

ROMANS 5

In chapter 4, Paul went back to Abraham and David to explain how God declares believing sinners righteous; now he goes all the way back to Adam. Adam's sin passed sin and death on to the whole human race, but Christ's obedience gives righteousness and life to all who trust Him. In our first birth, we became condemned children of Adam; but in our second birth, we are the forgiven children of God. Note the blessings of justification.

Riches (1–5). Peace, access into God's grace, joy, hope, love, the Holy Spirit—what riches we have in Christ! And trials work *for* us, not *against* us, and develop Christian character. How rich we are!

Reconciliation (6–11). We are at peace with God and need not be afraid. If He did so much for us when we were enemies, think what He will do for us now that we are His children!

Reigning (12–21). When we belonged to the old creation under Adam, death and sin reigned; now that we are in Christ in the new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), grace is reigning, *and we are reigning in life* (v. 17). You can live like a king by the grace of God!

ROMANS 6

Being a Christian is *a matter of life or death* (vv. 1–11). Persons who do not understand the grace of God argue, "If God is gracious, then we should sin more so we receive more grace." Those who trust Christ are identified with Him by the Spirit in His death, burial, and resurrection, as pictured in baptism. The old life is buried! We can reckon it dead (v. 11) and walk in newness of resurrection life.

Being a Christian is *a matter of bondage or freedom* (vv. 12–22). Who is your master, Jesus Christ or the old life? You are not under the authority of Moses (v. 15), but that does not mean you have freedom to break God's moral law (8:1–5). Yield yourself to the Lord; He is the most wonderful Master, and the "salary" He pays lasts forever.

Being a Christian is *a matter of rewards or wages* (v. 23). We quote this verse as we witness to the lost, and rightly so; but Paul wrote it originally to believers. Although God forgives the sins of His children, He may not stop the painful consequences of sin. The pleasures of sin are never compensated for by the wages of sin. Sinning is not worth it!

ROMANS 7

Believers are not under the law, but that does not give them license to become outlaws. They have a new life (6:1–11) and a new Master (6:12–23), and they also have a new love: they are *married to Christ* (vv. 1–6). If a marriage must be based on laws instead of love, it is going to make for an unhappy home.

If the law cannot change us or control us, what good is it? Its purpose is to reveal sin, and it does its job well (v. 7). Paul learned that the law even aroused evil desires in him (v. 8). If something as holy as God’s law (v. 12) can arouse sinful desires, what wicked sinners we must be!

Law brings out the worst in us, but love brings out the best in us. The Holy Spirit within us helps us to do what God wants us to do (Rom. 8:1–5) and to be what God wants us to be (Gal. 5:22–23). Keep your love relationship with the Lord alive and exciting, and you will have righteousness instead of wretchedness.

ROMANS 8

Paul asked, “Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (7:24). This chapter gives the answer: the Holy Spirit of God. The blessings He brings make us “more than conquerors” (v. 37)!

Life (1–11). When God saved you, He gave you a new life, not a new law; as you yield to that life, you obey His law. Keep your mind centered on the things of the Lord (Col. 3:1–4) and seek to please God in all things. Let the Spirit live His life in you.

Liberty (12–17). We enter God’s family by the new birth, not by adoption (John 3); but adoption gives us an adult standing in His family. He deals with us as mature sons and daughters and not as “little children.” We can talk (“Abba, Father” [v. 15]), walk, and use our inheritance right now. We are free, but we are still debtors to the Lord (v. 12).

Hope (18–25). We are not frustrated by the suffering we experience or see in our world because we have hope. When Jesus returns, we will enter into glorious liberty! The Spirit is the beginning of the harvest and assures us that the best is yet to come.

Guidance (26–30). God’s purpose is to make His children like His Son, and He will succeed. The Spirit intercedes for us and guides us as we pray, and the circumstances of life work for our good, no matter how painful they may be.

Love (31–39). The Spirit of God makes the love of God real to us (5:5; John 14:23–27). The Father is for us (vv. 31–32), the Son is for us (v. 34), and the Spirit is for us (vv. 26–27). Nothing can separate us from His love. Is there any reason why we should not be “more than conquerors”?