

- V17 - *Death & Life*. Because of Adam's sin, death reigned. Those who receive Christ reign in life. Reign” is a vivid word, implying dominion and authority. Under Adam, death does reign supreme - no one escapes its rule. How do we escape the awful reign of death? By receiving “the abundance of grace” and “the gift of righteousness” through Jesus Christ! If you are in Adam, you are under the reign of death, but if you are in Christ, you will reign in life, because Christ’s gift is greater than Adam’s sin.

#### 4. The Final Arguments (5:18-21)

- *Therefore...* concludes the thought that Paul broke off in v12. There are two conclusions:
  - One man’s sin brought condemnation to all, but One Man’s righteousness brought justification of life to all. Adam sinned and the judgment of God for this resulted in condemnation for all men. But Christ was righteous, and through Him, the free gift came, resulting in justification. If we choose Adam, we receive judgment and condemnation. If we choose Jesus, we receive the free gift of God’s grace and justification. When Paul declares that “*the free gift came upon all men,*” he is not teaching all men shall be saved, for in v17 the gift is limited to “*they which receive.*” It refers to everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ (10:9-17). What Adam did for mankind is inherited by birth. What Christ did for mankind must be personally received and appropriated by faith. As a result of Adam’s original sin, all sinned (or are accounted as offenders), and as a result of that all died. In the same way, as a result of Christ’s obedience, we are counted righteous, and we inherit eternal life (1 Cor 15:22). All men are either made sinners (in Adam) or made righteous (in Christ).
  - Unlike the first Adam, Christ “the second man,” the “last Adam” rendered perfect obedience to the Father (Phil 2:8). As a result, many are made righteous. The “*obedience of the One*”:
    - It includes Jesus’ active obedience throughout the entirety of His life. The active obedience of Christ is Christ’s sinless life, in which He lived in perfect obedience to the Law of God and to the will of God, throughout the entirety of His earthly life (Gal 4:4-5). It has secured the perfect righteousness that is imputed to us at the moment of justification.
    - The second part is Jesus’ passive obedience upon the cross. The passive obedience of Christ speaks of Him laying down His life for us at the cross – it emphasizes the passion in which He did this. It was in His passive obedience upon the cross that our sins were transferred to Christ (1 Peter 2:24; John 1:29).
- The heart of the argument of Romans 5:12-21 is contained in vv12,18 and 19. Men are justified on the ground of the imputed righteousness of Christ just as they were condemned on the ground of the imputed sin of Adam.

- Romans 5:20-21 bring to conclusion a massive section on justification by faith alone, from Romans 3:21-5:21.
  - There is a clear purpose for the law and part of it is so that the offence might abound. The law does not solve the problem of death brought by sin; it amplifies the problem (3:23). The law increases man’s transgression by making sin known and thereby increasing his guilt (3:20; 7:7-12).
  - Here is the good news: if sin abounded under the law, then grace abounded much more under Jesus. Our sin is great, but the grace of God is even greater. Where sin abounded, grace superabounded. God’s love is so amazing that grace abounded much more where we might have expected wrath. There is not a barrier too high that God’s grace cannot overcome. We cannot sin more than God can forgive. Jesus the new federal head undo the damage done by Adam (John 1:29).
- The reign of grace is marked by righteousness and eternal life through Jesus.
  - Grace reigns through righteousness, and grace teaches righteousness (Titus 2:11-12).
  - Salvation is found exclusively in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). God has provided the way of escape from the reign of sin and death, enabling us to enter the kingdom of grace and life, and it is through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Are you in Adam or are you in Christ?

#### Notes