SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

†
5:8

DEEP DIVE

Romans

Chapter Five, Verses 1–21

Peace with God, and the Reign of Grace — Justified by Faith, Loved While Sinners, and Two Men Who Decide the Race

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Paul stops arguing for justification and starts counting its fruit — peace, access, hope, love poured out, rescue from wrath — then sets Adam and Christ side by side and shows that grace is not an equal and opposite force to sin: it is "much more." Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Paul's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Romans 5:1–21

Peace · love · Adam · Christ · grace

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Five blessings, one chain, two men, and a grace that outruns sin

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"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." — Romans 5:1

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Romans 5:1–21

Peace with God, and the Reign of Grace — the fruit of justification, the love that died for enemies, and the one Man who undoes the one man

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Romans 5 in 5 movements, in Paul's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the argument so you can see where Paul is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word
R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle
MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED
God — His character & actions
Command / instruction
Key repeated word
Sin / warning
Promise / blessing
Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · ROMANS 5:8

"But △God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that ⚠while we were yet sinners, △Christ died for us."

† Before the Passage

Romans 4 closed on the empty tomb: Jesus "was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification" (4:25). Romans 5 opens with the word that hangs the whole chapter on that verse — "Therefore." For three and a half chapters Paul has proved that no one is right with God by works of the Law (1:18–3:20), that God has provided a righteousness "through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe" (3:21–31), and that Abraham himself was justified that way, before circumcision and apart from the Law (4:1–25). Now he stops proving and starts counting. What does a justified man actually *have*?

The chapter falls in two halves. Verses 1–11 are personal and warm — "we," "us," "our" — a list of what justification gives: peace with God, access into grace, hope of glory, joy in trouble, the love of God poured into the heart, rescue from wrath, reconciliation. Three times the believer "exults" (vv. 2, 3, 11), and the argument climbs by "much more" (vv. 9, 10). Verses 12–21 widen the lens to the whole human race and all of history:

two men, two acts, two results. Adam, through one transgression, brought sin, condemnation and death on "the many." Christ, through one act of righteousness, brings justification, life and a reign of grace.

The Old Testament roots run to the first pages of the Bible. "In the day that you eat from it you will surely die" (Genesis 2:17) stands behind verse 12; the long reign of death "from Adam until Moses" (v. 14) is the refrain of Genesis 5 — "and he died … and he died"; the Law given at Sinai is the one that "came in" (v. 20). Paul calls Adam "a type of Him who was to come" (v. 14), and he will say the same thing in 1 Corinthians 15:22: "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."

Read the chapter as the hinge of Romans. Chapters 1–4 asked, *How is a sinner declared righteous?* Chapters 6–8 will ask, *How does a justified man live, and can he be lost?* Romans 5 stands between, and its answer to the second question is already plain: if God loved us when we were enemies, He will not abandon us now that we are friends. Our four teachers agree on that, and on the reality of Adam's fall; they lean differently on the extent of "all men" in verse 18, and we will let each say so in his own words.

I

MOVEMENT

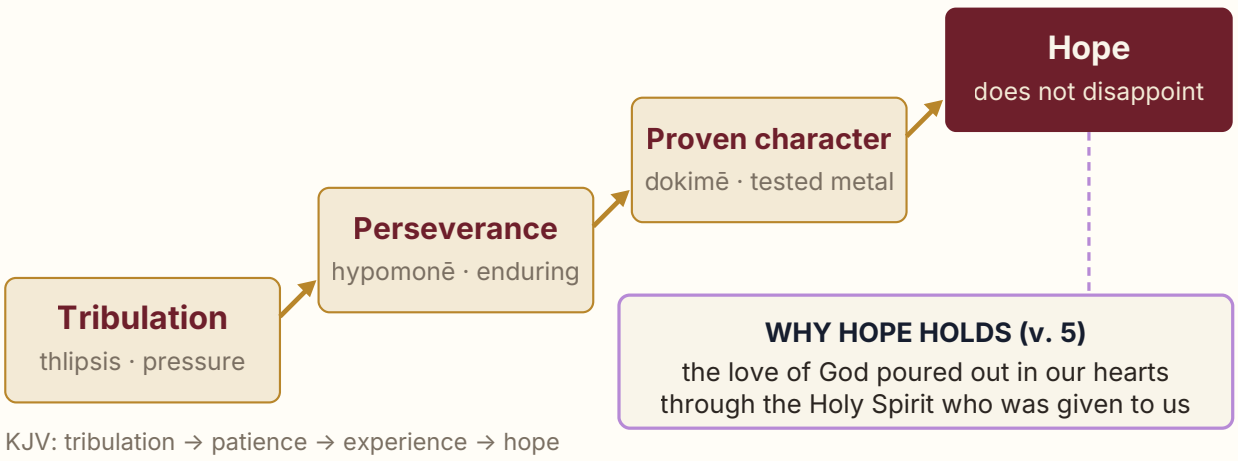
ROMANS 5:1–5

Peace, Access, and a Hope That Holds

The first fruits of justification — and the chain that runs from tribulation to hope

> [1] *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,* [2] *through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.* [3] *And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;* [4] *and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;* [5] *and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*
>
> ROMANS 5:1–5

FIGURE · THE CHAIN OF ROMANS 5:3–5



Read the links left to right and upward: trouble is the bottom rung, and the love of God poured out by the Spirit is why the top rung, hope, does not give way.

εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεόν

EIRĒNĒN ECHOMEN · "WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD" · G1515

Eirēnē (G1515) carries the Hebrew *shalom* — not a mood but a settled relationship, wholeness after war. Paul writes peace *pros ton theon*, "toward God," facing Him: this is the end of hostilities, not first of all the calm inside (that is "the peace of God," Philippians 4:7). It rests on *dikaiōthentes* (G1344), an aorist participle — "having been justified," a verdict already pronounced. NASB95 follows the reading *echomen*, "we have"; a number of early manuscripts have *echōmen*, "let us have." Either way the peace is made by God and enjoyed by faith.

προσαγωγή

PROSAGŌGĒ · "INTRODUCTION, ACCESS" · G4318

Literally a "leading toward" — the word for being ushered into a king's presence by one who has the right to bring you. NASB95 renders it "introduction"; KJV, "access." Paul uses it again in Ephesians 2:18 and 3:12, both times of coming to the Father through Christ. The perfect tense *eschēkamen*, "we have obtained," means the door was opened and stays open. And the believer does not visit grace; he *stands* in it (*hestēkamen*, perfect of *histēmi*).

θλῖψις · ὑπομονή · δοκιμή

THLIPSIS · HYPOMONĒ · DOKIMĒ · G2347 · G5281 · G1382

The chain of verses 3–4. *Thlipsis* (G2347) is pressure, crushing — grapes in a press. *Hypomonē* (G5281) is "remaining under" the load, endurance that does not bolt. *Dokimē* (G1382) is the quality of metal that has been through the fire and passed the test — "proven character" (KJV "experience"). The verb that drives it, *katergazetai*, "brings about," is a present tense: this is how God normally works. And the end of the chain does not "disappoint" — *kataischynei* (G2617), put to shame — because God's love "has been poured out" (*ekkechytai*, G1632, perfect tense: poured and still filling).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik draws the line Paul draws: this is peace *with* God, not first the inner peace of Philippians 4:7. Before justification there was real war; now "the battle between God and our self is finished." Access means a standing, not a visit — grace is the principle of the whole Christian life, not just its doorway, and in Jesus God does more than tolerate us: "He doesn't just love us; He likes us because we are in Jesus." On verses 3–5 he calls the chain God's normal pattern for growth, quotes Luther that "Whatever virtues tribulation finds us in, it develops more fully," and says of verse 5, "God's love isn't given to us in a trickle, it is poured out in our hearts."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul preached these five verses in three sermons. The first stays on "therefore" — "'Therefore' signifies a conclusion and is tied inseparably to what has just preceded it" — and on the past tense: "The moment you believe in Jesus, the second you put your trust in Him, God declares you just, once and for all." The second presses the war: "Where there is no estrangement, there is no need for reconciliation," and he traces access from Eden's guarded gate through the tabernacle to the torn veil — "There is no more veil." The third turns to suffering: hope is not wishful thinking — "Hope is not a spider web. It is the solid stability that anchors the soul" — and "Character is forged in the crucible of pain."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In "Peace: A Fact and a Feeling" (No. 1456) Spurgeon separates the *state* of peace from the *sense* of it. The state is settled in court: the sinner pleads guilty, owns the justice of the sentence, and sees it carried out on a Substitute — "Peace with God must come to us by the way of the cross." The sense follows: "We do not get peace before we are justified, neither is peace a means of justification." Unbelief can rob a Christian of the feeling, never of the fact: "Christian, there is no ground of quarrel between you and your heavenly Father." Elsewhere he pictures verses 3–5 as a ladder — "Tribulation is the foot" — climbed rung by rung like the pilgrim songs of ascent, until hope "climbs up to the very heart of God."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry heads the paragraph "Justification and Its Effects" and lists them: peace, access, hope, joy in tribulation. Peace is more than a cease-fire, "for God is either the worst enemy or the best friend." We do not merely enter grace but stand in it, "a posture that denotes our discharge from guilt." On the chain he is careful: "Tribulation in itself worketh impatience; but, as it is sanctified to the saints, it worketh patience" — it works "not in and of itself, but the powerful grace of God working in and with the tribulation." And the hope holds "because it is sealed with the Holy Spirit as a Spirit of love."

II
MOVEMENT

ROMANS 5:6–11

While We Were Yet Sinners

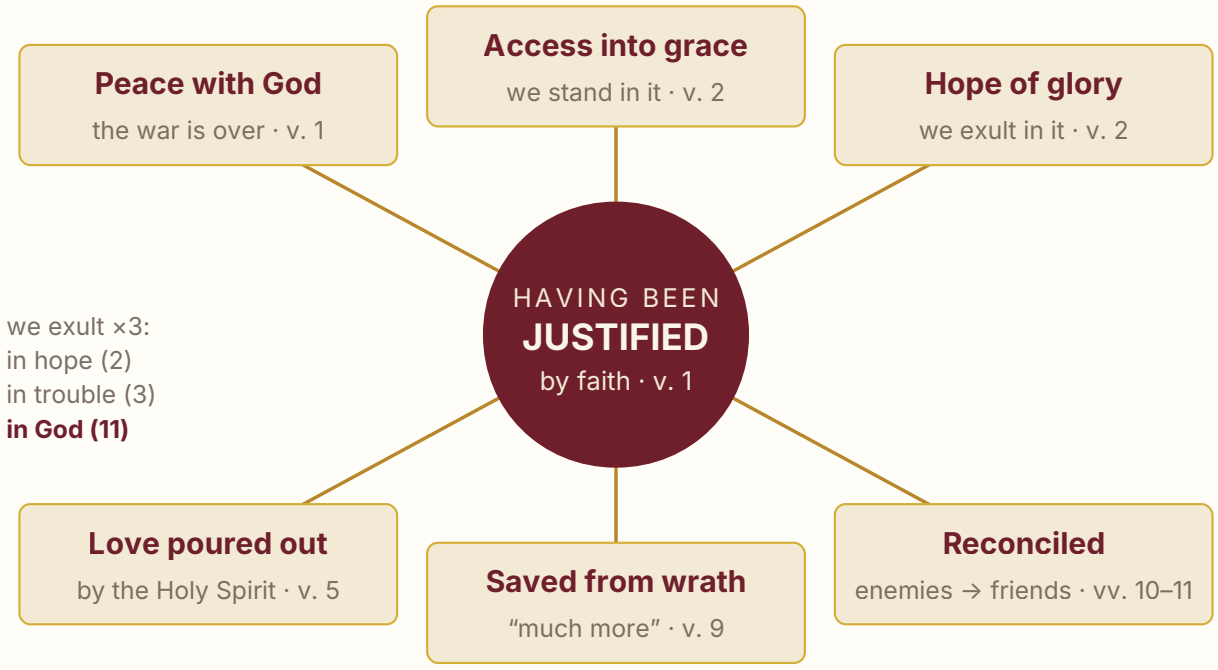
The love that died for the helpless — and the "much more" that keeps the reconciled

6 *For* ⚠ *while we were still helpless, at the right time* △ *Christ died for the ungodly.* 7 *For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.* 8 *But* △ *God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that* ⚠ *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* 9 ⟲ *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be* ☆ *saved from the wrath of God through Him.* 10 *For if* ⚠ *while we*

> *were enemies* we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, *much more*, having been reconciled, *we shall be saved by His life*. [11] And not only this, but we also *exult* in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now *received the reconciliation*.
>
> ROMANS 5:6–11

> *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*
>
> 1 JOHN 4:10

FIGURE · THE FRUIT OF JUSTIFICATION, ROMANS 5:1–11



Everything on the ring flows from the verdict at the center — six gifts the justified already have, and a joy that climbs from hope, through trouble, to God Himself.

συνίστησιν

SYNISTĒSIN · "DEMONSTRATES, COMMENDS" · G4921

To "stand together," hence to set side by side so as to prove — to exhibit, establish, recommend. It is present tense: the cross is not a past argument God once made but one He keeps on making. The KJV "commendeth" keeps the sense of a reference letter. Paul's order in verses 6–10 is a descent: "helpless" (*asthenēs*, G772, without strength), "ungodly," "sinners," "enemies." The lower the description, the higher the love. "For" in "died for us" is *hyper*, on behalf of — in a context of substitution, in the place of.

κατηλλάγημεν · καταλλαγή

KATĒLLAGĒMEN · KATALLAGĒ · "RECONCILED · RECONCILIATION" · G2644 · G2643

Katallassō (G2644) is the language of exchange — to change a relationship from enmity to friendship. Paul always makes God the reconciler and man the reconciled (2 Corinthians 5:18–19): the offended party takes the initiative. Verse 11 says we have "received" the reconciliation (*katallagē*, G2643) as a gift — the KJV's "atonement" was in 1611 "at-one-ment." The argument from the greater to the lesser runs twice: if God did the hard thing (justify and reconcile enemies by Christ's death), "much more" (*pollō mallon*) will He do the easier thing (keep friends by Christ's life).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik says the four words of verses 6–10 — helpless, ungodly, sinners, enemies — show that the reason for God's love lies in God, not in us. He notes that "for" (*huper*) means on behalf of, even instead of, and quotes Spurgeon, "He is the Savior not of those partly lost, but of the wholly lost." Leon Morris, he adds, warns that without the substitution the cross could even look like God's indifference. On verses 9–10 he takes the "much more" at full weight and quotes John Trapp: "It is a greater work of God to bring men to grace, than, being in the state of grace, to bring them to glory." A reconciled believer may be corrected by his Father, but he is never again under wrath.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

In "Christ in Our Place" Sproul reads "helpless" as original sin — no one moves toward God until God works — and "at the right time" as sovereign timing: "When He appoints a day for something that has to happen, it happens that very day." Christ died for the ungodly with a purpose that does not fail: "The Bible does not teach that Christ died to make salvation possible." He distinguishes God's benevolence, beneficence and the love of delight He has for those in Christ, and he will not let wrath drop out: "If there is no wrath in God, there is no need for the gospel." On verse 10 he insists the hostility ran both ways — "His estrangement from us is founded in a holy opposition to sin" — and that we are kept by Christ's life as well as His death.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's New Year's sermon "The Sad Plight and Sure Relief" (No. 1184) is on verse 6. Every person Christ died for was without strength — legally (no defense before God), morally (resolutions that collapse), spiritually (dead since Adam): "Man, you are without strength till God gives you strength." Christ came "in due time," when the world was at its worst, and the size of the cure shows the size of the sickness: "The glory of the remedy proves the desperateness of the disease." So no sinner who believes is shut out — "Christ came to save the very vilest of the vile" — and none will be dropped later. Of verse 10, in his exposition: "There is a threefold argument here."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry marks who Christ died for — the helpless and the guilty, not the deserving: "He died for the ungodly." In "while we were yet sinners" he hears a promise, "implying that we were not to be always sinners, there should be a change wrought." Then he names the fruit: "Justification and reconciliation are the first and primary fruit of the death of Christ." His picture of verse 10 is a will: "Christ dying was the testator, who bequeathed us the legacy; but Christ living is the executor, who pays it." The same Lord who died to write the inheritance lives to see it paid out.

III
MOVEMENT

ROMANS 5:12–14

Through One Man Sin Entered

Adam, the open door — and death that reigned before there was a Law

> [12] *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—* [13] *for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.* [14] *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*
>
> ROMANS 5:12–14

> *"but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."*
>
> GENESIS 2:17

ἐφ᾽ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον

EPH' HŌ PANTES HĒMARTON · "BECAUSE ALL SINNED" · G1909 · G264

The most debated phrase in the chapter. *Eph' hō* means "because" (as in 2 Corinthians 5:4); the Latin Vulgate's *in quo*, "in whom," is a mistranslation, though the doctrine Augustine drew from it is argued from the whole paragraph. *Hēmarton* (from *hamartanō*, G264) is an aorist — one past act, not a lifetime of acts. Verses 13–14 explain it: people died between Adam and Moses even though they had not broken a spoken command the way Adam had. Their death traces back to Adam's one sin, in which all sinned — whether as his offspring or as those he represented, the teachers below argue.

τύπος

TYPOS · "TYPE, PATTERN" · G5179

The mark left by a blow — the impression of a seal, a die, a mold — and so a pattern that points to something beyond itself. Adam is "a type of Him who was to come" (KJV "the figure"): one man whose act counts for everyone joined to him. The likeness is in the structure, not the result; verses 15–17 will spend more words on the differences than on the similarity. Death is said to have "reigned" (*ebasileusen*, G936) — a king with a throne and a realm.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik takes Genesis 3 as history, not myth: sin and death came into the world through one real man, and "Every grave is mute evidence to the spread and reign of sin since the time of Adam." He answers the objection of verses 13–14 — "I thought we were sinners because we broke the Law" — by noting that people died long before Sinai; "The law was too late to prevent sin and death." Death reigned even over those who did not sin as Adam did, by breaking a direct command, and so he concludes that infants are born sinners, with Adam as the representative through whom sin came. Adam is a type: one man acting for many, pointing to the One who would come.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

In "The Death of Adam, the Life of Christ" Sproul argues from the graveyard: "Without sin there can be no death, and without the law there can be no sin" — so the universal reign of death before Moses proves everyone is bound up in Adam's sin. He sets out two explanations. Realism says we were all present in Adam and sinned in him; he rejects its proof from Hebrews 7. Federalism says Adam acted as our appointed representative, and that is his view: "When God selects your representative, He makes that selection infallibly." He coins a line — "No damnation without representation" — and warns that whoever rejects Adam's headship has cut the branch Christ's headship sits on: "The principle of representation is at the very heart and soul of our salvation."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In his exposition of the chapter Spurgeon makes the same argument from the cradle that Paul makes from Adam to Moses. "It was by one man's sin that we all fell through the first Adam," and the proof is that infants die: "Children died who had not actually sinned themselves, but died because of Adam's sin." He does not leave the thought there. The same pattern that ruined us is the one that saves us, and he puts both halves in a single line: "They die, for Adam sinned; they live, for Jesus died."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry reads verse 12 as a funeral procession led by a king: "He speaks of death as a mighty prince, and his monarchy the most absolute, universal, and lasting monarchy." The point of verses 13–14 is that "Sin was in the world before the law" — death reigned in the long centuries between Adam and Moses, and that can only be explained by original sin working in Adam's whole family. Yet even here he lifts his eyes: "Adam was a type of Christ," the head of a race whose act passes to all who belong to him. The rest of the chapter is the second Head.

IV
MOVEMENT

ROMANS 5:15–19

Much More: The One Man and the One Man

Not like the transgression — condemnation and death in Adam, justification and life in Christ

15 *But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.* 16 *The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.* 17 *For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.* 18 *So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.* 19 *For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

ROMANS 5:15–19

FIGURE · TWO MEN, TWO RACES — ROMANS 5:12–21

IN ADAM "a type of Him who was to come" · v. 14		IN CHRIST "the one Man, Jesus Christ" · v. 15
one man · one transgression	→	one Man · one act of righteousness
disobedience (v. 19)	MUCH MORE	obedience (v. 19)
judgment → condemnation (v. 18)	→	free gift → justification of life (v. 18)
the many made sinners (v. 19)	MUCH MORE	the many made righteous (v. 19)
death reigned (vv. 14, 17)	→	they reign in life (v. 17)
sin reigned in death (v. 21)		grace reigns to eternal life (v. 21)

Not like the transgression (vv. 15–16): one sin was enough to condemn,
but the gift answered "many transgressions" — grace abounded all the more (v. 20).

Read across each row: every loss in Adam has its answer in Christ, and the gold arrows mark Paul's "much more" — the answer is greater than the loss.

παράπτωμα · χάρισμα

PARAPTŌMA · CHARISMA · "TRANSGRESSION · FREE GIFT" · G3900 · G5486

A play on sound Paul uses six times in three verses (vv. 15–17). *Paraptōma* (G3900) is a false step, a falling aside — the KJV "offence." *Charisma* (G5486) is a grace-gift, something given freely (from *charis*, grace), alongside *dōrea* (G1431), a present. The results are legal words: *katakrima* (G2631), the sentence of condemnation, against *dikaiōma* (G1345), the righteous verdict (v. 16) and the "one act of righteousness" (v. 18) — and *dikaiōsis zōēs* (G1347), "justification of life," a verdict that brings life with it.

πολλῷ μᾶλλον

POLLŌ MALLON · "MUCH MORE" · G4183 · G3123

The chapter's signature phrase: four times in NASB95 (vv. 9, 10, 15, 17), and a fifth idea in v. 20's "all the more." In verses 15 and 17 it does not mean that Christ saves more people than Adam ruined; it means the gift is stronger in kind than the trespass. One sin was enough for condemnation; the gift answered "many transgressions" (v. 16). Death reigned *over* men; now those who receive grace will themselves "reign in life" (v. 17, *basileusousin*, G936).

κατεστάθησαν

KATESTATHĒSAN · "WERE MADE, WERE CONSTITUTED" · G2525

From *kathistēmi*, to set down, appoint, constitute — the word for appointing a man to an office (Titus 1:5). The many "were made sinners" by Adam's disobedience (*parakoē*, G3876, a refusal to listen) and "will be made righteous" by Christ's obedience (*hypakoē*, G5218, listening under). The verb speaks of a status assigned by the act of a representative — the language behind the Reformation teaching of imputation.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik stresses that the comparison limps on purpose: the gift is not like the offense, because what Christ gives outweighs what Adam lost, and it must be received by faith. He explains the "federal" idea — Adam and Christ are representative heads, and every person is identified with one or the other. On verse 18's "all men" he holds that the gift is offered to all, not automatically applied, and quotes Everett Harrison: "If the doctrine of universalism is being taught here, Paul would be contradicting himself." His bank-robbery illustration makes verse 19's point: righteousness can be credited to us through Another only because sin was first credited to us through another.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul calls Romans 5:12–19 the heart of "The Doctrine of Imputation." "Paul labors the point that Adam's sin is reckoned, transferred, or imputed to the entire human race" — the worst imputation; the best is Christ's righteousness reckoned to believers. Adam stood under a covenant of works and failed; Christ kept it, so we are saved by works after all — His: "It is through the works of the One who alone fulfilled the terms of the covenant of works." That is why he defends the active obedience of Christ and tells of Machen's dying telegram. His conclusion is blunt: "Without the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, there is no justification."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In "Grace Abounding" (No. 3304) Spurgeon's first illustration of verse 20 is the federal headship of verses 15–19: had each of us stood or fallen alone, not one would have been saved, but the headship that ruined us in Adam is the very road by which life comes in Christ. His exposition weighs the two heads: "Adam's fall was terribly effectual, it has brought death upon the human race age after age," yet Christ's work is more effectual still, and "All who are in Christ are justified by Christ, just as all who were in Adam were lost and condemned in Adam."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry heads the section "The First and the Second Adam" and spends his strength on Paul's "much more." The likeness is real, but the gift surpasses the offense in reach and power: "The stream of grace and righteousness is deeper and broader than the stream of guilt." His most famous line is a physician's: "The plaster is wider than the wound, and more healing than the wound is killing." Adam's one act brought condemnation; Christ's gift answers many offenses and brings those who receive it not merely out of death but into a reign of life.

V
MOVEMENT

ROMANS 5:20–21

Where Sin Increased, Grace Abounded

Why the Law came in — and the throne grace takes from sin

> 20 *The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased,*
> *grace abounded all the more,* 21 *so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through*
> *righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
>
> ROMANS 5:20–21

παρεισῆλθεν

PAREISḖLTHEN · "CAME IN ALONGSIDE" · G3922

A double compound — *para* (beside) + *eis* (into) + *erchomai* (come): the Law slipped in alongside a situation already in place. It was not the main actor in the drama of Adam and Christ; it entered "so that the transgression would increase" — not to create sin but to expose it, define it, and (in fallen hearts) provoke it, so that what was there became plain transgression of a known command.

ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν

HYPEREPERISSEUSEN · "ABOUNDED ALL THE MORE" · G5248

Sin "increased" (*epleonasen*, from *pleonazō*, G4121, to grow more); grace *hypereperisseusen* — *perisseuō*, to overflow, with *hyper*, beyond, on top. Paul has to build a word: grace super-abounded, overflowed past overflowing. Then verse 21 crowns two kings: sin "reigned" (*ebasileusen*, G936) in the realm of death; grace now reigns "through righteousness" — not by ignoring sin but by the righteous ground of the cross — "to eternal life."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik: the Law does not justify; it makes sin abound by laying it beside God's holy standard — "God's perfect law exposes our flaws, and makes our sin abound." But where sin abounded, grace super-abounded, and it reigns through righteousness, centered on Jesus. He guards the verse against abuse: "Grace does not wink at unrighteousness, it confronts sin with the atonement at the cross," and he quotes Thomas Brooks: "As heat is opposed to cold, and light to darkness, so grace is opposed to sin." The reign of grace is the end of sin's reign, not its license.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul opens "Dead to Sin, Alive to God" on the puzzle: "Does that not sound strange? Why would God want sin to abound?" The answer is that the Law reveals and defines sin, and because of our corruption it even provokes it: "Where the law was added, sin abounded." Then he points to the grammar — Paul uses a superlative, not a balanced comparison. "The equation is not equal." "Sin is far outweighed by the grace that God gives." Verse 21 speaks of sin's reign, seen most clearly in death — he tells of losing his mother the morning after his son was born — and of a greater reign: "Sin reigns in death, but Christ triumphs over death."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon preached verse 20 again and again. In “Grace Abounding” (No. 3304) he says the battle is not sin against justice — “If it had been a fight between man’s sin and God’s justice, it would soon have come to an end” — but sin against grace, and grace wins: “Sin robbed us of silver, but grace has given us gold.” In “Sin and Grace” (No. 3115) the Law is a straight rule laid beside a crooked stick, and the counsel is pastoral: “O beloved, when your sin abounds, then is the time to recollect that grace much more abounds.” In “Reigning Grace” he sets grace on a throne of God’s immutable purpose, with justice and holiness now standing guard.

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry treats verse 20 as a question of purpose: the Law entered to bring sin to light, so that grace would be seen more fully when it saves. He reaches for a battlefield: “The greater the strength of the enemy, the greater the honour of the conqueror.” And in verse 21 the two reigns explain each other — as death’s dark kingdom is the backdrop, “so doth the reign of sin set off the reign of grace.” Grace reigns through righteousness, not at its expense, and its kingdom ends in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

VI
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

Adam’s death, the last Adam, reconciliation, and a hope that anchors

> *“For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.”*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 15:21–22

> *“So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”*
>
> 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45

> *“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

> *“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,”*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 5:18

> *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”*
>
> EPHESIANS 2:4–5

> *“for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.”*
>
> EPHESIANS 2:18

> *“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”*
>
> JAMES 1:2–4

> *“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,”*
>
> HEBREWS 6:19

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew’s

Sproul’s whole reading of Romans 5 leans on 1 Corinthians 15 and on 2 Corinthians 5:21. “He gets our guilt; we get His merit” — that exchange, he argues, is what Paul means by two representatives, and “The new Adam arrives in history to fulfill that which the original Adam failed so miserably to do.”

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary · Romans completed after 1714

Henry calls Adam “a type of Christ,” the first of two heads, and hears in verse 2 the posture of a pardoned man — “Not only wherein we are, but wherein we stand.” Read beside him, Ephesians 2:18 names the same open door to the Father, and Hebrews 6:19 the anchor of the hope that does not disappoint.

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four men read the same twenty-one verses from four chairs — the pastor's study, the theologian's lectern, the Tabernacle pulpit and the Puritan's desk. Read across a row to see how one movement sounds in each voice; read down a column to hear one teacher's whole emphasis.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · Peace and hope	Peace with God, not just inner calm; the battle is finished; love poured, not trickled.	"Therefore" and the past tense; the war, the torn veil, hope as an anchor.	Peace is a fact in court before it is a feeling; tribulation is the ladder's foot.	God is the worst enemy or best friend; tribulation sanctified works patience.
II · Love for enemies	The reason for God's love lies in Him; huper means instead of; much more kept.	Helpless means unable; Christ's death secured salvation; no wrath, no gospel.	Without strength legally, morally, spiritually; the remedy proves the disease.	Christ dying the testator, Christ living the executor who pays the legacy.
III · Adam's door	Genesis 3 is history; every grave is mute evidence; the law came too late.	Federal headship, not realism; no damnation without representation.	Infants die for Adam's sin and live because Jesus died.	Death a mighty prince; sin before the law; Adam a type of Christ.
IV · Two men	Representative heads; offered to all but received by faith; credit through another.	Double imputation; Christ kept the covenant of works; His works save us.	Headship that ruined us in Adam is the road to life in Christ.	The plaster is wider than the wound; grace a deeper, broader stream.
V · Grace reigns	The law exposes; grace super-abounds but never winks at sin.	Why would God want sin to abound? The equation is not equal.	Not sin against justice but sin against grace; silver lost, gold given.	The stronger the enemy, the greater the conqueror's honour.

ROMANS 5:1–21 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Peace is a relationship before it is a feeling.** Paul's peace is "with God" — the war is over because the verdict is in. Feelings of peace follow and can fade; the fact cannot be reopened. SPURGEON
- **"Introduction" means someone brings you in.** *Prosagōgē* is being ushered into a king's presence. We do not barge into grace; Christ leads us in, and we stay standing. THE GREEK
- **Three exults mark the road.** We exult in hope (v. 2), in tribulations (v. 3), and in God Himself (v. 11). The last is the highest — not in what He gives but in Him. THE TEXT
- **Tribulation does not sanctify by itself.** In itself it works impatience; it is God's grace working in and with the trouble that produces endurance, proven character and hope. HENRY
- **The lower the description, the higher the love.** Helpless, ungodly, sinners, enemies — Paul descends four steps so that God's love can be measured by the distance it came down. GUZIK
- **The "much more" runs from the hard to the easy.** If God justified and reconciled enemies by Christ's death, He will keep friends by Christ's life. The believer's security rests on the greater thing already done. THE TEXT
- **No damnation without representation.** Sproul's line for verses 12–19: we stand or fall in a head. Reject Adam's headship and you have nothing left to stand on in Christ's. SPROUL

- **Where the teachers differ on "all men" (v. 18).** Guzik reads the gift as offered to all and received by faith; Sproul holds that Christ died for His own and secured, not merely offered, their salvation. All four reject universalism. THE TEXT
- **The plaster is wider than the wound.** Grace is not equal and opposite to sin. It answers many transgressions where Adam's one was enough to condemn. HENRY
- **Grace reigns through righteousness.** Grace does not wink at sin; it takes the throne on the righteous ground of the cross and ends in eternal life. SPROUL

† Questions for the Table

1 **Paul lists what justification gives in 5:1–11. Which of these do you actually live from this week, and which do you only know about?**

Peace, access, hope, love poured out, rescue from wrath, reconciliation — Spurgeon's distinction between the fact and the feeling of peace may help.

5:1-11; Ephesians 2:18

2 **Walk the chain of 5:3–4 with a real trouble from your life. Where are you on the ladder right now?**

Tribulation → perseverance → proven character → hope. Henry: it is grace in the trouble, not the trouble itself, that does the work.

5:3-5; James 1:2-4

3 **Why does Paul describe us as helpless, ungodly, sinners and enemies before he tells us God's love? What happens to your view of God's love if you think you weren't that bad?**

Sproul warns we secretly believe we were not that bad; Spurgeon: the glory of the remedy proves the desperateness of the disease.

5:6-10; 1 John 4:10

4 **How does the "much more" of verses 9–10 answer the fear that you might lose your salvation after a fall?**

If God reconciled enemies by Christ's death, much more will He keep the reconciled by His life — Henry's testator and executor.

5:9-10

5 **Is it fair that Adam's sin counts for us? What would we lose if it did not?**

Sproul: if Adam cannot represent us, neither can Christ. The same principle that condemns in Adam justifies in Christ.

5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22

6 **"Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." How do you hear that verse on your worst day — and how could it be twisted?**

Spurgeon: when your sin abounds, recollect that grace much more abounds. Guzik: grace never winks at sin — Paul answers the twist in 6:1.

5:20-21; 6:1-2

Romans 5 begins with a man at peace with God and ends with grace on a throne. Between them stand two men, and every one of us is counted in one or the other. The good news is not that grace balances the books with sin — it is that grace is "much more."

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry died in 1714 having reached Acts; the Romans volume of his *Commentary* was completed by his successors (John Evans) from his notes and method, and is cited under his name as it is published. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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