

Serve Death or Reign In Life

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[0 : 00] Father, you know how it is to trust even people that we know very well, and we know that they're trustworthy. And Father, you know how hard it can be for us to trust people, even trustworthy people.

And Father, you know how many times people have let us down, and we thought we could trust them, but Father, we discovered we couldn't trust them. Father, you know how many of us carry unforgiveness and wounds from people who have broken promises, and just hurt us, and not been trustworthy.

And so, Father, you can see into our hearts as to how hard it is for us to trust you, you who is invisible, and how hard it is for us to trust your word, when your word seems to say things that our culture thinks doesn't make any sense.

And Father, you know the inward struggle we have on how in many ways we don't want to acknowledge that we don't trust your word, yet still somehow we don't. Father, we thank you that you know us so perfectly.

And we thank you that knowing us so perfectly, you don't turn your face away from us. You don't mock us or scorn us. You don't hate us. But knowing us so perfectly, you loved us perfectly as well, by sending your Son to die for us on the cross.

[1 : 18] And that you pour out your Holy Spirit, Father, on ordinary people like us, with the ordinary problems of trust, just like us. You pour out your Holy Spirit, and you speak to us through your word.

So, Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us this morning, that we might trust your word, and that your word might come deep into who we are, and so bear fruit for you that brings glory to you.

And all this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son, and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, I don't know how many of you were able to follow Helen when she was reading, but maybe some of you were thinking to yourself, did the Bible, and you didn't have the Bible open yourself, and you might say to yourself, did Helen just read that the Bible says that this guy Adam, that when he did something wrong, it meant that I die because he did something wrong.

Did I just hear Helen say that because somehow or another, I'm guilty of the thing that Adam did. Is that what I just heard Helen say?

And some of you are thinking, George, if I heard that she said, like, come on, George, you're a university-educated guy, and how on earth could you possibly believe that?

[2 : 53] That just seems a bit kooky, and it seems really unfair. So, George, is it saying that somehow or another, when Adam sinned, we're responsible, as well, or is it just saying that Adam's just sort of like an example of somebody who does bad things?

Which, you know what, we can sort of understand. We all have examples of people who do bad things. So, we're going to look at that question, okay? So, get your Bibles out. It can be very, very helpful. So, you're not just taking my word for it, but you're actually seeing what the Bible says, and it's Romans chapter 5, verses 12 and following.

We're going to look at it. And before I start reading this verse, I'm just going to say one thing, and I should have said this several weeks ago, and actually, I've been meaning to do this for several years.

If we had a service of a different type, especially after certain sermons, I would have a Q&A; time after the service where you could ask me questions. And it just sort of doesn't really fit with the way we do things here.

So, I'm not going to discuss, I'm going to talk as if Adam was a real person, and I'm not going to try to explain that or anything. I'm not going to do that right now.

[4 : 00] But what I, I don't know, Shirley, I think, is doing coffee or the nursery or something really helpful and important. But I'm going to ask Shirley to set up a time within a month. I don't know if it will be like a Saturday late morning or maybe a Monday evening, where anybody who wants can come, and we'll have some refreshments, some muffins or something like that.

And we'll talk a little bit about the historical Adam. And I'm going to maybe try to do that. And if you ever come to a, I'll try to, and you can send me a question or something like that. Send me an email if you think it would be a good time to do it.

You know, I probably should have done it a few weeks ago when we talked about homosexuality. And, you know, in another couple of weeks, you know, we're going to talk about, you know, how can the potter, you know, God can do whatever we want with this.

Does the clay have any right to say to the potter, don't do this to me? So there's some hard texts. And sometimes it's maybe just too hard to deal with in a sermon. It's maybe better to do it over, you know, coffee or hot chocolate or Coke or something like that and some snacks.

So I'm going to try to set up a time within a month. And I'll try to, we can talk about the historical Adam. So just so you know. But for now, we're going to talk, I'm going to talk as if Adam is a real person who really lived.

[5 : 17] And is the Bible here saying that this real person who really lived thousands and thousands of years ago, that when he did something, in some way, when he did it, you and I did it.

And when he did it, that's why we die. Is that what the Bible is actually saying? So let's listen. Chapter 5, verse 12.

And it begins like this. Sorry, just so you know what we were talking about yesterday, because it begins with therefore. So in the flow of the book, what Paul had just been talking about was this idea that it's a very, very powerful series of ideas, because sometimes we might think that if we're, that it's a series of ideas to help us to understand that when Jesus died on the cross for us, he died on the cross for people that he knew were bad people, and that in fact were his enemies.

And in fact, the 511 sort of ends with this idea, if Jesus died for us when we were his enemy, now that he's alive, just imagine how much you're going to be blessed.

And that's now where verse 12 comes in. Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, and here it means men and women, because all sinned.

[6 : 50] And then most of your Bibles are probably a hyphen. Just a bit of an aside, I'm not going to dodge this. You know, I mentioned to you several weeks ago, and I've said it in other times as well, that the Bible's witness about itself is that it's actually God speaking.

And it's really important for us to understand something about that, is that doesn't mean that Christians are claiming that the Bible is perfect literature, that we should all aspire to write like the Bible writes.

In fact, it's very, very interesting. In the time that the Bible was written, there were two different types of Greek that was the common language. There was the educated Greek, or formal Greek, that to our ears would sound a little bit as if people talked in King James Version English all the time.

And there was street Greek, the type of Greek that carpenters and farmers and tanners and soldiers talked. And the Bible's written in street Greek, not good Greek.

And here we see Paul actually doesn't complete his sentence. In other words, if he was writing this for a university paper, and the professor actually marked grammar, that he or she would put a little circle there and say, complete your sentences.

[8 : 07] You're not going to get an A plus if you don't complete your sentences. You've just dropped a mark. You're now looking at maybe at the best an A, maybe even an A minus, Paul. You missed ending the sentence properly.

It's a very important thing to notice, is that Christians don't claim that the Bible is perfect literature. We just claim that when we read each word of the Bible, and the Bible as a whole, we're reading the words that God wanted to have spoken.

If he doesn't want to have perfect grammar, take it up with him. I don't know, you know. So what did, that was just a bit of an aside. I like pointing those things out. You know, I'm sorry, just, oh gosh, I shouldn't do this.

Two things. There's two reasons why I point this out. It's because our friends who are Muslims believe that the Koran is the most perfect book ever written. And it's easy for Christians to try to think the same thing about the Bible, but that's not what the Bible says about itself.

And the other thing is that there's always been a bit of a, especially for Anglicans, this sense that speaking ordinary English isn't good enough. That we should be speaking special English with special accents.

[9 : 16] Some of you have maybe heard ministers who have what's called, I call it pulpit puberty. They speak one way when they're normal, but when they're up at the pulpit, they start speaking with deeper voices or they start speaking with a fake English accent or something like that.

You know, in other words, and it's like puberty, right? Like for a guy going through puberty and all of a sudden, you know, their voices is going up and down, right? So it's a very common temptation for Christians to think that somehow or another, that their English, when it comes to God, should be somehow special.

God just wants you to pour out his heart to him. He's not up there like a professor making sure you're going to get an A plus in speaking, you know, diction to him. Just pour out your heart. He poured out his heart to us. Every word is his, and I think he made it not perfect on purpose so we wouldn't think we have to speak perfectly or a certain way to him.

So, sorry, that was a bit of an aside. Probably an important aside. Maybe for some of you that was the exact, maybe that was one of those God asides. Okay, back to this. Okay, here's the bad news. Well, it's not bad news.

[10 : 24] You're going to see in a moment, as the more I thought about it all week, I've come to believe that this is the most spectacular news imaginable. But it was a bit of a shock to me at first this week to realize that, in fact, the Bible is saying exactly what some of you might be worried that it's saying.

It is saying that when Adam sinned, I sinned, you sinned, and all of the little babies, and all of the little babies, I can't remember which side of the building they're being looked after, all those cute little babies, when Adam sinned, each person, each human being is somehow in Adam or involved with Adam, and his sin was as if you and I sinned personally.

That's exactly what the Bible's teaching right here. It's actually even clearer in the original language than it is in English.

For instance, in verse 12, therefore just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all human beings, all men, because all sinned.

It's actually more literal to translate the because as in whom, but it's terrible grammar. But it's actually trying to emphasize that somehow or another, every human being is in Adam.

[12 : 01] And so now some of you are saying, wow, that's a hard idea, George. In fact, I don't know, George, what do you think about that?

So I'll tell you. On Tuesday afternoon, after my run, because I've been thinking about this a lot, I try to work on the sermon every day of the week, at least a little bit. And you know what?

I came to the conclusion on Tuesday that I was just going to trust God on this one. I'm just going to trust God on this one. This is a profoundly non-Canadian, non-Western, non-first world idea that we find as, I'm going to explain in a moment why we're mistaken about this, but we say it's completely and utterly unscientific, and maybe even a completely abhorrent idea.

And at the end of the day, at the end on Tuesday, before I thought about it more, I was going to say, you know what? I'm just going to believe God on this one. I'm just going to trust him. And some of you might say, well, gosh, George, that's sort of very anti-intellectual.

It's not anti-intellectual at all. It's not anti-intellectual. In the same way that, you know, I've been married to Louise for 34 years, and, you know, like me, she's not a perfect person, but I, she's a really good person, and I trust her.

[13 : 28] I trust her. And I, and, and 34 years of marriage, and I, I knew her for four or five years before that, I, I have a lot of ground. I have a lot of experience to trust her. And so, if she called me up and asked me to do something, I, that at first, and then I said, no, Louise, you have to explain it to me.

She said, no, just, you just have to do this. Just trust me. I, I, I, I hope I would trust her. And that's not being anti-intellectual. And, you know, so for me, it was as if God spoke to me in the early part of the week.

And this might not mean anything to you, but it really meant a lot. It was as if God spoke to me, and I'm not a very mystical person. And, you know, I just thought about it. I, I, the more I, I study the Bible, the wiser I think it is.

The more I've looked into things like the historical basis of the Christian faith, in terms of how the documents were written and transmitted, and, and the apostolic witness, and the integrity of scholars, the more I trust the Bible, and the more I look into Jesus and his resurrection, the more I believe that he really rose from the dead.

And the more I think about how the Christian worldview makes sense of human experience, the more I believe and trust and accept the Bible. So why wouldn't I just trust God on this one?

[14:41] And if I trust God on this one, and now I look at the world, in fact, as I started to do that throughout the week, the more and more and more I thought it was, this was actually a very, very, that this is something that Canada needs, and that Canadian Christians need, and that in some ways, I have been lapsed black in my ministry upon not maybe talking about this more, that it's actually a very profound and deeply needed idea.

The more I thought about it, the wiser I thought it became. That's going to maybe surprise you. George, the more you thought about it, the more you, once you just trusted that this is true, that you're just going to trust God that this is true, that when Adam actually did something wrong, whatever it was, he ate of the fruit of the tree that God told him not to do, that somehow or another, because of that, sin came into the world, and death came into the world, and every human being, actually, it's as if they ate the apple at the same time, or whatever it was, banana, mango, whatever it was, that we all ate that fruit at the same time.

You believe that's a, how, here's the thing, here's the first thing about this. Some of you, hopefully all of you know that this past weekend, there was an apologetics conference, and the theme of the conference was being human, and we had a biochemist, and a doctor, and a philosopher, and they came and talked about what it means to be human.

And at one of the breaks, I went to one of my favorite Starbucks, and there was a barista there that I've talked to quite a few times, and she knows that I'm a pastor, and she said, what are you doing today, George?

And I said, I'm going to a conference on being human. And it was really funny. She was, you know, pouring, I'm behind her, and she's pouring my coffee, and as soon as I said, I went to a conference being human, and she instantly turned around and looked at me.

[16:43] Like, she stopped doing what she did. She instantly turned around and looked at me. And she said, well, what have you concluded? Which I wasn't expecting. And so, I very quickly thought, well, I think we're concluding that, you know, a human, to be a human is a mystery, a combination of things we know and mystery.

And she said, well, I agree with that. That's what I would say. So, you know, here's the thing. This idea that we're all in Adam, and at first we say, well, that's just wrong, that's just stupid.

Well, why do we say that? Why do we say that? First of all, it's not unscientific. Science has nothing to say about that at all. Well, in terms of the historical Adam, but we can talk about that.

I said, well, that's an off-ramp thing. But this idea, here's the thing. If I was to say, if some of you were to say to me that there's a thousand-story office building in Ottawa, I would say to you, you don't know what you're talking about.

I know Ottawa, and I know there's no thousand-story building in Ottawa. You don't know what you're talking about. I know Ottawa.

[18:01] I've lived here for quite a few years. It's not there. Not here. You don't know what you're talking about. You're going against all of the evidence. Just don't know what you're talking about. If somebody was to say to me that the national food, the favorite food of Irish people, is fried pussycat, I would say, I'm Irish.

Both of my parents are from Ireland. All of my relatives are from Ireland. I've been to Ireland, and I know lots of Irish people, and you're wrong. It isn't what Irish people love to eat, fried pussycat. Irish people don't eat cats. And I would just say, you don't know what you're talking about. But do we know what human beings are?

Do we really know what human beings are? Wouldn't you all, wouldn't most people, other than the most extreme type of scientist types, naturalists, wouldn't you all acknowledge that to be a human being is a mystery?

I mean, there's things, obviously, we know, you know, we know that, you know, we know different things about our physiology, and, and we know, you know, we know, you know, doctors have a bit of an idea about what a healthy body looks like as opposed to a sick body, and, and we, we know, obviously, we know things about human beings, but at the same time, isn't it the case that there's huge parts about what it means to be a human that's a complete and utter mystery?

[19 : 25] Like, human beings are deep, and they have layers. One of the things you discover about being in a relationship with a person is that they're not simple.

That things that happened to them in their past that you don't even know about have this profound effect on, on you. And, and for some of us, as we've gotten a little bit older, I mean, it's, you know, it's a bit different maybe when you're just barreling through life with a whole pile of, you know, in my case, because I, I'm a guy, a whole pile of testosterone and a whole pile of adrenaline, and you just sort of barge through life.

You just sort of gallop through life, when you're 20 or 21, but you get a little bit older, and all of a sudden, you realize that something that happened to you when you were, you were six, or something that happened to you when you were five, or something that happened to you when you were 30, or something that happened to you 20 years ago, or 30 years, or 40 years ago, that all of a sudden, you realize that that's something that's, that's formed you, and you didn't even know it. I mean, it's, it's always had a, a forming effect on you. You didn't even know it. You don't even know the depths of yourself. And, and how is it, like, what is it, you know, we don't really understand, in a sense, how consciousness works.

We all have consciousness. We don't understand that, really. How do we understand how sometimes we just know something? How do we understand, how do we figure out why it is that somebody can just pick up a musical instrument, and all of a sudden, a melody comes?

[20 : 50] Like, I wish I could do that. I've never had that experience, but I, how is it that that happens to people? How is it that somebody, they can just say something, and it's the exact right thing? Why is it that sometimes you're sitting there, and you feel somebody's eyes on you, and you turn around, and they are looking at you?

How is it that we know that? And if there's so much about being a human being that we don't know, why is it that we would reject the idea that somehow or another, that in Adam, we sinned?

We can't reject that because we know human beings so well, as we know that there's no thousand-story building in the city of Ottawa. Now, I know that if you're here as a guest, and you're an atheist, or a Muslim, or a Buddhist, you don't have to accept that just because the Bible says that it's true.

That's fine. I understand that. That's a longer conversation, but I still think that if you think about it, this is part of the unbelievable power of the Christian understanding of the person, the depth of what it means to be a person.

And it explains so much, I think, because, you know, science can't explain why it is that there's no perfect human being. Like, you can't look at human DNA and say, because of DNA, we know that this human being will someday tell a lie.

[22 : 14] You can't discover that from DNA. Why? Why is it that human beings, that it's very rare to meet a person who's almost completely and utterly evil, and it's very rare to meet a person who's almost completely and utterly perfectly morally good.

Why is it that human beings do bad things? Why is it that something about that's wrong touches just about every single thing, if not every single thing that human beings do?

Why is that the case? But why is it at the same time that human beings do do good things? And why is it at the same time that not only that human beings do good things, but that they can appreciate beauty and they can appreciate music?

Like, why is that, that there's this complication within human beings? Well, maybe it's because we aren't just a separate individual, and it's as if, you know, there's an individual pot, a piece of dough made, and that's one pie, and then you take all new ingredients and make another pie, take all new ingredients and make another pie, and then, you know, you wouldn't expect all the pies to be exactly the same, especially if you're getting all new ingredients every time, but why is it that human beings aren't like that?

Maybe it's because that in some way that we're all in Adam, and that when Adam fell, that that touched all of us. And why is it that human beings feel compassion for each other?

[23 : 36] There's three things that are going on right now. Every one of us probably feels some compassion and concern for what's going on in Paris. I've never been to Paris. And I'm not alone here in saying, I bet if you went out into the streets, unless there's people who've just in some drug-induced haze didn't even know there's anything going on, but if you tell them, they would have compassion.

Two of the movies, one of the best-selling, one of the top movies right now is called Martian. The Martian, I think, or something, yeah, and at the heart of it is the entire planet, one of the aspects of the movie, is the entire planet having compassion and being concerned about one person left on the planet of Mars.

The Chilean miners film, which just came in the movies, it's touching on the fact that that crisis in Chile, that many people were riveted by, why is it that we feel compassion for other human beings? Is it possible that it's because in a way that we don't think about, we're all in Adam? And that at some level we sense that there's this, not just individualism about us, but that there's something common about us.

That there's something common. The biblical doctrine is that Adam is our covenant head.

[25 : 11] That Adam is the covenant head of the human race. And that in some ways his actions or failure to act does impact and touch and characterize all human beings.

And we enter that covenant, so to speak, with Adam purely by birth, by the fact that human succession goes from the sperm and the ovum of a male and a female and they're put together and there's a new human life and that is how human life goes on and all of us are in that human covenant with Adam as our head just by biology.

And that's what, but it's more than just biology because of this whole thing of sin. And it's a very rich and deep idea. Just one other thing because I have to move on with it. I think you've got the mystery and maybe the power of it.

You know, I was thinking about it a lot this week. The more we grasp that Adam is our covenant head, then racism makes no sense. In fact, it's an offense.

The more we grasp that we have a covenant head, the more that we would have a fear of people who are different than us, just because they're different doesn't make any sense.

[26 : 35] It would mean, it would undermine those who are transgendered or experience same-sex attraction as basing their identity in that if they understand and we understand with them that there's this one common human covenant with Adam as our head.

It would undermine caste systems and class systems and sexism and racism if we all grew in this sense that there is just one covenant head of all human beings.

At a very profound and deep level, it would make all of these things abhorrent and wrong. And it actually would build, it would make deeper sense why building bonds of affection in families and communities and across families and communities is not just some artificial command that God would rest on us but was actually part of the way that God created us that it's a sign of health when we have a desire for bonds of affection within communities and across economic barriers and racial barriers and educational levels and that compassion should be there.

It's woven into our DNA. A. I probably lost my place in my notes. Here's the thing. The doctrine or the idea of human beings as part of a covenant that has a head does not offend science or reason. It offends individualism. that's what I would say. That's what I just tried to demonstrate. I don't think it offends it.

[28 : 44] You can't prove it from science or reason. It's one of those things that once you have revelation and then you look at and then you accept it and then you look at the world you see evidence for it.

That it fits. That there's some sense to it. It's something maybe bigger than our minds can get our but there's a sense to it and there's a fittedness to it. So it doesn't offend reason.

It doesn't offend science. It deeply offends our individualism and it deeply offends our selfishness and it deeply offends our desire to choose race, our race over another or our politics over another or anything our tribe or our clan over another.

It's deeply offensive to that but it's not offensive to science or reason. And it's also then something about you know here's another thing about being human is that this text here has a profound explanation about the meaning of death.

I mean how do we understand death? It's really funny. You know when we listen to different people speak if you go to university and you're listening to different political ideologies and different you know different sciences and different explanations different types of anthropology sociology psychologies when you go and you talk to different religions it's amazing how often they completely and utterly ignore the reality and the significance of death.

[30 : 23] Yet if there is one single thing we know is that we will all die. and it's something we want to avert our eyes from usually for most of our life but it's there and how do different systems of thought account for it?

Look here again at verse 12 and then we'll keep reading down to verse 14 it's very very powerful and very very wise it says again therefore just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin and so death spread to all men this case meaning the human race because all sinned for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given but the sin is not counted where there is no law yet death reigned from Adam to Moses even those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam was a type of the one to come it's a bit complicated here's the thing what the bible is saying is that death is a symptom we have a I don't know if we have many doctors in the congregation I know we have at least one guy here who's in med school and they understand the difference between you know you're going to the doctor and you know

I have this pain over here I have this lump or whatever or you know and you tell the doctor your symptoms and then you hope that the doctor and then he or she will ask you a range of questions to see what other things are going on and you might not connect this lump to that mole or you know that something going on in your eye to that thing going on in your toe I don't know if there's a connection there and I just made it up but they look at your different symptoms and they're trained at least we hope to observe and they look at your different symptoms and they make a prognosis they make an analysis of what's causing it and so what the bible is saying here is that death is a symptom that on a very very fundamental it fits at a very very fundamental level with I think the most common human experience which is that at a fundamental on a strictly biological level death is natural but at a human level nobody experiences death of a loved one is natural we all know when it touches us closely that there's something unnatural about death and what there's a bit of an ongoing thing that's all the way through the book of

Romans that we're not going to talk about that much right now but if you go back to Romans 2 or listen to the sermon that I did on the first part of Romans 2 is that Paul knows that what Paul is just saying is that if you want to think that somehow or another when the Bible comes it's going to make things better when the law comes it's going to make things better I think Jewish people had a saying the more Torah the better it is I got that wrong but it's something like that and Paul is going to keep saying no no no that's not the case the Bible God's law isn't the solution and so it's just another one of these things that yeah the Bible is just going to actually make us more aware of the things that we've done wrong but the fact of the matter is there's always been death we only know a history of death and therefore there's always been a history of everyone being in Adam because death is a symptom of a deeper problem and the deeper problem is our separation from God and once we chose to be like

God ourself so that we could at first look God eye to eye but then look down our nose at God because that was ultimately the human desire that we would be able to look down our nose from God that we fell and our communion and relationship with God was broken and death is a symptom of that and that's why we can understand that on one hand there is something natural now about death because there's human covenant which we all experience is a covenant all with a covenant head but at the same time that there is something profoundly unnatural about it but actually and I'm not going to talk about this much this week I'm going to talk about in a couple of weeks in some ways there's actually some hope in it just as if you come to the doctor if you recognize that this lump over here isn't natural you can go to the doctor and hopefully the doctor can say okay this is actually really serious but we caught it in time and I can make you better and so that when we recognize that death is a symptom there is the hope that and in fact this goes with the whole bible thing is the bible might be some type of medicine but it's not health it's not a cure that the bible is regularly going to make us realize that we don't need more advice that we need a rescue and the bible and moral instruction will make us aware that only god can rescue not the state not the tribe not the clan not affirming our sexuality not political ideology that only god can rescue and that we can cry out and call out to him that he would rescue us so death follows sin death is a symptom of sin death

follows sin death is a symptom symptom of sin we don't need more information we need rescue rescue from god we don't need more information about rules take these vitamins memorize these bible verses do 15 jumping jacks 25 burpees we don't need more rules we need rescue not information now some people might say george okay now i can maybe see that there's something powerful about this but it still just doesn't seem fair and it still doesn't seem just and surely there's something wrong that adam did this and i didn't choose him and that just doesn't seem fair to me it doesn't seem just and we actually see that there that there's something to this thing but actually considering the question of fairness and justice helps us to understand the rest of chapter five actually when we ask this question because what the rest of chapter five is going to tell us is that we need more than justice we need mercy and if we are offered mercy without justice that's actually just god showing favoritism it's just god picking favorites it's just like irish people thinking that i'm just gonna let all the irish people have the slack and i don't know the english people oppressed us for a long time so you know sucks to be english but we like polish people so i don't know you know we'll let poli like if that's that's not justice and that's not really mercy that's just favoritism that's just power politics that's and and so that what what the bible is going to now go on and say is that in fact yes we do

[37 : 59] understand at a fundamental level we need justice we want justice but at the same time if all we have is justice we are doomed and we need something more than justice that doesn't transgress justice or contradict justice or undermine blind justice or blind justice and make it injustice that we need somehow to have justice and we need to have at the same time that which is greater than justice but coherent with justice we need mercy and we need grace and that's exactly what the gospel gives us because at the first very thing it's going to say as as as Paul's going to go through this he's going to outline what God has done he's going to say at the end of the day when you think about all the things that God has done what you can know and you can have a great confidence in is that God picked a better representative for you than you would pick for yourself that God when he picked Adam he knows everything he knew every human being that was going to follow and he picked the best person you could possibly pick and when that didn't work well what happened let's look verse we'll read verse 14 again yet death reigned from

Adam to Moses even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam who was a type of the one to come and Paul's original hearers they would have seen type type has an archetype and he is saying when he says that Adam is a type that even though he's the covenant head he is saying that God will provide a true and greater Adam that God will provide a true and greater Adam Adam is a type those were some philosophical training God will provide the archetype the true and greater Adam and what will God do through this second covenant head who is a true and greater Adam see God will now given that he's made the human race that the human race can have a covenant head God is going to provide an option for another covenant head that we don't enter into by biology but we enter into with empty hands by faith and what's going to be characteristic of this true and greater

Adam that's what Paul outlines here in verse 15 the thing which is going to first characterize this true and greater Adam is to understand it as a free gift but the free gift is not like the trespass that's what Adam did our covenant head for if many died through one man's trespass much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many super abounded for many that just as Jesus is this new covenant head and what's going to cover characterize him is that it's understood as a free gift it's super abounding grace coherent and consistent with justice that's going to characterize this second covenant head is abounding grace verse 16 and the free gift that's this new covenant head is not like the result of that one man's sin for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation in other words it was as if we were sentenced and found guilty justice but the free gift following many trespasses the free gift comes to us after thousands and thousands and thousands of years of human wrongdoing and even though it's thousands and thousands and thousands of years of human wrongdoing that not only did we share in

Adam's sin that we sinned like Adam ourselves in our daily lives and that the free gift that's going to be accomplished by Jesus upon the cross for us the true and greater Adam is super abounding more grace than the flood the overwhelming earth covering flood of human wrongdoing verse 17 sorry verse 16 for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification that means that God declares us right with him that

condemnation is a legal term sentence is passed justice is done you are found guilty justification is that somehow or another God acting not in contradiction to justice something happens so that God in a judicial sense can declare us right with himself verse 17 if because of one man's trespass death reigned through that one man death reigns over you and me much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness and it doesn't say that life will reign over us it says that we will reign in life through the one man

Jesus Christ it's all more and verse 18 therefore as one trespass led to condemnation for all men so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men in other words Adam sin God reacts with justice all are sentenced in a way which means it means our eternal separation from him but Jesus' act of righteousness leads to us being declared right with God and actually receiving life verse 19 for as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous now I'm just going to pause here and maybe this will be our I'll just sort of wrap it up here but it's a very very very very very very important point behind it is the image of two trees and if you go into the going deeper text this week

[44 : 14] I give you the text of Genesis 2 and Genesis 3 and Mark 14 and then 1 Corinthians 15 and it's this plane with the image of two trees that all that God does is he sets before Adam as a sign that just that all he says there's many things but Adam is told that he there's this one tree in the garden that he can't eat and it's not so much that Adam eats the God knows God made us to eat but Adam doesn't just want to eat of that tree and it's because Adam makes the decision I want to be God I want to be God I want to be bigger I want to exalt myself I want to be bigger I want to have my own order I want to make my order the order that the created world should be

I don't want to just tend the garden I want to make the rules for the garden I want to and so he takes the fruit in the quest to be bigger and so all human beings under our covenant head falls many many many many thousands of years later there's a second tree but because of humanity's fall the first time the second tree is not in a perfect garden where God provides everything now the second tree is on a dusty hill controlled by world dominating imperial power and at that second tree the second Adam the true and greater Adam chooses that out of love for the father and obedience to the father and love for you and me that his descent and humiliation would continue that already he left the father's throne and he set aside his glory he set aside his divine prerogatives he set aside the fact that he lived in complete unbroken perfection and communion and union with the father and he sets all those things aside and remaining

God he takes into himself our human nature and he continues to descend to live a normal human life suffering the trials and temptations that we suffer only without completely and utterly untrustworthy and he lives a normal human life and then he comes to this part where he who is the true and greater Adam the second Adam that he has a choice as to whether or not his diminishment and becoming smaller and his obedience to the father whether it will mean that he would actually hang naked upon another tree surrounded by the soldiers of an imperial force mocked by his own people and whether he would be willing to be stripped naked and bleed and die and on the cross bear all of our rebellion and our sin and

Jesus is obedient and so he dies upon the tree the second tree the true and greater Adam and up until now all the way through the book of Romans all of the images of salvation have been in a sense negative that on the cross you could imagine it's as if above right up there all of the things all of the things that God has against you and everybody that you know has against you and it's as if all the charges are up there and Jesus dies upon the cross and those are all taken away he takes God's judgment or punishment for but what Romans 5 through this image of a second Adam and a second covenant head is trying to get before us is that what Jesus accomplishes for us on the cross is not just negative but it's positive just as in some way when I when

Adam acted in rebellion I acted in rebellion against God in some way when I put my faith and trust in Jesus as my new covenant head his perfect life of obedience becomes mine his life eternal life becomes mine his right standing with God becomes mine you see it's not just that all of our sins are taken away and we're left naked we actually have the life of Jesus and his perfect obedience and that's why works mean nothing it would be like me and I'm going to go to the biggest star in the galaxy unbelievably bright and I say gosh if I'm going to go there I better bring this pack of matches to add the fire to it well that's completely ridiculous

[49 : 40] I could have I could I could I could have bulging pockets like this and a backpack filled with matches which are my good deeds that somehow I can add to the biggest star in the galaxy it's

completely absurd when I by faith enter into what my new covenant head when I turn and say Jesus I need rescue not rules will you be my savior I enter into a new covenant head and his perfect life of obedience is now mine his life is mine his standing with God is mine and that's why as the gospel grips us we can take risks we can risk failure because our accomplishments aren't what's going to make us favorable or attractive to make us attractive to God it's it's it's why we in a sense can just rest in him and look at ourselves and look at the things that are going on and just and how it can start to shape us with confidence about the future that his obedience is mine and when you put your faith and trust in

Jesus it's yours no matter how wrecked up or imperfect your life or how successful your life is success just means you have more matches to bring to the brightest star in the galaxy let's stand Andrew could you put up the Romans 1 16 to 17 please I'd like you to read this with me and just before you read it you get a bit of a sense about the gospel the gospel is this good news of what Jesus has done for us on the cross you understand now that Jesus death upon the cross is power it's not just power to remove the bad things we've done from our record it's actual power of somehow or another his obedience becomes ours his life becomes ours and we understand that he does this for everyone and the way that we receive it is I have nothing to bring you I need you to rescue me and that's what believing is and that in the gospel that what God does we understand that it's right that it's justice but not undermining justice it's greater than justice and that this righteousness of God means that we're right with him and it's revealed we're told it by the Bible and we receive it from faith and what happens is that the longer you're a Christian the more you know you need faith it's faith to faith strength to strength faith to faith and that's how we live we live with a righteousness right standing that comes from God that we only receive by faith will you say this with me for I am not ashamed of the gospel with power of God for salvation to everyone who believes to the the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith as it is written the righteous shall live by faith father there's any of us here who have not yet put our faith and trust in Jesus we're still trying to think that the Bible is just about rules about how to be sanctified about how to fix our sexuality fix our marriage you know fix our friendships and if we that on the cross the perfect justice you never stop being just you're perfectly just thank you for Jesus dealing with all the wrong that we've done but more than that father thank you that you have made the human race to be a race that can have a covenant head and thank you father for the provision of Jesus to be a true and greater Adam that we can call to by faith and that we can enter into this new covenant with Jesus as our covenant head that his right standing his life his perfect obedience by the mystery of grace in your love somehow becomes ours father thank you for this father make us disciples of Jesus who are gripped by the gospel and now can live to bring you glory not ourselves but bring you glory to do good in the world and to share the gospel to bring you glory father make us disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel who live for your glory and to this we say amen