

In Adam or In Christ

Romans 5:12-21

“For this cause, even as by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death; and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until law sin was in the world; but sin is not put to account when there is no law; but death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him to come. But shall not the act of favour be as the offence? For if by the offence of one the many have died, much rather has the grace of God, and the free gift in grace, which is by the one man Jesus Christ, abounded unto the many. And shall not as by one that has sinned be the gift? For the judgment was of one to condemnation, but the act of favour, of many offences unto justification. For if by the offence of the one death reigned by the one, much rather shall those who receive the abundance of grace, and of the free gift of righteousness, reign in life by the one Jesus Christ:) so then as it was by one offence towards all men to condemnation, so by one righteousness towards all men for justification of life. For as indeed by the disobedience of the one man the many have been constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many will be constituted righteous. But law came in, in order that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded grace has overabounded, in order that, even as sin has reigned in the power of death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Let’s pray:

Father, we thank You again for Your Word; Your Word is precious. You said, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Word shall never pass away.” We are thankful for that. We pray the Holy Spirit would take these words, these words spoken by the Holy Spirit into the Apostle Paul’s heart and left forever to us as a record of God’s ways and what You are doing. We pray these words will be made alive to us today. We say again in utter dependence only You have the words of eternal life. No one else. But would You speak to us? And would You open those words to us? And would You also give us ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches? When You do that, we believe something valuable, eternal is accomplished. Therefore, we ask these things in the name of our precious Lord Jesus. Amen.

Introduction

Let me say something about reading the Word. I repeat that the most valuable advice given to me by Brother Kaung years ago was, “Read the Word.” Read the Word over and over and over again. Read it before you read something else, and then the Word will become real to you. It will become life to you. As a matter of fact, another thing I do, (the environmentalist hate me for it) but I write the verses that I read very often. There is some power to that when you write it with your own hand, and you see it; it makes a difference. So, I throw reams of paper away and destroy many trees, but nevertheless, it gets into me. I believe Jim shared this once in a ministry that was so precious about Ezra, the scribe. That is what they did. They wrote the Word over and over, and when you write it, when you read it first, then when you write it, it gets into

you. And I believe you will never regret that advice our dear brother gave to many of us young Christians years ago.

I think you know from the outline that has gone out that the subject today is, "In Adam or In Christ," a pretty simple title, but that is the whole explanation of these verses in Romans 5:12-21. We see two things, and the gist of it all, at the end of it all, the substance of it all is you are either in Adam or you are in Christ. In Christ is God's only solution for mankind. So that is the title.

These verses, Romans 5:12-21, only ten verses are of monumental importance. Now I do not say that lightly. Others, much more learned and scholarly than I am, have said that much more. They have emphasized how strategic these ten verses are in the book of Romans. It shows the cause, the whole dilemma of man. What was the root cause? It goes further than that. It shows God's solution to those deficiencies of man, utter deficiencies. And then it goes even further. It shows you how much those blessings are in the outcome. So, I told you already there is a short outline that may help you. Forgive me for not breaking it down into verses as usual. The reason I did not do that was purposeful. These three thoughts together are so interwoven, it is impossible to say verses 1-3 have to do with this, and verses 3-17 have to do with this. Altogether, it means to be in Adam or in Christ.

Outline -- Two Men, Two Acts, Two Outcomes

So, the first thing in the outline we are going to look at is two men. If you do not understand in God's economy the importance of two men, you will never understand what God has done for us. And if you do not understand this thought of two men, you will never understand the book of Romans. It is the center of the presentation the Apostle Paul made in that glorious gospel. I call this the commencement. Everything begins and ends with these two men. That is what commencement means.

So, the second thing I want us to look at today are two acts. Now we could look at many acts, but we are going to look at only two acts because the Apostle Paul when he wrote this transitional section, he considered only two acts of these two men. And if we are going to understand the Christian life, if we are going to live fully in the Christian life, you must not only understand the place and the work of these two men, but you must understand the one act of each of these men. They changed the entire world, changed everything.

So, the two acts I call the conduct. Now notice when you get into this, it is not looking at your conduct; it is looking at the conduct of these two men. Your conduct was discussed in detail up to this point through verse 11 of chapter 5. Your conduct and my conduct were horrid. It ruined us. We were ruined; it shows the hopelessness of mankind. But here we go into something that is altogether different.

In the third section we will consider two outcomes. There are just two outcomes of these two men, and those two outcomes are the difference between heaven and hell. They are the difference between ruin and eternity. There is the difference, and we will get into it, between death and life. We must understand these two outcomes because this is the consequence of what they did.

Understand the Christian Life

So, as we begin, I do not want you to take my word only that these ten verses are of supreme importance. I believe they are essential to understand the Christian life. I believe they are essential for us coming into the reality of the Christian life. But I want to tell you what one brother, Griffith Thomas, said. I thought it was the most profound thing I have ever read.

If I have not told you this before, and I think I have, you ought to get Griffith Thomas' book on Romans. If you want to study Romans more deeply than we can do in our short period together, get that book. And you also ought to consider getting Newell's book which is a verse-by-verse translation. It is worth your time to get these two references and have them in your library.

Griffith Thomas described the absolute importance of these ten verses. He said, "Thus these verses give us the logical center of the epistle. (Quite a remarkable thing to say.) They are the great central points to which everything that precedes it has converged, and out of which everything that follows flows." That is quite a statement. Take his word for it. If I had to put it in my own words, I think this is the fundamental and foundational explanation of the Christian life in these ten verses. It tells us that most everything we know is compressed in these few verses.

Adam's Ruin, Christ's Restoration, Incalculable Cost

Paul captures the root cause of man's condition, and he also explains God's solution to solve that problem. He shows the absolute ruin of man, and he shows the height of what God brings us to in Christ. All of this has to do with source. All of it has to do with these two sources—Adam and Christ. Out of these two sources everything has flowed to mankind that was ever meant to be. So that is the importance of these verses. It tells us the cause and the effect of man's ruin, the consequences of man's ruin and the remedy to man's ruin.

I spent the end of my career as an engineer not that long ago. As a matter of fact, they are still calling and asking me to work. I am not sure why they are doing that, and I am rather reluctant to do that.

But I would go and look at ruined structures, that was at the end of my career, ruined structures. As a matter of fact, one of my young partners, vice president, and he said to me, "I do not do, (and I cannot say the word in public) old structures. I just use the word "ruined", but he used a much spicier word. He did not do these ruined structures, but that is all I did at the end. Why has this happened? That is what Romans 5:12-21 says, "Why has this happened? How do you fix it? Can it be fixed?"

I will never forget, I went out on one job, and I told this man from South Carolina, whose retirement income was his parking garage, "It cannot be fixed, you need to tear it down." I think it was the only time I ever told anybody that. Of course, it could be fixed, but you would spend, as they would say in the old expression, "an arm and a leg". It would not have been worth it to fix it. But thank God, everything that happened in Adam is fixed in Christ.

And the last thing, my clients always wanted to know, and they would always ask me, "How much does it cost?" Very often, that was the first question. Before I even figured out what was wrong, they would say, "How much is the cost?"

But let me tell you the cost that God paid in Christ was incalculable. Usually, I would scare them when I told them the cost. I would say, "Well that is going to cost you \$500,000 to fix this." And they would quickly look and find another engineer.

But dear brothers and sisters, what happened between Adam's ruin and Christ's restoration involved an incalculable cost, and that is what we see in Romans 5:12-21. Well, you get the point. So, these words are very important.

Another brother said, "This passage "therefore" is no mere episode or illustration, but that which really gives organic life to the entire epistle." Notice those words, very strong words. He said, "It is important we understand this." I would just say more simply it is the very heart of the message, God's gospel, which is the power that saves as we look at this. So that is the first thing in this introduction I want you to think about the importance of these words. Do not ever forget it. Meditate on them over and over. Consider them over and over. It tells you if you are a Christian where you have been and what you have been brought into. Make sure you understand the importance of this.

Spiritual Transition from Utter Hopelessness to Glory

The second thing is that it is a spiritual transition from the utter hopelessness of man into the glory that was prepared for us in Christ Jesus. Utter hopelessness! You cannot read the first chapters of Romans without discovering the utter hopelessness of man.

I think of in that first chapter and in that second chapter, "man is without excuse." "Man is without excuse," as it says in Romans 3:23: "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." It is ruin; it is hopelessness. How can we be restored from such hopelessness? That is what these verses deal with. It is the transition.

Brother Darby said something that I like very much. He said, "This epistle divides itself here as to doctrine into two distinct parts which a new paragraph hardly shows. Up to chapter 5:11 sins, in the plural, are being dealt with." Man's actions are being dealt with. We no longer now are dealing with sins; we deal with the singular sin, and the difference is man's nature. God could not settle with just forgiving our sins because, brothers and sisters, we would just continue to repeat those sins. There is something internally wrong with us. It is our nature, and what you are seeing in this chapter is the nature of those two men, the nature of Adam and the nature of Christ, and that in the end is the resolution of God bringing us into a new nature, delivering us from our old nature. That is the transition we see here. I do not think I finished Brother Darby's note.

"Up to chapter 5:11 sins have been treated of, and from this standpoint sin is in you." This is what we need to see when we read these ten verses.

Now in chapters 6-8 we are going to go into something else. We are going to leave reconciliation. We are going to leave justification by faith, and we are going to go into

sanctification. How do you live the Christian life? Is it possible to live the Christian life? I have always said that it is impossible. It is impossible for you, me, but thank God it is not impossible for God. That is where we are headed. So, I hope you begin to understand this.

Two Men—The Commencement

So, let's begin with two men, commencement, everything starts here.

The First Man - Adam

Romans 5:12 there is this very important phrase, "For this cause." Now I know we use many different versions of the Bible. Many of you like me are a fan of the King James Version and I think your King James Version says, "Wherefore." I think many of your Bibles, most probably the English Bibles use "Therefore." The New American Standard Bible it is "Therefore." But Darby chose to use, "For this cause." We begin to see the whole cause of mankind's ruin in this one verse. The whole explanation of what happened is embedded in one verse. It is a terrific verse. Listen to it: "For this cause, even as by one man sin" (did you notice it was singular?)

If you go back to Romans 3:24-25, you will notice that it is plural, but here you notice that it is singular. "sin entered into the world, and by sin death."

Something happened; there was a consequence. But then it says, "And thus death passed to all." That is a tremendous statement to understand these verses. It shows how what Adam did effected all of humanity forever. Can you imagine that? Now I know people have trouble with this. They think this is too broad, that maybe Paul had gotten caught away up to Paradise and had a third heaven experience and overstated the case. But he realized in this one man, Adam, humanity was ruined forever. This is the sense of this Scripture.

We inherited Adam's nature. Have you ever heard the phrase, "He does not fall far from the tree." Or a better way of saying it, "The apple does not fall far from the tree." That means you are kind of like your parents. In fact, we are like our spiritual parent, Adam, we inherited his nature. The word is so strong, and it has been imputed to us. What Adam is, is what we are. I will never forget dear old Marcy Bruington, one of the original five sisters. I remember when Jessica was born, and after she grew up, she looked at Jessica and said, "It looks like you spit her out." I do not think Jessica liked that, but we are just like our father Adam. His nature has become our nature. This is what the word means. In these two men this nature has passed from our founding father, if you will, to become our very nature. That is what is wrong with us. If you could sort of harness all of your good side, if you think you have many, and begin to behave in a proper way, by the way, which you cannot, and then you could be good, which you cannot, then you think, "Well, I am okay", but you would begin to sin again because the apple does not fall far from the tree. You have heard the phrase, "He is a chip off the old block." That is exactly what we are in Adam. Look at them, look at Adam. Do you see us? I have parents come to me and say, "The kids are acting up in school, yelling and crying." And I always say, "Little Adam, there it is, perfect demonstration of little Adam." Everything is made clear in this one verse.

How did Paul capture that insight? How did he get that revelation? He is putting away what was behind it. Christ has died for our sins, but now you have another problem, and the problem

is not what you do; the problem is who you are. This is absolutely important. If you miss this, you miss all of what these ten verses are about. It is all about two men. In this whole chapter, the explanation is about these two men, Adam, and Christ. The first man, of course, is Adam, which you know. He is the commencement and the beginning of the ruin of human life. What he did passed to every man. You read that in these verses in which there are repeated phrases.

The Second Man - Christ

Then there is the second Man. Thank God for that! God did not leave us with our ruined condition in Adam. Christ came, and in this second Man is the resolution for all that has happened to humankind. This is what these verses must deal with. These two people (stay with my two men, don't forget that) and what they did had such a supreme effect on mankind that it goes from the beginning of time through eternity—just two men. I think this is a rather amazing concept that Paul discovered when he was meditating on the Word of God.

Federal Headship – In Adam, In Christ

In God's eyes everything has to do with these two men. When God looks at the planet with 7.888 billion people, if I have it right, He does not look at eight billion people and say, "Are they Pakistanis, are they Indians, are they Americans, are they Chinese, are they Africans, or are they Europeans?" He looks at two men, and He looks at eight billion people through the lens of these two men. That is all He sees, and His question is to us, "Are you in Adam or are you in Christ?" That is the whole thing this chapter deals with. Everything has to do with these two men.

Theologians have described this as "federal headship." I do not know if you have ever heard that, and you cannot take your concordance and look up federal headship. You can find headship, and it means that these two had such an effect upon humanity and will have such an effect upon it, they are the head of mankind. Everything happens to us because of these two. That is federal headship. In other words, everything is imputed to you. You know, that is a word in the Bible, particularly in Romans. Everything is imputed to you through these two men, Adam, and Christ, and this is the way God looks at the world. We often make things so complicated; God looks at things very simply: "Are you in Adam or are you in Christ?"

I look back at the garden of Eden. There were two people, pretty simple. I look at the garden of Eden at the beginning of creation, and there were two trees, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life. I look at the Bible, there were two gardens, the garden of Eden and the garden of Gethsemane, just two gardens. God's solution came in that second garden in that agony of Christ. In that first garden was the beginning of the ruin of mankind.

Two Choices: Death in Adam, Life in Christ

There are only two choices in life. I do not want to burst your bubble. As I have gotten older, we only have two choices. Do not make it so complicated. You can either choose Christ or you can choose to live for yourself. That is the only two choices. I remember what it says in Romans 12:1-2 about the mercies of God that we can be conformed to this world, or we can be transformed by the renewing of our mind, that is our second choice. And if you read Romans

8:28, it says that we can be conformed to the image of God's Son, only two choices. That is the way God looks at it. This is the way He will always look at it. This is the solution to the problem, but this is the cause of the problem, and this is the way He sees it.

I think of Deuteronomy 30:19: This was the end of the Pentateuch, the last of Moses' books. I love this verse.

"I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you: life and death have I set before you, blessing and cursing: choose then life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed,"

There are only two choices. If you read these ten verses, you discover at the end there are two choices, death, and life. They are the only choices you have in life, and if you make the right choice, you live forever. I think you begin to understand how God looks at these two men. I always had this thought in my heart as I studied the Word about two things repeated and repeated. I was thrilled when I read what William R. Newell said when he described these ten verses as the doctrine of the two men. I cannot tell you how excited I was. It was like Christmas when I was a child. I was so excited to discover this, "the great doctrine of two men." This is what we see. This is what I told you as the federal headship.

We see this word that I read and emphasized as I read it, one man over and over. It says that about both men, one man this, one man that. It says in verse 12, one man, talking about Adam. It says in verse 15, the one man Jesus Christ. In verses 15, 17, there is another emphasis. That emphasis I just read. "It's *the* one." As a matter of fact, Darby very brilliantly said, and the way it is in Greek, we miss the point. The emphasis is on "*the one*." There is Adam, *the* one. He was the one all the way from Adam up to the time Christ came. And then there is the second one, "*the one man* Jesus Christ."

Verse 15: "But shall not the act of favour be as the offence? For if by the offence of one (and Darby says, "ought to be literally put, "of *the one*") the many have died, much rather has the grace of God, and the free gift of grace, which is by the *one man* Jesus Christ abounded unto many."

Verse 17: "For if by the offence of the one death reigned by the *one*, much rather shall those who receive the abundance of grace, and of the free gift of righteousness, reign in life by the *one Jesus Christ*."

Christ is the Great One

Did you notice that emphasis? The *one, Jesus Christ*, He is the ultimate One. I remember one time (many times really), and young men listen to this please very carefully. This is one of the many times I have embarrassed my lovely wife. We were out in Scottsdale, Arizona, with Thorton and Pat Sterns, and we had the most precious fellowship. I loved Brother Sterns and Pat. We would go see them in New Jersey, and then we would go see them when they moved out to Scottsdale. We were having breakfast one morning, a lovely breakfast, and right across from us two couples came and sat down, and one of them was Wayne Gretzky. Do you know who Wayne Gretzky is? He is the greatest hockey player that ever lived. As a matter of fact, they gave him a title. Wayne Gretzky is called, "The great one." How would you like to have that title?

I mean, rather than being called GOAT, Tom Brady would rather be called “the great one.” And I will never forget saying to Linda, “Can I get his autograph?” And she said, “No, no, you are embarrassing me, stop that.” And so, I figured that she could be overruled. Thorton loved me and Linda, so I said, “Thorton, can I get his autograph?” And he said, “No,” and Linda was beaming at that. She had won another war.

We are looking now in this chapter at the great One. The great One is not Gretzky; he was just a hockey player. He beat this little biscuit around the ice, and he is famous for it. The great One is Christ Himself. This is the One who came, this is the One who changed everything. This is the One who made everything right and took us from our ruined condition into the glories that are ours in Christ Jesus. This is what we see. Paul understood this. Paul understood this with clarity that few have understood. And when he wrote that famous chapter in I Corinthians 15 on resurrection to the Corinthian Church, he said, “For as in Adam all died, thus also in *the* Christ all are made alive.” Brothers and sisters, he understood this. Paul had enlightenment, revelation. He described these two men this way.

I Corinthians 15:47-48, “the first man out of the earth, made of dust; the second man, out of heaven. Such as he made of dust, such also those made of dust; and such as the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones.” That is us. That was God’s solution.

Verse 49: “And as we have borne (listen to this powerful verse, what revelation Paul had!) the image (that is nature, Brother Stephen Kaung always told us image is inner likeness; it is nature, likeness when you look at those two words in Genesis it is outward likeness. It is the inner likeness that He changes.) of the one made of dust, we shall bear also the image of the heavenly one.”

Christ Is God’s Solution to the Ruined Mankind

This is God’s solution. Isn’t that marvelous? We are not left in our ruined condition to bear the image of Adam. We are rescued in the great One, in Christ Jesus to bear the very nature of God’s beloved Son. That is the whole explanation of the Christian life. When you look at these verses, I Corinthians 15:45-49, you see some remarkable things that Paul understood. He said of Adam, the first man Adam, the first man out of the earth. He said of Adam, the natural man; that is us. And he said of Adam, the man made of dust, but he said of Christ, the last Adam. So, you have the first Adam, and you have the last Adam. That is the good news of these ten verses in Romans 5:12-21. Thank God for that! He has the second Man. There was the first man, the failure, the one that ruined all of humanity, and now, thank God, because of Christ we have the second Man, only two people, remember? This is God’s way of looking and resolving. He calls Christ, the heavenly Man. He calls Christ the heavenly One, and he calls us to be made like that, the heavenly ones to be like that One. This is what we are dealing with. I hope you begin to get the picture. What an enormous impact they made! What an enormous impact!

So, when you look at Romans 5:12-18 and read this first verse, you begin to discover the whole root cause is there, and then there are verses 13-17. Now if you look in your Bible, and I do not know if all your versions have this, but mine does and the King James. Verses 13-17 is a parenthesis, and most of this text is a parenthesis explaining to us what this means between

these two men. It is enlarging to us. It is parenthetically telling us what was accomplished in these two men. This to me is the most important parenthesis ever written. Do you understand that? Never has there been in human language, whatever the language, a parenthesis with such great impact as these verses of 13-17. How we need to see it! Then when you come to the end of that parenthesis, I will go back to verse Romans 5:18. Remember we were at “For this cause,” there is a huge parenthesis; recognize this when you study it. Then he goes back to his start, “So then as it was by one offence towards all men.” What Adam did was so heinous, so infectious it went to all men. Can you imagine that? It infected all men. That is how terrible his act was! But brothers and sisters, here we see at the end of this parenthesis,

Romans 5:18-19: “so then as it was by one offence towards all men to condemnation, so by one righteousness towards all men for justification of life. For as indeed by the disobedience of the one man the many have been constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many will be constituted righteous.”

Now I know in the King James it says, “made sinners.” That is the difference. We were constituted. I like that word; I think it is better. Your nature was constituted through Adam, and now what God is doing in this great recovery work, you are being reconstituted in Christ Jesus. And you are now going to be able because of His work, because of His death, because of His sacrifice, and because of Him laying down His life to take on a whole new nature. This is what Romans 5:12-21 must deal with. How marvelous it is! How wonderful it is! Therefore, we can read what it says in II Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creature:” I like it better in the Darby Version. “So if any one be in Christ, there is a new creation;” Isn’t that marvelous! A whole new creation. That first failed creation is gone, and by the work of Christ there is a whole new creation for those of us that are in Christ Jesus. This is how humanity commences, and this is God’s solution for mankind—two men, that’s it. Paul could not have explained it any more clearly.

Two Acts—The Conduct

Then we read about two acts. This is their conduct. This is what they did. It is interesting to me when I read this, and some people call it a warped mind, but I would say technical mind. Surely these two men, if you begin to compare Adam and Christ, did many things in their lifetime. I know that Genesis 5:5 says, “Adam lived 930 years.” Can you imagine living 930 years? I pray to God that I will not live 930 years. They just redid my end of life look up as how I was doing, and they said, “We think you will live to 93.” Well, he lived ten times longer than me. Surely, he did many acts. So how come it speaks about just one act?

And when you think of Christ and the way in particularly John the apostle ended his gospel with this very last verse. Christ has done so many things that if we took all those things and put them in books, it would fill all the books in the world—many acts.

But here we are looking at one act. It is because this one act is the issue before God. When you look at these two acts at the end, just as he only saw two men, he only sees two acts, and it is because of those acts we are what we are. It is because of the act of Adam, the single act of

Adam in the garden that day, he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and we inherited his human nature, and it is our nature.

Christ's Act on the Cross Ended the Ruin of Adam

It is because of what Christ did on the cross that ended the ruin of Adam. Now we can believe in Him, be born again of the Spirit, and inherit a new nature. You remember, Peter said when he was talking in his epistle, "We become partakers of the divine nature." That is what it is. It just means, you got a fresh start. You know, God took the big black backboard, the spiritual backboard and erased off all your sins, and said, "Go for it; now live for Me." He did not do that. The brilliance of God's gospel is that He not only dealt with the past, the looking back at past sins, but He dealt with the root cause. When we come into Christ Jesus, He dealt with the root cause. We are partakers of the divine nature. Now be careful what you do with that verse. Do not ever think for a moment you are divine. You will never be divine. But His life is in you. The Word of God makes it very clear that His life is in you. Isn't that wonderful? That is what happens out of these two acts. Even as by one man sin entered the world, it swept through all man and infected humanity. That is the reprehensible act of Adam.

Adam's Transgression – Disobedient to God

We often talk about Covid. There are many, many facts about Covid, and it depends on who you listen to how many died. If you listen to the World Health Organization, I think they say fourteen million. That is horrible by any standard. If you look at others, it is three million, seven million. I cannot imagine in the modern age we live in, that it is so wrong with numbers. But then I remember when Mac was sharing on church history, he compared that to black death, and if you look at one source of black death in the 1300's, the plague, it says, "75 to 200 million people died. Can you imagine! That seems like the infection passed to all men, it seems like the perfect illustration.

Brothers and sisters, what happened in the garden did more than infecting and killing a large part of Europe. It literally brought mankind to total and absolute ruin. This is the difference. If ever there was a pandemic, it was the pandemic that came out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil when man was ruined, and his nature was forever changed. If ever there was a solution, a grand solution, it was at the cross of Calvary where Christ died. That one act of obedience eclipses forever that one act of disobedience. This is the thing we see when we look at these two acts.

It was called "The Adam's transgression." It is referred to in verses 15, 18, 20 as *the* offence, the reprehensible act. And when you look at Adam, you may wonder, but he had the ultimate privileges it seems. Can you imagine! How could this have happened? He was created in the image and likeness of God. That would be enough, wouldn't you think? He was given this wife, and I believe that Eve was the most beautiful woman that probably ever lived. You know why I believe that? Because God created Eve, out of Adam. You talk about the perfect wife, (yes, honey, you are the perfect wife) he had paradise. He had a garden of Paradise. He had everything he needed. He was not deprived of anything with only one exception. He said, "Rule over it." He was king over this garden. He had everything a human being could want, with one

exclusion. God said, “Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for the day you eat of that tree, you shall surely die.” That was the one thing. I know we are so warped in our old nature, and we think how hard God was to deny them the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Well, you see what happened. Two choices were put before them. They could have taken of the tree of life which is Christ and lived forever. But instead, it was utter disobedience. I am not so kind to Adam, but a little more kind to Eve.

You know, the first deceiver showed up, and he said, “Did God really say this would happen to you? No, no, no, it cannot be that way! When you eat it, you are going to be like God; that’s why.” She was deceived. The New Testament makes it very clear that Eve was deceived, but Adam disobeyed. He comes along and Eve says, “Honey, eat the apple, just like your red shirt (sister’s shirt in audience with an apple). Eat it!” And he did, and because of that disobedience of Adam, mankind was ruined, and they had a whole new nature. This is the substance. But thankful, the act of Christ is called the “Act of Favor.” It is called grace. How marvelous! In Adam’s case it is called obedience, “the act of obedience.” How marvelous when you look at Christ’s act! How different are these two acts. In Christ, single act, the curse was erased. In Adam’s single act, the curse spread through all mankind.

Christ was Made Sin for Us

I mentioned to you a little while ago about my work in figuring out what was wrong with buildings, and everybody wanted to know the cost. That was really what was on their mind. They did not care so much about how I fixed it; what was it going to cost? Well, it cost God everything.

Brother Daniel read that verse in I Corinthians, “He was made sin for us.” Can you imagine! He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God. It does not stop there; do not ever believe that. In Christ was the solution. Can you imagine when it says in Isaiah 53:6: “Jehovah hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.” Can you imagine! Can you imagine, good doctor (speaking to the young doctor in the meeting), when he was in that garden, and he realized what was being called as if the sin of the whole world of Adam’s race of all of mankind would be transferred to Him. And we wonder when we read those agonies in the garden, it says, “He began to sweat tears, like drops of blood.” What agony! These are the two acts, but how different they are. The one act of Adam ended in total death, but then the greatest act in history ends in life. How marvelous! You get the point.

Two Outcomes—The Consequences

I want to talk about the two outcomes. These are the consequences of what happens. When you look at these two men, and you specifically look at their two acts, then you must understand there are two results or two consequences from these acts. If you miss that, you are going to miss the whole point. What Paul ends with in this presentation is the outcomes, and the outcomes to me are what are so significant at the end. We read about the outcome of Adam passing to all the seeds. We read about it passing to all mankind, and then we read about the act of Christ for all that believe. This is what is so precious and powerful. In Adam’s outcome

in Romans 5:12b it says, “and thus death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” That was their nature.

In Adam – Death Reigns as King

Verse 17a: “For if by the offence of the one death reigned.” Understand that phrase “death reigned.” Now the commentators say this means, “Death reigned as king.” It is a stronger emphasis. It does not just mean; well, we all die. We all know that. Life is hard, the old saying, “life is hard then you die.” You understand. It is much worse than that. Death reigned as king is the emphasis in the original language. That is what it says. If you read this in several places, death reigned as king is what the emphasis is, and that is what we see in these two outcomes. How terrible it was, but thank the Lord that is not the end of it. That is not the only thing where we read something reigns.

When you look in verse 21, it says, “in order that, even as sin has reigned as king in the power of death, (add the phrase ‘as king’ to have a right understanding of the original language) so also grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Isn’t that wonderful!

In Christ – Life Reigns as King

Grace now reigns as king through life, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the secret. Death reigns as king and life reigns as king are the two outcomes.

Verse 17: “For if by the offence of the one death reigned as king by the one, much rather shall those who receive the abundance of grace, and of the free gift of righteousness, reign in life by the one Jesus Christ:)”

That is the end. That is the glorious end. All the outcomes from Adam, all the ruin that caused death to reign as king is displaced and put away when Christ took upon Himself the sin of the whole world. And it even says more than that.

Much More

There is a word in chapter 5 that Paul intentionally used. Of course, I am speaking to you in English and not in Greek, but it is the phrase, “much more”. The phrase “much more” occurs in four places in chapter 5 of Romans. It occurs in verse 9, “much more,” verse 10, “much more,” and if you look at it, it also occurs in verses 15 and 17.

Verse 15: King James Version, “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of the one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.”

Did you notice the emphasis? The emphasis is very important. It says, “Much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by the one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded to many.”

Verse 17: “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)”

That is the ultimate outcome. There could not be a more glorious outcome. There could not be a greater redemption. There could not be a more heavenly solution. We have come from certain death, our destiny, to eternal life in Christ Jesus. All through that singular act on the cross, and all because He took all of it upon Himself. And then in the mercy of God we receive from Him His divine nature. This is Romans 5:12-21. We often say, "When we are saved, we get back to where Adam was." That is not right. That is poor theology. Adam was innocent; Adam had not eaten of the tree of life; Adam was not what God intended him to be. You understand? We come more than that so Paul in his wisdom and revelation emphasized in this short chapter much more, much more, much more, much more. He wanted us to get it and just so you understood it, in the Greek Version he said, "the abundance; it is abundance we receive." It is nothing to compare to what we received in Adam.

Conclusion

Verse 20: "But law came in, in order that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded grace has overabounded,"

How marvelous! Dear brothers and sisters, these ten verses are the explanation of two men that changed the world. These ten verses are the acts of those two men, and because of those acts all humanity is affected. This is the question God has, "Are you still just in Adam or are you in Christ?" That is the question. If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation. Old things have passed away; all things have become new. If you are born once, you die twice. If you are only born in Adam, you will die twice, eternal death and death at the end of your life. Death reigns as king. But if you are born twice, you will never die. It is the favor of God that you will never die. We said good-bye to our dear sister, Sujana, but she was not dead. You never die (the Bible says that Christians sleep, not die). Those that receive the outcome, the consequence of Christ and are in Christ Jesus, never die. And the ending phrase that Paul wants you to understand is now because of this act, life reigns as king. This is Romans 5:12-21.

Lord, would You open our eyes? Our eyes are shut. We often do not comprehend what You have done for us in Christ Jesus. We are thankful we heard from Mac this morning that you demonstrated Your love towards us in that while we were yet sinners you died for us. We are thankful for that. How marvelous! You took care of our past, our sins, but how much more marvelous this is that You have given us a whole new nature in Christ Jesus, His own nature. We who have lived under the ruling of our father eating of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil, in Christ Jesus are eating now of the tree of life. How marvelous! How beyond comprehension! Open our eyes, cause us to see. In Your precious name. Amen.