

Ladies Bible Study

week 12

(Week 11 in your lessons)

December 2, 2025

Paul is explaining in Romans 5:12-21 how it is that all men are sinners, and how it is that one Man's death (Christ) can give an ungodly sinner a right standing before God.

Let's take note that in verses 12,15,16,17,18, and 19 that the word "one" is mentioned eleven times.

We also should note that in verses 14,17, and 21, the word reign is used.

The key thought here is that, when God looks upon the human race, He sees but two men - Adam and Christ. Every human being is either "in Adam" and lost, or "in Christ" and saved; there is no _____ ground.

Verse 14 states that Adam is a type (figure) of Christ; he is the "first Adam" and Christ is the "last Adam".

Let's compare the First Adam with the Second Adam:

First Adam	Second Adam
Made of the earth 1 Corinthians 15:47	The Lord from heaven 1 Corinthians 15:47
King of the old creation Genesis 1:26-28	Lord of the new creation 2 Corinthians 5:17
Tested in a perfect garden and failed	Tested in the wilderness and succeeded
Brought sin, death, and condemnation	Brought righteousness, life, and justification
Death reigned Romans 5:14,17	Believers reign - Rom. 5:17 Grace reigns - Rom. 5:21

First Adam

Second Adam

Many (all men) made	Believers made
sinners - Romans 5:19	righteous - Romans 5:19
We are "in Adam" through physical birth	We are "in Christ" through spiritual birth

We should carefully note that in Romans 5:6,8 and 10, the Apostle uses the past tense: "when we were yet without strength....while we were yet sinners...when we were enemies." Why is this? Certainly Christ died for us long before any of us were even born.

The answer is that he speaks _____, dispensationally.

This should be evident from the fact that he says in verse 6 that "in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

This agrees with Galatians 4:4:

"when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son..."

But it becomes the more evident as we proceed to the remainder of the chapter: Verses 12-21. In these verses Paul shows that in using the pronoun "we" in verses 6,8 and 10, he is referring to the human race historically.

The Apostle had a broad outlook and a keen sense of his place and our place in history. The harmony and the design of this whole latter part of Romans 5 in its relation to verses 6-11 is beautiful to behold. The three leading characters of the passage are Adam, Moses and Christ.



By Adam we have the entrance of sin - verse 12

By Moses we have the knowledge of sin – verse 20

By Christ we have the forgiveness of sin – verses 20 and 21

From Adam to Moses (“when we were yet without strength”) we have the reign of death through Adam (6,14).

From Moses to Christ (“while we were yet sinners”) we have the reign of sin through the Law (8,20,21)

From Christ to the present (“when we were enemies”) we have the reign of grace, through Christ (10,20,21).

(1) to Adam, not at his creation, but after the fall,

(2) to Moses, not at his birth, but later at Sinai, where he delivered the Law,

and (3) to Christ, not at His birth or earthly ministry, but at His exultation in heaven as the taster of death “for every man” (Heb. 2:9).

This is how Paul consistently claimed Him. The Law was still in _____ until Paul was raised up to proclaim “the preaching of the cross,” nor was any revelation given as to the abolition of the Law covenant until Paul’s “But Now” of Romans 3:21.

From Adam to Moses – the Reign of Death Through Adam

“Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come.”
Romans 5:12-14



This is dealing with men during the period “from Adam to Moses,” ‘until the Law,’ “when there was no Mosaic Law.”

During this period of history it was _____ that “death passed upon all men,” not because the Law of Moses had condemned them to death, but simply because they were the offspring of fallen Adam, and depraved by nature. Entirely apart from the Law, “sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:15). Thus “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had NOT sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.”

The Bible says that while sin entered into the world “by one man,” Adam, death “passed upon all men for that or because all have sinned,” i.e. in Adam. We cannot say, “it was no fault of mine,” for we were in Adam, we were Adam when he sinned. We cannot dissociate ourselves from Adam any more than the branch can separate itself from the tree, or the tree from its root.

The period from Adam to Moses illustrates historically the helplessness referred to in verse 6. During these 2500 years there was no written Law to condemn sinners to death (verse 13). Nevertheless they died, for entirely apart from the Law, sin in its very nature corrupts and destroys.

Yet many of those who lived before Moses were saved and accepted by God. Examples are Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham. How could they be saved? Paul answers as, again speaking historically, he says, “When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly” (verse 6).

This was not yet _____ to them, nor is there any indication that they looked forward to the death of a coming Christ for salvation. Rather we are told that they believed God’s word to THEM. But we now know that the basis of their acceptance with God was the redemptive work of Christ, for Paul, in Romans 3:25, declares “His (Christ’s) righteousness for the remission of sins that are PAST.”

In verse 13 Paul goes on to explain that sin, while active from Adam to Moses, “is not imputed when there is no law,” i.e., there can be no “transgression” where there is not law to transgress (4:15). “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses,” as we have seen, and it reigned “even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” i.e., over those who had not violated a specific command as Adam had.



Adam's headship over the race as it progenitor was typical of "Him that was to come" (verse 14), but here the likeness ends, as is seen from the repeated use of the phrase "not as," in the following verses.

"but not as the offence, so also is the free gift....and not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift...." Verses 15,16

"The grace of God, and the gift by grace" is "much more" than a recovery from the effects of Adam's offence, "much more" than a reinstatement to the position Adam held before the fall. And this grace, through Christ, "hath abounded unto many."

"...for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification" verse 16

One sin brought condemnation to all, but grace and the "free gift" brought justification, not only from one sin, but from "many offences" (verse 16) and to many people (verse 15).

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one: much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." – verse 17

This is the end of a long parenthesis begun in verse 13, but it is filled with precious truth. As "death reigned" because of one man's sin, "much more" those who receive the "abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign..."

Observe carefully: not those who toil and strive and sacrifice "shall reign," but those who receive the "abundance of grace" and receive "the gift of righteousness" – these "shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" verse 17.

Does not the very phrase, "the gift of righteousness," indicate that righteousness cannot be achieved or earned by the children of Adam?



Verse 18 by no means teaches universal reconciliation, as some hold.

“As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men” who receive the gift, as is evident from the preceding verse, and consistent with the verse that follows:

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” verse 19

This passage, then, leads us from the “first Adam,” by whom sin and death entered and spread like a cancer over the whole human race, to the “_____,” by whom believers receive “abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness.”

From Moses to Christ – The Reign of Sin Through the Law

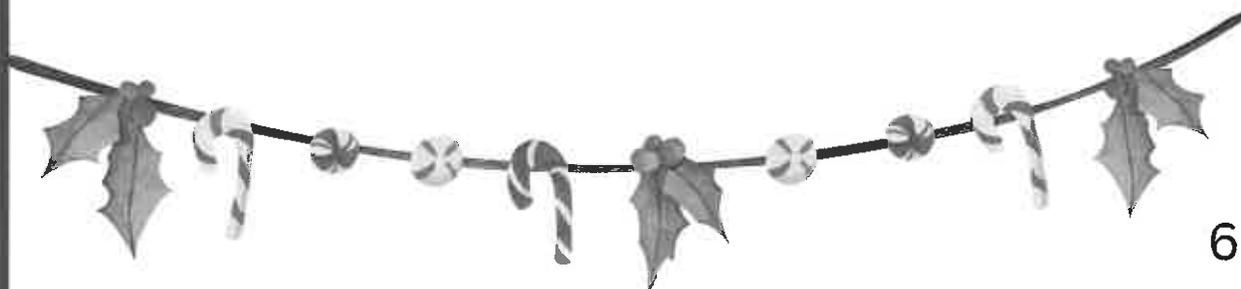
“Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound...” verse 20

The dispensation of Law covered the period of time from the giving of the Law by Moses to the revelation of grace by the glorified Lord to and through Paul.

We have already seen that the covenant of the Law was not done away immediately at the crucifixion of Christ, for the Pentecostal believers still remained under the Law, careful not to start a sect separate from Judaism (Acts 2:46, 3:1, 22:12,13). True, the Law was “abolished” by the cross, but it was not until our Lord in heaven commissioned Paul that “the righteousness of God without the Law (was) manifested” (Romans 3:21), and the dispensation of grace ushered in.

We have also seen that the Law was “added because of transgressions” (Galatians 3:19), “that sin, by the commandment might become exceeding sinful” (Romans 7:13) and “that the offence might abound” (Romans 5:20).

This purpose was indeed fulfilled, for now the written Law _____ men sinners and condemned them to death. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:56, declares pointedly that “the sting of death is sin,” and that “the strength of sin is the Law.”



“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.”

During the dispensation of the law, the guilt of man was being demonstrated as “sin...reigned” (5:21). There was no way of escape for, “kept under the law,” they were “shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed” Galatians 3:23.

But how then were Moses, Aaron , David, Daniel and other Old Testament believers saved? Paul gives the answer in Romans 5:8 where, speaking historically, he says:

“While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

They did not yet know this, for it was not “revealed,” “testified,” “manifested” until the “due time” through Paul (Gal. 3:23, 1 Tim. 2:6,7, Titus 1:3). They found peace of heart only as they _____ what God said to them. But we now know the secret as it is revealed in this very chapter of Romans. It was only on the basis of the all-sufficient redemption wrought by Christ that any man was ever saved.

The Present Dispensation - The Reign of Grace Through Christ

“....but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:20,21

This passage corresponds with verse 10: “when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.”

Sin had surely risen to its height during Paul’s early years. Christ had been crucified and even after His resurrection His enemies had stood by that awful deed. Israel had joined the Gentiles in declaring war on God and His anointed Son (Psalm 2:1-3) and Saul of Tarsus was the leader of the revolt. It was no longer merely a matter of sin; it was now rebellion. Saul’s bitter hatred of Christ knew no bounds.

Luke says: “As for Saul, he mad havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison.” Acts 8:3



The saints at Damascus said: “Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem...?” Acts 9:21

To the Galatian believers the Apostle himself wrote: “...beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it (laid it waste)” Galatians 1:13

“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound....”

As Saul, “being exceedingly mad” against the disciples, persecuted them even unto strange cities (Acts 26:11), God stepped in to intervene. While on his way to Damascus, “yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” (9:1), he was overtaken and saved by the very One whom he had so bitterly persecuted.

Surely God had responded to the abounding sin of man with His overabounding grace! Little wonder Paul says of this:

“and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant....this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” 1 Timothy 1:14,15

But it is even more deeply significant that the Apostle continues to say:

“Howbeit FOR THIS CAUSE I OBTAINED MERCY, THAT IN ME FIRST JESUS CHRIST MIGHT SHOW FORTH ALL LONGSUFFERING, FOR A PATTERN TO THEM WHICH SHOULD HEREAFTER BELIEVE ON HIM TO LIFE EVERLASTING” verse 16

Thus Saul, who until lately had been the leader of the persecution against Christ, the personification of the enmity that existed between God and man, now became not only the herald, but the living _____ of the overabounding grace of God, burning out his life to proclaim to others “the gospel of the grace of God” Acts 20:24.

But again we must ask: On what basis could God justly save one who was the avowed and bitter enemy of Christ, with even the blood of the Lord’s disciples on his hands? The answer is again: on the basis of the death of Christ for us. In our helplessness, in our sinfulness, yes, in our willfulness, “Christ died for us.”



Thus we read in Colossians 1:21, 22:

“and you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight.”

It is wonderful that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

It is more wonderful that "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

It is most wonderful that "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son."

Amazing truth: "By the death of His Son"! It would have been gracious indeed had He said, "Give me the instigators behind this outrage against My Son! Give Me Judas, Caiaphas, the chief priests and, not least, Saul of Tarsus. I will punish them and be reconciled to the rest." This would have been more than mankind had any reason to expect. But, wonder of wonders, He has reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son, His beloved, sinless Son! That death, so unjust and cruel, has become the just payment for our sins and the basis upon which God can now show the fulness of His love for sinners. Indeed, His gracious and loving question now is, "Will you be reconciled to Me?" (See II Cor. 5:20).

Thus we are now living under the reign of grace. As "DEATH REIGNED from Adam to Moses" (Rom. 5:14); as SIN REIGNED "unto death" after "the Law entered" (Ver. 20,21), so now grace abounds, THAT GRACE MIGHT REIGN "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ver. 20,21).

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

Surely Rom. 5:20,21 is the antidote for the deep anxiety that has haunted so many because of the popular teaching on the unpardonable sin.

Those who know "the gospel of the grace of God" will not strike fear into the hearts of their hearers by the threat of an unpardonable sin, for

"... we have redemption through His blood, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE" (Eph. 1:7).

"...WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND, THAT ... GRACE MIGHT REIGN..." (Rom. 5:20,21).



Surely there is no room for an unpardonable sin here. It has been rightly said that sinners who die in unbelief in this dispensation of grace will go to the lake of fire with all their sins unpardoned, but not because one of them was

The unpardonable sin must be considered in the light of dispensational truth. All through Old Testament times Israel had resisted the Father. The Father, in turn, had sent the Son, who had taught and labored among them, only to be rejected too. Now the Son was to send the Spirit, and this generation in Israel would have her last chance to be saved. Hence the Lord's warning:

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men ... neither in this world [age], neither in the world [age] to come" (Matt. 12:31,32).

Our Lord spoke these words on the same principle which the writer's father had in mind when he said to his young son: "Now this is the second time I've spoken to you. If I have to speak again - !!!" Indeed, we have the actual account of Israel's commission of the unpardonable sin in early Acts (e.g., Acts 7:51).

Thus to us, as to Paul, has been committed "the gospel of the GRACE of God," and "the ministry of RECONCILIATION," in which we proclaim God's offer of grace to His enemies, pleading with them to be reconciled to Him (II Cor. 5:20,21) while there is still time (II Cor. 6:1,2).

Let's review what we have learned:

The OT is the book of generations of Adam and ends with the word Curse in Malachi 4:6. The NT is the book of the generation of Jesus Christ and ends with no more curse in Revelation 22:3. The Paradise of Genesis that Adam lost is regained in Revelation through the cross of Christ.

What Paul is teaching here is the unity of the human race in Adam. When he says in verse 12 that "all have sinned" he means that all of us sinned in Adam when he sinned. We are identified with him, and his sin is our sin, his death is our death. His argument is given in verses 12-14 and goes like this: We all know that a man dies if he disobeys God's law. But there was no law from Adam to Moses, yet men died!



We know that Adam died because he disobeyed a divine law; but from Adam to Moses men did not have such a law to disobey. Then death must be from another cause, and that cause is Adam's sin. Because we are born "in Adam" we inherit his sin and condemnation. But in His grace, God has given a "Last Adam," a new "Head" Who has by His life and death undone all that Adam did in his sin. Paul presents several contrasts between salvation and sin:

In verses 15-16 we see the offence vs. the free gift. Adam's offence brought condemnation and death, while the free gift of God's grace brings justification and life.

In verse 17 we see death vs. life. Death reigned as king because of Adam, but now we reign in life (right now, not in the future) through Christ, and have abundant life!

In verse 18 we see condemnation vs. justification. Adam's sin plunged the human race into condemnation; Christ's death brings right standing with God. Adam hid from God; in Christ we have free access to God!

In verse 19 we see disobedience vs. obedience. Adam disobeyed God and made us sinners; Christ obeyed God and, through faith in Him, we are made righteous.

In verse 20 we see law vs. grace. God did not give the law to save mankind, but rather to reveal man's sin. But God's super-abounding grace met the demands of the law when Christ died, and then supplied what the law could not supply – salvation from sin.

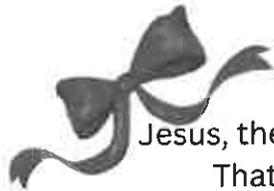
The whole transaction is summarized in vs. 20; being in Christ, a new creation, means sin no longer reigns, grace does! Death does not reign, life does! And we reign in life!

Now the important question to ask yourself is this:

Am I "in Adam" or "in Christ"? If I am "in Adam," then sin and death reign over my life and I am under condemnation. If I am "in Christ," then grace reigns and I reign through Christ, and sin no longer has me in its slavery – this will be the theme of chapter 6 – one of my favorite chapters in the Bible.

In Romans 5:6-11, Paul teaches substitution – Christ died for me on the cross. But in Romans 5:12-21 he goes higher and teaches identification – I AM IN CHRIST AND FREED FROM SIN AND DEATH!
HALLELUJAH – WHAT A SAVIOR!!





Jesus, the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears;
'Tis life, and health, and peace.
He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free.
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood availed for me.

- Charles Wesley

