

Romans 5:12–21 "You Sin Because You Are A Sinner"

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 00] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah.

! It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?

The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian, checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.

Bowing your head in prayer, let's just pray. Father, we ask that you would continue to pour out your Holy Spirit upon us with gentle and deep power. Father, sometimes you say things that are weird to us in your Word, and we don't entirely know what to do with them. And sometimes, Father, that weirdness is really bothersome. And so, Father, we confess before you as Canadian Christians that some of your Word this morning is weird and bothersome, but we know it's true and good and beautiful. So we ask that your Holy Spirit would lead us and guide us into all truth. And we ask this in the precious name of Jesus. Amen. Please be seated.

So, if you came expecting a Mother's Day sermon, we generally don't do that, and I'm not doing it today. I'm not giving a Mother's Day sermon. I am going to do a bit of a prayer time later on, especially around Mother's Day, and that will happen later. And I'm also going to be doing something, I'm going to be doing something which is quite the first time I've done it here in the church.

[2 : 20] I don't know how many of you were paying close attention when Jeremy read the scripture text, but what Jeremy read is what we're going to look at. It's Romans chapter 5, verses 12 to 21, if you want to get your Bibles and sort of get ready to look at it. But there's lots of problems for Canadians in this text, and it is very weird. Just to give you one thing, it says, or at least appears to say, but I say it says, that there was an actual historical atom.

Now, obviously, that's a complicated truth in Canada in 2026. It's not what they teach at the University of Ottawa or McGill. It's not what the Supreme Court believes. It's very counter-cultural. So, one of the things I'm going to do today is I'm not going to actually talk about that directly. I'm going to just assume it and show you why it's actually sort of very, why it's actually really remarkable news that gives us hope in the face of death, that explains why it is that we feel compassion towards other human beings, and why it is that we have both a craving for alone time and time with others, and why are these things so important for us as human beings. And this text sheds profound and beautiful light on all of these topics. But what I'm going to do is, 12 minutes after the service is over, I'm going to sort of say during my farewell, I'll say there's coffee out there, you can all stay, and I'll say, I don't know, let's say it's 11.30, and I'll say at 11.42, I'm going to stand right here underneath this lectern, and if you want to ask me any questions, you can just come and ask me any question you want, and I'll give my best to give you an answer.

So, that's what I'm going to do. And for you folks online, you can email me. I don't know if I'll be able to have a chance to email you back all my answers and stuff, but feel free, if you have questions, just email me. And by the way, this might end up being an experiment we do once a month. I've

long wanted to make myself available to answer questions after the service. Questions are wonderful. A good question is very powerful. You can't grow in knowing the truth if you don't ask good questions, good honest questions. So, I'm, anyway, there you go. If nobody comes, that's fine. I'll just go back up and chat with people, but that's what we're going to do. So, what is this odd text? So, if you turn with me in your Bibles to Romans chapter 5, verses 12 and following, if you're wondering why we're looking at it, it's not because I like preaching on really weird and odd things. It's because we preach through either whole books or big chunks of the books. That's really good. It forces us to look at texts that we wouldn't normally look at, and such as a text like today, which I would guess that you could go to a church for a decade and never once have this text even referenced.

[5 : 01] So, it's there. Hopefully, this will be a great help to you. As I said, I think it's very beautiful and true. So, I'll just read the first verse. Actually, I'll read the first three verses, and then you'll see a little bit about what the issue is, and then I'll help you to try to understand it, hopefully. Pray for me if I'm having trouble. When I'm on my holidays and I'm in church and if the minister's having a hard time, I say to myself, God put me here today so I could pray for him while he's having a hard time. So, here's what the text says.

Therefore, so the therefore is it. What's happened is just before that they've been talking about how it is that if you put your faith and trust in Jesus, you can be made right with God, have peace with God, be reconciled to God. So, this is like, how is it that you can believe that this isn't just a series of useful fiction, like interesting fictions, but like really true, like truly true, like actually true, not just invented stories. So, therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all people because all sinned. You might, I don't know if it's up there under there, there's a dash now, and this is just, I'm not going to talk about all the things, right, but I just want to let you know something about how this, the text is structured.

Paul actually is very ungrammatical in this section. It's just, people have said to me that I'm, I always talk in asides, and I guess I'm like Paul. So, Paul is talking with this really huge idea, and then all of a sudden he says, I'm just going to stop talking because, whoa, I should just make a little reference to this, and then when he makes this little reference to this, he goes, whoa, I should make another little reference to something, and then he says, whoa, I began over here, I guess I should go back, and then that's what he does in verse 18. So, that's sort of how the text is structured.

There's this broken sentence. I'll read verse 12 again. Therefore, just as sin, that is a personal rebellion against God by doing evil and trying to be God yourself, it came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all human beings because all sinned. For sin indeed was in the world, here's his aside, before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 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.

Pretty odd. So, what's going on? If you could put up the first point, this text, what this text is like, it's as if you were to look at a pond, and on the pond you'd see lilies, and if you know, if you see the lilies, you know that the lilies go down, they have a root system that goes down, it's not pond all the way down. Eventually, the lilies have roots that go under the ground underneath that are the bottom of the pond.

And so, what this text is doing is it's like lilies that you notice, and it's going down into this bedrock of a series of Christian ideas and biblical ideas which are very profound, very true, very important, and answer a whole lot of things about how we live and how we're wired and what our yearnings and longings and desires are for. And so, the very first idea is that you need to understand that Paul is assuming as true that human beings were originally designed and created by the triune God. If you don't get that, nothing else is going to make any sense in this text. But that's the first big idea. Human beings were originally designed and created by the triune God. Now, this is earth-shattering.

[8 : 52] In terms of, if you were to actually take a course, like a good course, about different ways that people try to understand what human beings are, the entire pagan world, and in some ways the Quran assumes a pagan understanding of human beings, and in the pagan and Quranic understanding, human beings are made by God to be his slaves.

Or his food, in some case. That's why human beings were made. That's a pleasant thought. You can imagine the type of society that would be based on having that as your fundamental belief. In the more eastern types of religions, human beings are a tragic accident.

There originally was just this all, and there's different accounts as to why the all broke into individual bits of consciousness, but that's a tragic thing that has happened. And the goal is to get rid of any sense of individuality, and all of its desire and thinking to merge once again with the all. And that's what human beings are.

They're a tragic accident, who are going to move by rebirth and rebirth and rebirth until they finally move to the one. And then you have the idea, which is the idea primarily of what it's taught on one level in Canada, taught through naturalistic understandings of evolution, is that human beings fundamentally are just pure and utter accidents.

And if you read some of the more articulate philosophers who accept this naturalistic type of framework, materialistic type of framework, the universe doesn't give a hoot about any of us.

[10:30] And from the universe's point of view, there's absolutely no difference between Daniel, my friend there, the seat that he's sitting on, or the little microscopic creatures in the carpet, or the ants that are outside, or a piece of poop. There's no difference.

None such whatsoever. He just happens to be one type of accident, a piece of poop is another type of accident, and the universe is massively indifferent to everyone. And in these range of understandings, of fundamental understandings of human beings, what the Bible proclaims is something absolutely radically unique. It was that human beings were originally designed and created by the triune God to live and flourish in this creation. And that's why human beings are different from poop, and are different from cockroaches. That's why human beings should have integrity, and have freedom. That is why they have worth and value. And the worth and value is based on them being human beings, not the color of their skin, not their sexual orientation, not what they do or don't do, not their political beliefs.

Human beings, just by being originally created and designed by God, have worth and value and integrity that should be respected. Human beings are made in the image of God. And that's this fundamental big idea.

And the next little two points are just little bits that you need to add to it. I'm not going to say everything about what the Bible says about human beings, but the next one, if you could put up the next one, that'd be very helpful. Human beings were originally designed to be in personal communion with him, that is the triune God, and with other human beings. That's how God designed us. He designed you and me, he designed our human beings to have a personal communing with the triune God.

And he also created us to have an interpersonal communing. You know, he didn't design us to sort of be like a whole pile of, you know, individual little, well, you know, that's one of the problems that's happening with people, where they live a fantasy life online. And, you know, you see people who are friends, and all four of them are sitting looking at their phones, and there's no interaction. Like, that's moving in the opposite way of what God has designed human beings to be.

[12:52] And that explains why, you know, you think about it for a second, if that's the way God designed us to be, that explains why on one level, we want to respect each person as a person, and people understand that. But we also understand that there's, that we're made to be in some type of friendship and community. And maybe it's not the nuclear family, maybe it's not the extended family, maybe it's our friends or compatriots, but we have on one hand a desire to exercise our freedom, and we have a desire to have alone time and our own thoughts, but we also have a desire to be with other people. And it's only the biblical account that explains why it is that human beings are hardwired for this. Because God designed human beings to be in personal communion with him, which we don't entirely get, but with other human beings as well. And then here's the next point, if you could put it up. And this is really weird. And that is, to Canadians today, it's, it, and it's this, that human beings were designed to be in a covenant with him as a, as a whole. And I, I, sorry, I should edit that. I didn't have time to edit it properly.

The whole should be that we're all of us, it's like, we're designed to be in a covenant of solidarity with each other, with him. In other words, it's not just that, it's not just me, but in some ways, humanity as a whole, in solidarity with each other, are designed to have a relationship with God. Now, these ideas are going to, if, if, once you begin to meditate upon these ideas, you'll realize that everything that Paul is going to say afterwards actually makes a lot of sense. Now, this final thing, it's very counterintuitive to Canadians, but here's what you have to think about. Think about a science fiction movie. And, and there's, in the science fiction movie, aliens actually exist, right? And, and that's not very hard. What I think one of the best watched movies of this year has been Hail

Mary, right? All about meeting an alien life form. And that's sort of, that's, I guess I just, there's, that's a spoiler, but I think you see it in the, in the, in the credits or in the trailers. But imagine that there's, there really are aliens.

And, you know, they, they eventually go on the moon and land on the moon again. And as they're going along, they come across like an alien spaceship and alien artifacts. And they would look at this, I mean, that would be front page news. It would be like news for, for ever and ever here. And people would be studying it and trying to figure out what the different things in the gadgets do and what they don't do. And, you know, there'd be lots of debate about how, you know, you don't want to break it and all of that. And then maybe they're trying to figure out what it is. But the thing is, you know that it didn't happen by chance. You know, it was designed by an alien intelligence. And then maybe one day they come across something and they realize that's an alien version of a book. And then you realize, as the linguists start to work on it, that there's a language and you can fit, they can figure it out.

And you realize it's the manual of the designer of the ship about what everything in the ship is and how it works. Well, you'd want to read that. And you're going to expect the alien technology to be a bit weird. You're going to say to each other, whoa, you know, honey, that's really weird. Look at that. That this thing does this. Like, who would have ever thought that this does this? And they go, oh, honey, look at that. That's really weird. It does this, but it doesn't do that, right? That's just how we would think. We'd expect it to be weird. And here's the thing, that God has designed human beings to be not only a personal communion with him and personal communion with each other, but that is as a whole. All human beings as a whole have a type of solidarity. And as a whole, we are in a covenant with God. And by the way, this once again has profound explanatory power. Why is it that if I was to show on a big screen a picture of dogs being abused in Kazakhstan, let's say, my dogs wouldn't even look at it. Let's say we could even figure out a picture that we understand they can actually see it. They'd show no interest whatsoever. But why is it that if we see pictures of human beings being abused in Kazakhstan, it bothers us? Why is it that we would think less of another person if they said, oh, you know what, heck, they're just people in Kazakhstan. Who cares what happens to them?

[17:20] I don't care if they get abused and raped and pillaged. You'd go, there's something wrong with that person. You'd say, there's something missing if they don't have compassion. There's something missing.

And this has profound explanatory power as to why it is that we do have that compassion for other people. So these are the big ideas. So now that you've heard them, let's actually look at the text again. So if we could go back to verse 12, listen to the text. It goes like this. Therefore, it's trying to explain.

So what this text is saying is when we say that if you enter into Jesus, if you put your faith and trust into Jesus, if you take him at his word and take God as at his word, when Jesus says, come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me from gentle and lowly of heart for you will find rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light and you will find rest for your souls. Believe on him. Believe in me. When we actually take him at his word and believe what he says and who he is, and we have good reason to because he really did rise from the dead.

And he really did rise from that in the context of the most profound philosophy and system of thought and poetry that's ever been written. And we take him at his word and believe into him. We enter into union with him and it really is the case then that the death he died is dealing with all the punishment we deserve for all the wrong things we do and the times we fail to do the good things. And it really does mean that we have peace with God. It really does mean that we are made right with him. It really does mean that we are reconciled to God. All of these profound things aren't just stories. They're really true. They're really true. They're ontologically true, to use a really big word. And that's what the text is trying. That's why it says, therefore. Therefore, these things aren't just stories. The fact that Jesus rose from the dead isn't a story. It really happened. His whole letter is bearing witness from the early years that Jesus really did rise from the dead. And he really did appear to people. It really happened. And now he's saying these other profound truths, they're really true.

[19:35] They're really, really true. So verse 12, therefore, just as sin, that is personal pride, trying to say you're better than God, put God in second place while you're on first place.

And you're going to show him that you're really the boss. And you're going to do whatever you want to do. And you're going to be your own authority and your own law. And if not you, then your culture, your tribe, your ideology. And so therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned. So if you could put up the next point, it's this. You are not a sinner because you sin. You sin because you are a sinner. That's one way to understand it, right? I'll say it again. You are not a sinner because you sin. You sin because you are a sinner. So what this text is, so first of all, this is a really profoundly hopeful text. You know, if what they teach in university and in the courts and the media is true, and we're all just a result of blind chance, of cause and effect, there's nothing that exists other than just mind and matter, I mean, not mind and matter, just energy and matter, then you know what? Death absolutely wins, and it sucks to be you. And you have absolutely no hope because death wins. Don't let anybody else tell you that it doesn't. It just does. It's just naturally true. Death wins. But if death, human death, was not what God originally created, then there's hope. Then you can say, surely, God, if you do exist, I call out to you. I hope and trust that you who created human beings to be a certain particular way and not to have death, I pray that you will help me in the face of my death.

And what's going on here is, I remember I said the third point is that God created human beings to be in solidarity with each other, and the way he designed them, a design feature that that's how human beings were made, is that the human solidarity has a covenant head, and that covenant head was Adam.

[21 : 47] And God made that covenant head, Adam, to be like something. He's a type. It's not that Jesus is a type of Adam, but that Adam is a type of Christ. And so when that covenant head and human beings all in solidarity with him, and once again, this explains why it is so natural for human beings to understand representation, and that, you know, the head of the university speaks for the university. If you're in a lawsuit and you hire a lawyer and the lawyer acts on your behalf, we understand these things. They're deeply human. And they're not deeply human, and we go from them to think about God, but it's because that's the way reality is structured and we're hardwired that we understand and have these things in just about every single culture. And throughout all of time, we have these issues and a consistency of representation and communal, and what the representative does affects all of the community.

And what this is saying is that God designed Adam to be the head of this solidarity. And when Adam said, I will be like God, which means that I will be not just equal with the true God, but over him, and I will do what I think looks good. Every human being was touched with that rebellion. That's why the Bible teaches you don't you the Bible doesn't say you're a sinner because you sin. The Bible says you sin because you are a sinner. And it's because of that human rebellion that death entered into human existence. And it touches every single human being. It's a very profound thought, very wise, and it gives you profound hope. If this is true, Lord, have mercy. Have mercy. Have mercy on me and on my loved ones. There's one you can call out to. And I am here today to introduce you to him. We are here to introduce you to him whom you can call out to. Now, Paul has an aside. Paul is saying, whoa, okay. And now this little aside, which I'll just read in a moment. If you've followed along, you're a really, really careful reader. You remember that Paul's dealt with a whole pile of things in Romans chapter 2, in Romans chapter 3, in Romans chapter 4, up until now. And he just wants to make a little bit of an aside because he knows that we human beings are deeply addicted to thinking that the way to get right with God is to be a good person.

[24 : 21] And so even if we can't be a good person, maybe what we really need to get to be a good person is to hang out with the right people, or to have the right teacher, or to have the right guru. And that's how we're deeply addicted. We're deeply addicted to try it. Because we are in rebellion against God, we will try anything, any human thing, rather than call out to him. That's how we're wired. It's why, you know, if you listen to Richard Dawkins and other, like, leading atheists, they actually don't want there to be a God. They'll try any type of thing other than actually maybe calling out to God. And so that's what's going on here in verses 13 and 14. Look what it says. For sin indeed, this is an aside, right?

Okay, oh, he says like, oh, I better remember to remind people about this. For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. That's the law by Moses. But sin is not counted where there is no law. I'll explain that in a moment. 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 who was to come.

So what's going on here? If you remember in Romans chapter 2, Paul demonstrates that even if God said, I'm not going to use my own moral judgments to see that you can't live a good life. I'm just going to use your judgments. And if I just record your judgments and then show your life, you'll realize you don't even live up to your judgments. And so what Paul is saying is, for those of you who are addicted to trying to work out your own salvation and try to do anything other than that, here's the big thing that you don't understand. You're a sinner because you sin. You sin because you're a sinner.

Like, so you go to, you're a sinner going to your guru. You're a sinner trying to do good. You're a sinner doing all of these things. And it's just always going to end up showing up in all of those things you do, sometimes in just very, very, very, very, very tiny ways that are very, very subtle, but very potentially profound. And sometimes in massive ways, but you can't leave yourself to fix yourself. And wherever you go, and some people might say, well, why do they use Moses? Why didn't they use others? Like, you know, why doesn't he use, because who cares about Moses? Why don't they use Gautama Buddha or Krishna or Confucius or Brene Brown or Glennon Doyle or Tony Robbins or Eckhart Tolle or Marcus Aurelius? Well, because, you know, Paul is just saying, well, pick your, pick your person.

If you keep just searching for some other new moral teacher, the problem isn't find a moral teacher and techniques. The problem is that you are a sinner. And it's all connected. Just jump down, down to verse, remember, because I said it's an aside. Now, jump down to verse 20, where he makes it clear again. Now, the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. So what's he saying? It's like this. Imagine you have a cottage, and you're going up to the cottage. You meant to get there on time, but there was a traffic jam, and then you had a flat tire. And before you know it, you get into your cottage at around 10 o'clock at night, and you're having company come the next morning at around 10, and you're opening the cottage, and then you discover that you both forgot flashlights, and you discover that you forgot to charge your phones, and there's no lights in the house whatsoever because the power is out for some odd type of reason, and you want to start getting caught. And all you can do is you remember that there's two candles over in the corner. So you get two candles, and you light them, and you try to clean the cottage up with candles. And then the next morning, and it's a night where it's completely dark and cloudy. There's no starlight, no full moon. And the next morning, and you clean up the cottage the best you can.

[28 : 02] What happens the next morning when it's a beautiful sunny day, and the cottage has lots of windows? It looks as if you hadn't even cleaned up the cottage at all. Like you didn't even see 10% of all the crap. And what Paul is saying is you get a more perfect law, it's just going to show more crap in your life. So why does God give a perfect law? Well, here's a very good reason. Imagine that next week they announce that they've designed an inoculation that you can have. And if you take this inoculation, what it will do is this, it will create antibodies in the system within your body, so that the very first cancerous type cell that develops in your body, the very, very first one, you will get a throbbing pain in all of your knuckles of your left hand. Now let me tell you, everybody who knows anybody who's died of cancer, and any reason person would say, okay, once you figure out that it's safe, you'd say, I want to get inoculated.

Because what's the main key to beating cancer is early knowledge of it. And if you actually had something that would quickly show you that there's a cancer growing in you just by some pain, and that means you've got to call up your doctor, like right away, and they can begin tests to find the cancer and treat it, like you'd want to take that. And so why does God provide a perfect law, like in the Ten Commandments, and through Moses, and all of that? It's so you realize, I need help, God. Not so you can redefine your life to make yourself look like you're perfect, but to say, I need help, and call out to God. That's why he provided it. So then, this, I mean, it sounds a little bit weird now, and, but Paul says, okay, no, no, no, I've got to understand, they've got to understand, now that they understand that there's this, they're sinners because they sin, they, I, now, oh boy, I better start to explain to them why it is that, when I said that if you put your faith into Christ, like why is it that that actually works? Like why is it it's not just a fiction?

Why is it that the punishments you deserve is actually dealt with on him? Why is it that his perfect life of obedience actually stands for you? Why is it that he's the perfect penitent so you can be reconciled to God? Why is it that because of what he did actually means you have people, like why is it that it works? It's because Jesus is the new covenant head that you can enter by faith. The

same thing that is designed you in solidarity, God provides a new head, a new means that you enter, not by biology, not by simple transmission through, you know, of husband and wife coming together, it's by putting your faith and trust in him. There is a new kingdom, a new covenant that enters into this world that gives you, well, let's see what it gives you. Look what goes on to say, verse 15. He's going to describe this new covenant in these terms. What describes the new covenant? The new covenant, verse 15, is a free gift, and it's not at all like the trespass. For if many died through the 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. And in the original language, it's super abounded, like super, super, super duper abounded. And it's saying, well, okay, in Adam, this happened, this one guy did it, sin touched everybody, and what is it that he says? That people died as a result of it. But what happens with this new covenant, this new covenant brought by Jesus, his one act of redemption, it's a free gift, and it brings grace. And then he goes, oh, here's another thing he says, verse 16. And the free gift, that's how you understand what it is to be in Jesus, is not like the result of that one man's, Adam's sin. For the judgment following Adam's sin brought condemnation. In other words, you did something wrong, and now God doesn't ignore the wrong and the injustice and the evil that you have done and the lies and the selfishness and pride. He doesn't ignore it. In a sense, you have a sentence longer than your, or you have a list of offenses longer than your arm. Each one is judged. Each one you're found guilty. Each one will receive a punishment.

That's what condemnation means. But in Christ, the free gift following many trespasses brought, being declared right with God. In other words, God says, George's, if all the charges against George, good grief. If I was to, you know, he said, if I was to list all the charges against George, and you were to string them together, and they're just normal font, it would go to the moon and back and back and back and back, and that's how Jesus, that's how George comes to Jesus.

[33 : 20] And yet, in Jesus, the new type, all of that is on him. His perfect life, that's why he can die and take the punishment that I deserve for that sentence as long as my arm. And then there's another benefit. Look at verse 17. For if, because of one man's trespass, that's Adam, death, again he reminds us, death reigned. Death reigns. Death reigns. Nobody is defeated other than Christ and his resurrection.

But it comes through that one man. What happens? Look at the contrast. Much more. Well, those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of being made right with God, we reign in life through that one man, Jesus Christ. God did not design human beings to be under the crushing weight of death to destroy us. He designed us to go into the world and go into the universe and go into the galaxies and to flourish in life. And that will come back. And he goes on. There's more. Look at verse 18. By the way, the point is, if you could put the point up there, the point for all this, there is a greater grace-filled covenant of eternal life. That's the big point for this section. There is a greater grace-filled covenant with a new covenant head, and it's marked by eternal life and liberty and freedom. But look at verse 18. Therefore, as one trespass by Adam led to condemnation, I've already explained, for all human beings, so one act of righteousness, Jesus' perfect life and death upon the cross, leads to being made right with God, justification and life for all who enter that covenant. And there's more. Verse 19. For as by one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, that is Christ, the many will be made right with God. Now he says, I better remind them. The law came in not to give you a way to try to make a ladder to climb to heaven that you can climb yourself. No, the law came in to increase the trespass. He's going to explain more about that in chapter 7. I won't say anything about it now. You can wait till I get to chapter 7. But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.

What is God's heart for you? God takes no delight in the death of a sinner, but that you and I will turn from our wickedness and live. The message of the book of Ezekiel. Put in our liturgy, if you do morning and evening prayer, as a way to remind. That's God's heart for you. God's heart for you is that you would realize you are in Adam, and you sin because you are a sinner, and you're going to die, and you call out to God, and you come into Christ, and you discover all of these benefits that he wants you to actually reign in life. That's what his desire is. He wants you to know a super abundance of grace. And then it continues in verse 21, the final verse for today. So that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, his being making us right, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hallelujah. I mean, that's just so beautiful. Just a couple of takeaways. I don't know how this has touched you or affected you. Just four very quick takeaways. And if you can't write them down, or you can go online to look at it, or you can go on. I think the YouTube thing will have a link that we'll give to you. The first one is that, who does not want to know that the story of their life can have an ending, which is true and good and beautiful? Who doesn't want to know that? Who doesn't want to know that they can come to God in their brokenness? They can come to God with a record that would, if they put all the charges down, would go to the moon and back and back and back and back.

And who wants to know that at the end of their story, that, you know, you're born again, and God is designed, and now in Christ you have eternal life, and your future is one of superabundance grace. And this has all been publicly declared by God.

[37 : 39] This is now your destiny. And you might be having very, very hard times, and you will have very, very hard times, but those hard times do not define you. What defines you is this final word about you, and the final word about you is the story of your life will be good and true and beautiful.

And who doesn't want that? And this isn't just a fiction. This is true. Another one, who does not need a deeper life of gratitude for God's free gift of grace to you? Who doesn't need to be more grateful? You know, there's so many of us, and part of the problem with, you know, that doom scrolling and social media is it's making us feel inadequate. It's making us feel superior. It's making us feel angry. It's making us feel suspicious of people who differ of us, and sometimes on really trivially small points. It does all of these types of things. And I'm not saying you should never look on Instagram. I'm not saying anything like that, but I'm saying, don't we need to spend more time on looking at things that make us grateful? Wouldn't you rather be formed by gratitude?

Wouldn't you rather remember the things that come in services like that and what Christ has done for you and your eternal destiny in Him, and have that be that which you meditate upon and grow in gratitude?

gratitude? And it's in the context of gratitude to deal with the bad news about your health and the bad news about your finances and maybe the bad news about what some people have said about you. I'm not saying you don't know those things, but wouldn't you rather deal with those things and walk towards them in a spirit of gratitude for what God has done for you? Don't you think you would deal with it better if gratitude was what drives you as you try to walk towards and deals with it, rather than doom? Here's the third one. Who does not need help to live a life of persistence, impenitence, and pressing on? By the way, when I'm saying who does not, I need it.

[39 : 41] I'm a marsh wiggler. I can easily think of 53 things about to go bad. I need to live out of gratitude more, like I do. And, you know, the fact is that what we need is, you know, like I got an email just the other day that, you know, accused me of being a whole lot of bad things. And, you know, and probably most of it wasn't fair. But as I was sharing with you last week, I was smiling when I got it, not entirely, but afterwards that, well, I preach one thing and now God makes sure I have to deal with it. It's not just abstract, you know. And on one level, I have to say, well, some of these things might be a little bit tiny fair, but, well, they don't know I'm way worse than that. And Christ has accepted me. And I don't say that to make me then be complacent in dealing with it. But I need to persist in repenting of the things I've done wrong. And I need to persist in then trying to move on and amend my life. And I need to acknowledge the Christian life. I'm going to write a blog about this, hopefully, in the next week. This Christian life is like the game Snakes and Ladders. Do kids still play Snakes and Ladders? They don't play that anymore? Okay, there's this old game, you'd roll the dice, and you'd move around the board. And you land on one spot, there's a ladder. The goal is to get up to the first one. And you get on a ladder, and you go way up. And then you go on another one, there's a snake, and you go slide way down. And that's what human life is like if you're a Christian, you're discipleship. If you don't think that's true, you're not being honest with yourself. You know, sometimes you have this profound experience, and it's as if your spiritual life just goes way up to the next level.

And then maybe three weeks later, you have an email, or something comes to you about your sin, and you slide way back down there. And that's what you want to persist, knowing that Christ, you are in him. He will bring you to the end. And then finally, who does not need help? So if I need help to live a life, and these stories help me, I am in Christ. He is my covenant head. My sins really are forgiven. I really do have eternal life. Death and failure and accusations are not the final word about

me. Those are not the final word about me. And this doesn't mean I don't care about the wrong things I do. I can look at them and try to repent and try to change my life and then fall and change my life and keep pouring. And if I need this, you know what else I need? I need to extend grace to others and pray for others as they're trying to deal with the same thing. It is not right if I say, okay, all you guys, you've got to give me grace, and I don't have to give any grace to you. This is teaching us to extend grace to others. Who does not need help in extending grace and prayers to others that they will persist in penitence and pressing on? Brothers and sisters, 12 minutes after the service, you have questions about historical Adam, all that other type of stuff, I will be here.

I will try to answer your questions as best I can. This text is beautiful and wise and true. And if you do not yet know Jesus, you need to be born again. A point in time comes, you just have to say, God, I want to be Christ's. I want this to be true. I'm trusting you at your word. Could you take me as your child and make me born again? And there's no better time to do that prayer than today, right now. I invite you to stand.

Bow our heads in prayer. Father, it's a bit shocking when we read this text to realize that every single one of us are vastly worse than we realize. And every one of us are vastly more lost than we ever realized. But we give you thanks and praise, Father, that you reveal these things to us in the context of saying that your grace is super abundantly more and that you desire a super abundance of more to us. And so, Lord, help us to be patient and persist and curious and prayerful and thoughtful as we deal with the weirdness of what it means to be a human being and the truth of your word. And Father, make us open to these truths. And not just open in an intellectual sense, but may these truths be really, really, really, really deeply forming in our hearts.

[44 : 17] That we will walk towards our problems and disappointments and hard times and our good times as well, Father, deeply filled with gratitude for Christ and what he has done for us and how he has brought us into himself and made us right with you. So, Father, we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. And all God's people said, Amen.

Amen. Amen.