

## CHAPTER VII

### ROMANS 5:1-21 - THE REIGN OF GRACE OVER THE REIGN OF SIN

THE transition from the preceding gospel teaching of 3:21-4:25 to 5:1-21 may be likened to that situation in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* where Christian, having entered through the narrow Wicket-gate, is told by Good-will, who represents Jesus Christ, "An open door is set before you, and no man can shut it."<sup>1</sup> In other words, having commenced the pilgrim journey as a new convert, the way ahead to the Celestial City is one of glorious hope and sustaining life built upon a gospel foundation. So at this point in Romans, there is much more to the Christian life than mere entrance, that is initial justification, as vital a truth as that may be. Thus 5:1 introduces us to assuring prospects that do not leave the gospel behind so to speak, but rather build upon that same gospel, especially its foundational roots, so that an enlarged perspective concerning its trunk and branches is productive of the fruit of sanctification.

Shedd concisely explains the transition here as follows: "St Paul has described the *necessity* of the righteousness by faith, in Romans 1:18-3:20; and the *nature* of it, including its harmony with the Old Testament, in 3:21-4:25. He now proceeds to describe the *effects* of this righteousness, in 5-8."<sup>2</sup>

Among faithful commentators, there is broad agreement that at this juncture, Romans proceeds with a distinct change of emphasis, though there is disagreement as to Paul's purposes in continuity with regard to the sections that comprise chapters 5-8. Recollection of II Peter 3:15-16 is appropriate here where this Apostle confesses the difficulty of understanding some of the respected Paul's teaching. A summary of this writer's understanding at this point is as follows. Romans 5 has continuity with Romans 8, while Romans 6-7 represent a hiatus that deals with several problems which Paul anticipates with regard to the implications of his teaching.<sup>3</sup> Romans 5:1-11 is somewhat introductory, though it breaks into two related gospel grounded sections, vs. 1-5 and 6-11, that conclude with an *a fortiori* confidence and exaltation in the saving life of Christ which is built upon "the reconciliation." Thus in vs. 12-21 this saving life is heralded as a fulness of reigning grace that is reflected by means of antitheses between "the one and the many" and "Adam and Christ" and "law and grace" and "death and life." The consequence of this sovereign grace and life is expounded in Romans 8 as an exultant, triumphant certitude, transcending temporal earthly trials, that the true believer is forever secure in the love of God.

Here we have reached the vortex of Paul's teaching that is arguably the most profound in Romans. Moreover there is probably no other place in Scripture where the necessity of an acutely focused and renewed mind cf. 12:2, employing logic and reasoning, is more necessary. The implication of this fact is that biblical Christianity is based upon precise, rational truth and not flimsy sentiment. Of course it does not stop at this juncture as indeed Paul makes abundantly

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<sup>1</sup> John Bunyan, *The Works of John Bunyan*, ed. George Offor, III, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> William G. T. Shedd, *Commentary on Romans*, p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Martyn Lloyd-Jones strongly argues for this position, *Romans, Assurance, An Exposition of Chapter 5*, pp. 3-7, as does James Montgomery Boice, *Romans, II*, pp. 504-6, and Douglas J. Moo with more technical support, *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 290-295.

clear in his teaching that follows; however, the obvious point here is that profound spirituality and consequent assurance is based upon this substantial doctrinal truth and no other ground.

#### A. GOSPEL RECONCILIATION HAS GLORIOUS PROSPECTS, VS. 1-11.

Notice that “reconciliation” as a gospel synonym, first mentioned three times in this section of Romans in vs. 10-11, is a very important term, and thus it is well to anticipate its significance at this point. In Romans 1-4, the doctrine of justification by faith has emphasized the objective character of the gospel, that is righteous acquittal of man for Christ’s sake through faith alone. However, “reconciliation” stresses that the justification of the sinner allows union with that satisfied God. Thus justification by faith must never be separated from those more subjective and experiential elements that are integral to the gospel as a whole. The history of the Christian church is strewn with the lifeless wreckage of orthodoxy concerning justification that knows nothing of being alive unto God and thus exultant concerning the glory of God.

##### 1. The glorious hope of reconciliation, vs. 1-5.

Clearly this bracket of verses is a contained unit that proceeds from chapter 4 and introduces the reader to the outcome of justification by faith. As a whole the spirit of Paul here becomes animated and jubilant.

##### a. Peace with God through faith, v. 1.

In terms of the intense exposition of the gospel in 3:21-4:25, this verse contains only one expression that stands out as adding new truth, and that is “peace with God.” Every other concept has been dealt with in detail.

(1) Two technical matters concern “we have peace with God.” First, the alternative as an exhortation, “let us have peace with God,” while having better manuscript support is yet overridden by the far greater internal evidence for the indicative above.<sup>4</sup> Second, “peace with God” is not to be confused with the “peace of God.” The point here is *not* that we have the “peace of God” (Phil. 4:7) infused within, but rather that we are at peace with God because He is at peace with us; the barrier of sinful obstruction has been dismantled, the chasm of separation has been bridged; hostility and enmity between God and the justified sinner has turned to reconciliation and concord. By *implication*, the believer responds with feelings of enjoyment, bliss, and contentment at the fact of the friendship that God has established. Murray explains: “Peace of heart and mind proceeds from ‘peace with God’ and is the reflection in our consciousness of the relation established by justification.”<sup>5</sup>

(2) Implicit here is the truth that man is not naturally at “peace with God,” but rather alienated from his Creator. That is, to use a collection of Pauline

<sup>4</sup> So Cranfield, Godet, Hodge, Moo, Morris, Murray, Shedd, etc. agree.

<sup>5</sup> John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, I, p. 159.

terms, he is an “enemy” (Rom. 5:10), “subject to God’s wrath” (Eph. 2:3), “alienated and hostile toward God” (Rom. 8:7; Col. 1:21). Explicit is the truth that the God of Adam’s fallen race has arranged a permanent truce with sinners who yield to his faith terms. The Lord Jesus Christ’s day of atonement is at the same time God’s armistice day, his just cessation of hostilities to believing sinners. It is His doing, the terms being wholly of free and sovereign grace.

- (3) God’s verdict declared to the believing sinner not only grants full pardon and right standing, but it also provides the ground of His intent that a glorious adopted relationship be established by means of which the riches of His grace will be inherited. Thus in Romans 8:31-32 we move from justification through atonement to the hope of this spiritual wealth: “If God is for us [justification], who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”
- (4) By way of application, concerning the priority of being at “peace with God,” Lloyd-Jones comments:

So we start with ‘peace with God.’ Before we come to consider any blessings we must always consider the whole question of our standing and status and position before God. It is almost baffling to understand how anyone can miss this. . . . There is nothing wrong in seeking blessings, and we should thank God that He gives us such glorious blessings; but a man who starts with the blessings is a fool, for the reason that he may not be there to enjoy the blessings he is seeking. . . . The primary business of the Christian Gospel is not to give us blessings. I emphasize the *primary* purpose. Its primary function is to reconcile us to God.<sup>6</sup>

b. Access with rejoicing through faith, vs. 2.

In a court of law, a man on trial before a judge is remanded or under certain restraints until the verdict is established. Should the judge deliver a ruling of “not guilty,” then the prisoner at the bar is free to enter into the enjoyment of normal civil life; it is highly likely that he will offer profound thanks to both the presiding judge and his attorney. So Paul here describes the consequences of biblical justification by means of God’s gracious verdict, these all being grounded upon faith in the sinner’s only effectual attorney, “our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- (1) We have *introduction*, by faith.

Jesus Christ the “attorney” obtaining qualifying pardon is also the “way,” the means of “introduction” and “access,” προσαγωγή, *prosagōgē*, cf. Eph. 2:18; 3:12, by which entrance is gained into the straight highway of “grace” that the progressing pilgrim is to walk upon with sure-footedness. Note that “faith” here is the same “faith” of v. 1 that links the believing sinner to *all* that God provides through Christ. As a result of entrance through

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<sup>6</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, Assurance*, p. 10.

justification into the kingdom of God, an ever expanding panorama presents itself to the new believer.

- (2) We have *grace*, in which we stand.

Thus entrance by justification is “into this grace in which we have stood, presently stand, and will continue to stand,” consider the perfect tense here of ἵστημι, *hisētmi*. While in I Corinthians 15:1 we stand in the gospel, and here as well this stance is in the God of all grace, yet Paul has in mind the believer being constantly grounded upon grace as a fundamental, objective truth, literally “this grace.”

Moo well describes this distinction when he explains that grace here is

not the manner in which God acts, or the gift that God gives, but the ‘state’ or ‘realm’ into which God’s redeeming work transfers the believer. It is the realm in which ‘grace reigns’ (5:21), a realm that is set in contrast to the realm or domain of the law (6:14, 15: the believer is not ‘under the law’ but ‘under grace’; cf. also Gal. 5:4). Without denying the presence of God’s grace throughout human history, Paul, along with the rest of the NT (cf. John 1:17), so focuses on God’s work in Christ as that act in which God’s grace was decisively and finally realized that he can picture the new status of the believer as one in which grace is characteristic and dominant. While this state of grace includes our justification as a key element, the notion goes beyond justification to all that is conveyed to us by God in Christ.<sup>7</sup>

As John Newton has written:

’Tis grace has brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home.

- (3) We have *hope*, in which we exult.

- (a) The exultant effect of grace.

When a sinner has been regenerated (made *alive* unto God) and justified (made *right* with God), his grasp of the truth that this saving work is all of grace will have an inevitable effect upon his life, and that particularly within the realm of assurance. Thus when a Christian stands upon the grace of God, it produces the result that Paul describes here, namely that of “exulting in hope of the glory of God.” To “exult” here is to “boast” or “glory” in the consummation of salvation which is rooted in Christ (Gal. 6:13, 14; cf. Rom. 2:17:23). It involves the eruption of the soul, often in song, that cannot be contained. Thus Paul indicates here that the biblical Christian is much more than a person who is orthodox and coolly correct. Rather the warmed heart will desire to sing as John Bowring has penned:

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<sup>7</sup> Moo, *Romans*, p. 301. Here footnote 38 also mentions that, “Bengel, Murray, Cranfield, and others confine ‘this grace in which we stand’ to justification.” However, Calvin, Haldane and Lloyd-Jones support the broader understanding.

In the Cross of Christ I glory:  
 Towering o'er the wrecks of time,  
 All the light of sacred story  
 Gathers round its head sublime.

(b) The consummate hope of grace.

To “hope” here is not the perspective of possibility or even probability, but God-guaranteed, grace-generated, joyful certainty, as 8:30 affirms. And on the horizon of that certainty is “the glory of God” which here refers to the Christian’s final “glorification by God” in His presence. At the moment the child of God is undergoing transformation, “from glory to glory” (II Cor. 3:18); however, the completion or consummation of this process shall be that time when, “we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (I John 3:2). So Charles Wesley has written:

Finish then Thy new creation,  
 Pure and spotless let us be;  
 Let us see Thy great salvation,  
 Perfectly restored in Thee;  
 Changed from glory into glory,  
 Till in heaven we take our place,  
 Till we cast our crowns before Thee,  
 Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Romans 8 provides particular focus upon this future tense aspect of salvation. The Christian is to be “glorified with Him [Christ]” (v. 17). There is the prospect of “the glory that is to be revealed to us” (v. 18). At the end of this age, “the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (v. 21). We are told that “whom He [God] justified, [without intervening conditions] He also glorified” (v. 30).

The consequence of this teaching then is that of unshakable confidence on the part of the Christian, and Paul will reinforce this truth over and over again as his epistle proceeds. So Lloyd-Jones comments:

In other words, to understand the doctrine of justification rightly means that we have assurance and certainty of salvation. . . . If you are biblical you must take the same ground the Apostle Paul. Paul says that we must boast of this [justification], we must exult and glory in it. But how can you do so if you are uncertain about it? This is also the reason why any doctrine that teaches a possibility of falling away from grace is unscriptural. You cannot boast and exult and glory in the ultimate of salvation if you may suddenly lose it all. The answer is that it is all of God, it is all of Christ, it is all of grace and by faith.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition of Chapter 5*, pp. 55-56.

## c. Rejoicing in the fruit of tribulation, v. 3-5.

Whereas the focus at the end of v. 2 has been exultation at the hope of the consummate “glory of God,” that is at the end of this age, Paul’s mind immediately turns to the reality of exultation as well in the darkness of the present. Note how this same contrast is made in 8:18 between “the glory that is to be revealed to us” (future) and “the sufferings of this present time” (present). It could be asserted that while it is relatively easy to exult in the future it remains difficult to exult in the depressing features of the present. In anticipation of this estimate, Paul responds with “a graduated string of spiritual pearls,” so to speak, that, like v. 2, climaxes with the thought of “hope.” Moo adds here: “Sequences of this kind, in which suffering inaugurates a chain of linked virtues, are introduced as a stimulus to face difficulties with joy in two other NT texts (I Pet. 1:6b-7; Jas. 1:2-4) and must have been popular in the early church.”<sup>9</sup>

(1) Rejoice that *tribulation* leads to perseverance, v. 3-4a.

- (a) The “tribulation” that Paul exults or glories in is θλίψις, thlipsis, being major and traumatic trial involving pain, ostracism, and deprivation (8:35-39; I Cor. 4:9-13; II Cor. 1:4-10; 11:23-28; 12:10; II Tim. 3:10-12). However it is not intrinsic rejoicing in suffering, in some masochistic sense, but rather delight in the fruit of suffering in much the same way that a mother rejoices in the midst of suffering because a child has been born to her (John 16:20-22). So in I Peter 1:6, to “greatly rejoice” is not with regard to “various trials” in themselves, but rather the anticipated “inheritance which is imperishable” and the “salvation ready to be revealed in the last time,” vs. 4-5.
- (b) Thus there is a benefit in “tribulation” in that it “brings about perseverance,” or alternatively, “works/produces, with effort/toil [emphatic κατεργάζομαι, katergazomai, cf. 4:15; 7:8], endurance. Thus persecution is a profitable teacher; it is fruitful in the true child of God; that is impatience is tempered, as with Joseph unjustly imprisoned for two years (Gen. 40:23-41:1; cf. Heb. 5:8).
- (c) However, this resultant “endurance/perseverance” is also a teacher, so that it works/produces (understood) “proven character,” again as in the character of Joseph. Persecution becomes the acid test that validates the regenerate heart quality of the believer. The word here for “proven character” is δοκιμή, dokimē, which is used in a similar vein in James 1:3, “knowing that the *testing* [emphasis added] of your faith produces endurance.”
- (d) At the conclusion of *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, John Bunyan bemoans his ongoing struggles concerning inward conflicts. Yet he acknowledges the resultant benefits that obviously encourage him:

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<sup>9</sup> Moo, *Romans*, p. 303.

These things I continually see and feel, and am afflicted and oppressed with; yet the wisdom of God doth order them for my good. 1. They make me abhor myself. 2. They keep me from trusting my heart. 3. They convince me of the insufficiency of all inherent righteousness. 4. They shew me the necessity of flying to Jesus. 5. They press me to pray unto God. 6. They show me the need I have to watch and be sober. 7. And provoke me to look to God through Christ, to help me, and carry me through this world. Amen.<sup>10</sup>

Certainly of the tinker of Bedford it could be said that “perseverance led to proven character.”

- (2) Rejoice that *proven character* leads to hope, v. 4b.

The sequence continues so that “proven character” works/produces (understood) “hope,” ἐλπίς, elpis, that is a favorable and confident expectation. Clearly “hope” is a key term here, cf. vs. 2, 5, and it is Paul’s intent that this confidence be strengthened, even by means of an enlightened appreciation of persecution. “Hope” then strengthens by means of its antecedent stimulants. So Moo illustrates:

Hope, like a muscle, will not be strong if it goes unused. It is in suffering that we must exercise with deliberation and fortitude our hope, and the constant reaffirmation of hope in the midst of apparently ‘hopeless’ circumstances [like Abraham in 4:18-19] will bring ever-deeper conviction of the reality and certainty of that for which we hope.<sup>11</sup>

Hence, the question is raised as to what is the object of that hope? and v. 5, in conjunction with v. 2, provides the answer.

- (3) Rejoice that *hope* is confident in the love of God, v. 5.

- (4) “Hope,” like “love,” must have a direct object on account of its transitive nature. Further, it is the character of the object hoped for that determines the legitimacy of the matter that we anticipate being realized. Many a person has hoped for that which, on account of it being unreal, has only resulted in disappointment and despair. Thus Paul specifies the exact direction of the hope which he has been describing; it is a hope that “does not disappoint,” κατασκύνω, kataischunō, literally, it does not “put us to shame” as if it was an empty and impotent hope. There are two reasons why the hope that Paul describes is genuine and effectual. First, objectively speaking, we have the inscripturated knowledge of “the glory of God” 8:17-25, v. 2. Second, subjectively speaking, we have “the love of God [that] has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

<sup>10</sup> Bunyan, *Works*, I, p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Moo, *Romans*, pp. 303-4.

## (a) The outpoured love of God.

This is the “subjective” love of God, that is His love for us rather than our love for Him, as v. 8; 8:31, 35, 39 plainly indicate. The direction of this love here is akin to the “peace of God” in v. 1 which is likewise directed toward man. This is not to deny that His love for us will generate, as a consequence through the kindling of the Holy Spirit, our love for Him (I John 4:19). However, it is important to understand here that mature Christian hope is grounded upon God’s sovereign initiative rather than humanly generated feelings.

Moreover, this love of [from] God “has been poured out within our hearts.” The perfect tense of ἐκχέω, ekcheō, stresses that which has and presently continues to be “outpoured” into believing hearts, and more particularly the hearts of the Christians in Rome. This word, also used in Acts 2:17, 18, 33 concerning the outpoured Spirit at Pentecost, cf. Titus 3:6, describes a bestowal with great abundance, “unstinting lavishness,”<sup>12</sup> that is to be paralleled by the abundant outpouring of God’s wrath (Rev. 16:1-4, 7, 10, 12, 17).

It should not be forgotten that for Paul, the former Pharisee who so narrowly conceived of the love of God in such exclusive nationalistic terms, the result of Pentecost was an overwhelming sense of the world being deluged with the love of God in tidal proportions that had now drenched the church at Rome. Warfield makes a similar point when, in distinguishing the new age of Pentecost with the past he writes:

We live in the dispensation of the Spirit, a dispensation in which the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh with the end of extending the bounds of God’s kingdom until it covers the earth; and that He is poured out in the hearts of His people so that He reigns in their hearts and powerfully determines them to do holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives.<sup>13</sup>

## (b) The agency of the outpoured Holy Spirit.

Clearly, as no man can know the things of God except through the Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:11), so no man can know of the love of God for him except such truth is spiritually communicated. So Paul introduces here a theme which he will expound upon more extensively in 8:1-17. However, a question arises at this point which has led to some to suggest that this “love of God poured out within our hearts” refers to a post-conversion baptism with the Spirit, akin to the sealing of the Spirit in Ephesians 1:13-14, not to be identified with the modern Charismatic movement, since it could hardly be said that every believer has received such an overwhelming effusion, especially at an experiential level

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<sup>12</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, I, p. 263.

<sup>13</sup> B. B. Warfield, *Faith And Life*, pp. 144-5.

Contrary to the opinion of Lloyd-Jones at this point, it would seem that here, as well as throughout Romans, Paul has in mind authentic believers in general rather than a Spirit-baptized group within the fellowship of saints.<sup>14</sup> This is not to deny levels of spiritual maturity amongst Christians. However, the text here quite plainly gives no indication that as we move from the nature of justification, the resultant Christian life involves a distinct experience transcending the normalcy of conversion. Whatever outstanding experiences a child of God may be blessed with, and their authenticity is not in question, they must not be allowed to impose themselves upon biblical exegesis.

2. The glorious life of reconciliation, vs. 6-11.

As the truth of vs. 1-5 commenced with the gospel, so vs. 6-11 also commence with the gospel. While vs. 1-5 represent a unit that establishes assuring conclusions based on the gospel of justification by faith alone, so vs. 6-11 likewise represent a similar unit that establishes related assuring conclusions based on the gospel of Christ's substitutionary atonement.

Now "the [objective] love of God [toward man that] has been poured out within our hearts" v. 5 is described in more effecting detail. Justification by faith is liberating truth for the guilty soul; however the loving purpose behind such a gospel needs to be enlarged upon since it is very stimulating in terms of reassurance of reconciliation in the face of past alienation.

a. We are saved by the love of God in Christ's death, vs. 6-8.

The emphasis in v. 6, "while we were still helpless . . . Christ died for the ungodly," and v. 8, "while we were yet sinners . . . Christ died for us," suggests that Paul may have been musing on the question as to his status at that very time when the Lord Jesus Christ was impaled on a Roman cross. In other words, he pondered the astonishing fact that at the very time in history when Christ was dying for him, he was involved in rebellion and militant sin that held him helplessly captive.

Note that the verb "die" occurs four times in these three verses, and this "death" of Christ "by his blood" delivers from "wrath" and results in "justification," v. 9.

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<sup>14</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition of Chapter 5*, pp. 78-102. For Lloyd-Jones this baptism by the Spirit takes us to the highest level of assurance and usefulness that transcends a more common variety that immediately follows conversion. Thus he states, "You cannot be a Christian without the Holy Spirit, but you can be a Christian without having the love of God shed abroad in your heart. . . . All Christians have not had this experience, but it is open to all; and all Christians should have it," pp. 84, 85. So he refers to some remarkable experiences from the lives of great and lesser known saints such as Henry Venn, John Fletcher, Richard Roberts, George Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards. Refer also to Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition of Chapter 8:5-17*, in which he expounds on this view in greater detail and gives many more historic examples, as well as Lloyd-Jones, *God's Ultimate Purpose, An Exposition Of Ephesians One*, pp. 243-311. John Stott is correct when he writes: "It is not my purpose to deny that such post-conversion deeper, richer, fuller experiences of God's love are authentic, for they are well documented in Christian biographies. . . . My question is whether Romans 5:5 is primarily intended to describe unusual and overpowering experiences which are given only to some, even if they are 'open to all'. I think not." *The Message of Romans*, p. 143.

But these facts must be understood according to the loving purpose of God, which, when truly appreciated cause the Christian to “exult in God,” v. 11.

(1) When helpless sinners, v. 6.

Paul focuses on man as ἀσθενής, *asthenēs*, literally “strengthless,” as a person incapacitated by illness (Phil. 2:25-27), and the context refers to himself as living at the time of Christ’s birth. Thus at that time, and of course including fallen human history overall, man was incapable of raising himself up from his captivity to sin as symptomatically represented. Surely this inability is essentially internal, involving an unholy soul, affections and choices. Greek and Roman culture had not been successful in affecting change in man’s heart; rather both empires had tended toward class consciousness, corruption, and tyranny.

So Christ died “for” ὑπέρ, *huper*,<sup>15</sup> “on behalf of” the sinner void of good,” that is “the ungodly”(4:5). Thus both representation and substitution are involved, not mere assistance and coaching (Mark 10:45; Gal, 3:13; I Tim. 2:6). This love, like that of the Good Samaritan who “felt compassion” for the man left for dead on the Jericho road (Luke 10:30-33), contemplates impotence along with pagan misery, but also, unlike the priest and the Levite, actively intervenes with saving mercy.

But what is “the right time” here? It is God’s appointed time in world history suitable to His decree, the ripening state of the nations and man’s predicament (John 2:4; 7:8; 17:1; Rom. 3:21, 26; Gal. 4:4). It is the right time according to the prophetic Scriptures, for the Jews to be provoked to jealousy and the Gentiles to be incorporated into the promise given to Abraham, the formation of the church, and the evangelization of the world. As Thomas Goodwin illustrates:

There is, as you know, the first age of the world [the Old Testament], and the latter age of the world [the New Testament]. You may justly compare it to your hourglass, when the former age was expired, when all is run out, and the bottom glass is filled, then God cometh and turneth up a new administration, and beginneth another dispensation.<sup>16</sup>

(2) When unlovable sinners, vs. 7-8.

Using human analogy and *a fortiori* argument from a lesser to a greater situation, the puny, selfish, shabby love of man is mirrored against and wonderfully eclipsed by the determined love of God. So Paul reasons for an affecting appreciation of this love of God directed toward destitute sinners, to the end that the Christian will, like in v. 2, assuringly “exult [boast, glory] in God,” v. 11. Such an ultimate response finds its supreme expression in

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<sup>15</sup> Refer to Moo, *Romans*, p. 307, n. 65, where an excellent summary of the relationship between CCCC here and CCCCg given, also *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, pp. 696-7.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Goodwin, *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*, I, p. 201.

8:37-39; 11:33-36. Thus we should sing as Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane has written:

Content to let the world go by,  
To know no gain nor loss—  
My sinful self my only shame,  
My glory all—the Cross.

(a) The lesser love of the world, v. 7.

Here human devotion is illustrated in its “best” light; yet it is partial and lacking in mercy. The major components are self-interest and worthiness. There is no thought of grace, only love that seeks a worthy object.

1) Analogy one, the “righteous” man.

Consider the man who fulfills his civic duty; he is a decent, law-abiding person; he is a status quo citizen, trustworthy, reputable. He has not distinguished himself in being admirable or noble, but he is sincerely religious. However, it is unlikely that anyone would actually sacrifice their life for him.

2) Analogy two, the “good” man.

He is certainly a cut above the “righteous” man, having distinguished himself as a compassionate and wise benefactor. He is “good” because his heart is kindly; he is considerate of the poor; he is sensitive concerning the troubles of others and one who would readily go the extra mile. In this case, because of virtue and merit, someone might possibly consider dying for such a person.

(b) The greater love of God, v. 8.

1) It is unified love.

The love of God is identical with the dying love of Christ. The atonement of Christ is God’s atonement. The Father was not passive while the Son actively died for sinners. Rather, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself” (II Cor. 5:19). The cross demonstrates, not simply the love of Christ but the love of God (John 3:16).

2) It is superior, gracious love.

Who Christ is and what he has done and the object of his love prove the superior quality of the love of God. But the heart of the matter is God’s love for sinners in the person of His Son. That is, the lover of God is essentially gracious love, as distinct from man’s which is meritorious love. So George Goodman has written:

God commends His love—  
 Greater could not be;  
 While I was a sinner,  
 Jesus Died for me.

Jesus, Son of God,  
 Now your grace I see;  
 You who loved the sinner  
 Gave yourself for me.

- b. We are secure by the love of God in Christ's death, vs. 9-10.

The fact that "Christ died for us," v. 8, introduces us to a broad vista of resultant benefits. So Paul reverts in both verses to his favorite *a fortiori* form of argument, cf. vs. 10, 15, 17, which Moo explains had its rabbinic form using "light and heavy" propositions.<sup>17</sup> Such a perspective comprehends great dividends that result from the investment of faith alone in Jesus Christ, the objective ground of justification. The future aspect of "much more then" here in v. 9 parallels the future aspect of "we exult in hope of the glory of God in vs. 2, 4b.

- (1) From wrath as well as guilt, v. 9.

The *minor premise* is that we have been justified by Christ's "[shed] blood," and as a consequence personal sin has been justly forgiven; condemnation has become acquittal. Whereas in 3:24 we are justified by God's "grace" (His attitude), and in 3:28; 5:1 we are justified by "faith" (man's answer), here we are justified by Christ's "blood" (Christ's atonement, "death," v. 10).

The *major premise* is that we shall be delivered from the penal consequences of our sin, that is "the wrath [of God]," τῆς ὀργῆς, *tēs orgēs*, and the intimation is that therefore we shall be saved from the time of justification until the time of God's judgment day, cf. 8:30b. Shedd explains that this wrath of God "denotes a personal emotion, and not merely an abstract attribute. A divine emotion is a divine attribute in energy."<sup>18</sup> For the Christian this wrath has been placated and cooled by Christ's propitiatory offering, 3:25. However, here "the wrath" is future and anticipates "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," 2:5; (cf. Job 21:30; Zeph. 1:14-18; I Thess. 1:10; II Thess. 1:7-8; Rev. 6:17).

While the new believer is inclined to view his salvation with a narrow field of vision, namely justification as pardon, yet he is to grow with a broader vista concerning the multifaceted blessings of the gospel. Such comprehension will also result in not only wonder and praise, but also stability and assurance.

<sup>17</sup> Moo, *Romans*, p. 309.

<sup>18</sup> Shedd, *Romans*, p. 116.

## (2) By life as well as death, v. 10.

The *minor premise* is that, as former enemies before God, we have been reconciled to God by God through Christ's death, ("blood, v. 9). The "if" here assumes the statement to be true. Thus, having been regarded by God as enemies, Murray describes it as, "God's holy hostility to and alienation from us,"<sup>19</sup> that same God, though offended, was moved to justly remove the enmity, to bring about reconciliation. This is wholly God's doing, even as we have peace from God, v. 1 and love from God, v. 5; thus He is to be admired and praised for it (II Cor. 5:18; Col. 1:20). As with vs. 7-8, humanly speaking, who would think of offering a son unto death for a person who deeply offended you, to bring about reconciliation? Charles Wesley raises this question and gives the answer that it is God through Christ alone.

Depth of mercy can there be  
 Mercy still reserved for me?  
 Can my God His wrath forbear?  
 chief of sinners spare? Me, the  
 I have long withstood His grace,  
 Long provoked Him to His face,  
 Would not hearken to His calls,  
 Grieved Him by a thousand falls.  
 Whence to me this waste of love?  
 Ask my advocate above!  
 See the cause in Jesu's face,  
 Now before the throne of grace.

The *major premise* is that, having through Christ's reconciling death become children of God the Father, we shall be saved by the life of the Son of God, or better, "in his life." Note that the relational emphasis of "reconciliation" takes over from "justification." Now that the enemy is a friend or son of the once offended living Father; now that he is close at hand through the living and interceding Son of God, Heb. 7:25, shall not the friend or son have the guarantee of ongoing and future salvation by means of "His [Son's] life"? The goodness and consistency of God demands a positive answer. But what specifically is this future saving life of Christ? Certainly the sustaining life of Christ is indicated here (6:8-11; Gal. 2:20), yet there is also final deliverance by resurrection because of "Christ the first fruits" (I Cor. 15:20, 23) that is equally intended (7:24-25; 8:11, 23, 30); the sustaining aspect merges into the consummate event.

The point here is that future tense salvation, that is from now till the day of resurrection, is secure for the Christian who is presently an authentic child of God. Justification in a present sense is but our commencement (5:1). Thus as Murray states, "those who are the beneficiaries of Jesus' death must also be the beneficiaries of all that is entailed in his resurrection life."<sup>20</sup> The guarantee of this is the sovereignty of grace (5:21).

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<sup>19</sup> Murray, *Romans*, I, p. 172.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

- c. We are exultant in God's reconciliation, v. 11.

Truth has consequences, and this is especially so with regard to the Christian gospel. Paul now concludes this section with a description of what ought to be the believer's response to the doctrine he has taught. Here we distinguish between the nominal and the regenerate child of God. The former responds to the truth of vs. 1-10 with polite agreement; the latter responds with heartfelt passion, usually evidenced by unstoppable testimony and fervent singing.

- (1) The ground of exultation.

"Exultation" here, *καυχάομαι*, *kauchaomai*, means to glory or boast, cf. 5:2-3, and obviously excitement and exuberance of the *soul* are involved which transcend personality types. However, this enthusiasm is rooted in the truth of the gospel and not sensual stimulation for its own sake. "Exultation" is a generic term; what matters is that which stimulates us to jubilation. Paul sums up this gospel truth stimulant as "the reconciliation," a significant relational term that will find further exposition in vs. 12-21.

- (a) The glorious person of God.

It is by means of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the arbitrator from heaven, that we are able to exult in God. Thus to praise Christ is to praise the Father who sent him (John 5:23).

- (b) The saving work of God.

The key term for Paul here is the inclusive expression, "the reconciliation," *τὴν καταλλαγὴν*, *tēn katallagēn*, which in the KJV is translated "the atonement." Shedd explains: "At the time when the [KJV] version was made, atonement = at-one-ment, or reconciliation. The present use of the word makes it equivalent to expiation or satisfaction."<sup>21</sup> The saving work of Christ, judicially bringing peace from the holy God who was formerly hostile toward the sinner, has also brought about rapprochement, the resumption of a harmonious relationship with resultant concord.

It is significant that the concept of reconciliation which Paul describes had no place in the Greco-Roman religions of the first century. Colin Brown explains: "[I]n general the thought of a personal relationship to God is far removed from Greek thought. . . . This [subject of reconciliation] is the theological novelty in comparison with non-Christian religious thought, which knows the deity only as the object of the reconciling work of man."<sup>22</sup> However reconciliation here is distinctively the sovereign grace of God whereby He moves with particular initiative toward the offending sinner (II Cor. 5:18-19) with

<sup>21</sup> Shedd, *Romans*, p. 119.

<sup>22</sup> Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, III, pp. 166-7.

overtures of peace and love (Rom. 5:1,5). The same point is true today with regard to Mohammedanism which knows nothing of adoption whereby the child of God cries out, “Abba! Father!” (8:14-17).

When this truth is experientially grasped by the pursued sinner, exultation is inevitable, not only by the adopted son of God, but also by the Reconciler and the inhabitants of heaven (Luke 15:4-7).

(2) The character of exultation.

But how exactly do we exult in God as Paul here describes? By means of a heart that responds in adoring and grateful prayer, by passionate testimony and proclamation, by spiritual fruit that has the savor of Christ, and by singing a new song such as Charles Wesley has taught us:

Glory be to God on high,  
And peace on earth descend:  
God comes down, He bows the sky,  
And shows Himself our Friend:  
God the invisible appears:  
God, the blest, the great I AM,  
Sojourns in this vale of tears,  
And Jesus is His name.

B. GOSPEL RECONCILIATION HAS ASSURING ANTITHESES, VS. 12-21.

If Romans 3:21-26, as was earlier claimed, is the most important gospel passage in all of the Bible, yet it remains true that in Romans 5:12-21 we have reached the reasoned heart of Paul’s epistle. Perhaps it is the woven intricacy of vs. 12-21 that has attracted so much interest. Be that as it may, more importantly the former passage views the gospel with narrow focus, whereas these latter verses perceive the gospel as through a wide-angle lens that provides a panorama of the history of redemption. One other contrast concerns that which John Murray mentions; whereas 3:21-26 is individualistic, here we consider opposite corporate entities, the solidarity of the seed of Adam versus the solidarity of the seed of Christ.<sup>23</sup>

The concluding emphasis in v. 11 upon “the reconciliation,” and all the gospel doctrine that this articular reference assumes, appears to be the connecting element between vs. 1-11 and vs. 12-21 in the light of Paul’s “therefore” commencing v. 12. Also consider the absence of any “justification” language in this section. In essence, reconciliation involves two parties that are presumed to be in a state of hostility, one being offended and the other being the offender; thus they are subsequently united in holy harmony. Hence it is significant that in vs. 12-21 there is constant reference to two parties that are in tension because of sin, Adam and Christ, that is until through Christ grace sovereignly abounds toward the seed of Adam and reconciliation is effected. This tension involving various antitheses is Paul’s way of lauding the superior sovereignty of grace in Christ by means of a series of *a fortiori* arguments, v. 21.

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<sup>23</sup> Murray, *Romans*, I, pp. 178-9.

The great emphasis given to the person of Adam, eight mentions in vs. 12-21, indicates just how vital this personage is to the teaching of Paul, and of course the attending doctrine of original sin. Therefore it is no little matter to consider here the fact of Adam's historicity as the original and sole father of the human race. Liberal commentator, C. H. Dodd, responds to this problem concerning Romans 5:12 as follows: "Thus Paul's doctrine of Christ as the 'second Adam' is not so bound up with the story of the Fall as a literal happening that it ceases to have meaning when we no longer accept the story as such. Indeed, we should not too readily assume that Paul did so accept it."<sup>24</sup> It is obvious that Dodd's critical presuppositions are in conflict with Scripture, and so much the worse it becomes for the Word of God! However, for Paul the former Pharisee it would be unthinkable to conceive of anything else other than an historic, biblical Adam. Further, Paul's argument here concerns an historical Christ and requires that his antithesis be historical as well.

Therefore Lloyd-Jones is correct when he states:

We must assert that we believe in the being of one first man Adam, and in one first woman called Eve. We reject any notion of a pre-Adamic man because it is contrary to the teaching of the Scripture. . . . [T]hese early chapters of Genesis with their history play a vital part in the whole doctrine of salvation. Take for instance the argument of the Apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Romans 5:12-21. Paul's whole case is based upon that one man Adam and his one sin, and the contrast with the other man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His one great act."<sup>25</sup>

Thus the importance of the creationist cause becomes evident since the biblical doctrine of sin is inseparably joined to a literal Fall according to Genesis. The *American Atheist* journal acknowledged this when it published the following comment that is essentially true:

Christianity has fought, still fights, and will fight science to the desperate end over evolution, because evolution destroys utterly and finally the very reason Jesus' earthly life was supposedly made necessary. Destroy Adam and Eve and original sin, and in the rubble you will find the sorry remains of the Son of God. If Jesus was not the redeemer who died for our sins, and this is what evolution means, then Christianity is nothing.<sup>26</sup>

#### 1. The superiority of reconciliation through Christ over Adam, vs. 12-17.

There is common agreement that v. 12 is an incomplete sentence, that is it presents a protasis without providing the expected apodosis. Such anacolutha are not uncommon in the intense style of Paul's writing, cf. 9:22-24.<sup>27</sup> Thus what follows in vs. 13-17

<sup>24</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle Of Paul To The Romans*, p. 80. C. K. Barrett makes a similar comment based upon liberal presuppositions: "It need not be said that Paul, a first-century Jew, accepted Gen. i-iii as a straightforward narrative of events which really happened." *The Epistle To The Romans*, p. 111. Refer also to John Stott, *The Message of Romans*, pp. 162-6, where his commitment to theistic evolution, especially with the exegetical help of *Derek Kidner*, leads to a contorted explanation as to how God may possibly have taken over a hominid and formed him into Adam! It is evident that unquestioning acceptance of an evolutionary world view and time scale for human history necessitates the molding of Scripture to this presupposition.

<sup>25</sup> D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Knowing The Times*, pp. 343-4. Refer also to Lloyd-Jones' confrontation with an ecumenical gathering arranged by the British Council of Churches in 1957-8 when he valiantly stood for the historic truth of Romans 5:12. Iain H. Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*, II, pp. 316-318.

<sup>26</sup> *American Atheist*, September 1978, p. 30.

<sup>27</sup> "Hence a man with the passion of Paul naturally breaks away from formal rules in the structure of the sentence when he is greatly stirred, as in Gal. and 2 Cor." A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar Of The Greek New Testament*, p. 435.

represent a parenthesis with a resumption in v. 18 of the main thought of v. 12. This interruption concerns the guilt of all men as sinners from the time of Adam beyond Moses who have yet lived during differing dispensations and revelations of sin.

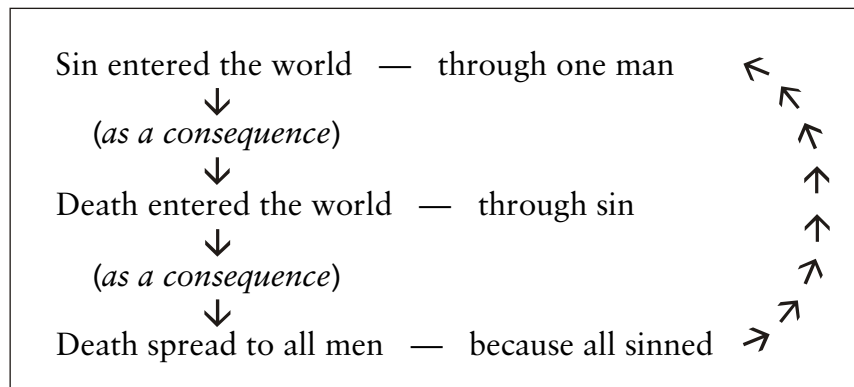
a. Sin reigns through the one man Adam, vs. 12-14.

Again, as in 1:18-3:20, the critical doctrine of sin is considered though here not so much as a prelude to an exposition of the gospel as an antithetical contrast with the reigning superiority of grace. Nevertheless, the perspective here of universal inherited sin and consequent universal death presents a horrendous scenario. Luther graphically describes it as follows:

[T]his original sin is the very tinder of sin, the law of the flesh, the law of the members, the weakness of our nature, the tyrant, the original sickness, etc. For it is like a sick man whose mortal illness is not only the loss of health of one of his members, but it is, in addition to the lack of health in all of his members, the weakness of all of his senses and powers, culminating even in his disdain for those things which are healthful and in his desire for those things which make him sick. Thus this is Hydra, a many-headed and most tenacious monster, with which we struggle in the Lernean Swamp of this life till the very day of our death. It is Cerberus, that irrepressible barker, and Antaeus, who cannot be overcome while loose here on earth.<sup>28</sup>

(1) All sinned in Adam, v. 12.

The following diagram indicates the three main propositions of this verse that are logically related and present a circular argument.



<sup>28</sup> Martin Luther, *Lectures On Romans*, p. 300. Footnotes 14-16 explain that: “In Greek mythology [Hydra was] a monster that inhabited the swamps of Lerna in the Peloponnesus. When one of its nine heads was cut off, it was immediately replaced by two new ones, unless cauterized. Hercules slew this dragon. [Cerberus was] [t]he surly, three-headed dog that guarded the gates to Hades. In his most difficult ‘twelfth labor’ Hercules subdued this formidable beast. . . . [Antaeus was] [t]he giant whose strength was constantly renewed so long as he remained in contact with his mother, Earth. Hercules crushed him while holding him aloft.”

- (a) Sin entered the world through one man.

We focus on Genesis 3 where sin had its entrance, as distinct from its origin, into the human race at a point of time in history, aorist here of εἰσέρχομαι, eiserchomai. “Sin,” always in the singular in this chapter, along with “the transgression,” describes that state of pollution resulting from Adam’s original act of sin; it is an invasive cancer contracted by serpentine infection, a principle of thorough sinful contamination involving the totality of Adam’s being and faculties.

- (b) Death entered the world through sin.

It seems understood that death similarly entered into human history at a point of time following after Adam’s sin. This second assertion is also plain biblical truth upon which Paul is building his case; but up to this point we have been exclusively dealing with Adam. This death of Adam, at the age of 930 years, involved both separation from fellowship with God in innocence enjoyed in the garden of Eden, as well as separation from life. Of course the lurking question that immediately follows concerns the obvious fact that yet everyone in the human race dies? So why then is death universal?

- (c) Death spread to all men because all sinned.

Now Paul declares that because the one man Adam died, it was an inexorable result that all of mankind should die. Because of Adam, death “spread to all men,” distributed itself like a plague, a congenital disease. Hence universal death finds its cause in the original human death. But why is this connection so inevitable? The final clause becomes the linchpin of the whole argument; all of mankind is locked up to death, “because all sinned.”

Logic suggests a connection between Adam’s original sin and death, and humankind’s resultant death; that is, man dies universally because he contracted sin from Adam. But the aorist of ἀμαρτάνω, hamatanō, cf. the aorist of 3:23, along with the teaching of vs. 18-19 give more solid evidence for the belief that the human race inherited sin from Adam, that is, “all sinned in, through, and with Adam.”

However, while the inheritance of sin from Adam is clear Pauline teaching, yet the means of that inheritance in Calvinistic Protestantism has fallen into two camps. Charles Hodge and John Murray represent the “federal,” corporate, covenantal understanding of imputation, which point is upheld in vs. 15-21. Augustine and William Shedd represent the “realistic,” seminal understanding of imputation. Lloyd-Jones claims both aspects are essentially true, and he is especially influenced by the biblical force of Hebrews 7:9-10, ignored by Hodge,

where Levi is said to have offered tithes, being in the loins of Abraham.<sup>29</sup>

(d) An objection is considered. Hence Lloyd-Jones rightly concludes:

What is clear then is this, that Paul is saying here quite plainly that all sinned in Adam, and that all are guilty before God on account of that one sin of Adam when he deliberately transgressed God's commandment. God has imputed to the whole of the human race, including ourselves, that one sin of Adam. Adam sinned and we all sinned. This is an essential part of the doctrine of Original Sin.<sup>30</sup>

"But," responds the objector, "such a condition is unfairly imposed upon mankind since we had no opportunity to resist the serpent's sinful overture." Augustus Strong and Jonathan Edwards respond to this matter in detail.<sup>31</sup> In support of Edwards, Shedd explains that a man, infected with sin, is justly and responsibly sinful when he assents and agrees to a sinful act. In other words, when a child of Adam sins, he does not sin reluctantly, but approves of what he does. The love of a parent for his child is good, admirable, and responsible, but it stems from original nature that approves of the child. So the sinner acts from original nature and yet is to be justly condemned for that which he does by nature and approves.<sup>32</sup>

(e) By way of application, the practical ramifications of the doctrine of Original Sin, and its rejection, are profound. A modern representation of this problem of human nature is portrayed in William Golding's novel *Lord of the Flies*, in which a group of schoolboys, abandoned on a deserted island, degenerate rather than improve over the years of their confinement. Consider the following realms of life.

1) *Government*. Law and order are established either to restrain man's evil tendency and grant freedom to do the good, or to engineer man, he being essentially neutral in morality. The former course stems from biblical revelation. The latter course stems from materialistic, evolutionary humanism. Inherent in law enforcement here will be an understanding of morality that is either objective or relative.

2) *Family life*. Parents, knowing themselves to be sinners, raise their children on the premise of their like tendency to sin, and the exhortation of the righteous God. Alternatively, the little innocents simply need exposure to the right social environment. Thus parents

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<sup>29</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans 5*, pp. 213-219. Cf. John Murray, *The Imputation Of Adam's Sin*, and the opposing view of William G. T. Shedd, II, *Dogmatic Theology*, pp. 59-63.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 218-9.

<sup>31</sup> Augustus Strong, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 629-37; Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, I, pp. 216-33.

<sup>32</sup> Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, II, pp. 168-257.

themselves, being inexperienced, need guidance from more knowledgeable government that denies Original Sin.

- 3) *Education.* Shall the teacher assume a flowering sinful nature that needs to be educated in biblical righteousness, or an environmentally conditionable nature that needs to be educated in a secular world-view? Shall the teacher assume that pupils have a spiritual soul that is first accountable to God, or a body of flesh that is only different from the animal world in its complexity?
- 4) *Religious life.* Original Sin requires revelation and church life that, by means of redemption and sanctification, effect change in a man's corrupt soul. Worship will focus on grace. On the other hand, a fundamentally neutral human being at birth needs platitudinous nurture that encourages the pursuit of perfectability, with the cooperation of either God or man. In this vein, worship will offer a degree of human worthiness.

- (2) All sinned from Adam, vs. 13-14.

The concluding expression of v. 12, "all sinned," appears to trigger in Paul an anticipation that the readers of his epistle are well aware of Old Testament history, especially the distinctive epochs separated by the giving of the law to Moses at Mt. Sinai. Hence a parenthetical explanation is considered necessary.

- (a) From Adam to Moses, like Adam, v. 13.

It seems basic to Paul's argument here that the codified law given to Moses was a distinctive revelation of the righteousness of God provided for Israel, and not a continuation from creation. Otherwise the discussion here would be quite unnecessary. On the other hand, the fact that the Mosaic covenant was a new revelation raises the question as to the character of the pre-Mosaic revelation of God's moral demands.

The logic here leads to an inescapable conclusion. We know that sin is not chargeable if definitions and sanctions against sin have not been promulgated. For a man to be punished he must have known about the terms of his transgression. Therefore it follows that since death, as a punishment for sin, had universally reigned over man from Adam to Moses, it must be concluded that this first dispensation knew of a revelation of God's righteousness. Consider God's judgment on Noah's generation as well as the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all explicit sinners.

What specifically was this pre-Mosaic revelation of God's righteousness that was not identical with the Mosaic code? As Shedd puts it: "Although the decalogue was not yet promulgated, there must, nevertheless, have been some law of some kind against which πάντες ἥμαρτον, *pantes hēmarton*, [all sinned]; otherwise sin could not have

been charged to them.”<sup>33</sup> The most common belief here is that this pre-Mosaic law was a revelation engraved on the conscience, 2:12-16, though in view of the numerous appearances of God in the form of a theophany during that period, a more concrete revelation ought not to be excluded.

(b) From Adam to Moses, unlike Adam, v. 14.

As sin became a universal inheritance as a consequence of Adam’s sin, so it became inevitable that universal death would follow on from Adam’s death to the generation of Moses. And this epidemic of death was in spite of the fact that not all, “sinned in the likeness of the offense [disobedient act] of Adam.” The suggestion of some that Paul here refers to children and the mentally infirm who sin through Adam yet not against law, though upheld by Augustine, Owen, Edwards, Shedd, Haldane and Murray, seems unlikely. Rather, none of Adam’s progeny sinned after the distinctive manner of their innocent father, especially with regard to eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 3:1-5, cf. v. 22-24).<sup>34</sup>

However, the distinctive nature of Adam’s sin ought not to lead us to believe that there is no connection between Adam’s fall and, “Him who was to come.” Rather, Adam was a “type [pattern, representation],” τύπος, tupos, of the promised Christ, for “as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive” (I Cor. 15:22). John Owen comments on this verse: “Adam being the figure of Christ, look how it was with him, with respect unto his *natural posterity*, as unto sin and death; so it is with the Lord Christ, the second Adam, and his *spiritual posterity*, with respect unto righteousness and life.”<sup>35</sup> As John Henry Newman wrote:

O loving wisdom of our God!  
 When all was sin and shame,  
 A second Adam to the fight  
 And to the rescue came.  
 O wisest love! That flesh and blood  
 Which did in Adam fail,  
 Should strive afresh against the foe,  
 Should strive and should prevail.

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<sup>33</sup> Shedd, *Romans*, p. 131.

<sup>34</sup> John MacArthur writes: “Because Adam and Eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden after they sinned, they had no more opportunity to disobey God’s single prohibition. They no longer had access to the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, nor have any of their descendants. Consequently, it has been impossible for any human being, either before or after Moses, to have “sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam.” *New Testament Commentary, Romans 1-8*, p. 299.

<sup>35</sup> John Owen, *The Works of John Owen*, V, p. 326.

## b. Grace reigns through the one man Christ, vs. 15-17.

The similarity/fulfilment relationship between Adam and Christ just mentioned at the end of v. 14 prompts Paul to immediately counter with a number of antitheses that describe the dissimilarity between the defiler of the human race and its Redeemer. These contrasts are diagrammed as follows.

	ADAM	CHRIST
	↓	↓
v. 15	transgression	gift of grace
	↓	↓
v. 16	condemnation	justification
	↓	↓
v. 17	death	life

Here two generals, two representatives of the human race, are juxtapositioned. There is Adam, the captive underling of the strong man Satan (Mark 3:27), through whom the universe has been captured and thoroughly polluted. To use John Bunyan's imagery found in *The Holy War*, Diabolus has taken captive the City of Mansoul. On the other hand there is the stronger man Christ who recaptures the universe and cleanses it. At the direction of King Shaddai, Prince Immanuel assails Diabolus and recaptures the City of Mansoul.

It should also be noted that the three antitheses presented here become the ground upon which Paul makes his climactic declaration in vs. 18-21.

## (1) Grace reigns over transgression, v. 15.

A strong contrast, ἀλλά, alla, is made here between the universal affliction of death that Adam's transgression generated upon "the many," and the universal bestowal of free grace upon "the many." Note that in v. 18 the contrast involves "all men," while in v. 19 it is again "the many." Not surprisingly, those commentators who have a doctrinal proclivity toward liberalism and neo-orthodoxy also tilt here toward universalism, the ultimate salvation of all men.<sup>36</sup> However, refer to those references in Romans that declare the final condemnation of the objects of God's wrath, such as in 1:24-32; 2:3-5; 9:18 as well as the forthright response of John Murray to Karl Barth in this regard.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> These include Barrett, Barth, and Cranfield.

<sup>37</sup> He first makes it clear that Barth does not believe in an original historic Adam who commenced human history. Then he comments: "[I]f there is distributive universalism in the apodoses of verses 18 and 19, as Barth's interpretation demands, there must also be in the apodosis of v. 21, and the reign of grace through righteousness unto eternal life must embrace all men without exception. This is not Paul's teaching (*cf.* II Thess. 1:9; 2:10-14) and to maintain that the universalistic terms of Rom. 5:18b demand the ultimate salvation of all is to fail to apply to this text the canons of exegesis which obviously obtain in the interpretation of numberless universalistic expressions." Murray, *Romans*, I, pp. 387-8.

Moo gives the probable meaning when he writes: “[I]n each case, Paul’s point is not so much that the groups affected by Christ and Adam, respectively, are coextensive, but that Christ affects those who are his just as certainly as Adam does those who are his. . . . 1:16-4:25 makes it equally clear that only certain people derive the benefits from Christ’s act of righteousness.”<sup>38</sup>

- (a) The one man Adam = transgression of the many.

“The transgression (contraction of sin?),” *παράπτωμα*, *paraptōma*, cf. 17, 18, 20, that is “sin (infection of sin?)” *ἁμαρτία*, *hamartia*, cf. v.20, is Adam’s incendiary act that results in the ashes of death, even the ravaging of the whole human race. This tragedy might be likened to one infected immigrant entering a country who inevitably infects the whole populace with his disease. But here, in the realm of human sin, the plague is infinitely worse as are its devastating consequences.

- (b) The one man Christ = gift of grace to the many.

However “the free gift,” *τὸ χάρισμα* *to charisma*, Christ as a complete Savior, is the gloriously transcendent, “much more . . . grace of God” antithesis that freely provides, “a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of the spirit of fainting” (Isa. 61:3). This gospel is about “the one man Jesus Christ,” who may be likened to an immigrant who brings with him a life-giving pharmaceutical patent that becomes a health-giving blessing to the whole populace. Isaac Watts describes Christ as God’s great apodosis as follows:

Adam the sinner: at his fall,  
 Death like a conqueror seized us all;  
 A thousand new-born babes are dead  
 By fatal union to their head.  
 We sing thine everlasting Son,  
 Who joined our nature to his own:  
 Adam the second from the dust  
 Raises the ruins of the first.

- (2) Justification reigns over judgment, v. 16.

There is both repetition and progression in this further consideration of the antithesis introduced in v. 15, while a climactic conclusion is to follow in v. 17.

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<sup>38</sup> Moo, *Romans*, pp. 343-4.

## (a) The one man Adam = condemnation.

The singular sin of Adam warranted judgment and the verdict of his condemnation. However, in parallel with v. 15, the participation of “the many” in Adam’s sin brought about their condemnation as well. Thus the whole human race, on account of Adam, is legally, judicially condemned to death, and humanly speaking without hope. This sentence of death is portrayed as a horrifying pall that is the downside upon which the gospel of free grace is predicated.

## (b) The one man Christ = justification.

Adam as the facilitator of condemnation now recedes in contrast, that is the logical thought of his reception to begin with of particular grace. Rather, “the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification [of the many who by faith have believed in Christ].” In other words, the grace of God so generously responded to the universality of the human predicament, and not merely Adam. Murray comments: What the judgment unto condemnation took into account was simply the one trespass; . . . But the free gift unto justification is of such a character that it must take the many trespasses into its reckoning; . . . In this way we can perceive the identity which the apostle has in view and we can see how the magnitude of grace is exhibited by the manifold trespasses with which grace reckons.”

The climax of this verse, namely the fact that “the free gift results in justification,” not only confirms the *sola fide* character of the gospel, but also how Paul exalts in the forensic nature of “the reconciliation,” v. 11.

## (3) Life reigns over death, v. 17.

If the contrast has been established in vs. 15-16, here it takes on a greater vividness and luster that all the more enhances the glory of the sovereignty of grace, especially as it relates to the recipient of such abundance. It is noteworthy that as with vs. 15-16, so here both χάρις, charis, “grace gift,” and δωρεά, dōrea, “free gift,” are closely connected. Moo suggests that, “‘grace’ denotes the motive or manner in which God works, while ‘the gift’ is the specific manifestation of this grace — the righteous grace and life conferred on ‘the many.’”<sup>39</sup>

## (a) The one man Adam = death.

The negative proposition is sober in the extreme, depressingly and despairingly so. It portrays a holocaust, a paralyzing scourge effected by one individual. Death has come to the whole human race through Adam with the result that it has established terrifying, tyrannical dominion.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 335n. Cf. Shedd, *Romans*, p. 136.

Lloyd-Jones writes: “The world is a place of cemeteries; it is a place of death and gloom and end.”<sup>40</sup>

(b) The one man Christ = life.

While the torment of death has been the underlying human affliction introduced in v. 12 that has continued through to v. 21, in v. 10, but more particularly here in v. 17 the essential antithesis of “life” is upheld that reaches a climax as “eternal life” in v. 21. Cf. also 6:4, 11, 23; 8:2, 6, 10-11, 13. It is the “one Jesus Christ” who mediates the superior “much more” blessings of grace that are so transcendently glorious when compared with the “one Adam’s” fearful legacy. These benefits include:

1) The abundance of grace.

Specifically this is gospel grace, as the qualifying “gift of righteousness” indicates. John Bunyan describes it thus:

Thou Son of the Blessed, what grace was manifest in thy condescension! Grace brought thee down from heaven, grace stripped thee of thy glory, grace made thee poor and despicable, grace made thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of sorrow, such burdens of God’s curse as are unspeakable. O Son of God! grace was in all thy tears, grace came bubbling out of thy side with thy blood, grace came forth with every word of thy sweet mouth. Grace came out where the whip smote thee, where the thorns pricked thee, where the nails and spear pierced thee. O blessed Son of God! Here is grace indeed! Unsearchable riches of grace! Unthought-of riches of grace! Grace to make angels wonder, grace to make sinners happy, grace to astonish devils. And what will become of them that trample under foot this Son of God.<sup>41</sup>

2) The gift of righteousness.

Here “the abundance of grace” is specified as “the gift of righteousness,” which is reminiscent of 1:17; 3:22-23; Phil. 3:9; and vs. 15-16. Therefore it is the righteousness which comes through faith alone, the righteousness which justifies, the objective imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the believing sinners covering according to Isaiah 61:10.

3) The reign in life.

The future result will be the “reign in life,” since the justified sinner will also have been regenerated; his dead soul shall have been transplanted with a heart of flesh. Thus the “reign in life”

<sup>40</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition Of Chapter 5*, p. 261.

<sup>41</sup> Bunyan, *Works*, I, p. 346.

here contrasts with the earlier declaration in this verse that “death reigned.” While the future tense aspect of βασιλεύω, *basileuō*, may anticipate the believer’s reigning participation in the new order established at Christ’s second coming (Matt. 19:28; I Cor. 6:3), yet more likely it describes the future newness of life that follows conversion. In support of this priority consider 6:9-14, and especially v. 12 where βασιλεύω, *basileuō*, is used, as here, with obvious related meaning.

What then is it for the Christian to presently “reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ”? To begin with it is for the believer to recognize the singular reign of grace in his life, that is embodied in Jesus Christ, this being a supplanting of the former reign of death through sin by means of Adam. Therefore, 6:12 declares that the former tyrant is not to be heeded when he knocks seeking to gain entrance. According to 6:11, the child of God is to acknowledge that he is dead to Adam’s corporate administration and overtures, and “alive unto God in Christ Jesus.” This newness of life 8:2, 10, in spite of the condemned body of flesh, is variously described in the New Testament (II Cor. 3:6; Gal. 5:25; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:3; II Tim. 1:1). Thus the regenerate soul lives his present life, not under the dominion of sin and death, but as regnant, prevailing in life by the life of God that has made him alive. Therefore in 6:17-18, Christians, formerly “slaves of sin, . . . having been freed from sin [and death, through life become] slaves of righteousness.”

So Lloyd-Jones describes what “reigning in life” means:

We have lost the fear of death, we are no longer under the dominion of sin, we are no longer under the dominion of the devil, we can resist him and make him flee. Indeed, we are no longer under the tyranny of life itself. . . . Paul is reigning in life. He has mastered sin, Satan, life, death, everything; he is more than conqueror. This is true of us already in the present.<sup>42</sup>

## 2. The superiority of grace over sin, vs. 18-21.

It is commonly understood that here, on account of Paul’s use of two conjunctions that combine to draw a strong inference concerning the past, we return to the continuance of the interrupted thought of v. 12, though with a cumulative effect. In other words, related issues concerning the main antithesis between Adam and Christ having been dealt with, a finale concerning the triumph of grace is played with the full orchestration of the Apostle’s divinely inspired ability. Variations on the theme having been played out, now the final movement breaks forth.

With regard to emphasis, most of the key words that represent the doctrine of Romans thus far are mentioned in these verses, namely sin, transgression, condemnation, death, law, righteousness, justification, grace, and life, and these are all embodied in “the

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<sup>42</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition Of Chapter 5*, p. 264.

reconciliation” described in v. 11. Yet it is “justification, grace, life” which exultantly sit at the apex of Paul’s argument.

a. In man’s status before God, v. 18.

The absence of any verb in this sentence, which most translations supply, such as “resulted” NASB, may suggest Paul’s exclamatory enthusiasm at this point. At the same time, we have two parallel statements here that are virtually identical in their grammatical arrangement. The particular emphasis concerns man’s standing before God, either condemnation or justification.

(1) Sin brings universal condemnation.

The repetition here is a reflection of Paul’s pastoral heart. For him the doctrine of original sin is of the utmost importance since it is really the foundation of the gospel’s universal significance. Further, it enhances our appreciation of the sovereignty of grace. The bad news here is that on account of Adam’s one sin, the whole human race falls under God’s encompassing condemnation.

(2) Grace brings universal justification.

The “one act of righteousness” could be more literally translated the “one [act of] justification,” and Paul’s intent is to contrast this glorious and incomparably greater work of grace with Adam’s shameful act of disobedience that resulted in condemnation. The atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ is a singular, unrepeatable, saving event (Heb. 10:10, 14), the benefits of which are obtained through faith alone.

Furthermore, this justification is “of life to all men,” or better, “justification resulting in life for all men.” Here “justification” and “regeneration” are indivisibly related. The true child of God will be both right with God and alive unto God.

However, the universality here, described as “all men,” incorporates all and only those who are of saving faith and the objects of Christ’s designed efficacy, not “all men” in totality. Murray makes a telling argument here with reference to I Corinthians 15:22 where Paul similarly writes: “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.” “As the context will demonstrate the apostle is here dealing with the resurrection to life, with those who are Christ’s and will be raised at his coming. The ‘all’ of the second clause is therefore restrictive in a way that the ‘all’ in the first clause is not..”<sup>43</sup>

b. In man’s state of being, v. 19.

Once again, the close grammatical parallelism is maintained. However the change of emphasis concerns a return to the cause of man’s condemnation and

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<sup>43</sup> Murray, *Romans*, I, p. 203.

justification as described in v. 18, that is original sin through Adam and original grace through Christ.

(1) Sin constitutes many sinners.

Through Adam's initial act of "disobedience," παρακοή, *parakoē*, his refusal to heed what God had commanded (as distinct from "transgression" in vs. 15-18), "the many," not "many," were "made," καθίστημι, *kathistēmi*, or better, classified by declaration and constituted as sinners. But what more precisely does this mean? Did the race issuing from Adam's loins become diseased without agreed participation? If so, how is it possible for man to be guilty as charged? Refer back to the consideration of this matter in v. 12.

Obviously Adam's progeny was not consulted concerning its father's original sin; nor was it consulted in terms of it coming into being. However, as there is responsibility incumbent upon those who have unsolicited being, so there is responsibility incumbent upon those who inherit Adam's sin. As man accepts his being in preference to nonbeing, so he accepts his nature and thus is accountable in his agreeable acceptance of it.

Here man is classified according to his parentage; man is what he is because of his filial roots and ethnicity; he is racially adamic and he agrees with his parental traits. However, whereas we are here considering man's *identification* with Adam, in v. 12 it was man's *participation* with Adam that was emphasized. Yet here, surely *identification* plainly suggests *participation*.

(2) Grace constitutes many righteous.

The parallelism at this point seems most intentional and it is packed with transcendent gospel truth. So through "the obedience of the One," that is Jesus Christ, "the many," or those under Christ's saving panoply through faith, are "made righteous," again καθίστημι, *kathistēmi*, or classified by declaration and constituted as righteous.

The first contrast here concerns Adam's "disobedience" and Christ's "obedience." As Adam refused to heed the will of God, so the Son of God declared, "My food is to do the will of Him [the Father] who sent Me and to do His work" (John 4:34; cf. Heb. 10:7). Hence the active obedience of Christ, his earthly conformity to the Father's will, qualified him as the One who offered passive obedience in his atonement.

The second contrast here concerns the seed of Adam being constituted "sinners" and the seed of Christ being constituted "righteous." Here the larger preceding context of Romans, especially from v. 12 onward, demands that as man has participated in the disobedience and unrighteousness of Adam, through inheritance and imputation, so the believing sinner participates in the saving obedience and righteousness of Christ by means of imputation and donation, cf. v. 17, through faith alone.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. Hodge, *Romans*, pp. 173-6; Murray, *Romans*, I, pp. 203-6; Shedd, *Romans*, pp. 139-42.

Thus as the human condition, its inescapable tyranny, its universality, does engender despair, hopelessness, yet Paul would stimulate hope in a most logical manner. Consider that the problem started with one man; is it true that Adam originated the disease? Yes, the evidence of Scripture and experience is overwhelming. Then also consider the good news that the remedy originates with one man, the qualified Son of God. Therefore, to coin the thought of I John 4:4, “You have overcome your inheritance in Adam because greater is your adopted Second Adam, he that is for you and in you, than your father in the flesh, he that is in the world.”

c. In man’s reckoning with law, vs. 20-21.

Ever mindful of the Jew who sees the law looming between Adam and Christ, Paul returns to Mt. Sinai since, in view of v. 19, it is the right moment to deal with the ordained function of the law. This resolution will see Mt. Sinai as being complementary to gospel proclamation in Christ rather than in conflict. The law, rightly understood, only enhances the antitheses of condemnation and justification, sin and righteousness.

(1) Law is confronted with grace, v. 20.

“Law” here, without the article, surely refers to that “entering in” of the Mosaic administration of God’s righteousness as revealed in the Pentateuch.

(a) Law stimulates sin.

The Law “entered in,” *παρεισέρχομαι*, *pareiserchomai*, that is it “made its entrance alongside,” though not in the sense that it merely crept in, so to speak. Rather it entered in the course of Israel’s redemptive history so that “the transgression would increase,” cf. 4:15; 7:13; Gal. 3:19. According to God’s design, the Law was given to God’s redeemed people so that they might become sensitive about the reality of their ongoing sinfulness. The remedy for such a revelation was found in the ordained sacrificial system.

More specifically, the Law was intended to bring focus on the gulf between the demands of God’s perfect righteousness and man’s universal unrighteousness in Adam; the purpose of the Law was as God’s x-ray machine that reveals the depth and pervasiveness of corruption, “the transgression,” that is all too easily hidden; while the Law is intentionally diagnostic, in no way is it remedial.

(b) Grace abounds over sin.

As the antitheses here indicate, Law and Grace are to be understood in a related manner rather than as separate entities. God’s desire to manifest grace requires that it be predicated upon a confrontation with the reality of sin in all of its hideous breadth and depth. Thus, as “the sin increased,” *πλεονάζω*, *pleonazō*, so “the grace abounded all the more,” *ὑπερπερισεύω*, *huperperisseuō*. The history of Israel forcefully

illustrates this truth, that is the abundance of God's grace that always dominates in the face of repeated disobedience (Neh. 9:5-31; Hos. 11:1-11). The emphasis here must not be thought of merely quantitatively but rather dynamically, even as v. 21 will emphasize. The thought that grace could super-abound only to be once again defeated by sin is unthinkable in the context here. Rather grace reigns over a foe that has been defeated once and for all. As John Kent has written:

Join thou my soul, for thou canst tell  
How grace divine broke up thy cell,  
And loosed thy native chains;  
And still, from that auspicious day,  
How oft art thou constrained to say,  
That grace triumphant reigns.

(2) Death is confronted with life, v. 21.

Here the dynamic introduced in v. 20 is played out in full force since the thought that "grace abounded all the more" now becomes that of "grace reigning" in victorious power. Lloyd-Jones declares that here Paul, "puts the whole of the Gospel in one big, thrilling statement,"<sup>45</sup> and not surprisingly he devotes four sermons to his exposition of this one verse.

(a) Sin reigns in death.

Here the power of sin is portrayed with such despotic force that it takes on personal meaning, as if it were a conquering monarch who, having taken captive a whole nation, employs this slave labor in a wide variety of devilish vocations and pays the "wages of death" (6:23).

1) Sin and power.

Thus it is sin that has "reigned," βασιλεύω, *basileuō*, that has held sway over the whole human race, and to such a degree that none have been able, of themselves, to escape such servitude. Man is wholly directed by the inherited nature of Adam (John 8:34). However, concerning the man in the street today, while he acknowledges sin in general as a universal problem related to imperfection, he declines to admit his helpless captivity on account of his boast in autonomy and self-determination.

2) Death and its captivity.

As a consequence, sin reigned "in [the] death [from Adam?]," that is sin reigned in the inevitable consequence of death. Man as a sinner will debate over the matter of sin; but beyond debate in human experience is the inevitability of death as an imposed divine

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<sup>45</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition Of Chapter 5*, p. 313.

sentence. Although man will speak of death in naturalistic terms, nevertheless his inner fear and loathing of death causes him at the same time to inwardly “consider his ways” (Hag. 1:5, 7), whatever empty bravado he may outwardly express. Morris significantly points out: “The mention of *eternal life* in the second half of the verse indicates that we should understand *death* here as spiritual as well as physical.”<sup>46</sup> Thus, in being reminded of our inescapable confrontation with the “wages” of sin, and hence the power of sin, we have a prelude to the greater power of grace. Suddenly grace becomes not an abstraction, a mere aid to virtue, but a mighty conquering force!

(b) Grace reigns in life.

We are now introduced, also by way of personification, to grace as a rival conquering monarch whose greater power presents the good news and prospect of real emancipation to citizens of the captive nation. However, by way of clarification, this reigning *grace* must be distinguished from other differing uses of the term.<sup>47</sup> First, assisting *grace*, according to Unitarianism, where God in general helps with grace those who help themselves. Second amoral *grace*, according to licentiousness, where God in general helps even blatant scoundrels since he overlooks their sin. Third, infused *grace*, according to Roman Catholicism, where the Church mediates grace via the sacraments to the baptized. Fourth, universal *grace*, according to Arminianism, where sufficient grace is given to all so that they might believe, if the will. None of these come close to the glory and majesty of reigning grace.

1) Grace and power.

Thus grace “reigns,” again βασιλεύω, basileuō, that is it sovereignly conquers the “reign of death,” including its root, and that individually as well as corporately. Then what precisely does Paul mean here by “grace”? “Unmerited/demerited favor” is surely included yet not inclusive enough as the following context suggests. Surely it must be the totality of the gospel that takes us back to God’s eternal decree and gathers together the gracious saving of God’s elect, as hopeless sinners, by means of the economic working of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is not merely grace on offer, but grace effectively saving and keeping. John Newton has written:

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<sup>46</sup> Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 242. Cf. Robert Haldane, *Commentary on Romans*, pp. 236-7, where death includes eternal misery in contrast with eternal life.

<sup>47</sup> The stimulus with regard to these negative categories comes from Lloyd-Jones’ own classification at this point. *Romans, An Exposition Of Chapter 5*, p. 317.

Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,  
 To melt the hardest hearts;  
 And from the work it once begins  
 It never once departs.

‘Twas grace that called our souls at first;  
 By grace thus far we’re come;  
 And grace will help us through the worst,  
 And lead us safely home.

2) Grace and righteousness.

Thus grace reigns “through righteousness,” that is by means of the vindication of His righteousness, 3:25-26, and principally here “the gift of righteousness,” v. 17. Whereas sin corrupts through disobedience, the dominion of grace, its effectual working, has absolute holy integrity, according to a “just and justifying God,” 3:25-26; cf. 1:16-17. But further, it is not only the righteous character of God that is upheld and evident in this gospel of sovereign grace; rather this righteous God gratuitously imputes and imparts His righteousness to unrighteous sinners.

3) Grace and life.

Thus grace reigns “to eternal life,” previously described in vs. 17-18, it having vanquished death. Of course this life is not simply linear and temporal, but rather the indwelling, saving life and “gift of God . . . in Jesus Christ our Lord” (6:23; cf. 2:7; I Tim. 6:12, 19; Tit. 1:1-2; 3:7). So “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (I Cor. 15:45; cf. I John 1:1-3; 5:11-12, 20). Here we arrive at the living God’s ultimate purpose, grace through righteousness being the means, namely bringing the dead to life so that they might “glorify Him and enjoy Him forever.”

4) Grace and Jesus Christ.

Thus grace reigns “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” and all of its power, righteousness, and life, are mediated through him. Thus Haldane concludes:

Jesus Christ is that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; and the Father hath given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as He hath given Him. ‘My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life.’ The termination, then, of the reign of death over those whom He [Christ] represents, and the establishment of the reign of grace through the everlasting righteousness which He has brought in, are all by Jesus Christ. He hath abolished death. By Him came grace and truth; He brought life and immortality to light. He ‘is the true God, and eternal life.’ And ‘to

this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be the Lord both of the dead and the living.<sup>48</sup>

(c) By way of application, Lloyd-Jones comments:

Thank God for the power of the reign of grace. This is the ground of assurance. It is because of this that we can be certain He will never let us go. Our frail grasp often lets go of Him, but He will never let us go. Hudson Taylor used to translate the statement in Mark 11:22 which in most Bibles reads, 'Have faith in God'. He said it should be, 'Hold on to the faithfulness of God.' . . . Oh, the blessed, the powerful reign of grace! Do you feel it around and about you? Are you aware of its clutches and of its hold? Do you know of your security? It is all in the power of grace. Thank God for it!<sup>49</sup>

Doubtless it is true that Paul intends to stimulate assurance by means of his presentation of the sin and death vanquishing gospel of sovereign grace. However, it would be equally true that the Apostle intends that such understanding stimulate the fervent worship of God as appears to be the case in 11:33-36. Genuine assurance will inevitably respond in this manner, and of course this is what Lloyd-Jones means when he concludes, "Thank God for it!"

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<sup>48</sup> Haldane, *Commentary on Romans*, p. 238.

<sup>49</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Romans, An Exposition Of Chapter 5*, pp. 354-5.