! It's like your Employee Benefit Handbook. Let's see what God's Benefit Handbook looks like!

**BOOK (NIV 1984): [Read Rom 5:1-11]**

V.1:

- Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

V.2:

- through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

V.3:

- Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

V.4:

- perseverance, character; and character, hope.

V.5:

- And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

V.6:

- You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

V.7:

- Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.

V.8:

- But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

V.9:

- Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

V.10:

- For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

V.11:

- Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

### **Process Observations/Questions:**

- Q v.1: What is the first benefit of righteousness you see? [We have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.]
- Q: What does having "peace with God" mean? [The unsaved person is at "enmity with God" (Rom. 5:10; 8:7) because he cannot obey God's Law or fulfill God's will. Two verses from Isaiah make the matter clear: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22).]
- Q v.2a: What benefit do you see here? [**#1 – Access to God**]
- Q: During OT times, did the Jews have access to God? [No - The Jew was kept from God's presence by the veil in the temple.]
- Q: What level of access did the Gentiles have during the OT times? [They had a certain boundary. The Gentile was kept out by a wall in the temple with a warning on it that any Gentile who went beyond would be killed.]
- Q: So when Paul writes that we have gained access, what key event is he really referring to that allowed our access to God? [When Jesus died, He tore the veil (Luke 23:45) and broke down the wall (Eph. 2:14).]
- Q v.2b: What benefit do you see here? [**#2- Glorious Hope**: "Peace with God" takes care of the past: He will no longer hold our sins against us. "Access to God" takes care of the present: we can come to Him at any time for the help we need. "Hope of the glory of God" takes care of the future: one day we shall share in His glory!]
- Q. V3, 4: What benefit of righteousness do you see in these verses? [**Christian character** - Justification is no escape from the trials of life. "In this world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). But for the believer, trials work *for* him and not *against* him. No amount of suffering can separate us from the Lord (Rom. 8:35–39); instead, trials bring us closer to the Lord and make us more like the Lord. Suffering builds Christian character. The word "experience" in Romans 5:4 means "character that has been proved." The sequence is:

tribulation—patience—proven character—hope. Our English word “tribulation” comes from a Latin word *tribulum*. In Paul’s day, a *tribulum* was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain. The *tribulum* was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As we go through tribulations, and depend on God’s grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.]

- Q V.5-8: What benefit of righteousness do you see in these verses? [**God’s love within** - “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick” (Prov. 13:12). But as we wait for this hope to be fulfilled, the love of God is “poured out into our hearts” (literal translation). Note how the first three of the “fruit of the Spirit” are experienced: love (Rom. 5:5), joy (Rom. 5:2), and peace (Rom. 5:1). Before we were saved, God proved His love by sending Christ to die for us. Now that we are His children, we have this inner experience of this love through the Spirit that sustains us as we go through tribulations.]
- Q V.9-10: What benefit of righteousness do you see in these verses? [**Salvation from future wrath** - Paul argued from the lesser to the greater. If God saved us when we were enemies, surely He will keep on saving us now that we are His children. There is a “wrath to come,” but no true believer will experience it (1 Thes. 1:9–10; 5:8–10). Paul further argued that if Christ’s *death* accomplished so much for us, how much more will He do for us in His *life* as He intercedes for us in heaven! “Saved by His life” refers to Romans 4:25: “raised again for [on account of] our justification.” Because He lives, we are eternally saved (Heb. 7:23–25).]
- Q V.11: What benefit of righteousness do you see in these verses? [**Reconciliation with God** - The word *atonement* means “reconciliation, brought back into fellowship with God.” The term is mentioned also in Romans 5:10. In Romans 1:18–32, Paul explained how men declared war on God and, because of this, deserved to be condemned eternally. But God did not declare war on man. Instead, He sent His Son as the Peacemaker (Eph. 2:11–18) that men might be reconciled to God.]
- Summary of the seven benefits: A review of these seven blessings of justification shows how certain our salvation is in Christ. In the end, the real gift is Jesus Himself. God gave us nothing less than His only Son. Our salvation consists of having a love relationship with Jesus. Totally apart from Law, and purely by grace, we have a salvation that takes care of the past, the present, and the future. Christ died for us; Christ lives for us; Christ is coming for us!

### **Read Rom 5:12-21**

V.12:

- Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—

V.13:

- for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.

V.14:

- Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

V.15:

- But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

V.16:

- Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.

V.17:

- For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

V.18:

- Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

V.19:

- For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

V.20:

- The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,

V.21:

- so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Process Observations/Questions [Use DEB – two columns “Adam” and “Christ”]:**

- Q V.12: How did sin enter the world? [When Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden, sin entered him, which then infected the human race going forward.]
- Observation: This is where the doctrine of original sin started. Sin was imputed into all mankind when Adam sinned. Just as fig trees produce figs, and apple trees produce apples, sinners beget sinners. So through one man, Adam, all of us were under a death sentence. It’s what we will read in Romans 6:23 – “For the wages of sin is death.”
- Skeptics sometimes ask, “Was it fair for God to condemn the whole world just because of one man’s disobedience?” The answer, of course, is that it was not only fair; but it was also wise and gracious. To begin with, if God had tested each human being individually, the result would have been the same: disobedience. But even more important, by condemning the human race through one man (Adam), God was then *able to save the human race through one Man* (Jesus Christ)!
- Q V.14: When Paul says Adam is “a pattern of the one to come,” who is he referring to? [Christ – Adam is considered a Christ-type, a foreshadowing]
- [DEB] – Let’s do the best we can to appreciate Paul’s contrast of Adam and Christ. Let’s look at the main contrast, and then based on Scripture, see how this is described:
  - Adam – sin entered the world and all died (Christ– Righteousness available to all)
  - V.15 (Adam’s offense compared to Christ’s free gift of eternal life)
  - V. 16 (The effect of Adam’s sin = condemnation [unrighteous]; The effect of Christ’s obedience = justification [righteous])

- V.17 (Thru Adam death reigned; Thru Christ the gift of righteousness and His abundant grace reign in us for all of eternity.)
- V.18-19 (Just as one act by Adam brought condemnation on all men, one act of Christ on the cross brought justification for all who believed upon Jesus.)
- V.20-21 (Law vs Grace – As the law made offenses increase, grace increased all the more.)
- Summary: You cannot help *being* “in Adam,” for this came by your first birth over which you had no control. But you do control whether you *stay* “in Adam.” It’s your decision if you want to 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).
- X-Ref I Cor 15:20-22

**LOOK:**

Out of all the benefits you’ve heard today, were there any that were new to you? How about ones that you maybe had forgotten about?

Isn’t it amazing how condemnation was upon all men through one act of disobedience by Adam, and then in God’s infinite wisdom, He had a plan that required one act of obedience by Christ that allowed us to experience justification and live an abundant life in His abundant grace? Is it possible that we are taking for granted all the benefits He’s given us? I hope not! Let’s close our time in prayer with a thankful heart for all God has provided to us.

**Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, pp. 526–530). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

Since Romans is a book of logic, it is a book of “therefores.” We have the “therefore” of *condemnation* in Romans 3:20, *justification* in Romans 5:1, *no condemnation* in Romans 8:1, and *dedication* in Romans 12:1. In presenting his case, Paul has proved that the whole world is guilty before God, and that no one can be saved by religious deeds, such as keeping the Law. He has explained that God’s way of salvation has always been “by grace, through faith” (Eph. 2:8–9), and he has used Abraham as his illustration. If a reader of the letter stopped at this point, he would know that he *needed* to and *could* be saved.

But there is much more the sinner needs to know about justification by faith. Can he be sure that it will last? How is it possible for God to save a sinner through the death of Christ on the cross? Romans 5 is Paul’s explanation of the last two words in Romans 4: “our justification.” He explained two basic truths: the blessings of our justification (Rom. 5:1–11), and the basis for our justification (Rom. 5:12–21).

### **The Blessings of Our Justification (Rom. 5:1–11)**

In listing these blessings, Paul accomplished two purposes. First, he told how wonderful it is to be a Christian. Our justification is not simply a guarantee of heaven, as thrilling as that is, but it is also the source of tremendous blessings that we enjoy here and now.

His second purpose was to assure his readers that justification is a lasting thing. His Jewish readers in particular would ask, “Can this spiritual experience last if it does not require obedience to the Law? What about the trials and sufferings of life? What about the coming judgment?” When God declared us righteous in Jesus Christ, He gave to us seven spiritual blessings that assure us that we cannot be lost.

***Peace with God (v. 1).*** The unsaved person is at “enmity with God” (Rom. 5:10; 8:7) because he cannot obey God’s Law or fulfill God’s will. Two verses from Isaiah make the matter clear: “There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked” (Isa. 48:22); “And the work of righteousness shall be peace” (Isa. 32:17). Condemnation means that God declares us *sinners*, which is a declaration of *war*. Justification means that God declares us *righteous*, which is a declaration of *peace*, made possible by Christ’s death on the cross. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Ps. 85:10). “Because the Law worketh wrath” (Rom. 4:15), nobody condemned by the Law can enjoy peace with God. But when you are justified by faith, you are declared righteous, and the Law cannot condemn you or declare war!

***Access to God (v. 2a).*** The Jew was kept from God’s presence by the veil in the temple; and the Gentile was kept out by a wall in the temple with a warning on it that any Gentile who went beyond would be killed. But when Jesus died, He tore the veil (Luke 23:45) and broke down the wall (Eph. 2:14). In Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles have access to God (Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19–25); and they can draw on the inexhaustible riches of the grace of God (Eph. 1:7; 2:4; 3:8). We stand “in grace” and not “in Law.” Justification has to do with our standing; sanctification has to do with our state. The child of a king can enter his father’s presence no matter how the child looks. The word “access” here means “entrance to the king through the favor of another.”

**Glorious hope (v. 2b).** “Peace with God” takes care of the past: He will no longer hold our sins against us. “Access to God” takes care of the present: we can come to Him at any time for the help we need. “Hope of the glory of God” takes care of the future: one day we shall share in His glory! The word “rejoice” can be translated “boast,” not only in Romans 5:2, but also in Romans 5:3 and 11 (“joy”). When we were sinners, there was nothing to boast about (Rom. 3:27), because we fell short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But in Christ, we boast in *His* righteousness and glory! Paul will amplify this in Romans 8:18–30.

**Christian character (vv. 3–4).** Justification is no escape from the trials of life. “In this world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33). But for the believer, trials work *for* him and not *against* him. No amount of suffering can separate us from the Lord (Rom. 8:35–39); instead, trials bring us closer to the Lord and make us more like the Lord. Suffering builds Christian character. The word “experience” in Romans 5:4 means “character that has been proved.” The sequence is: tribulation—patience—proven character—hope. Our English word “tribulation” comes from a Latin word *tribulum*. In Paul’s day, a *tribulum* was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain. The *tribulum* was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As we go through tribulations, and depend on God’s grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.

**God’s love within (vv. 5–8).** “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick” (Prov. 13:12). But as we wait for this hope to be fulfilled, the love of God is “poured out into our hearts” (literal translation). Note how the first three of the “fruit of the Spirit” are experienced: love (Rom. 5:5), joy (Rom. 5:2), and peace (Rom. 5:1). Before we were saved, God proved His love by sending Christ to die for us. Now that we are His children, surely He will love us more. It is the inner experience of this love through the Spirit that sustains us as we go through tribulations.

For many months I visited a young man in a hospital who had almost burned to death. I do not know how many operations and skin grafts he had during those months, or how many specialists visited him. But the thing that sustained him during those difficult months was not the explanations of the doctors but the promises they gave him that he would recover. That was his hope. And the thing that sustained his hope was the love of his family and many friends as they stood by him. The love of God was channeled through them to him. He did recover and today gives glory to God.

Faith (Rom. 5:1), hope (Rom. 5:2), and love (Rom. 5:5) all combine to give the believer patience in the trials of life. And patience makes it possible for the believer to grow in character and become a mature child of God (James 1:1–4).

**Salvation from future wrath (vv. 9–10).** Paul argued from the lesser to the greater. If God saved us when we were enemies, surely He will keep on saving us now that we are His children. There is a “wrath to come,” but no true believer will experience it (1 Thes. 1:9–10; 5:8–10). Paul further argued that if Christ’s *death* accomplished so much for us, how much more will He do for us in His *life* as He intercedes for us in heaven! “Saved by His life” refers to Romans 4:25: “raised again for [on account of] our justification.” Because He lives, we are eternally saved (Heb. 7:23–25).

A will is of no effect until the death of the one who wrote it. Then an executor takes over and sees to it that the will is obeyed and the inheritance distributed. But suppose the executor is unscrupulous and wants to get the inheritance for himself? He may figure out many devious ways to circumvent the law and steal the inheritance.

Jesus Christ wrote us into His will, and He wrote the will with His blood. “This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:20). He died so that the will would

be in force; but then He arose from the dead and returned to heaven that He might enforce the will Himself and distribute the inheritance. Thus, we are “saved by His life.”

***Reconciliation with God (v. 11).*** The word *atonement* means “reconciliation, brought back into fellowship with God.” The term is mentioned also in Romans 5:10. In Romans 1:18–32, Paul explained how men declared war on God and, because of this, deserved to be condemned eternally. But God did not declare war on man. Instead, He sent His Son as the Peacemaker (Eph. 2:11–18) that men might be reconciled to God.

A review of these seven blessings of justification shows how certain our salvation is in Christ. Totally apart from Law, and purely by grace, we have a salvation that takes care of the past, the present, and the future. Christ died for us; Christ lives for us; Christ is coming for us! Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

### **The Basis of Our Justification (Rom. 5:12–21)**

How is it possible for God to save sinners in the person of Jesus Christ? We understand that somehow Christ took our place on the cross, but how was such a substitution possible?

Paul answered the question in this section, and these verses are the very heart of the letter. To understand these verses a few general truths about this section need to be understood. First, note the repetition of the little word *one*. It is used eleven times. The key idea here is our identification with Adam and with Christ. Second, note the repetition of the word *reign* which is used five times. Paul saw two men—Adam and Christ—each of them reigning over a kingdom. Finally, note that the phrase *much more* is repeated five times. This means that in Jesus Christ we have gained much more than we ever lost in Adam!

In short, this section is a contrast of Adam and Christ. Adam was given dominion over the old creation, he sinned, and he lost his kingdom. Because of Adam’s sin, all mankind is under condemnation and death. Christ came as the King over a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). By His obedience on the cross, He brought in righteousness and justification. Christ not only undid all the damage that Adam’s sin effected, but He accomplished “much more” by making us the very sons of God. Some of this “much more” Paul has already explained in Romans 5:1–11.

Skeptics sometimes ask, “Was it fair for God to condemn the whole world just because of one man’s disobedience?” The answer, of course, is that it was not only fair; but it was also wise and gracious. To begin with, if God had tested each human being individually, the result would have been the same: disobedience. But even more important, by condemning the human race through one man (Adam), God was then *able to save the human race through one Man* (Jesus Christ)! Each of us is racially united to Adam, so that his deed affects us. (See Heb. 7:9–10 for an example of this racial headship.) The fallen angels cannot be saved because they are not a race. They sinned individually and were judged individually. There can be no representative to take their judgment for them and save them. But because you and I were lost in Adam, our *racial* head, we can be saved in Christ, the Head of the new creation. God’s plan was both gracious and wise.

Our final question must be answered: how do we *know* that we are racially united to Adam? The answer is in Romans 5:12–14, and the argument runs like this: We know that all men die. But death is the result of disobeying the Law. There was no Law from Adam to Moses, but men still died. A general result demands a general cause. What is that cause? It can be only one thing: the disobedience of Adam. When Adam sinned, he ultimately died. All of his descendants died (Gen. 5), yet the Law had not yet been given. Conclusion: they died because of Adam’s sin. “For that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12) means “all have sinned *in Adam’s sin*.” Men do not die



because of their own acts of sin; otherwise, babies would not die (Rom. 9:11). Men die because they are united racially to Adam, and “in Adam all men die” (1 Cor. 15:22).

Having understood these general truths about the passage, we may now examine the contrasts that Paul gives between Adam and Christ and between Adam’s sin and Christ’s act of obedience on the cross.

***Adam’s offense is contrasted with Christ’s free gift (v. 15).*** Because of Adam’s trespass, many died; because of Christ’s obedience the grace of God abounds to many bringing life. The word “many” (literally “the many”) means the same as “all men” in Romans 5:12 and 18. Note the “much more”; for the grace of Christ brings not only physical life, but also spiritual life and abundant life. Christ did conquer death and one day will raise the bodies of all who have died “in Christ.” If He stopped there, He would only reverse the effects of Adam’s sin; but He went on to do “much more.” He gives eternal life abundantly to all who trust Him (John 10:10).

***The effect of Adam’s sin is contrasted with the effect of Christ’s obedience (v. 16).*** Adam’s sin brought judgment and condemnation; but Christ’s work on the cross brings justification. When Adam sinned, he was declared unrighteous and condemned. When a sinner trusts Christ, he is justified—declared righteous in Christ.

***The two “reigns” are contrasted (v. 17).*** Because of Adam’s disobedience, death reigned. Read the “book of the generations of Adam” in Genesis 5, and note the solemn repetition of the phrase “and he died.” In Romans 5:14, Paul argued that men did not die “from Adam to Moses” for the same reason that Adam died—breaking a revealed law of God—for the Law had not yet been given. “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Because *sin* was reigning in men’s lives (Rom. 5:21), *death* was also reigning (Rom. 5:14, 17).

But in Jesus Christ we enter a new kingdom: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but *righteousness*, and *peace*, and *joy* in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). “Therefore being justified by faith” we are declared *righteous*, we have *peace* with God, and we *rejoice* in the hope of the glory of God. Note that it is *we* who reign! “Much more they ... shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” In Adam we lost our kingship, but in Jesus Christ we reign as kings. And we reign “much more”! Our spiritual reign is far greater than Adam’s earthly reign, for we share “abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness” (Rom. 5:17).

***The two “one acts” are contrasted (vv. 18–19).*** Adam did not have to commit a series of sins. In one act God tested Adam, and he failed. It is termed an “offense” and an act of “disobedience.” The word *offense* means “trespass—crossing over the line.” God told Adam how far he could go, and Adam decided to go beyond the appointed limit. “Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die” (Gen. 2:16–17).

In contrast to “the trespass of one” is “the righteousness of one,” meaning the righteous work of Christ on the cross. In Romans 5:19 Paul calls it “the obedience of One” (see Phil. 2:5–12). Christ’s sacrifice on the cross not only made possible “justification,” but also “justification *of life*” (italics mine). Justification is not merely a legal term that describes our position before God (“just as if I’d never sinned”); but it results in a certain kind of life. “Justification of life” in Romans 5:18 is parallel to “be made righteous” in Romans 5:19. In other words, our justification is the result of a living union with Christ. And this union ought to result in a new kind of life, a righteous life of obedience to God. Our union with Adam made us sinners; our union with Christ enables us to “reign in life.”

***Law and grace are contrasted (vv. 20–21).*** “Then Law crept in” (WMS); or, “Then the Law came in beside” (literal translation). Grace was not an addition to God’s plan; grace was a part of

God's plan from the very beginning. God dealt with Adam and Eve in grace; He dealt with the patriarchs in grace; and He dealt with the nation of Israel in grace. He gave the Law through Moses, not to replace His grace, but to reveal man's need for grace. Law was temporary, but grace is eternal.

But as the Law made man's sins increase, God's grace abounded even more. God's grace was more than adequate to deal with man's sins. Even though sin and death still reign in this world, God's grace is also reigning through the righteousness of Christ. The Christian's body is subject to death and his old nature tempts him to sin; but in Jesus Christ, he can "reign in life" because he is a part of the gracious kingdom of Christ.

An Old Testament story helps us understand the conflict between these two "reigns" in the world today. God rejected Saul as the king of Israel, and anointed David. Those who trusted David eventually shared his kingdom of peace and joy. Those who trusted Saul ended in shame and defeat.

Like David, Jesus Christ is God's anointed King. Like Saul, Satan is still free to work in this world and seek to win men's allegiance. Sin and death are reigning in the "old creation" over which Adam was the head, but grace and righteousness are reigning in "the new creation" over which Christ is the Head. And as we yield to Him, we "reign in life."

In Romans 5:14, Adam is called "the figure of Him that was to come." Adam was a type, or picture, of Jesus Christ. Adam came from the earth, but Jesus is the Lord from heaven (1 Cor. 15:47). 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; but Jesus Christ turned to a thief and said, "Today shalt thou be with Me in 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).

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).

**Witmer, J. A. (1985). Romans. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 455–460). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

*C. Provided righteousness enjoyed (5:1–11).*

5:1. The apostle now turned to a presentation of the experiential results (suggested by the connective *oun*, trans. **therefore**) of the believers' justification—God's declaring them righteous—on the basis of faith (cf. 3:21–4:25). The participial clause **since we have been justified** (cf. 5:9) **through faith** describes antecedent action to the main clause, **we have peace** (*echomen*) **with God**. Some of the important Greek manuscripts read, "Let us have peace (*echōmen*) with God." This seems to be the preferred reading. If so, then the sense is, "Let us keep on having (in the sense of enjoying) peace with God." Peace has been made by God **through our Lord Jesus Christ** (cf. Eph. 2:14a), which fact is demonstrated by God's justification. A believer is not responsible for having peace in the sense of making it but in the sense of enjoying it.

5:2. The Lord Jesus, besides being the Agent of the believer's enjoyment of peace with God, is also the One **through whom we have gained access** (*prosagōgēn*, "privilege of approach" to a person of high rank; used elsewhere only in Eph. 2:18; 3:12) **by faith into this grace in which we now stand**. Though the phrase "by faith" is not supported by the best Greek manuscripts, it is the human means of the access. Believers in Christ stand in the sphere of God's grace (cf. "grace" in Rom. 3:24) because Christ has brought them to this position. He is their means of access.

In the Greek text the sentence, **And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God**, is coordinate to the clause, "We have peace" (5:1). Like that clause, this one too may be translated, "Let us keep on rejoicing." Because of Christ, Christians eagerly anticipate the time when they will share Christ's glory, in contrast with their falling short of it now (3:23). In that sense He is "the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27; cf. Rom. 8:17–30; 2 Cor. 4:17; Col. 3:4; 2 Thes. 2:14; Heb. 2:10; 1 Peter 5:1, 10). Certainly such a prospect is cause for joy and even boasting! (*Kauchōmetha*, "rejoice," is lit., "boast" or "exult," here in a pure sense; this Gr. word is also used in Rom. 5:3, 11 where it is trans. "rejoice.")

5:3–4. Believers can enjoy the peace with God that has been achieved and the glorious future in God's presence that awaits them. But how should they react to the experiences of life that are often adverse and difficult? They are to **rejoice in their sufferings**. The word "rejoice" is *kauchōmetha*, the same word in verse 2. "Sufferings" is *thlipseis*, "afflictions, distresses, pressures." James wrote along the same line: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds" (James 1:2). This is more than mere Stoic endurance of troubles, even though endurance or steadfastness is the first result in a chain-reaction outgrowth from distress. This is spiritual glorying in afflictions because of having come to **know** (from *oida*, "to know by intuition or perception") that the end product of this chain reaction (that begins with distress) is **hope**. **Suffering** brings about **perseverance** (*hypomonēn*, "steadfastness," the ability to remain under difficulties without giving in; cf. Rom. 15:5–6; James 1:3–4). Only a believer who has faced distress can develop steadfastness. That in turn develops **character** (*dokimēn* ["proof"] has here the idea of "proven character"), which in turn results in hope. As believers suffer, they develop steadfastness; that quality deepens their character; and a deepened, tested character results in hope (i.e., confidence) that God will see them through.

5:5. A believer's **hope**, since it is centered in God and His promises, **does not disappoint** him. "Disappoint" means "put to shame because of disappointment" in unfulfilled promises. This affirmation concerning hope in God is a reflection of Psalm 25:3, 20–21 (cf. Ps. 22:5; Rom. 9:33; 1 Peter 2:6). The reason this hope (resulting finally from affliction) does not disappoint is that **God has poured out His love into our hearts**. God's love, so abundant in believer's hearts (cf. 1 John 4:8, 16), encourages them on in their hope. And this love is poured out **by** (better, "through," *dia* with the genitive) **the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us**. The Holy Spirit is the divine Agent who expresses to a believer the love of God, that is, God's love for him. The reality of God's love in a believer's heart gives the assurance, even the guarantee, that the believer's hope in God and His promise of glory is not misplaced and will not fail. This ministry of the Holy Spirit is related to His presence in believers as the seal of God (Eph. 4:30) and as the earnest or down payment of their inheritance in glory (2 Cor. 1:21–22; Eph. 1:13–14). Later Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit Himself has been poured out in believers (Titus 3:6). Each believer has the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9) in the sense that He is indwelt by the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 John 3:24; 4:13).

5:6–8. Having mentioned the pouring out of God’s love, Paul now described the character of God’s love, which explains why its pouring out assures believers of hope. God demonstrated His love by the death of His Son, Jesus **Christ**. This demonstration was first, **at just the right time** (cf. Gal. 4:4). Second, it was **when we were still powerless** (*asthenōn*, “without strength, feeble”; cf. John 5:5). Third, it was **for** (*hyper*) **the ungodly** (*asebōn*, “impious”; cf. Rom. 4:5). Clearly Christ’s death was a substitutionary death, a death in place of others. The Greek preposition *hyper* often means “on behalf of,” but occasionally it means “in place of,” its meaning here. This is clear from the statement in 5:7, which also has *hyper*. A person willing to **die for a righteous man** or **for a good man** obviously is offering himself as a substitute so that the righteous or good man can continue to live. This is the highest expression of human love and devotion. However, God’s love contrasts with human love in both nature and degree, because **God demonstrates** (“keeps on showing”) **His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us** (*hyper*, “in our place”). Though a few people might possibly be willing to die to save the lives of good people, though that is rare, Christ went well beyond that. He died in the place of the *powerless* (“feeble,” v. 6), the *ungodly* (v. 6; 4:5), *sinners* (5:8), and even His *enemies!* (v. 10).

5:9–11. The participle translated **have ... been justified** (“declared righteous”) ties these verses to the argument at the beginning of the chapter (cf. v. 1). The immediate connection, however, is with what preceded (vv. 6–8). God gave proof of His love by having Christ die in the place of humans “while we were still sinners.” Because of the sinner’s response by faith (v. 1) to Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, God has declared him righteous. Certainly that now-declared-righteous person will not be forsaken by God’s love, which has been poured out effusively in his heart. Since the divine dilemma of justification (3:26) has been solved on the basis of Jesus’ shed **blood** (cf. 3:25), certainly Jesus Christ will see that justified sinners will **be saved from God’s wrath**. Believers will never be condemned to hell (John 5:24; Rom. 8:1) nor will they be the objects of God’s coming Tribulation wrath (1 Thes. 1:10; 5:9).

Here this same truth is repeated in different words (Rom. 5:10). Reconciliation, the third great achievement of Jesus’ sacrificial death on Calvary, is presented (also v. 11). This great triumvirate—*redemption* (3:24; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3:13; Eph. 1:7); *propitiation* (Rom. 3:25 [NIV: “sacrifice of atonement”]; 1 John 2:2; 4:10 [NIV: “atoning sacrifice”]); *reconciliation* (Rom. 5:10–11; 2 Cor. 5:18–20; Col. 1:22)—is totally the work of God, accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ. Redemption pertains to sin (Rom. 3:24), propitiation (or satisfaction) pertains to God (3:25), and reconciliation is for people (cf. **we were reconciled**). Reconciliation is the removal of enmity that stands between people and God (cf. “enemies” in 5:10; Col. 1:21). Reconciliation is the basis of restored fellowship between people and God (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20–21).

**If** (Rom. 5:10) may be rendered “since”; it assumes that the reconciliation **through the death of His Son** is true. In addition, reconciliation was done **when we were God’s enemies** (lit., “being enemies”). Since reconciliation was accomplished by Jesus’ death, certainly **His life** is able to insure the complete and final salvation of believers. “His life” is His present life (not His life on earth) in which He intercedes (Heb. 7:25) for believers. He died for His enemies; surely He will save those, His former enemies, who are now fellowshiping in Him. Because Christians, God’s reconciled ones, share in Christ’s life, they will **be saved**. **Not only is** future salvation assured, **but we also rejoice in God** (“but also boasting [*kauchōmenoi*] in God”) here and now. This is what Paul already exhorted believers to do (Rom. 5:1–3). The assurance and guarantee of it all is the fact that **through ... Christ ... we have now received reconciliation**

(lit., “the reconciliation”). Since God has reconciled godless enemies to Himself, they should enjoy that peace with Him.

*D. Provided righteousness contrasted (5:12–21).*

5:12. Paul had now finished his description of how God has revealed and applied to humans His provided righteousness on the basis of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ received by faith. One thing remains to be done—to present the contrastive parallelism between the work of Jesus Christ (and its results in justification and reconciliation) and the work of another man, Adam (and its results in sin and death). Paul began by saying, **Therefore** (lit., “because of this”; cf. 4:16), and started his comparison, **just as**; but he became concerned by other matters and did not return to the comparison until 5:15. Paul explained that **sin** (in Gr., “the sin”) **entered** (*eisēlthen*, “entered into”) **the world through one man; and**, in accord with God’s warning (cf. Gen. 2:16–17), **death** (in Gr., “the death”) **through sin**. God’s penalty for sin was both spiritual and physical death (cf. Rom. 6:23; 7:13), and Adam and Eve and their descendants experienced both. But physical death, being an outward, visible experience, is in view in 5:12–21. Paul concluded, **And in this way death** (“the death”) **came to all men**. “Came” is *diēlthen*, literally “passed or went through” or “spread through.” *Eisēlthen*, “entered into” (the first clause in the verse) means that sin went in the world’s front door (by means of Adam’s sin); and *diēlthen*, “went through,” means that death penetrated the entire human race, like a vapor permeating all of a house’s rooms. The reason death spread to all, Paul explained, is that **all sinned**.

The Greek past (aorist) tense occurs in all three verbs in this verse. So the entire human race is viewed as having sinned in the one act of Adam’s sin (cf. “all have sinned,” also the Gr. past tense, in 3:23). Two ways of explaining this participation of the human race in the sin of Adam have been presented by theologians—the “federal headship” of Adam over the race and the “natural or seminal headship” of Adam. (Others say that people merely imitated Adam, that he gave the human race a bad example. But that does not do justice to 5:12.)

The federal headship view considers Adam, the first man, as the *representative* of the human race that generated from him. As the representative of all humans, Adam’s act of sin was considered by God to be the act of all people and his penalty of death was judicially made the penalty of everybody.

The natural headship view, on the other hand, recognizes that the entire human race was *seminally* and *physically* in Adam, the first man. As a result God considered all people as participating in the act of sin which Adam committed and as receiving the penalty he received. Even adherents of the federal headship view must admit that Adam is the natural head of the human race physically; the issue is the relationship spiritually. Biblical evidence supports the natural headship of Adam. When presenting the superiority of Melchizedek’s priesthood to Aaron’s, the author of Hebrews argued that Levi, the head of the priestly tribe, “who collects the 10th, paid the 10th through Abraham, because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor” (Heb. 7:9–10).

5:13. Though **sin** entered human experience through the act of Adam’s sin (in which the entire human race participated *seminally*), sin expressed itself repeatedly in people’s actions (cf. Gen. 6:5–7, 11–13) from the point of its entrance “until” (not **before**, as the NIV has it) **the Law was given**. However, as Paul had already said, “Where there is no Law there is no transgression” (Rom. 4:15). This does not mean that **sin** does not exist unless there is a Law. It means that sin

does not have the character of being a transgression apart from **Law** and therefore **sin is not taken into account** (lit., “imputed, reckoned”) as such.

5:14. The fact that sin did exist during the period from Adam to the Law is proved by the fact that **death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses** (lit., “from Adam until Moses”). And death also reigned over people who had not broken **a command as did Adam** (cf. “death reigned,” v. 17, and “sin reigned in death,” v. 21). Adam had disobeyed a specific command of God (Gen. 2:17) and committed a transgression, something that his descendants did not do when they sinned till other specific commands from God were received. But yet all Adam’s descendants had sinned with Adam (Rom. 5:12), and therefore death did reign (cf. Gen. 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31). Since death was present, that proved all had sinned in Adam (cf. comments on Rom. 5:12).

The mention of Adam by name (cf. “one man,” v. 12) brought Paul back to the point of referring to him, **who was a pattern of the One to come**. A parallelism exists between Adam and Jesus Christ as heads of groups of human beings (cf. 1 Cor. 15:45–49), but the parallelism is more contrastive than comparative.

5:15. The details of the parallelism between Adam and Christ (begun by Paul in v. 12 with the words “just as”) are given in verses 15–17. The apostle made clear the contrastive nature of the parallelism by stating, **But the gift** (*charisma*, “grace-gift”) **is not like the trespass**. What Christ “gives” contrasts with what Adam did, his “trespass” (*paraptōma*, “false step”; also mentioned in 4:25; 5:16–18, 20). The point of the first contrasting parallel is the degree—**how much more**. **The trespass of the one man** brought physical death to **the many**, in this case the entire human race to date with two exceptions—Enoch and Elijah. By contrast, **God’s grace—and the gift** (viz., righteousness, as stated in v. 17; cf. v. 16) **that came by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ—abounded to the many!** If this latter “many” is identical with the first (the many who died, which is possible, but is not required by the text) and constitutes the entire human race, then “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.

5:16. Here Paul presented a second contrasting parallelism; this one is different in kind. He began by emphasizing the contrast: **Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin**. Literally, the Greek is, “Also not as through the one who sinned is the gift.” Obviously here a noun paralleling “the gift” is missing in the text. Some suggest “the judgment” from what follows; others the transgression, or the death, or the condemnation. It seems best to leave it indefinite as does the Greek text and to translate it by “the result” (as does the NIV) of that which happened.

Paul continued, **The judgment followed** (“was out of”) **one sin** (lit., “one,” i.e., Adam) **and brought condemnation**. God passed judgment (*krima*) on Adam and he (and the entire human race) received condemnation (*katakrima*, “punishment”; *katakrima* occurs elsewhere only in v. 18 and 8:1). **But**, by contrast, **the gift** (*charisma*, “grace-gift,” i.e., righteousness, 5:17; cf. v. 15) **followed** (“was out of”) **many trespasses and brought justification** (*dikaiōma*, “a declaration of righteousness,” also used in 1:32, 2:26; 5:18; 8:4). God’s grace, as Paul stated repeatedly, beginning in 3:24, is the basis of a person’s being justified, declared righteous. And this was in the face of “many trespasses” (*paraptōmatōn*; cf. 5:15, 17–18, 20). One man (Adam) trespassed (v. 15) God’s command, and everyone since has repeatedly overstepped God’s instructions.

5:17. The third contrasting parallelism (cf. vv. 15–16) combines the two preceding ones and involves both a difference in degree (**how much more**; cf. v. 15) and a difference in kind (“death” and “life”; cf. v. 16). The first-class condition in the first part of the verse assumes the

statement to be true, **if** (since) **death reigned** (cf. v. 20) **through that one man**. This fact is confirmed by verses 12 and 14. Death is a tyrant, ruling over people and bringing every person under its fear and into its grip (cf. Heb. 2:15).

As a result it also is true that **those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift** (cf. Rom. 5:15) **of righteousness reign in life through the one Man, Jesus Christ**. The Lord Jesus is the Agent of all of God's provision for people. Whereas death reigns like a tyrant over all, believers in Christ, who receive God's grace, reign in life. In the one case people are dying victims under a ruthless ruler; in the other they themselves become the rulers (cf. Rev. 1:6) whose kingdom is one of life! The fact that it is "those who receive" God's grace and gift emphasizes that the provision made for all in Christ's sacrificial death and offered to all by God must be appropriated by an individual by faith to become effective (cf. "received" in John 1:12).

5:18–19. In these verses Paul concludes his basic parallelism between Adam and Jesus Christ begun in verse 12 and the contrasts between them in verses 15–17. Paul reduced the contrast to the briefest possible statement. **Consequently** (lit., "so then"), **just as the result of one trespass** (*paraptōmatos*, "false step"; cf. vv. 15–17, 20) **was condemnation** (*katakrima*, "punishment"; cf. v. 16) **for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men**. The "one righteous act" (lit. Gr.) was Christ's death on the cross. One trespass (Adam's sin) is contrasted with one righteous act (Christ's sacrifice). The result of Adam's sin (everyone under God's condemnation) is contrasted with the result of Christ's work (justification offered to all). One brought death; the other brings life. Once again the "all men" in the first half of the sentence includes the entire human race (cf. "all men" in v. 12, and "the many" in the first half of v. 15). This implies the same dimensions for the "all men" in the second half of the verse (cf. "many" in the second halves of vv. 16, 19). The provision in the one righteous act, therefore, is potential and it comes to the entire human race as the offer and opportunity which are applied only to "those who receive" (v. 17).

The same conclusion is stated in different words in verse 19, where Adam's act is called **disobedience** and the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ is called **obedience**. As a result **the many** (cf. first halves of vv. 15, 18) **were made** (lit., "stand constituted as") **sinner**s (cf. 11:32). In the second half of 5:19 **the many** means "those who receive" (v. 17; cf. "many" in the second half of v. 16). They are not simply declared righteous (the verb *dikaioō* is not used here), but they **will be made righteous** in the process of sanctification, culminating in glorification in God's presence. The word "made" (from *kathistēmi*) means "stand constituted as," the same verb used in the first half of verse 19 in the words "were made sinners."

5:20–21. A remaining question in this discussion is, Where does the Mosaic Law fit into all this and why? Paul explained, **The Law was added so that the trespass** (*paraptōma*, cf. vv. 15–19) **might increase** ("abound"). The word "added" should be rendered "came in beside," for it translates the verb *pareisēlthen*. Two similar verbs, *eisēlthen* and *diēlthen*, were used in verse 12. Galatians 2:4 is the only other place in the New Testament that uses the Greek verb for "came in beside."

Is the statement in Romans 5:20a a purpose or a result clause? The coming of the Mosaic Law (clearly meant here in light of vv. 13–14) did **result** in the abounding of "the trespass" (the consequence of any law), but (also in the light of vv. 13–14 and 4:15) the Mosaic Law came in "so that" (*purpose*) abounding sin might be recognized as abounding trespass.

The result was that **where sin increased** (lit., "abounded"; cf. 5:20) **grace increased all the more** ("overflowed superlatively"; cf. "overflow" in v. 15). What a contrast! No matter how great human sin becomes, God's grace overflows beyond it and abundantly exceeds it. No

wonder Paul wrote that God's grace "is sufficient" (2 Cor. 12:9). God's goal (*hina, so*, introduces a purpose clause) is that His **grace might reign through righteousness** (the righteousness of Christ provided for people) **to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**. Once again Paul spoke of reigning in connection with life. In verse 17 those who received God's gift "reign in life" through Christ. Here God's grace is personified as reigning and bringing eternal life.

By the time the Apostle Paul had reached this point he had not only described how God's provided righteousness is revealed in justification but he also was anticipating how it is to be revealed through regeneration and sanctification.

**Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith (p. 1688). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.**

**5:12** Employing the concept of corporate solidarity, Paul explained that when Adam sinned all humanity was profoundly affected through that act of rebellion. There is a corresponding corporate solidarity in Christ. Whereas "in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Co 15:22). Therefore, Paul said later that "no condemnation" comes to "those *in Christ Jesus*" (Rm 8:1, emphasis added). So while the damaging consequences of Adam's sin, including an inherited tendency to sin, were passed on to all of Adam's descendants, justification likewise passes on to all who receive God's gift of righteousness secured through Christ's death (vv. 17–19). Note, however, that Paul did not teach universalism here. God forces His righteousness on no one; people must receive the offered gift through faith.