***What has the Reign of Grace Provided you?
RO64-01***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 5:21. We have in this verse Paul's final statement about human salvation.

**Two Reigning Monarchs**

He is presenting this final statement in the form of an analogy of two reigning monarchs. Sin is one of the monarchs, and it exercises a reign of terror over mankind through death. The other monarch is grace, and it reigns now on the basis of absolute righteousness provided through Jesus Christ in His death on the cross.

Both of these reigns, you will see, are again related to the two key personalities that the apostle Paul has been consistently directing our attention to throughout this whole final section of Romans 5, and that is Adam and Jesus Christ. Adam brought about the reign of sin onto death. Jesus Christ brought about the reign of righteousness unto eternal life.

The old sin nature is the sin to which he is referring in verse 21, when he says, "That as sin has reigned unto death." The old sin nature exercised a tyranny which degrades, corrupts, and humiliates a person, and it ultimately produces death. The grace of God, on the other hand, has more than neutralized the reign of sin, and has completely reversed its effects. The reign of death through sin seemed irreversible. That was the situation that mankind faced. It seemed irreversible. To people who are unbelievers, the reign of sin in their lives often seems irreversible until the grace of God comes into the picture, and then the power of sin is stripped. Its authority is removed.

The grace of God, therefore, is all the more glorious in view of the terror that the reign of sin imposed upon mankind. What grace had to overcome in the way of man's sin was something enormous, horrendous, and hideous. Therefore, the grace of God stands up with all the more glorious relief.

**Grace Means a Gift**

The grace that God has given us has to come as a gift, or it cannot be grace. That's a very simple statement. But if you understand it (number one), and if you believe it (number two), you are way ahead of most church people who have never understood that the word grace means gift. It cannot be by grace if it is not a gift. Therefore, the introduction of any kind of human doing is a denial of grace. It's a neutralizing of grace, and it is a very dangerous thing to do. It has eternal consequences.

I still do not get over the shock when I realize that every single human being in this world that has tried to put anything besides grace upon that throne of authority is lost. Anybody who has tried to put anything upon that grace throne is lost, and lost forever. If you have tried to put anything in the way of a ritual up there, you're lost. The old sin nature is so deceptive.

**Roman Catholics**

How many Roman Catholics have I heard say, "Yes, Christ died for our sins? His death is what it's all based on. But your good works (your good life) will put you in a position where you will deserve to benefit what Christ has done. You will merit the merits of Christ." That is the way the priest puts it. Now that's a notion right out of hell itself. Every Roman Catholic, including the pope, who expects to be saved by grace plus something he has done is in hell, and is going to hell. Everybody who thinks he can add some ritual like water baptism is at this moment in time lost.

**Mormons**

Every Mormon (all four million of them) are lost. They're lost. They're going to hell. They're headed for the lake of fire. And when I said that to them in Salt Lake City, they looked at me like I was some kind of a madman, because they do not understand Paul's principle here at the end of Romans 5 – that grace and works are mutually exclusive, and that one aspect of human doing completely neutralizes the grace of God. And Mormons are taught that they must have water baptism to be saved. They must have the laying on of the hands of the official so-called priesthood. They must perform certain other functions. And when they've done it all (when the package is complete), then they're going to heaven. Not one single Mormon will enter glory land, because he has put something else upon this throne except grace and the merits of Christ.

Now that is serious business, and that is what the apostle Paul knew humanity and its old sin nature would do. Oh he knew it so well. And that is why he has been hammering and hammering and hammering in these verses that salvation is a very exclusive thing. It is by grace, plus nothing.

So, I don't know where you stand today, but if someplace along the line you have picked up a notion that you can add something to grace and still make it to heaven, I'm here to tell you that you're wrong. And I'm here to tell you not upon my cute preacher's opinion, but on the fact that the Word of God has made it very clear that that is wrong. And God will not tolerate your tampering with His plan of salvation.

The thing about Satan is that he is so magnificently clever, and so magnificently wise and devious, that the very people who are screaming for some ritual, like the Jews (here in the early part of the New Testament church) were screaming, "Circumcision, circumcision, or you won't go to heaven." And the very thing they were screaming to do was the thing that was sending them to hell. And every male in the New Testament church who subscribed himself to circumcision as part of his salvation went straight into hell. And everybody who adds any kind of ritual today to the merits of Christ is going to go straight into hell. And you better stop listening to preachers, and you better start opening up the Word of God, and start hammering into your mentality exactly what the Word of God has said, until you are sure exactly what Paul has been trying to get across in Romans 5 on the vital issues of heaven and hell.

**Eternal Life**

We looked at the reign of death in the previous session, and we looked at the reign of righteousness. And the goal of the reign of righteousness, he says, is "Unto eternal life." The word "unto" looks like this in Greek. It's the preposition "eis," and it means "with a view to." The idea here is "to bring," referring to eternal light: "Even so, might grace reign as absolute monarch, by means of absolute righteousness, to bring (for the purpose) eternal." And the word "eternal" is the Greek word "aionios."

The Greek word "aionios" is used in 2 Corinthians 4:18 in such a way that you'll get a pretty good idea of what this word means. It's used in contrast to a Greek word that means "for a season." If you have a King James Version of the Bible, it'll use the word "temporal." In 2 Corinthians 4:18, the word "eternal" ("aionios") is in contrast to that which is for a season, indicating that "aionios" has reference to an endless duration of time. It is in contrast to the word used in 2 Corinthians 4:18 which is "proskairos," which means "for a season."

**Believe**

This word is used in John 3:16 where we had the famous declaration about the gospel, and that those who believe it will have eternal life. And I do hope that you recognize that it says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It says that we are to *believe* in Him – positive volition toward the gospel, and toward the fact that Christ died; was buried; and, rose again for our sins. There is not a whisper, in a very classical verse on salvation, of anything that you are expected to do so that you would be deserving of this eternal life. So, this word "aionios" is used in John 3:16.

It is used to describe God in a variety of ways. It is used to describe God's nature in Romans 16:26 as being eternal.

His power is described by this word in 1 Timothy 6:16.

His glory is described by this word and 1 Peter 5:10.

His future king rule, in 2 Peter 1:11, is described by this word "aionios" ("eternal" – a duration of time endlessly.

It is use of the fire of hell, in contradiction to groups like the Mormons who don't believe that hell is going to be forever. The Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe that people will be in hell forever. But you will find in Matthew 18:8; Matthew 25:41; and, Jude 7 that it uses this word "aionios" in reference to the fire of hell. And it indicates therefore that it is endless in duration.

Mark 9:43:3 calls the fires of hell unquenchable. They're never to be put out, and that's why the word "eternal" is used.

Furthermore, a punishment in hell is stated as an eternal separation from God in 2 Thessalonians 1:9. You can pursue those on your own, and you will find that this word "aionios" is a very important word, and it tells us some very, very significant things.

**Duration without Limit**

The first thing it tells you is duration without limit. So, the first thing it tells you is that six months is not "aionios." Can you understand that? "Aionios" ("eternal") means on to infinity. It does not mean six months. It does not mean ten years. If God said, "I want to give you six months or something," what do you think He would have said? Eternal, wouldn't He? If God wanted to give you ten years or something, what do you think he would have said? Eternal, wouldn't He? If God wanted to give you salvation until you didn't behave yourself, how long would He say? He'd say that He's going to give you like until you don't behave yourself, wouldn't He? What would He call that? He'd say, "Eternal," wouldn't He?

I see that you're shaking your heads, "No." You don't like that. But there are a lot of people who say that though. I don't see why you should be so upset about that. There are a lot of people who say that God says that He's going to give you eternal life, but they also say, "If you don't behave yourself, you're going to lose it," so you have 30 minutes of life, because that's about (for an average) a pretty good congregation like this, you can behave yourself for about 30 minutes – most of you. That's stretching it on the outside, knowing you as I do. But God gives you 30 minutes of life.

**Eternal Life**

Don't forget this word. "Aionios" means "without duration." And it is used in some very serious relationships in the Word of God: these references to God; these references to the fire of hell; and, these references to punishment. And the things that he attaches this to here in this passage, of course, is life ("zoe"). He is giving us eternal life. Life here is in the sense that God has life. This word life is associated with the holiness of God; that is, it is life in His presence forever. So, it is a certain special kind of life (a qualified life) to live in the presence of a holy God.

And grace, he tells us, reigns over a realm of life which is eternal. And if it is eternal, the very word tells you that it must be permanent. You cannot have God say, "I'm giving you eternal life," and then you turn around and say, "I can do something to lose that life (the life of God, and that's what eternal life is – the life of God): I can lose it once I get it. If you lose it, He never gave you eternal life. Eternal life means that there is no losing it again. The very word screams that to us from the pages of Scripture. This is a life which cannot be invaded by death. It is a life which cannot be forfeited by sin. That's why it's eternal.

You and I are in the position of eternal life at this moment as believers. That's the kind of life that is in you now. You have eternal life. Again, in your experience, there is a difference between position and experience. Our experience, for many of you, will be physical death. The way things are going, and the way things look, you are probably going to be a unique congregation in the history of the Christian church. This is going to be a congregation that, by and large, will not die physically. We'll never see physical death. Even those of you on the older side, those of you that are 45 or 46 years old and higher, even you people are probably going to make it to the coming of the Lord. You have the quality of eternal life and you'll go into His presence – into His presence without missing a beat.

I've been looking around trying to figure out whom we could entrust our properties to when we leave here. And Charlie Boozer is the only one I can come up with, so far, because I know him so well, but I kind of hate to leave it to him. But anyhow, most of you are going to go on up there alive, because you have eternal life within you. You don't need to die physically at all. It's unnecessary now. That's all been reversed, and that's all been resolved. And as far as God is concerned, at His time, if you're there at the time of the rapture, you're going up, and you're never even going to know what it is to die physically.

**Eternal Life is Free from Death and Sin**

So, eternal life, the life that grace brings us on the basis of the absolute righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has been imputed to us, is an eternal life. It cannot be invaded by death, and cannot be invaded by sin. Eternal life is the kind of life that God has given to the believers.

1 Peter 1:4-5: "To an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." We have a life that is free from the contamination of sin. We have a life which is the very life of God. We have His nature.

Now again I remind you that if God had meant for you to think that your life in Him (that your salvation life) had a terminal point (periodically), then he would not have used the word "aionios." He would not have used the word "eternal life."

So, the final analogy of Paul here is between the reign of the old sin nature unto death and the reign of grace through absolute righteousness unto eternal life. Eternal life is the quality of life which was manifested in the humanity of Jesus Christ as 1 John 1:2 tells us.

One of the great verses, John 5:24, reminds us that eternal life, in your position, is what you have right now.

The product from the original trespasser that is sin, condemnation, and debt. But the product from the grace of Christ on the cross is righteousness, justification, and life.

**Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord**

The agent in all this is what makes the difference. We know who is the agent for sin unto death, but the agent for grace, on the basis of righteousness unto life is someone else. And Paul says that this eternal life is: "By Jesus Christ our Lord." The word "by" is the preposition "dia." It means "by means of." It indicates the agency of eternal life, and that is by means of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word "Jesus" is "Iesous." That's the name that stresses the fact that He was man (His humanity). The word "Christ" is "Christos." That emphasizes the fact that He came to be the Messiah of Israel to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant. And the word "Lord" is "Kurios," which means "deity." That indicates deity. So, you have the God-man (His humanity and His deity) who came to be the Messiah, and thus the Savior of the world.

It is "Jesus Christ *our* Lord," speaking in terms of those of us who are Christians: "Jesus Christ *our* Lord." Now, that's right in the Greek. The word "our" is a special word. It is attached: "Jesus Christ our Lord." This is not just our potential Lord. This is not our Lord if you will make Him your Lord.

How many strong sermons have you heard preached on making Christ the Lord of your life? How many preachers have you seen weeping as they call upon you with some phrase, like: "If he is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all." That really warms the cockles of your heart. How many times have you sat around throwing sticks on a fire to make Christ the Lord of your life? How many poor kids have been dragged off to summer camp while some idiotic camp director preacher has built a big bonfire, and told them that they could throw a stick on the fire to make Jesus the Lord of their lives?

Well, now you see that you can take a look right here at this verse and the Word of God, and you can see right off the bat that it says, "We have eternal life via Jesus Christ our Lord." He is already your Lord. And don't go for that gobbledygook stuff about making some special move to make Christ the Lord of your life. He is already that by divine action. Who do you think you are to rise up and say that you can make Him the Lord of your life by some human decision? You and I are worse than zero nothings, and we're going to make the Son of God, the God-man, the Messiah Savior, the Lord of our lives. You're not going to do any such thing. That's just professional preacher talk because they have no content to what they want to bring to people. They have no content to teach the people of God, and the people of God are such idiots that they want preaching.

**The People of God are Conned**

I've had my share of idiots in this ministry over the years. Somebody reminded me just the other day that a man we had for many years in this church finally came to where he said, "All Dr. Danish does now is teach us. We don't want to be taught. We want to be preached to." That poor man didn't know that what he was asking was to be conned. And, boy, there are plenty of preachers in the woods. They pour out of seminaries all the time such that they say, "Do you want to be conned? Man, I'll con you. I'm a good conman. I know how to do that."

So, the people of God are conned. They're told to make Christ the Lord of their lives. They're given all kinds of emotional appeals to do so. So, they make it, and they go home, and they wonder, "Man, why am I so empty? Why am I so defeated? Why am I under the sense that sin still reigns over me rather than grace reigning over me? Why is it that Romans 5:17 is so meaningless to me when it says that one of the results of the gift of righteousness to me is that I shall reign in life – that I am to be a reigning monarch in my daily life. And I'm going along like a defeated pauper. Well, the reason for it, dear friend, is because you have no content of doctrine in your soul. If your mentality does not have God's thinking, you will be a defeated pauper.

So, don't think in terms of making Jesus Christ the Lord of your life, but rejoice in the fact that He already is. Now, it is true that you can hinder the expression of His Lordship, and that simply means this: that here is eternal fellowship in the outer circle, and in the inner circle there is temporal fellowship, and every time you step out here to the area of carnality, you have restricted the lordship of Jesus Christ in your life. But He is still Lord of your life, and He's going to come right in there and exercise His authority, and He's going to start putting the screws and the pressure on you through the Holy Spirit until you crack down and say, "Lord, I want to get back in here where it's nice and warm. I want to come in out of the cold." And you're going to come in out of the cold after a while because the Lord of your life is not going to tolerate your wandering outside of His family household in that way.

So, the recognizing of Christ's deity is to recognize His authority in our lives. The word "Lord" means to recognize His deity, and to recognize Him, therefore, as the authority in your life. You maintain His effectiveness through maintaining temporal fellowship – , not by throwing a stick on a fire, or promising to do better, or signing your name in a book of covenants that somebody is making of all those who are going to do better. And I've seen it all done in a variety of ways, and it doesn't change the lives of people one bit.

Since the Lord Jesus Christ has carried the guilt of Adam's sin; He has carried all of our personal sins; He has carried all the human good evil that we have spewed out; and, He took all that to the cross with Him, He is therefore also the one who gives us absolute righteousness. He is the one that removed the problem from the sinner. He is the one who has established the ground for giving us absolute righteousness. That's what you're going to get it, and you're going to get it on the grace basis as a gift from Him. That's what Paul is trying to say.

On the one side, sin reigned unto death. On the other side, grace reigns through absolute righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. If you don't receive it as a gift, Paul is saying, you will not receive it at all. That's why I say that if you have tried to receive salvation with anything other than a gift basis, you're lost. If you die tonight, you will get the shock of your life of waking up in hell. And you better recognize that.

Now then, as the reign of sin over mankind was through the offense of Adam, so the reign of grace is through the righteousness of Christ. What this is telling us is that the evils of the fall are overwhelmingly engulfed by the benefits of redemption. The absolute reign of sin has been replaced by the absolute reign of grace. Now nothing can topple the reign of grace from its authority over the believing sinner. Nothing can topple grace and its authority. Sin and death did not abdicate their reign over your life. They were pushed out by Jesus Christ. If you think that sin and death can ever again reverse the battle, and cause the reign of grace to lose out, you're mistaken.

The high watermark of sin has been far exceeded by the grace which was imputed in absolute righteousness to the sinner. Divine grace is never withheld because of any degree of sin. It is given in spite of whatever degree of sin you may be guilty of. Divine grace is never an obligation to pay a debt to anyone. No one deserves it, and no act of God's grace is ever a payment. It's always a gift. But anytime you do something, then it's a payment.

**Repentance**

The grace of salvation is not dependent upon a suitable amount of human repentance. It's very wrong to tell people that if they want to be saved, they must repent of their sins. That's preacher talk again. The Bible tells you to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. The only way you can repent is actually by believing. Repent simply means to change your mind, and if you believe in Him as Savior, you've changed your mind.

**Grace Gives You the Faith so that You can be Saved**

Grace does not reward faith with salvation. Don't forget that. The reign of grace does not reward faith with salvation. Salvation is never a reward. Grace simply gives you the faith so that you can be saved. Grace gives you the faith so you can be saved. Never call salvation a reward. It is not. It is a gift.

God is free to forgive sin because the debt has been paid in full by Jesus Christ. So, nothing that anyone can do will stand in the way of keeping God's grace from reigning forever in the life of a believer, just as once death reigned in the life of that believer. So, we have no loss of salvation. God's reigning grace is never going to be overpowered by anybody's sin.

If you look back at Romans 5:1, you will notice that the verse began with our Lord Jesus Christ: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

If you look at Romans 5:21, you see that it again ends with our Lord Jesus Christ: "That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Even in this very mechanical way, the apostle Paul has indicated at the beginning of the discussion, and at the end, that it's all tied up with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The divine plan of salvation, therefore, is immutable. He is the provider of it all. The reign of grace makes all the necessary provisions for you to be taken right into heaven. If you have a problem with that, you might want to take notice of Philippians 1:6, and read it often. It says, "Being confident of this very thing: that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." If God has saved you, and begun that good work, he's going to carry you right into heaven. Did you hear what it said? Paul says, "Being confident of this very thing: that He who has begun the good work (the good work of salvation) in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (until the day of the rapture). Now, that's great news. If Christ has saved you, He's going to keep right on keeping you saved right into heaven itself.

Paul nowhere in Romans 5 suggest that human doing is a part of God's immutable plan. And God's plan *is* immutable. It's unchangeable. God's grace allows nothing to threaten the security He has provided for you.

**What has the Reign of Grace Provided You as a Believer?**

Now let's take a look (in tying this up now) at the grand work that the reign of grace has provided. Just what has the reign of grace done for you as a believer?

1. **Foreknowledge**

The first point is foreknowledge. The word "foreknowledge" means that God takes a personal interest in a certain sinner to save him. The word "foreknowledge" does not mean knowing something ahead of time. That is an English interpretation. The word "" in Greek connotes an intimacy of association – a personal interest.

In Amos 3:2, God tells the Jewish people that they were not something special above all the nations of the world. Yet, he says, "I have known you." And what did He mean? He meant, "I have a personal, intimate relationship to you. I have a personal attachment. My heart has been centered on you." That's what foreknowledge means.

The translation in areas of the Bible use the word "know" in terms of sexual intimacy to convey that concept of the Hebrew word – a personal, intimate association. So, the word "foreknowledge" expresses a personal interest on the part of God in a sinner to save him. Now that's grace. That is point number one. God has a personal, intimate concern and interest, and wants to have an intimate association with you. That's foreknowledge. The reign of grace did that for you.

1. **Predestination**

Next is predestination. This means that God elects a certain sinner in whom He has a personal interest to be saved. For example, in Ephesians 1:4-5, we read, "According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." And look there – when God got interested in you, and wanted a personal, intimate closeness with you. His foreknowledge began out there before the world was ever created: "That we should be holy and without blame, before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

Aha, were you predestinated because you were such a choice plum. Not on your life. There are no plums in this auditorium tonight. There are lots of prunes, but no plums. It is not because you are something choice, but by His good pleasure – the good pleasure of His will. So, please don't come up to me and ask me why God predestinates some and doesn't predesignate others. The answer is right here: the good pleasure of His will. And I'd suggest you just take it up to the front office and ask Him. Don't ask me. As I look upon most people, I wonder why He's picked them too. But He just acts by His own will. And that's all the explanation you're going to have on that. If that's not satisfactory, that's tough.

1 Peter 1:2 speaks about us as: "The elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace be unto you," and so on. The elect according to the foreknowledge of God. God, first of all, the reign of grace, first of all, says, "I want an intimate relationship with you. Then the reign of grace picked you to be saved. It picked you before the world was created, and it picked you to be adopted into the family of God. And do you know what adoption means here? It means to come in with full adult privileges. This is not just to be adopted into a family as a child so that you have only a child's privileges with restraints. But you come into the family of God as a full-grown adult with all the privileges appertaining thereto.

There is nothing accidental about salvation. If you sit here today in the family of God, just breathe a sigh of relief, and say, "What a magnificent thing the reign of grace is to pick me, and to predestinate me to this destiny of eternal life, because there are a lot of people that He does not predestinate. There are a lot of people who are in churches who are all fouled up with some confused system of salvation. And they're never going to see heaven's shores. They're never going to be in the glory land, because God has not chosen them. God has not elected them.

1. **Effectual Calling**

The next act of reigning grace is what we call effectual calling. Effectual calling means that God moves certain unsaved sinners to positive volition toward the gospel. God says, "I want an intimate relation with you, John Doe." He says, "I have designated you to be in heaven for all eternity." He comes along, and He calls you. And we say it's ineffectual call because this is not like when you put your head out the door and you call your children to come in from play for supper, and they say, "Yeah, OK." And ten minutes later, they're still out there playing until you come out with a stick. Then your call becomes effectual, and they come charging in.

When God calls you, you say, "Yes." And if God does not call you, you're not going to say anything. You're going to say, "No," if anything. But God's effectual call is "Yes." The reign of grace enabled you to say, "Yes."

Now, as far as you and I are concerned, we have the freewill to go positive or negative to the gospel. And the Bible certainly does present that fact– that we are responsible if we end up in hell. You have the freewill to have reacted today to things that you've heard relative to how God saves people. That's why we're talking to you in a group – not one-on-one. You don't have to tell us what you think. You don't have to tell us what your reaction is. You only have to tell it to God. As the principle of privacy, which is instituted in this age of grace for every individual priest and every individual human being to handle his own life, you have to answer only to God, and thus to make your determination.

You can indeed say, "No." and that's involved here in God's effectual call. It's involved in your being negative. But how they're involved is, again, one of those inscrutable things that the Bible does not explain. But when God has called you with this effectual call, you're going to say, "Yes," and the result is going to be regeneration. A believing center will receive a living human spirit, and thus he will be born-again spiritually. He then enters the family of God on a permanent once for all basis. Only a fool would say that person can have more than one physical birth.

This confused Nicodemus because he obviously, when he misunderstood what the Lord was saying about being born-again, thought in physical terms. Jews think in physical terms. They have a physical oriented language. It has concrete pictures. It's not an abstract language like Greek. So, he thought, when Jesus said, "Be born again," and he said, "Now, how can I go back in my mother's womb and be born again so that I'm going to heaven?" And he missed it completely because the Nicodemus said, "That doesn't make sense. That's stupid." And Jesus explained to him, "You're right, Nicodemus. You can only be born once physically. I'm talking about spiritually."

**You can't Lose your Salvation**

And it is a very foolish and stupid person who says, "You can be born-again spiritually more than once." But you must say that if you say that you can lose your salvation. Then you must also say that you're born-again many times. And you see the idiocy of the whole concept. God is trying to give us spiritual things in terms we can understand. And if there's anything we should understand, it's that once your baby is born, it's born, and you're never going to "unborn" it. That's true in the physical realm; and, that's true in the spiritual realm. But that's a terrible strain for some people. They just fracture their brain cells trying to grasp that, when it really shouldn't be all that difficult.

You're placed in Christ with this regeneration so that you have absolute righteousness that's credited to your account. All sins are forgiven. Absolute righteousness is credited to your account because you've been regenerated.

1. **Justification**

Well, you know what's going to come up next. Now, the reign of grace is going to give you justification; that is, God is going to look upon you, and He sees you with absolute righteousness credited to your account, and He's going to say, "You're justified. You're clean. You have no moral guilt. Everything that Adam put on you is gone. Everything that you put on yourself with your personal things is gone." Where God placed you under the condemnation of sin, it's all gone. All the guilt is gone. You have a perfect record of absolute righteousness. It's a judicial decision of God. And God is a judge who cannot be reversed by any higher courts. When God makes a decision, it's irreversible. God says, "You're justified."

1. **Sanctification**

Then there's another thing that the reign of grace does for us, and that is sanctification. We're going to begin the Romans 6, which starts teaching us about sanctified living. Sanctification is the development of the spiritual maturity structure in your soul. It's what 2 Peter 3:18 calls "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." You do this through the intake of Bible doctrine into the mentality of the soul. This enables you to live a godly life. And living a godly life according to divine viewpoint principles enables you to store treasures in heaven through your good works; through your divine good production; and, through the use of your spiritual gifts. Without sanctification, you cannot store charges in heaven. The magnificence of the reign of grace enables you and me to store treasures in heaven that we are going to enjoy. Oh, how we're going to enjoy them forever, unless you're foolish enough not to put them up there and send them ahead. We develop a godly lifestyle so that the old sin nature is brought under control.

1. **Glorification**

Also, the best is yet ahead, for the final act of the reign of grace is glorification. This is where you and I have sin removed. We're taken into heaven. We have resurrected bodies. They can never die again. We are in absolute bliss. We are like Christ. We are transformed into His image. We're taken into the Lord's presence. The Judgment Seat of Christ declares our status relative to our rewards, and we begin a magnificent enjoyment of eternity. This is all the product of the reign of grace.

Now, can how much greater is the accomplishment of the reign of grace over the reign of sin, and all we lost through that? This is the power of grace in action. It has overcome our spiritual deadness throughout Adam (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 3:11). It has overcome our antagonism toward God and His truth (Romans 8:7, Romans 5:10, 1 Corinthians 2:14). The power of the reign of grace in action has overcome our blindness to the truth of Bible doctrine (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). It has overcome the power of the devil over us (James 4:4-6). It has overcome the personal trials and the burdens that we carry (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Grace so reigns that it keeps us saved. Philippians 1:6 tells us that. John 10:28 certainly tells us that. Romans 8:38-39 certainly tell us that. The reign of grace is such that it will not give up its throne once again to the reign of sin in your life. The reign of grace, therefore, is the basis of our assurance in salvation. God does the work of saving us. He does it right. He knows how to do it.

One of the point to observe is that grace always gives in its reign, while sin always takes away in its reign. The classic example of this, of course, is the prodigal son. He began with plenty because of the grace of his father. But when he decided to follow the leadings of his nature, it took him all the way down to the pigpen where he had nothing. Eventually, he recalled that when he was under grace, he had it all; and, when he was under sin, he had nothing.

The thing that is deceptive about sin is that it's exhilarating when one is in the midst of it – when one is in the midst of the action of an evil. But subsequently, when the kicks are over, it leaves the individual empty and depressed. The Bible repeatedly stresses this very simple fact that grace gives abundantly, as befits a gracious reigning monarch (John 1:16, John 4:13-14, John 6:35, Acts 4:33 2 Corinthians 9:8, Ephesians 1:7, Ephesians 2:7, Ephesians 3:8). All of those Scriptures emphasize the abundance that comes from grace.

So, a Christian who whines about how hard things are, is indeed a very sorry representative of the God of all grace. As 1 Peter 5:10 puts it: "But the God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, make you perfect; establish; strength; settle you."

Then 1 Peter 4:10 add to that: "As every man has received a gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Eternal life was the quality of life which was manifested in the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the kind of life we have. 1 John 1:2 puts it this way: "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifest unto us."

Jesus Christ was the epitome of eternal life. We who have Him possess that eternal life.

Then we will make a final observation. Eternal life is part of the believer’s present experience. You have it now. John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My word and believes on Him that sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."

So, we would translate Romans 5:21 in this way: "So that just as the old sin nature reigned in the sphere of death, even so, also grace might reign through absolute righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

These are simple words, when you stop and think about them, fraught with a fantastic depth of meaning, and it is a magnificent way for the apostle Paul to close the section in the book of Romans that deals with the critical topic of justification.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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