

Romans Session 70

Christ and the Reign of Life 3

Romans 5:15-21 (NASB)

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.*

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.*

In this passage, Paul explores five essential areas of contrast between the condemning act of Adam and the redemptive act of Christ.

1. Different in effectiveness (v15)
2. Different in their extent (v16)
3. Different in their efficacy (v17)
4. Different in their essence (vv18-19)
5. Different in their energy (vv20-21)

We have already studied the first two, Different in Effectiveness, and Different in Extent.

As we begin tonight, we want to take on the next of these five and it is the Difference in their efficacy (v17)

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.*

We see in this contrast between the one act of Adam and the one act of Christ, the capacity to produce a desired result.

As Paul already pointed out, the one sin of the one-man Adam brought the reign of death, and it is to that truth that the **if**, here that carries the idea of "because" refers.

It has been established that Adam's one act of sin brought the reign of death.

But that was hardly the intent of the first sin.

Neither Adam nor Eve sinned because they wanted to die;

They sinned because they expected to become like God.

Their sin produced the very opposite result from that which they desired and emphasized the deception of the tempter. Instead of becoming more like God they became more unlike Him.

The one act of one man, Jesus Christ, however, produced precisely the desired result.

The divine intent of Jesus' sacrifice of Himself on the cross was that **those who receive the abundance of that unmatched act of grace and of the gift of righteousness would rein in life through the One** who died for them, namely, **Jesus Christ**.

The one-dimensional result of Adam's one act was death, whereas the result of Chris's one act is life, which is multidimensional.

Christ not only offers **life** but abundant life, life that abounds, He said;

John 10:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*

The redeemed in Christ not only receive abundant life but are given **righteousness** as a **gift**;

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

²¹ *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

They **reign** in that righteous **life** with their Lord and Savior.

They possess the very righteous, glorious, and eternal **life** of God Himself.

The "practical use" of this great truth is that the One who has granted us spiritual **life** will fulfill that life within us.

Philippians 1:6 (NASB)

⁶ *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus*

God is the great transformer and fulfiller of life.;

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

To **reign in life** through Christ is also to have power over sin.

Later in this letter Paul also says;

Romans 6:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*

¹⁸ *and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

As believers, we know from experience as well as from Scripture that we are still plagued with sin, still clothed in the sinful rags of the old self;

Ephesians 4:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ *if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,*

²² *that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,*

But sin is no longer the nature or the master of the believer.
In Christ, we are no longer victims of sin but victors over sin.

1 Corinthians 15:57 (NASB)

57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sinning didn't bring the desired result, but the Sacrifice of Christ did.
That brings us to;

THE CONTRAST IN ESSENCE

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.

Ok, this contrast is in essence.

When speaking of the many who died because of the sin of Adam, being all inclusive of mankind, without exception. The **life to all men** here refers exclusively to those who have put their trust in Christ. So, you see they are not the same. There is no universalism here.

We are aware that salvation comes only to those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:16-17 (NASB)

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Romans 3:22 (NASB)

22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction

Romans 3:28 (NASB)

28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Romans 4:5 (NASB)

5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

Romans 4:13 (NASB)

13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Paul's primary teaching in these two verses is that the essence of Adam's **one transgression** was **disobedience**, whereas the essence of Christ's **one act of righteousness** was **obedience**.

When God commanded Adam not to eat of the forbidden fruit, Adam disobeyed and brought death.
When God sent His only begotten Son into the world to suffer and die, the Son obeyed and brought life.

The word **made**, translates *kathislemi*, and here carries the idea of constituting, or establishing.
The guilt of Adam's **disobedience** was imputed to all his descendants. They were thus **made sinners**, in the sense that they became legally guilty in God's sight.

In the same way, but with the exact opposite effect, Christ's **obedience** caused those who believe in Him to be **made-righteous** in God's sight.

The consequence of His perfect **obedience is that** an unblemished, impeccable righteousness is imputed to their account, making them legally righteous.

From beginning to end, Jesus' earthly life was characterized by perfect obedience to His Heavenly Father.
Even at the age of 12, He reminded His parents that He had to be about His Father's business.
Jesus sole purpose on earth was to do His Father's will.

John 4:34 (NASB)

*³⁴ Jesus *said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.*

John 5:30 (NASB)

³⁰ "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:38 (NASB)

³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

And there are many more verses we could use here.
And how far would He take this obedience?

Philippians 2:8 (NASB)

⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Thus **the obedience of the one**, secured redemption for **the many** who **will be made righteous** in God's sight.
God justifies the ungodly, and the result is that He can then declare still sinful believers fully righteous without any taint on His righteousness.

Romans 3:26b (NASB)

²⁶ so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

The "practical use" of this truth is that genuine believers can truly sing with H. G. Spafford in his great hymn:

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the Cross and I bear it no more
It is well, it is well with my soul.