

# "Abounding Grace" Romans 5:12–21

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[ 0 : 00 ] Some of you, if you've been in the evangelical world for some time, would have been, are familiar rather, with John Piper, the pastor and theologian who led Bethlehem Baptist in Minneapolis for decades.

I bring him up just because, as we are going through Romans, we are in chapter 5. We've been in Romans for a few months now. John Piper started his sermon series in Romans in 1996, and he ended it in, I think, 2004.

It was something like 8 1/2 years. I might be getting the exact years wrong, but he spent 8 1/2 years in the book of Romans. 225 sermons to cover 443 verses. Wild. He crawled through each verse, parsing out the grammar and words and spending a ton of time just digging into this book of the Apostle Paul.

So, going into Romans, I thought about John Piper quite a bit. I thought, how on earth did he do this? And maybe more importantly, why on earth would he do this?

I mean, to take your time to go through almost verse by verse, you know, less than two verses per sermon on average. You know, you lose the flow of a letter, right? This is a letter, first and foremost, written to a group of people to be read in one shot.

[ 1 : 32 ] Nobody gets a letter from grandma or gets a letter from a friend. I don't know if anybody still is into pen pals. But you don't parse it out and read line by line, word by word, digging deep into the grammar.

Nevertheless, it's God's word, and every word counts and matters. But still, going into Romans, I'm like, why on earth would you do that?

And then I got to chapter 5, which we were in last week and we continue on in this. And you realize that the Apostle Paul has written a letter to a church, of course, but he has written something of a theological treatise that is unbelievably dense and so theologically rich.

And every sentence, every word, the grammar that he has chosen, everything about it is robust and full and absolutely pregnant with meaning, allusions to the past, typology.

He touches on creation, what it means to be human, who God is, how he has interacted with us, what salvation is, on and on and on and on. So, get to chapter 5, I get it.

[ 2 : 49 ] Now, just if anybody's worried, we are not going to spend the next, say, 4 years or 5 years in Romans. Our hope is to have it finished up in at least two more chunks. But we're going on, I'd say, a pretty good pace.

Nevertheless, Romans chapter 5, we're in the second part this morning, starting in verse 12. And it will help us, this chapter and this section of this chapter, will help us to understand how very deep and pervasive sin truly is.

Now, we've touched on sin, but Paul is going to explain to us the genesis of sin and why it isn't just a problem that affects some, but it is at the very core of what it means to live the human life in this world.

He will also tell us, in light of that sin, that pervasiveness of sin, the depth of sin, just how glorious the grace of God is.

It's an incredible chapter. We will do our best to read it and wrestle through it, but without a doubt, we will leave things unexplained.

[ 4 : 02 ] But that's just going to be the nature of how we're going to go through this second half of chapter 5. The text breaks up quite nicely and quite easily into three sections, which is always good for the preacher.

All of these sections address either Adam or Jesus or both, either comparing them with their similarities or contrasting them how they are different.

So it'll break up like this. First point, verses 12 to 14, we'll look at Adam and sin. The second portion, verses 15 to 17, we'll look at Christ and grace. And then finally, the remaining three verses, 18 to 21, we'll look at how Christ is the greater Adam. And I'll explain what that means shortly.

So if you have a scripture journal, you can turn with me to Romans chapter 5. We'll be at the bottom of page 24. There are still, I think we have some Bibles. Now, normally I'd say just point you back at the welcome table.

[ 5 : 05 ] The welcome table is out those doors and around the side, but you can go at any time to grab one and follow along. It would be a great help if you could follow along with the text as we read it. So before we open up into verse 12 and 13, a bit of a reminder of what we looked at last week in chapter 5, verses 1 to 11.

In it, last week, Paul explained how the reconciliation that God offers through Christ, how it came about. And he contrasts how sin entered the world.

And he talked about suffering. And in the end, how we can expect, because of what Christ has done, to live a life that is full of glory.

In this section, he's going to continue on with this line of argumentation. And he connects it by anticipating a potential objection.

What's interesting here, before I read verses 12 and a portion of 13, is that Paul jumps into this explanation where he's anticipating an objection.

[ 6 : 18 ] And it's as if he is contrasting how sin came through the world by one man. We'll read shortly. But then it's like he stops. And he stops midway through his compare and contrast here.

See if you can pick it up with me. Look at verse 12. Therefore, and that's therefore connects us with 5, 1 to 11. 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.

And then verse 13. For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. I'll pause quickly there. Did you catch that? So normally you'd say something like, just as sin came into the world through one man, so, and then you contrast it with, well, we'll see what Paul will contrast it to. But what he doesn't do is he doesn't complete his compare and contrast. Right off of that in verse 13. Paul breaks from this comparison to address this objection.

How on earth is it possible for sin and death to spread to all people through one man? So he's about to compare and contrast. And then it's like he hammers on the brakes, realizing how audacious and potentially offensive this statement is.

[ 7 : 39 ] And he's going to take some time to explain it for us. How on earth is it possible for sin and death to spread to all people through one man?

It's a real objection in the first century. What's interesting is that this objection persists today. To understand it, we need to understand what happened with Adam and do a bit of homework.

Now, we touched on this in a previous sermon, and this is where this letter is so theologically dense. So I'll try to sum it up in a paragraph or two.

What Paul is referring to is what Christians have called original sin or the fall. It's standard across the Western church, for sure. Original sin, that moment where the idyllic life that God created for humanity came crashing down because Adam tried to reverse the roles.

Instead of understanding him as a creature, a creation of God, and God as the uncreated one, Adam as the vassal, God as the Lord, Adam tried to reverse this.

[ 8 : 50 ] He tried to make himself in the place of God as Lord, himself as the infinite one, and God as something else. Now, it turns out that something else is not who God is and not who the scriptures communicate God to be.

So what we have in the garden is the complete breakdown and the unleashing of a chain reaction where sin enters the world.

Where Adam no longer worships God, no longer participates in the stewardship of God's creation, no more do we see a deep, personal, vulnerable, loving, intimate relationship between God and man.

Instead, this chain reaction comes. Sin enters the world, and then death, both in a physical and a spiritual sense, spread to all people because all have sinned.

The question that is important for us to ask is whether we are sinful, is whether we are all sinful, and by extension, are we acquainted with death because we sin like Adam, or because we sinned in

and with Adam?

[10:10] Stick with me, because this is where I think it's helpful to have a handle on some Greek, which I don't have the greatest handle on, but I have some great commentaries that help me with this. So, here's the question again.

Do we sin, are we sinful because we are sinning like Adam, or because we sinned in and with him? If it's the former, then this objection seems to be easily answered. Because if death is a result of sin, and we all sin like Adam, then we are all deserving of death.

But that is not actually what the text says. It says that sin and death came to all because we all have sinned. So, what is happening?

Again, it's helpful if we have a handle on the grammar, but just to sum it up quickly, Paul is telling us that all people sinned in one act in the past.

[11:12] He is saying that the sin that makes us sinners aren't because we continue on a lifestyle of sin, which we do, but because in some way, in some fashion, we sinned in the past.

And the verbiage that he uses, the tense he uses, is a tense that conveys a completed act in the past.

Okay? It's a past sin. And whether or not it pours into the future, that's a side issue. But what Paul is saying is that we are all under sin, all subject to death, because we sinned in the past.

We participate in Adam's one sin. And this one sin unleashed death into the world. We are active participants with Adam. Now, Paul's going to continue on here to explain it.

But first, if it seems awkward and kind of nitpicky, in the original language, the original hearers, it would have seemed just as awkward.

[12:22] Okay? You don't talk about somebody who lives today and talk about how they have sinned hundreds, thousands of years prior.

That's not something you'd say in the first century. It's not something you'd say today. But Paul is deliberately using this past tense to describe what's happening here.

So anyways, Paul continues on to build on this shocking truth in the next section. Read with me 13 to 14. And then we'll try to unpack this a bit more. For sin indeed was in the world 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 who was to come.

Sin and death do not come when the law is given but before. Paul is not saying that sin does not exist unless there is a law. What he is simply saying is that the law, which comes later, simply it shows us in a more explicit way what sin looks like.

[13:29] But what he is saying here is that even though there wasn't a law, wrongdoing existed. And we know that because death, Paul says, reigned from Adam to Moses, meaning the time before the law was given.

Now if you are unfamiliar with the biblical story, I'll try to do a really quick 30-second summary. Adam and Eve fall. Abraham is promised.

Now we looked at Abraham a couple weeks ago, right, in chapter 4. A bunch of other really important stuff happens. Israel goes into Egyptian slavery. God saves them after 400 years, brings them out to the desert, on the way to the promised land, and sometime in between his salvation out of slavery and into the promised land, God gives Israel a law.

Okay? I hope that kind of situates you. That's all I'm going to say about it. We can talk afterwards. But at that time in between Adam and the giving of the law, it's not as if this idyllic life continued, or there wasn't wrongdoing, or there wasn't sin.

No, it certainly did exist. The law came afterwards. The law only accentuated or made explicit what already was happening in the history of God's people and in the world.

[14:45] So, even without the law, that explicitly stipulates God's will, explicitly stipulates what is right and wrong, all people from every place and every culture, are guilty of sin.

For the sin we are guilty of was in and through Adam, and it means that death and everything associated with death reigns over the just and the unjust.

The really, really nice people in your life, the terribly rude people in your life. The young, the old, the men, the women, everybody that you know, everybody that you know is touched and operates under sin and death.

You see, we fall prey to this false promise that what is really needed is more education. You see, education is the problem.

We need to get people out of ignorance and into knowledge, and then life will get better. Or maybe it's the alleviation of suffering. People, when they're suffering, when poverty happens, they get desperate.

[15:49] That's when they commit the sinful acts. By the way, that's all true, by and large. Maybe the problem is we haven't achieved enough progress. We don't have enough wealth.

There's not enough relational harmony. You know what? Our roads are just terrible. Have you driven down Merrillville? It's horrendous. They'll drive anybody bananas. So we need good infrastructure.

We need safety regulations. So on and so forth. The list continues and continues. And these things are excellent, and they're worthy of pursuits. And they make the world we live in, the city that we belong, a more functional, good, and safe and comfortable place to live.

I don't want to downplay any of that at all. These things are excellent, and they're worthy of our pursuit. But this text tells us that the human problem of sin and death is far greater than any solution that we might come up with.

It is so widespread and so pervasive because it goes all the way back to the beginning, to our origin. In fact, sin and death, it's a key part of our origin story.

[16:59] Connected to Adam himself, first father. Such sin and death, it is what marks us as human beings. But even so, why and how did we sin in and through Adam?

I don't think I've answered that question yet. We get a clue in the latter half, especially later on in verses 18. But it's a good question that can be a very difficult one for us Westerners to grasp because we have a very heavy emphasis on individualism and autonomy.

Paul tells us that Adam, especially at the tail end of verse 14, that Adam was a type of the one who was to come. So what is a type, and what is he talking about?

In the Bible, typology is a very important way to read the Scriptures. It can get overblown and you can find types everywhere. But a type simply is something that, say, happens, especially in the Old Testament, that is a shadow of something to come.

It's almost like a trailer of something to come. If you're, I don't know, do people watch trailers anymore? It's like there's a trailer that comes out, it gives you a taste of what the movie will be like, but you're not going to get the full picture of what that movie is unless you go to see the movie.

[18:19] The type is like that. Adam is a type. So what is he a type of? We'll get into this in a bit more depth, but Adam is a representative for us.

Now, the type of one is to come, we'll see, is Christ. But what Paul is referring to here is that Adam is our representative head. He is the one who represents us in the same way that an MP represents you in the commons, or if you are a part of a union.

A union rep represents you in a collective bargaining situation. Adam is our representative. He is our head. We are in solidarity with him, so what he does is imputed or counted to us.

So, if you guys remember, we've looked at this a little bit back in chapter 3, but here's the problem, and this is where the rub is for us.

The difference with Adam is that unlike being represented by an MP or by a union rep, is that you don't have agency in the matter. The scriptures are telling you that you can't move to a different constituency and change your MP, or vote him or her out at the next election.

[19:38] You can't vote Adam out of your life. You can't join another union or just quit your job and go into a different industry. Adam represents you whether you like it or not.

He is your representative head. We do not have agency in the matter. But even if we could have a better representative, maybe we could pick our own representative.

Maybe we would be our own representative who's going to speak for me? I'm going to speak for me. Do you think you could do better than Adam? It's a very important question because God is the one who gave us Adam as a representative head.

He is the one who made the best possible environment for human beings to flourish. Adam was without sin. He was without blemish.

He didn't have a history that he was trying to hide. He wasn't lacking in any kind of way. He was the perfect human being. He was the best of us.

[ 20 : 39 ] Okay? He was the best of us. And if he fell as our representative head, could we truly find a better one? It's an interesting question to wrestle through because if we are frustrated with what Paul is saying here that we don't have a say in the matter, that we are damned to a life of sin and death because of what happened with Adam, so much so that his sin was really our sin, then the question is, can you do better?

Is there another way? You see, headship or representation, as frustrating as it may be, is actually good news. Okay? It's good news. Why is it good news? Because God has called Adam a type of the one to come.

Again, look with me at verses 14. We'll look at all of verse 14 and then I'll emphasize the last part that I want to draw your attention to. 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 the hope is that even though Adam was the best of us and he fell, that the type that he is hopefully is going to point to a perfect version, a better version.

And Adam 2.0, where all the bugs are worked out. Okay? Someone who is perfect and without blemish, who does not have the ability to sin. Okay?

[ 22 : 07 ] He's not riddled with selfishness and pride. Paul gives a clue here. And then this brings us to our second point.

Verses 15 to 17. And we're going to look at Christ and grace. So how then are Adam now, Paul's going to move on to compare and contrast Adam and Jesus, looking at how they're contrasted, how they are dissimilar.

Adam's a type of the one to come, but in so much as he is just our representative head. Okay? So Christ also is a representative of head. And Paul is going to say in this next section, that's where the similarities end.

Almost certainly where the similarities end. Look with me at verses 15. And I'll just say this really quickly. How are Adam and Jesus dissimilar? There are many ways.

I think the Apostle Paul will spell out at least three, but we'll look at two of them. The first is that they're dissimilar in the nature of their actions. Look with me at verses 15.

[ 23 : 12 ] Yeah, just verse 15. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, talking about Adam in the garden, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many.

So, we've talked about it. The trespass of Adam that Paul is referring to is the rebellion and idolatry that happens in the garden. Adam, he elevates himself.

Alright? He does not want to worship God. He wants to be worshipped. His will is what matters, not God's will. So, Adam, as our representative head, did what we would have done.

Therefore, as we have seen in that previous section, death reigns in us as it did Adam. Compare that to Christ. Christ doesn't self-promote himself, does he?

Upon the cross, what does Jesus do? He sacrifices himself. It is the perfect example of humility.

And now, this one act of righteousness that Jesus does on the cross, it becomes our righteousness.

[ 24 : 21 ] Interestingly, why? Because now, Christ is our head. And that is where the connection between Adam and Christ begin and almost certainly end. Just as Adam was our representative head, now Christ is our representative head.

And because sin came to us because of our connection with Adam, now righteousness comes to us because of our connection with Christ. Christ is now our representative head.

He is not like the old Adam who, through the act of disobedience, brought death. Instead, through his act of self-sacrificial giving, it says that we are given life.

The nature of the first Adam is to bring death. The nature of the second Adam, the Adam 2.0, if you will, is to give life. One self-exalts, the other lays down his life.

One is prideful, one is humble. We have two separate, separate, very different kinds of Adams. The second difference is the immediate result and then the ultimate effects of their actions.

[ 25 : 26 ] Look with me at verses 16 and 17. By the way, if you're a bit of a, a grammar nerd or you enjoy getting deep, going deep dives into scripture, you'll notice in verses 15 and then also in verses 16 and 17, Paul uses a not like much more language to compare and contrast Jesus and Adam.

And he does it here for the second difference. This is what he says, verse 16. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation

but the free gift follows many trespasses.

Following many trespasses brought justification. Verse 17, for if because of one man's trespass death reigned through that one man, bit of a separation here, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

Guys, that is a thick sentence. It's a tough one to get our minds around. But here's an attempt. Adam's sin brought death and condemnation. That was the immediate results of his sin.

Adam sins in the garden. He is rightly judged and condemned and he is banished from the presence of God. That's what happens in the garden. Adam and Eve, they were barred from entering the garden, to re-enter the garden.

[ 26 : 54 ] Because they were disconnected from the source of life, they became cut roses. They were beautiful. Mankind is beautiful, capable of much, but disconnected from the source of life.

We bloom once, we do not bloom again. But what of Christ? On the cross, Christ Jesus, he justifies us. We have spent a fair amount of time examining this in Romans thus far.

But in essence, it means that before God, we are made right. And given the very standing and stature of Christ himself, even more than that, the ultimate effects of Christ's death on the cross is that death no longer reigns, but life does.

It's like we are reconnected to the source of life in some miraculous way, grafted into a living tree, or if we're going to use the rose analogy, a living bush.

Even more than that, the ultimate effect is that, is not just that life reigns over death, but it says actually that we will reign in life through Christ.

[ 28 : 03 ] This is where it's unbelievably dense, where Paul's getting into an absolute theological treatise here. Really what Paul is saying here is that because, again, thinking of headship, thinking about Christ being our representative head, what happens to Christ as our head is what happens with us, and what happens with Christ.

He rises from the grave, he ascends into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God himself to rule and reign over this world. Paul is saying that we get to participate in that in some kind of way. We are not Christ, we will never be Christ, but we are so connected with him. He is our head, we are the body, he represents us, he is Adam 2.0, and Paul is saying in this text that we will reign in life.

What that looks like, how that will ultimately unfurl, it's hard to understand and comprehend in its fullness, but what it ultimately says is that death no longer has a final word.

Life will always triumph, death, death, and that the grave is truly robbed of its power, truly robbed of its power. Our destiny is the same as Christ's, to be in the presence of God forever.

[ 29 : 17 ] You notice how we're starting to see how Jesus is the better Adam? Adam being completely removed from the presence of God, never to be allowed back in, and what does Christ do?

He is in the presence of God, he is God himself, and he brings us with him. He is our representative head, so where he goes, we go also.

One additional point before we get to our third and final point, and this is key, both for being under this new representative head and for the gospel itself. Notice in verses 15 to 17 how many times Paul uses the term free gift, okay?

I'll just read a bit, but the free gift is not like the trespass. The free gift by the grace of that one Jesus Christ, the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin.

The free gift following many trespasses and so on and so forth. Five times in three verses he uses the term free gift. And then three more times he speaks of the grace of God.

[ 30 : 23 ] So why the emphasis on gift and grace? And then why even mention that the gift is free? Is that not a kind of redundancy? I mean, it's a, people do this, I'm sure I've done this.

If you give a gift with, we can give gifts with strings attached. They're not really great gifts, if that's the case. It takes the joy out of it. But in its essence, a gift is free, right?

You're giving somebody something that they didn't pay for because you want to, because it's a joy to do so. So it seems a bit redundant for Paul to say the free gift. Why is he emphasizing grace and gift in this way?

I think it goes back to the ultimate effect of Christ, namely, that we will reign with him. You see, if we were to have access, sorry, if we were to have success and victory in anything, as again, broken,

sinful human beings, we want to take credit for it, whether in small victories or even in eternal life. I wonder if this is especially the case for some of us here this morning. You've studied, you've saved, you've made right decisions, you have taken risks, but they're calculated risks.

[ 31 : 37 ] You've exercised, you've eaten well, you've raised children with good values, or you've been a fantastic volunteer, you've done all the things right, and these are all wonderful things, but if any of these things are done in such a way as to garner eternal life, or garner salvation, or garner reputational bliss, so to speak, then what we are doing ultimately is trying to buy something that is not for sale that God only gives as a gift.

And we take something that is good and wonderful that is salvation, and we say, I want a part to play in earning this. I do not like the idea of being gifted something without taking some kind of credit for it, but when we do that, it becomes utterly useless, because the gift no longer is a gift. We are trying to earn our salvation by our own works, but friends, you need the grace of God, and that grace of God is a free gift, and Paul is saying, listen, if you make it into anything else, it loses all its power, and it can be a very difficult thing for us to accept, especially if we are of the variety of people that like to be somewhat self-made, like to work hard and do good.

It's a very hard thing to just receive something that is so unbelievably great, but as hard as that may be to accept, this is really the only thing that brings full and lasting freedom.

For our eternal life is not contingent on our best efforts, but on Christ's everlasting gift. Christ is truly the greater Adam, and this leads us into our third and final point, starting in verse 18, and I'll read to the end of the chapter.

[ 33 : 30 ] Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification in life for all men. For as by the one man, that again, Adam, for as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin is increased, grace abounded all the more, so that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul returns to his half-completed sentence in verse 12. He completes the comparison between Adam and Christ, and we can see this in how Paul structures this paragraph with as so.

That's how he's going to compare and contrast it, as so. Verses 12, 18, 19, and 21. And in doing so, he's going to highlight the supremacy of Christ and what he has done over and above Adam.

How great is the grace of God? Paul asks, so great that the one act of righteousness by Christ renders the power and consequences of sin and death powerless.

[ 34 : 45 ] One act and sin is completely emptied of power. Christ, upon the cross, does the most righteous thing and it says that he redeems the world.

But here's an interesting thing, because if you go back to the second half of verse 18, I'll read the full thing. This is what it says, therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification in life for all men.

The question, I think, is an important question to ask. Is Paul saying that on the cross, Jesus saves all people? Is there a universalism where regardless of how we respond to Christ, because we are represented by him, okay, are we then saved by him?

Is Paul saying that all really means all in verse 18? Listen, if we haven't gotten in the weeds enough in this chapter, we're going to go a bit deeper in.

Listen, this next section, I've got to ask for a bit of grace. I understand enough to be a bit dangerous. But what I don't understand can be a bit dangerous as well.

[ 36 : 05 ] When it comes to the biblical understanding of salvation, some theologians and very excellent ones subscribe to an idea of double predestination. The idea that God predestines some to election and salvation, but then elects some for hell and damnation.

salvation. And as a result, Christ's sacrifice on the cross is only for the elect and not for the world. However, a passage like this, what we have in chapter 15, 18, and on to the end of the chapter, a passage like this makes an audacious claim that God in the one act of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross truly died to atone for all the sins for all time.

Therefore, Christ's death is universal in its sufficiency and scope. Universal in its sufficiency and scope. Okay? When we consider how the one act of Adam's rebellion has permeated all of humanity, okay, Adam's rebellion is also, in a sense, universal in scope, it stands to reason that the

one act of Christ, the second Adam, should likewise carry this universality for all people. The redemption must fit the sin. And I think I would be a heretic if I paused there, if I ended there. Because we need to be careful with reading what Paul says and what he doesn't say. I think Paul, in his excitement, and I don't say that to dismiss him at all, but his excitement in understanding how grand and fantastic the salvation of Christ truly was upon the cross, he gets as close to the line of universalism as possible.

[ 38 : 02 ] Okay, but he doesn't cross it. We need to be careful to not put words in Paul's mouth or defend a belief that the church has never held in finding a random proof text to fit it.

In some ways it would be wonderful if universalism was true. Okay, I have family members that have died without knowing Christ. Right? I would love for them to be in heaven with me.

Okay, if, say it this way, if universalism, if you scoff at it, and there's not an ounce of you that wishes it could be true in some way, shape, or form, your heart might be a bit cold.

It might be. I'm not saying it is, but it might be. Nevertheless, it's not something that the Bible will teach. Again, we need to be careful here, because Paul isn't saying that this universally sufficient atonement is universally applied.

Okay? Instead, we see that although I would argue that it is universally sufficient what Christ does on the cross, so that if hypothetically every single person put their faith in Christ, they would truly be saved, it is particular in its application.

[ 39 : 25 ] And how do we know this? Well, let's go back one verse in verse 17. This is what it says. For if because of one man's trespass, death reigns through that one man, much more will those, here's the key bit, who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

You see, Jesus' death on the cross was so very great, okay, dying for the sins of the world. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

But it's still a gift that must be received. And how do we receive it? By faith. Now, why do some people receive it gladly and some don't? I think there truly is a doctrine of election.

we're not going to talk about it. And to be perfectly honest, there is a high degree of mystery that who knows the mind of God? Why? Some go to heaven and some don't.

Okay? But nevertheless, there is this call to receive what Christ has given. To receive it. To not stand on our own merit.

[ 40 : 41 ] To not stand on our own self. promotion, but to humble ourselves and say, I can't get salvation. I can't beat sin.

I can't conquer death. But you have. So I'm trusting you. You are my new head. You are Adam 2.0. You're the one that I'm going to trust. I'm going to receive this gift.

God truly in Christ has proven to the world that he doesn't want to see people die. And he doesn't want to see death persist. Christ truly is the greater Adam.

Just as through Adam, the first representative head of mankind, sin became universal, so too did righteousness come into the world by the second and greater Adam.

friends, let us think about this and dwell upon it and receive it. This free gift given to us. Nothing is needed to be added to it.

[ 41 : 43 ] It doesn't need a fix of some kind of way. There are no bugs that need to be worked out. It is perfect and it is yours. Will you receive it? You see the grace of God given to us in the obedient, justifying, righteous death of Christ is far greater than the effects of sin.

In fact, Paul says that grace abounded all the more. Where sin is, grace abounds all the more. Literally, grace super or hyper abounded, which is to say that the gift of eternal life, it towers over death.

Death is strong and if you've tasted death in any kind of way, you will know that that is quite the feat. It is like an ant standing walking, whatever ants do, do they stand existing next to the sea and tower, only infinitely greater.

Life towers over death. Wherever there is sin, there is abundantly more grace. There is abundantly more life. So grace is superior to sin, life to death, the free gift to sin earned, Christ's solution to Adam's problem, Christ himself over Adam.

He is, if you receive his gift this morning, if you receive his gift this morning, he is your new representative head. And where he goes, you will go also.

[ 43 : 12 ] And friends, he is at the highest height. Will you go there with him?