

Romans

Romans Chapter Five

Romans 5:12-21

February 14, 2010

This is lesson number 28 in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

The Theme of the Letter

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

Title: “Made Righteous”

Read Romans 5:18-19

Verses 18 and 19 serve as a summary statement of what the great Apostle Paul has laid out from verses 12 through 17.

We have pointed out that Paul interrupts himself at the end of verse 12 and opens a parenthetical comment. {There are no punctuation marks in the Greek text and so we are trusting the Greek scholars to let us know these things.} But if you could read the Greek language, it would be clear from the phrases that 'an aside' comment has been inserted.

In verse 12, Paul begins a “just as - even so” comparison but he does not complete the “even so.” He must first explain why “death spread to all men, because all sinned.” He doesn't complete the “just as - even so” comparison until he gets to verse 18.

The reason that all men die, even infants who have not personally sinned, is because they were represented by Adam who is a type of Jesus Christ.

Some believe that all men die because all men sin against “natural law.” It is true that rational men sin against natural law as Paul makes clear in Romans 2:14-15. Men sin against their conscience having a law in their members even if they have never heard of the Word of God and its Holy Law. Besides that, all men are accountable for the revelation of the divine nature {Godhead} in creation {Romans 1:20}, so they are without excuse. But sin against conscience and revelation does not explain why infants die.

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Some believe that all men die because of an inherited sinful nature. It may be true that men are born with a sinful nature passed on by natural generation from our first parents, Adam and Eve. And so we sin because we are sinners - we do not become sinners when we commits acts of sin. We are already sinners when we are born and that might explain the death of infants who have not had an opportunity to commit a willful sin. But the Apostle does not say all men “become sinners,” but that “all sinned.”

While it is true that all men violate their conscience and that all men are born with a sinful nature, that is not the reason that all men die. The reason that all men die, the reason even infants die - is because of the **one sin of the one man**, Adam.

But that seemed to Paul, under the inspiration of the very Spirit of God, to require yet another parenthetical comment after verse 14: in verses 15- 16 -17. So we have a parenthetical comment within a parenthetical comment to explain the **differences** between Adam and Christ.

Adam is a type of Christ and there are similarities between Adam and Christ - things that are true about the type, Adam - that are true about the Christ.

Among the **similarities** of Adam and Christ: both were appointed by God the Father; both are representative persons, federal heads as it were; what they each did was imputed to those whom they represented.

But there are **dissimilarities** as well. The free gift abounds over the one offense. By the one offense “the many” died and were judged guilty by God and were condemned. But by the one act of the Man Jesus Christ grace abounded to “the many.”

Now at verse 18, after making these distinctions about the type and Christ, Paul can summarize verses 12-17 and completes the “just as - even so” comparison.

In verse 18 there are two phrases that include the word “all.” Those who argue for **universalism** - the idea that God will not surely send men to hell - will say: “See even though ‘all’ are condemned; somehow, eventually ‘all’ will be justified.”

To be justified is to be declared “not guilty” by God Himself. One who is justified will be glorified and will spend eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ.

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We will not spend as much time today as we did last time on the intent of the atonement, but we must be true to the Scripture on this or we will find ourselves making God a bystander and powerless in the matter of who actually believes the Gospel.

Was the entire event of the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us and keeping the law of God perfectly and then voluntarily becoming sin for His people and dying on a cruel cross, going into the grave for three days and three nights and to rise again by His own power and ascending back to the Father: was all of that to make salvation **possible**? Only possible, and not certain, because God has left it up to each man to “decide” whether or not he will allow God to save him?

Or was “all of that,” the Christ event, to make salvation a **certainty** for those given to Christ by the Father before the foundation of the world?

Rarely do I make any claims for originality. Most of what we preachers present is in some way a restatement of what we have read or heard others teach that we believe gives the truth of the Word. Our personalities take over but the germ of the thought was probably not original with us. Now I am cautious about this line of thought, but I honestly don't remember reading or hearing anyone else make the case for particular redemption this way. I will not be surprised when someone says to me, “Why Jim, John Owen, or someone else said that over two hundred years ago.” So be it.

Here is my case for “particular redemption,” which, to date, I believe is an original line of thought for the doctrine. Not that there was no one else who thought of this; just that I am not aware of anyone else.

At Romans 3:25-26 we see that Jesus' death was ‘**propitiation by His blood**’ for a particular people - those who had died in faith, but whose sin had not been propitiated, “For it is not possible that blood of bulls and goats can take away sin.” {Hebrews 10:4} Those people who had died in unbelief were in hell and had a legitimate charge that God was not just because those who were already in paradise had not had their sins propitiated, the only difference between those in hell and those in paradise was that those in paradise believed that God would Himself, someday, make propitiation through a sufficient sacrifice.

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On the day that Jesus actually went to the cross, God is now ‘just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.’ If you argue that atonement {propitiation} is general or universal in its intent then all those who were dead at the time of the atonement, unbelievers in hell as well as believers in paradise would be justified and hell would have to open its gates and could not keep anyone.

It is ridiculous to argue that there is a different intent of the atonement before and after the cross event. Most of the preachers I hear today who preach that Christ died for everyone in the same way only offer their “proposition” to those not yet dead, they are not able to make the cross event propitious before **and** after the event.

So if the “all” in the latter part of verse 18 is coextensive with the “all” in the first part, Paul would be teaching universal salvation. But there is a place of everlasting punishment. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

... 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, **8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,** 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

“So the meaning of the verse must be that on account of the one offense of Adam the sentence of death and condemnation was pronounced upon all whom he represented. On account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the sentence of justification of life was pronounced in favor of all He represented.” {Haldane}

Christ’s entire earthly course of humiliation and obedience to the Holy law of God, culminating in His death on the cross - as propitiation for the sin of His people, is seen as “one righteous act.”

Then in verse 19, as by imputation of the sin of Adam “the many” are made {constituted} sinners, so it is by the imputation of Christ’s obedience that “the many” are made {constituted} righteous.

Lloyd-Jones points out that the word translated “made” is much stronger than our English word suggests.

It means “to set down in the rank of,” or “to place in the category of.”

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He goes on to point out that the Holy Spirit does not say we are made sinful, an adjective; but sinners, a noun. He does not say that mankind was made sinful and therefore liable to sin; and because they were liable to sin they sinned, and because they sinned they were punished. That is not what the Apostle says. He asserts that because of this one disobedience of Adam all were constituted sinners and regarded by God as sinners.

The reason this is so vitally important is because it is the same argument for imputed righteousness. Because of the obedience of the one, Jesus Christ, "the many" are constituted - placed in the category of the righteous. We are not led into obedience and then justified on account of our obedience, but in Christ we are made - placed in the ranks of the righteous!

This is the very ground of our assurance, the righteousness of Jesus freely given. The way to have assurance of salvation is not to try to feel saved by looking at your obedience, or that you made a 'decision,' or that you have been baptized - the way to have assurance is to take an objective look at Jesus dying for sinners, and to know that except for the grace of God you would already be in hell, and then to trust Jesus only with your eternal soul.

"O, can it be, upon a tree, that Jesus died for me?"

The voluntary disobedience of Adam; the voluntary obedience of Christ - neither personal as far as those affected, but by a legal act of a Holy God imputed to those represented by Adam and to those represented by Christ.

That is the way to have assurance that can never be shaken.

If you are, indeed, a child of God, it was **done** two thousand years ago on Calvary's hill, and in time you hear and believe the Gospel and come to faith in Christ alone!

The work of Christ on behalf of believers is far more comprehensive than we can fully grasp. A few Scriptures to help us see the scope of Christ's work.

Isaiah 42:1

"Behold! My Servant whom I uphold,
My Elect One in whom My soul delights!
I have put My Spirit upon Him;
He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

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Isaiah 52:13-53:12

13 Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. 14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men; 15 So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider. continuing...
with Isaiah 53

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

John 6:38-39

38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 10:17-18

17 Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

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John 17:4-5

4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.
5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Galatians 4:4-5

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Hebrews 2:10

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Hebrews 5:8-9

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.
9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

And as Brother Gables has pointed out, even the whole creation was affected by the sin of Adam and will be restored in Christ.

Romans 8:18-25

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³ Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

These and many other passages show the scope of the life and death; the atonement of Jesus of Nazareth who is the Christ.

That the atonement of Christ is for believers only and not for the entire human race has been stated repeatedly in Romans:
{1:16-17; 3:21-25; 4:23-25; 5:17}.

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Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:22-23

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

There can be no doubt that the apostle and other inspired writers limits the propitiation of the atonement to believers. Yet there is a sense that pervades this entire epistle that Paul has dealt with. The ever-present tendency of the Jews to regard themselves as better than the Gentiles. But there is no difference between Jew and Gentile and so Christ died for “all” men, Gentiles as well as Jews.

This is especially relevant in our day when there is this notion of the primacy of the Jews, **because they are Jews**, is the dominant eschatological view.

One of the great errors of Dispensational eschatology is that they make a distinction between the Jews and the church and, in effect, teach that God has more than one way of saving sinners. This offends my friends in the Dispensational camp but they cannot avoid the obvious if Jews and the church are separate entities. They make this error because they interpret the New Testament with the Old Testament.

There is One God and One Savior, the Savior of sinners - Jesus Christ.

What about assurance?

Lloyd-Jones: “Do you need to test whether you really grasp the argument of salvation in Christ alone - are you certain and sure of your salvation? Or, do you still go on saying, ‘I would not like to say that I am sure, because I cannot trust myself. I may sin tomorrow or next year and I would be lost.’ Can you see that your salvation and mine depends only and entirely and exclusively upon the obedience of Christ?”

“Ah,” says someone, “does not that lead to an invitation to to go ahead and sin?” That is precisely what people were saying about Paul and his teaching. This is what Paul deals with in the sixth chapter: ‘What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?’

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“In other words, if you do not sound as if you were preaching antinomianism you are not preaching the Gospel! The Gospel sounds dangerous to the merely moral man, but of course it is not dangerous, because the man who is in Christ will not think like that. The man who is in Christ will see this wonderful truth and will be so amazed and will so rejoice in it that he will spare no effort to be worthy of it. ‘Everyman that has this hope in him, purifieth himself even as he is pure.’ {1 John 3:3} The argument works the other way around.” Lloyd-Jones

Put another way, if you cannot do anything to earn your salvation, neither can you do anything to lose your salvation. As Lloyd-Jones says, :...that sounds dangerous to the merely moral man.”

If you are not sure of your “calling and election,” may God the Holy Spirit arrest your mind with the truth of His Word.

Put your trust in Jesus Christ and Him only!

And then “Be what you are!” L-J