**Where Sin Abounded, Grace Abounded Much More**

*Romans 5:20-21*

**Introduction**

1. Sin is the greatest problem in the world (**cf. Romans 2:23; 6:23**).
2. We are extremely blessed that it pleased God to provide a plan of salvation by His grace – a plan that more than takes care of our abundant problem of sin.
	1. “Grace, grace, God’s grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within; Grace, grace, God’s grace, grace that is greater than all our sin.” (Grace Greater Than Our Sin, Julia H. Johnston, D. B. Towner)
	2. **Romans 5:20-21** – grace abounds much more.
3. However, God’s grace and its abounding nature has been misunderstood by many since its revelation to the world.
	1. **2 Peter 3:16** – some twist scripture to their own destruction.
	2. We must be careful that we truly understand God’s grace, and how it abounds in our lives.
4. The Problem of Sin
5. The Entrance of Sin and its Consequence
	1. **Romans 5:12** – one man – Adam.
		1. Sin entered the world – speaks nothing of a corruption of his nature, or that of his posterity – MERELY WHERE SIN FIRST APPEARED.
		2. Choice – **Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:6** – (“Paul follows the usual custom of speaking of the man instead of the woman,” R.L. Whiteside) – forbidden, gazed and considered, acted.
	2. Death through sin – What death?
		1. **Death** – separation.
		2. **(v. 12)** – ***“Therefore”*** – following what preceded, namely, continuing to note the blessings of justification.
		3. **(vv. 10-11)** – reconciliation to God – “to change from enmity to friendship, to reconcile.” (VINE)
		4. Context: separation from what/who? – God (**cf. Isaiah 59:2**)
		5. **Genesis 2:17** – in the day you eat of it… (**Genesis 5:5** – died physically) – died spiritually immediately.
	3. How did this spread?
6. The Spread of Sin and its Consequence
	1. ***“and thus”*** – *houtōs* – referring to what precedes, in this manner, thus, so (BDAG)
		1. Preceded – ***“death THROUGH sin”***
		2. ***“because ALL sinned”*** – the death spread to all when each individual sinned.
		3. **Romans 6:23** – death is a wage owed to one who sins.
	2. **Catholicism/Calvinism** – Original sin/total hereditary depravity – inherited sin, and sinful nature.
	3. **Contradiction** – **(vv. 13-14)** – death reigned, through sin, even apart from the likeness of Adam’s sin.
		1. **(v. 13)** – law for Adam – **Genesis 2:16-17** – eat, don’t eat.
		2. **(v. 14)** – law for those from Adam to Moses – others (Patriarchal).
		3. **(v. 17)** – by one man’s offense death reigned through him.
			1. **Reigned** – *basileuo* – the aorist tense…is “ingressive,” stressing the point of entrance. (VINE) (Death BEGAN to reign.)
			2. Seen in conjunction with **(v. 12)** – death’s entrance was through Adam’s sin, so death’s reign always has its beginning with Adam.
	4. Paul’s writing personalizes death as a consequence of one’s own sin.
7. The Solution in Christ
8. Not a solution – God made man upright.
	1. **Romans 7:9** – Paul was “without the law” prior to being amenable to the law – before the “age of accountability.”
	2. **Ecclesiastes 7:29** – Man entered history, and continually enters the world without sin.
		1. Sought out many schemes – shows this is not a solution to sin, but merely a prior state to sin for each man.
	3. Not inherently sinful, but doesn’t mean sin won’t come – **cf. 1 John 2:1**
9. Not a solution – the law is able to maintain life.
	1. **Romans 7:10, 12** – ***“and this commandment, which was to result in life” (NASB)*** – brought death through the breaking of it.
	2. **Romans 10:5** – if you do the commandment, you live.
10. Problem – **Romans 3:23; 8:2-3** – All sinned – what the law could not do – ***“free from the law of sin and death”*** (Because efficacious sacrifice not found under it.)
	1. The law is not the problem, but what the law lacks.
	2. **Romans 5:20** – entered that offense might abound – **Romans 7:13** – become exceedingly sinful.
		1. It is something directing in righteousness but cannot make righteous after the first sin.
		2. Sin abounds, for the only alternative is righteousness, which is impossible to reach through the law after it’s lost in sin.
11. God’s grace, and the gift by grace – Jesus Christ
	1. **Romans 5:15** – Offense/death, grace/gift by grace – Jesus Christ.
	2. Righteousness of God through faith in Jesus – **Romans 3:21-26**
		1. **(vv. 21-23)** – apart from the law.
			1. Righteousness of God – **Cf. Romans 1:16-17** – gospel of Christ reveals **God’s plan of righteousness** – just shall live by faith.
				1. Why does faith in Christ lead to being just/righteous?
			2. Apart from the law – **(vv. 19-20)** – by deeds of law none can be justified – **cf. Romans 10:5** – just by perfect keeping (maintain life, but not give it once it’s lost.)
			3. **(v. 23)** – all sinned, life lost, law is not the answer.
		2. **(v. 24)** – justification reached by a free gift.
			1. ***“But the free gift is not like the offense” (5:15)***.
			2. Through redemption in Christ – how does Christ redeem?
		3. **(v. 25)** – Christ is a propitiation by blood (metonymy – death).
			1. Wages of sin is death (**cf. Romans 6:23**).
			2. Life is owed when sin is committed – salvation is the gift of life to those who lost it.
			3. How can we keep our lives when we owe them due to sin?
			4. Propitiation:
				1. **(v. 25)** – Jesus’ blood (death) demonstrates God’s righteousness.
				2. (**v. 26)** – it allows God to be just, while still being the justifier of sinful man.
				3. ***hilastērion*** – relating to an appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force, expiatory; a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation (THAYER).
				4. Sin 🡪God’s judicial wrath 🡪 price must be paid (death) 🡪 avoid such for sinner by Christ dying (propitiation) 🡪 **cf. Romans 5:9** – saved from wrath through Him.
		4. ***“propitiation by His blood, THROUGH FAITH…the justifier of the one who HAS FAITH IN JESUS” (vv. 25, 26)*** – must be accessed (**cf. Romans 5:2** – access by faith into grace).
12. The All-Sufficiency of Christ’s Gift
13. Adam and Christ – A Type/Antitype Relationship
	1. **(v. 14)** – type – *typos* – a mark made as the result of a blow or pressure (BDAG)
	2. Resemblance – almost a mirrored image, but Christ’s side (antitype) abounds.
14. Offense/Free Gift **(v. 15)**
	1. **Offense –** transgression of law (sin) – choice made to break Divinely revealed law.
		1. Personal action directly leading to something earned.
		2. Something we chose to do which merits consequence.
	2. **Free gift** – something given, “free” denoting the absence of personal meritorious action on the part of another to earn the object being given.
	3. Something done vs. something given to be received.
15. Many Died/Abounded to Many **(v. 15)**
	1. **Many died** – i.e. the consequence of the offense (transgression) as a personal choice.
		1. Object of personal merit – death.
	2. **Abounded to Many** – the extent of the offer reached to all who had need of it.
		1. All who died by their own choice are offered the gift freely.
16. Judgment from One to Condemnation/Free gift from Many to Justification **(v. 16**)
	1. **Judgment/condemnation** – the logical decision in keeping with Divine law based on the action of offense was condemnation (adverse sentence of death).
		1. **ONE** (namely, Adam’s sin) – for judgment from one in (***eis*** – to or into) condemnation.
		2. I.e. ONE offense is all it took for there to be the sentencing of condemnation. (Enough for the need of an efficacious sacrifice.)
	2. **Free gift/Justification** – the logical decision in keeping with Divine law based on the gift of Christ’s sacrifice was the justification of man (made acceptable before God).
		1. **MANY OFFENSES** (Adam’s, and all else – **v. 12** – all sinned) – i.e. the free gift not only came as a result from Adam’s sin, as a resulting need from the sins of all.
		2. NOT MERELY COEXTENSIVE IN APPLICATION WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM’S SIN, BUT OF THE SINS OF EVERYONE FOR ALL TIME.
17. Death Reigned/Reign in Life **(v. 17)**
	1. **Death reigned through the one** (Adam) – ingressive, began to reign.
		1. Before Adam sinned, no death.
		2. **After Adam sinned, death – started with his action.**
		3. Still reigned until Christ:
			1. No sacrifice for Adam until Christ – **Romans 3:25-26** (passed over)
			2. **All others sinned and died** – **(v. 12)** – no sacrifice for them without Christ.
	2. **Reign in life** – where death once ruled us, WE now reign in life.
		1. Death had dominion (**cf. Romans 6:9**).
		2. Received – abundance of Grace, and the result of righteousness **(v. 16)** – reign in life (death no longer has dominion).
		3. **Through Jesus** – He is the gift, **propitiation** (no longer dead in sin because He died for us).
18. The Avenue of Christ’s Gift
19. Note the final two contrasts –
	1. Offense/Disobedience 🡪 condemnation/sinners **(vv. 18-19)**
		1. In what way were ALL condemned, and ALL made sinners by the sin of ONE MAN – ADAM?
		2. Connects back to – **(v. 12)** – he was the first, and provided a path/example of sin to condemnation.
			1. Though, only those who follow his example – decide to sin – are met with the consequences.
			2. **Not automatic (transferred, inherited, sinful nature) – avenue – personal choice to sin (following example of disobedience).**
			3. The same must be true for the blessings in Christ 🡪
	2. Righteous Act/Obedience 🡪 Justification of life/Righteous **(vv. 18-19)**
		1. Righteous act and obedience are synonymous – made righteous by such obedience.
			1. **False – Christ’s personal life of righteousness is put to our account.**
			2. NOTE: ***“righteous act”*** – singular – WHAT SINGLE ACT OF OBEDIENCE IS MOST SIGNIFICANT IN CHIRST’S LIFE.
				1. ***“Became obedient to…death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8).***
				2. Same context as **(vv. 6-11)** – blessings of Christ’s death.
			3. Parallel to Adam – death spreads when we sin.
				1. Justification/made righteous – when we obey.
				2. Propitiation ***“through faith” (Romans 3:25)*** – ***“obedience of faith” (Romans 1:5, NASB).***
			4. **Hebrews 5:8-9** – obedience to death made Him qualified to give salvation (made perfect through suffering), yet through obedience.
				1. Again, not automatic – avenue – obedience.
		2. **Still a free gift** – cannot be made righteous through own works – righteousness through sacrifice yet reached through condition of obedience.
	3. Sin reigns in death/grace reigns through righteousness **(vv. 20-21)**
		1. **(v. 20)** – all stated before – as abundant as sin is, grace more than takes care of the problem.
		2. **(v. 21)** – but note the avenue of grace’s abundant reign:
			1. **Sin reigned in death** – sin’s reign is of significance because it is in the sphere of death.
				1. I.e. where there is sin, there is death (spiritual).
				2. Where there is death (spiritual), it is because of sin.
				3. NO SUCH THING AS SIN (unaddressed, as it is) DEVOID OF CONSEQUENCE OF DEATH.
			2. **Grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life** – grace’s reign is of significance because it is to the end of eternal life, but it is through righteousness it reigns.
				1. I.e. where there is grace, there is righteousness.
				2. Where there is righteousness, it is because of grace.
				3. That grace leads to eternal life, but through the avenue of righteousness.
				4. **Through (channel of act) righteousness?** – **Romans 1:16-17** – God’s plan of righteousness for man, the gospel. (NOT PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.)
				5. **By faith** **– Romans 5:2** – access into grace by faith (obedient faith).
				6. **Through Jesus Christ** – i.e. His righteous act **(v. 18)** of death on the cross (propitiation – allows God to forgive sin).
				7. THE IDEA THAT GRACE ABOUNDS MORE IS NOT THAT SIN PERSISTS, BUT GRACE ELIMINATES THE CONSEQUENCE OF DEATH.

**GRACE ABOUNDS BECAUSE IT ELIMINATES SIN WHICH BRINGS ABOUT DEATH, THUS DEATH AS WELL.**

If sin persists, then grace must not be so powerful.

**So grace’s reign cannot be in the realm of sin, but in a realm absent from sin – gospel plan of righteousness.**

1. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? **(6:1)**
	1. If where sin abounds grace abounds much more does that mean sin must continue for grace to be abundant? Not if it is understood where grace reigns abundant (**5:21).**
	2. Grace’s reign, thus, a justified life, is through righteousness by the gospel. So:
		1. Present members as instruments of righteousness to God – **Romans 6:12-14** – through the gospel.
			1. **(v. 14)** – not merely under law, but especially under grace.
			2. ***“Law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2); “not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21).***
			3. Sin = lawlessness **(1 John 3:4**) – EVEN UNDER LAW OF CHRIST.
			4. ESPECIALLY UNDER GRACE – provision for sin in Christ **(cf. 1 John 2:1-2** – don’t sin, still propitiation).
		2. In obedience to the gospel, delivered to doctrine of Christ (gospel) to increase to holiness, and everlasting life – **Romans 6:17-19, 22**
			1. Grace is shown to abound as we present ourselves as slaves of righteousness, breaking free from sin and growing in holiness.
			2. To present to lawlessness is to allow sin to reign in death once again, NOT for grace to abound.

**Conclusion**

1. Some think God’s grace abounds more than sin by freeing sinners from the consequences of their sins, but not the sin itself.
	1. This is a cheap, and weak grace.
2. God’s grace abounds more than sin because through the forgiving and transforming power of the gospel of Christ it frees man from the grips of sin, and brings him into a life of righteousness which ends in eternal life.
3. If we think God’s grace is abundant in our lives, but we are continuing in any sin, we are fooling ourselves.