

The Reign of Grace: Walking in Victory (Rom. 5:20-21)

I. FREELY RECEIVING THE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. God's grace is a revelation that enables us to reign in life and gives us confidence before God.
¹⁷ Those who receive...the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ...¹⁸ Through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men... (Rom. 5:17-18)
- B. **Receiving the gift of righteousness**: It has legal and emotional implications. **Legally**: We are in a new position to stand in the Father's presence with confidence. Our new position is based on a historical event in which a legal transaction or exchange occurred in God's court. Jesus offered His blood for us as our legal substitute. Jesus paid the debt of our sin that was required to legally satisfy the claims of justice in God's court. Jesus, the innocent one became guilty and we, the guilty ones became innocent. **Emotionally**: God enjoys and delights in relating to us.
- C. **Reign in life**: To walk in victory even when facing trials or temptations
- D. **Free gift**: We receive God's righteousness freely, fully (100%), and instantly (at our new birth).

II. THE REIGN OF SIN AND THE REIGN OF GRACE

- A. Paul made a declaration that where sin abounds, grace abounds more (Rom. 5:20-21). He applied this declaration by saying that in the same way that sin reigned in our lives before our salvation, even now grace reigns in us. In other words, as the dominion of sin brought damage and loss to us, so now the dominion of grace brings restoration and blessing, in a greater measure.
²⁰ Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, ²¹ so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life... (Rom. 5:20-21)
- B. **The reign of sin**: We were under **condemnation** (judgment) before God. We were **powerless** before sin (at the heart level), in sickness, fear, and lack and without the ability to challenge Satan's attack against us. We were under **darkness** without the ability to understand the Word, or to receive divine direction for our life. We were **destitute** without hope of a good future in God.
- C. **The reign of grace**: It includes forgiveness, new power, new desires, and new insights. We have new abilities to resist sin and Satan. Do not ask God for these—thank Him for them.
1. **The Father's acceptance and affection**: God enjoys and delights in relating to us.
 2. **Authority to use the name of Jesus**: We have authority to use Jesus' name to release the works of God and to hinder the works of Satan in our life, circumstances, and nation.
 3. **The indwelling Spirit**: We receive the Spirit who gives us new desires (holiness), and insights (revelation and direction) and releases His ministry through us to touch others.

D. Paul describes what God did in Christ to provide us with the gift of righteousness. God made it possible on legal grounds for us to become a new creation living under the reign of grace without any condemnation. As a new creation, we are no longer under the reign or dominion of sin.

17 If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new...²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin [Jesus] to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... (Rom. 8:1)

E. **Old things have passed away:** Our former **condemnation** has passed. We now can feel confident and enjoyed by God by receiving the spirit of adoption as children of God (Rom. 8:1, 15-16). Our former **powerlessness** has passed. We now have the ability to resist the impulses of sin, sickness, fear, lack, and Satan's attack (Rom. 8:2-13). Our former **darkness** has passed. We now have the Spirit living in us to lead us out of confusion to new understanding in the Word, in life circumstances, and in how to minister to others (Rom. 8:14, 26-27). Our former **destitution** has past. We are now heirs of God who are destined to be glorified with Him (Rom. 8:17-18, 30).

F. **Analogy:** A homeless beggar received notice that a distant relative had died and put him in his will to inherit the ownership of a large company that had great wealth. He had to engage in the legal processes to receive the benefit of his new wealth. The lawyers of the company resisted his efforts to use the money with legal challenges and by giving him confusing information. Since he was accustomed to living in poverty, he had to "renew his mind" to engage in the legal process.

G. We are transformed by changing the way we think. We must live in agreement with God's Word. We grew accustomed to thinking and feeling condemned and powerless before we were saved.

2 Be transformed by the renewing of your mind... (Rom. 12:2)

H. Many live in defeat because they neither know who they are in Christ, nor the position they have before the Father. The sense of condemnation is a root cause of many spiritual failures. It kills faith, leaves us with a sense of rejection, makes prayer difficult, and hinders our desire for God.

I. The freeness of the gift of righteousness is not a license for compromise and passivity. The power of grace only works for those who repent of their compromise. Grace gives us **confidence to begin anew** after we repent of our sin and it gives us **power to obey and press hard** after God. Those with the greatest revelation of grace are most zealous and passionate in pursuing God.

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin [separated from the reign of sin] live any longer in it?...

11 Reckon [see] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ... (Rom. 6:1-2, 11)

J. Grace gives us the gift of righteousness to lead us to living in righteousness. We must understand our **legal position** with **imputed** righteousness and **living condition** with **imparted** righteousness. Paul did not separate imputed righteousness from imparted righteousness as competing realities. They are a dynamic part of each other by being together as one great reality in the grace of God.



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