

# Man's unrighteousness against God's gift of Righteousness

## Man's unrighteousness against God's gift of Righteousness

The opening word of our section for this morning and the position of that section in the chapter give us two good reasons to look back before we can actually move forward in our study. *Therefore* implies that something has been said before and that something can be found in the first half of Chapter 5 which Dan expanded on two Sundays ago. You remember, in the first part of this chapter, the Apostle Paul makes the statement that there is more to Christianity than simply believing in Christ and having our sins forgiven and looking forward to going to heaven someday when we die. Sadly enough, there are millions of Christians who go no further in their Christian faith than that very fact. Paul goes on to declare that Christ, through the Holy Spirit, comes to live in each believer's heart, getting us ready to enjoy the full bloom of life now. This morning we are going to examine why that is true and how is that possible.

Our passage this morning is characterised by repetitions and one of them is of the word *reign* which is used five times. Two men -Adam and Christ- reigning over two different kingdoms; The first reign is described in verses 12-14 and we shall call it:

### A. The Reign of Death (vv.12-14) \*

Paul has spent a lot of time in the book of Romans proving that man is a sinner. He has shown us that every class of human in the world is guilty in the eyes of God. If you are not yet convinced of that truth just open any newspaper or turn on your TV and you'll soon find out about the accuracy of what Paul is saying. I was talking to a friend early this week and she as she was reading the *Metro* she said something like "It's only about rape and murder and crime in this newspaper" and I thought how spot on she is! In these verses, Paul tells us how man came to be the way he is. Sin entered the human family by the actions of the first man Adam. We have all heard of the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2 and the wonderful place it was until Adam broke the one Law God had given Him in Genesis 3:1-7. The moment Adam sinned has been referred to as "The Fall". Sadly, Adam's fall did not just affect Adam, but it affected the whole world! "*sin entered into the world.*" There is no way to explain the world being in such an awful state apart from the fall! There is only one way to explain things like murder, abortion, theft, racism, hatred, adultery, idolatry, and all kinds of wickedness: "*Through one man sin entered into the world.*"

We talked about Adam but what about us in all this, did Paul forget about you and me, not at all. At the end of verse 12 we read *because all sinned*; it does not

say all men commit sin or are sinners but all sinned. The verse here in the past tense suggests that we all sinned even before we were born and came into this world. Basically, what Paul is telling us is that when Adam sinned, you sinned. When Adam disobeyed, you disobeyed. When Adam fell, you fell. Some people might argue otherwise and say that they were not there when all this took place, thousands of years ago. But to understand this, we need to understand that Adam was the first man. In fact, Adam was the representative man. What happened to Adam happened to all of us. In the eyes of God, Adam was given the authority to act for the entire human race. We are united racially to Adam therefore, when he sinned, we were in his loins and we sinned as well. When Adam fell, he passed his sinful condition down to every human that has ever been born a bit like a contagious disease. (Some people put it this way; Adam was driving the bus of humanity. When he drove the bus off the cliff, we went with him.)

What about the little children, babies like Charis or Caitlin, are they infected as well? Yes they are. That may sound harsh, but it is true! They are born with a tendency towards sin like **Genesis 8:21** tells us. We have to teach children how to do everything, however, no need to teach them how to do evil or be mean towards each other because this infection of sin fills their blood, it runs through their veins. Now, tell me, do you have to go to school to learn how to do these things properly? Who taught you how to be lazy? How to be jealous? How to be envious? How to be greedy, and cruel, and impatient, and bitter? Do you have to plan these out carefully each morning when you get up? Did Zizou think ahead, and say, "Well, now, in such a situation, I am really going to let my anger go -- I'm going to head-butt this Italian player" Do you plan those things? Do you have to try to be jealous, or proud, or lustful? No! They actually come naturally.

\* The sad thing here is that there is a result or consequence to sin and it is death, mentioned three times in these three verses. In a few weeks time, we'll look at Chapter 6 and a verse I learnt early on in my walk with Christ "*the wages of sin is death*" v.23. Death reigned because of Adam's Original Sin and there is no denying that today. Some Jews in Paul's time objected that the Mosaic Law was given by God as an answer to Adam's sin but Paul shows clearly to them that it is not the case. Indeed, even those who lived between Adam and Moses who did not have the Law so their sin was not charged against them, even those ones died. And the answer as we've seen before is that even those ones were racially united to Adam and died with him as he sinned. Adam chose to do wrong deliberately, but there are many who do not choose to do wrong deliberately, such as little children, yet death reigns in their life. This is simply our inheritance from Adam. **Illustration:** *Dutch Embassy*

\* When Paul mentions death here he does not mean only Physical Death which we are all aware of, but also a Spiritual Death which in reality is being separated from God. (Eph.2:1-2; 4:18). There is also a third type of death, Eternal Death

which refers not only to eternal separation from the presence of God (2 Thess.1:8-9) but also of eternal torment in the Lake of Fire (Rev.20:14-5).

Do you know that you can be sitting here this morning and actually be dead although you are alive and your heart is beating. You can be full of life and excitement, jumping up and down but in fact be dead. That death is characterized by emptiness, void, and lack of hope or purpose in life. This is why men and women who seem to have everything that is supposed to be worthwhile and valuable in life sometimes express themselves very forcefully as experiencing nothing but emptiness. If you are a Christian this morning, Paul urges you not to be like the world, walking with its head down towards a bleak ending but instead be victorious, more than conquerors-because you do "have this hope as an anchor for the soul firm and secure (Heb.6:19).

This morning, if you are not saved or in a relationship with the Lord, the Bible says that you are spiritually dead and in need of a Saviour. The good news of the Gospel is found at the end of verse 14 with a transition statement. Adam is referred to as "*a type of the one to come*". We are talking about contrast here with Adam pre-figuring Christ. The first Adam gave us a gift, a poisoned gift which is sin and with sin came death. However, the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ also gave us a gift, that of salvation by His blood.

This leads us to the second reign described in verses 15-21 and we shall call it:

## B. The Reign of Life (vv.15-21) \*

These verses are a rather simple contrast between the old life we have from Adam -- all of us -- and the new life which we may receive continually from Jesus Christ. Paul is trying to show his readers the difference between what they received from Adam and what they have received from Jesus Christ. I enjoyed history at school and thought hard about taking it as my major going on to university but decided to take English instead which I am grateful for. Most of the dates and events we learnt in *Ancient History* were in terms of BC and AD. And in a way, this is how God looks at us and sees us; in relation to Adam (BC) and what he brought to the human race or Jesus Christ (AD) and his contribution to humanity. However, as we go through these verses, what I want you to see and keep in mind is the use of the phrase *much more* which is repeated five times here and that we heard two weeks ago as well. Paul uses a light to heavy type of comparison, where he says that "*if a is true by how much more is b true*". Paul is telling us that in Jesus Christ we have gained much more than we ever lost in Adam! \*

### 1. Adam's offence vs. Christ's free gift (verse 15)

**Verse 15** tells us that Adam committed an "**offence**". That is, he crossed a line that God had drawn, **Gen. 2:17**. When Adam sinned, his sin did not just affect

him, it also affected you and me, **Romans 5:12**. So, we see that Adam the Sinner transgressed against the Lord and brought sin to every human being. Everything we lost in the first Adam was regained by the second Adam. Everything Adam gave away in the Garden, Jesus purchased back on the cross! **Verse 15** tells us that what Jesus did was "*much more*" than what Adam did! You see, Adam sinned one sin and it brought death to all men. Jesus died one death and it brought the possibility of life to all! Of course, this only becomes effective for those who exercise faith in Jesus and believe unto salvation. **1 Cor. 15:22** says, "*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*"

## 2. Judgment And Death vs. Justification And Life (vv. 16-19) \*

Here, the Apostle Paul tells us that because Adam sinned, every man is doomed to die. Not only that, but all men are also condemned. This means that we all stand under the wrath of God, **Eph. 2:1-4; John 3:36**. The bottom line is that the end result of Adam's trespass in the Garden is an eternity away from God for all men! This is a horrible thing, but it is nonetheless true! This is the program that all men are under in their natural state. It does not matter how important or wealthy they are. It does not matter how intelligent they are. It does not matter what they believe. If they are outside of a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, then they are already dead in sins, **Eph. 2:1**, and they are headed to eternal death in the lake of fire, **Rev. 20:11-15**. By contrast, the same verses tell us that Jesus offers a far different program! While the sin of Adam brings death, devastation and damnation; the gift of Jesus Christ brings, life, liberty and luxury! What a difference Jesus makes! In Adam, we are judged. In Christ, we are justified! We can stand and walk tall because we know that in Christ, God has accepted us. In Adam we die. In Jesus we live! In Adam we face the wrath of God. In Jesus we enjoy the love of God! In Adam we burn. In Christ we reign in life! Not the life to come which is the promise to all who put their trust in Jesus but life now in a fallen world, life in all its fullness and abundance (Jn. 10:10). [This reigning in life is not to be relegated to the unseen and future.--It is meant to be our present experience. Christ hath made us kings to God, even the Father. We are called to the royalty of men, the abundance, the freedom, the consciousness of power and victory, which we are wont to associate with those who reign. To reign in the ordinary life of the home, the shop, the counting-house--such is our high calling in Christ Jesus. And it may be ours if we receive "abundance of grace" of the one Man, Jesus Christ]. In Adam we are the servants of sin and Satan. In Jesus Christ, we are the Sons of God!

## 3. Law vs. Grace (vv.20-21) \*

Notice **verse 20**. Paul tells us that the lost sinner is under a mountain of sin! He tells us that sin abounded. This word means "*to abound in abundance.*" In other words, there was a pile of sins and they were all pressing us under their weight.

\* However, look at the contrast! Paul tells us that where that mountain of sin

existed, grace did abound. He uses a different word here. This word "*abound*" means "*to abound above measure; to overflow.*" The first word speaks of addition. One sin was added to another. The second word speaks of multiplication. God's grace was multiplied over and over again! Simply stated, once we were being crushed under a mountain of sin, now, in Jesus, we stand on a mountain of grace! Yes, sin abounded, but grace super-abounded!

What is the purpose of the Law then? Obviously it is not redemptive as we saw in verse 14 because both those who lived under the Law -after Moses- and those without the Law died. Law has no ability, none whatsoever, to change the heart - to change the desire. However, law has a great advantage. If we didn't have laws, we couldn't exist. We couldn't live in this land together if there were no traffic laws, and other laws, to regulate society, it would be chaos. In Galatians 3:21-5 we read "*Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor*". The Law works like a school master -a pedagogue- who reveals sin and shows us the need for redemption and the necessary steps to be taken in order to get our relationship right with Our Creator.

How can we detach ourselves from this old life and enjoy the full bloom of life. Sometimes we try it on our own strength but discover after a while that the Old Adam is too strong for us. God has found a way to cancel out the old life and to give us instead a new life -- a totally different life -- from which to draw all our strength. This life comes down from the throne of the universe, where Jesus Christ is seated in power, and is ministered in my heart by the Holy Spirit (given to me by faith in Jesus Christ).

**Illustration:** *glove and golf club*

There is a way by which the glove can easily pick up the club without any difficulty whatever. All I need to do is to insert my life into the glove; that is all. Then it becomes as able to do as I am able to do. This is the truth that Paul is giving us in Romans 5, 6, 7, and 8 -- that God has provided a way by which the total, risen life of Jesus Christ is made available to us. When that life fills us, as my hand fills that glove, we can do all that Jesus Christ can do. So the club can be picked up without any difficulty by the glove. It is the glove that is doing it -- isn't it? -- filled with my life! \* This is why Paul could say, "**I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,**" (Philippians 4:13 NKJV). And, if you are a Christian this morning, Jesus Christ has come to indwell your heart, and he is perfectly able to do everything through you that God can ever demand of you -- or that life can ever demand of you. *All you have to do is ask and receive!*