

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"Being a King in Life"
Romans 5:12-21

Feb 16, 1986

INTRODUCTION

1. "One" is a very essential number in this tremendously doctrinal section. It refers to both Adam (#1) and Christ (Adam #2).

2. Do millions suffer for the sin of one? Yes, since millions may be saved by the righteousness of one. This is God's way and what He does is the ultimate standard of right. This is absolute justice.

3. To develop the truth here, a series of comparisons and contrasts are noted. Look--

1. ADAM AND CHRIST vv. 12-14.

The federal headship of Adam is patent. "All sinned" in Adam just as really as Levi paid tithes in Abraham (Heb. 7:9, 10). The sin of Adam exerted an influence where the absence of an expressed law might have suggested the abrogation of death. In this, Adam was a figure of Christ, the effect of Whose work extends far beyond Himself to the believing sinner.

2. TRESSPASS AND GIFT v. 15

This verse (and the next two) show in what points the type (Adam) falls short of the Antitype (Christ). It provides the difference in intensity between the destructive power (Adam) and the recovering power (Christ). This sharp contrast between Adam and the race is seen by the use of the definite articles--"the one" and "the many." Adam's sin is the sole cause of death among men (vv. 12-14). Over against this poisonous fountain in Adam stands the healing "grace" of God and the "gift" of justification. Both "grace" and "gift" are found "by grace, which is by the One Man, Jesus Christ." These have "abounded unto the many." The "much more" is logical (more certain) and not quantitative.

3. CONDEMNATION AND JUSTIFICATION v. 10

Here a difference in extension of the two opposing powers (Adam and Christ). Not an extension to men, but to their needs. The extent of the destructive power does not go beyond the one sin of Adam; the extent of the recovering power is as wide as the countless sins of any heart. The two forces are measured by the difference in the number of sins to which each looks: the judgment to one sin, the free gift to many.

4. DEATH AND LIFE v. 17

The "for" might have expected to be "therefore" or

"then," but it is used to reassert what has been said (cf. 15:27), but in a different form. The superiority of the saving energy in Christ has been seen (vv. 15, 16). It is shown here that those who "receive" this "abundance of grace" and "gift of righteousness" will surely "reign in life by One, Jesus Christ," Note: Paul says "death reigned," but not "life reigned." Rather, he is more expressive: "they reigned in life." The justified ones are kings in life. Thus: if death in Adam is certain, then life in Christ is more so (if possible).

5. TRESSPASS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS v. 18

The words "so then" should begin this verse. It looks back over everything that has been said from v. 12 on. The first "all" includes all mankind (babies too). The second "all" is limited by the phrase "they which receive the abundance of the grace" (v. 17). The second "all" is thus not universal. Babies, insane and irresponsibles are nonetheless covered.

6. DISOBEDIENCE AND OBEDIENCE v. 19

This verse repeats in corroboration the statements of the last. Both verses are not primarily argumentative, but declarative of conclusions already reached. The word "all" in v. 18 is changed to "the many" as more suitable to the word "one." The verb "made" is not causative, but assertive. Those in Adam were justly declared sinners because thereby they were naturally such (Eph. 2:3). Those in Christ are declared righteous graciously because they are so in Him. "Obedience" is not a reference to Christ's sinless history, but to the specific act of Calvary (Ph. 2:8).

7. ABOUNDING TRESPASS AND ABOUNDING GRACE v. 20

Here Paul shows the place of law. It was imposed to show sin's character. Law did not solicit sin; it elicited. It was not intended to remove sin, but to prepare the way for its removal in Christ. "Where sin abounded (a fact proved by the offense under law), grace (in Christ) did much more abound."

8. REIGN OF SIN AND REIGN OF GRACE v. 21

Here is the final parallel between Adam and Christ. As sin reigned in the sphere of death (universal death) so grace (which far exceeds sin in its power) reigns by means of righteousness (which in Christ) unto eternal life. Righteousness does not fail the one who has it--it is forever.

CONCLUSION Justification by faith secures the final salvation of him who has it. Why? Because it is "by Jesus Christ our Lord." Amen.