

Condemnation -vs- the Free Gift

(Rom 5:15-17)

- Remember the context of assurance to all that are “in Christ”

I. Rom 5:15- “Many” (“the many” in the Greek)

A) Is Paul teaching Universalism?

1. Universalism- the teaching that all will end up saved in the end
 - i. Mankind is divided into 2 great groups throughout the scriptures:
 - a) Matt 3:12- Wheat and chaff
 - b) Matt 25:31-46- Sheep and goats
 - c) John 3:16-18- Saved and condemned
 - d) John 5:27-29- Good and evil
 - e) Rom 1:16-18- Righteous and unrighteous
2. Beware of “literalism” applied to scriptures
 - i. In no field of study do we force a universal meaning upon words without considering the context in which they are used
 - a) Luke 2:1- “All the world” to be taxed (specific world)
 - b) John 3:26- “All men” baptized by John (hyperbole)
 - c) Acts 2:17- Spirit poured out upon all flesh” (all kinds/nations)
 - 1) Based upon the context, these examples are easily understood
3. Paul clearly cannot be teaching universalism, because that would be contrary to the things in the Roman epistle itself:
 - i. Rom 3:21-22- “All that believe”
 - ii. Rom 4:16-24- “All who believe”
 - a) Compare Acts 13:39- “All that believe”
4. Rom 5:17- The text itself identifies the “many” as “those which receive grace”

B) Paul is employing parallelism between Adam and Christ

1. Each is the head of a race and represent all that are “in” them, or of their race
2. His meaning is “the many in Adam” (all) and “the many in Christ” (All)

C) Is Paul saying it is “possible” for all to be saved

1. This would contradict Rom ch 9
2. This would also ruin his analogy intended for assurance
 - i. Possibility isn’t certainty
 - ii. The things of Christ are said to be “much more”
3. The parallel would make it “possible” for all to fall in Adam
4. Rom 5:19- “Made”- ordained, appointed, constituted

- i. Paul is describing the action of God here and not what's possible through man's actions
 - ii. 1 Cor 15:20-22- Adam has his seed, and Christ has His seed
 - a) What's true of Adam is true of "all" his seed, and what's true of Christ is true of "all" His seed
- II. Rom 5:16-17- Paul is contrasting here "one sin" -vs- "many offences"
 - A) One offence -vs- many offences
 - 1. What Adam's one act of disobedience produced -vs- What Christ's perfect obedience produces
 - i. One act led to condemnation of all -vs- many sins covered by the one act of Christ
 - ii. V. 16- "Judgment by one"
 - a) Here Paul refers not to Adam as the one, but to his one act of disobedience
 - 1) He is not saying that through Adam's one act many were led to act like Adam and bring condemnation upon themselves
 - B) Paul is using judicial language (condemnation, justification, etc.) and to understand this, we need to think in terms of a judge and his court proceedings and his pronouncements
 - 1. Judgment -vs- free gift
 - i. One sinful act is brought before the judge and condemned, and that "judgment" is passed upon the "many" of that entire race
 - a) God disqualified from glory all mankind in Adam the moment Adam sinned (Eph 2:1-3, Rom 3:23)
 - ii. Those guilty of many, many offences (yet chosen before of God) are brought before the judge and given the "free gift" of justification based on the single obedience of One-Christ
 - a) The "free gift" is the legal pronouncement of justification by the judge
 - b) God qualified for glory all those in Christ the moment Christ was raised from the dead (Eph 2:4-7)
 - 2. Condemnation -vs- justification
 - i. Disobedience of Adam condemns all "in Adam" no matter if they ever sin
 - ii. Obedience of Christ justifies all "in Christ" no matter the abundance of their sins
 - 3. Death -vs- life
 - i. Condemnation's penalty is death, justification's reward is life
 - ii. "Dominated by death" -vs- "reigning in life"
 - a) "Death reigned" is the best possible description of human history

- b) Heb 2:14-15- “All their lifetime subject to bondage” (fear of death)
 - 1) Death reigns over humanity, is at the back of their thoughts continually, no matter how hard they try to ignore it
 - (a) Hopelessness of world attitude and opinion
 - (b) Obsession with trying to stay young
 - (c) Cost of medicine
 - (d) Walt Disney’s head
- c) “Reigning in life” is due to righteousness
 - 1) Justification= pronounced to be righteous
 - (a) The righteousness of God is what actually saves
(1) Rom 1:7, 3:21-22, 10:3, Phil 3:9)
 - 2) But the gift is far more than just the pronouncement (imputation), it is the righteousness of Christ Himself
 - (a) Rom 8:29- Being conformed to His image
 - (b) “Reigning in life” is not only future, it begins when the life is given to us
(1) This is the key to understanding Rom ch 6

III. Final comparison

- A) **Adam**=1 act of disobedience-judgment (passed even without any personal sin)-condemnation-domination of death-daily unrighteous fruits of Adam (becoming more and more like him)
- B) **Christ**=Life of perfect obedience-free gift(given regardless of number of personal sins)-justification-reigning in life- fruits of righteousness (becoming more and more like Him)
 - 1. So then in the condemnation the judge took into account 1 sin, but the value of the free gift is the taking into account many sins and still pronouncing justified
 - i. Judgment had to reckon/deal with 1 sin, the gift had to reckon/deal with many, many
 - a) Here then we can see how awful sin is, and how great grace must be!
1) Which is exactly what Paul goes on to say in v.20-21