**The Book of Romans**

Part Three: God’s righteousness is revealed in His free gift of Spirit-life. (Romans 5–8)

***New Life: A New Position . . . Dead in Adam to Alive in Christ***

***Romans 5:12-21***

The story of humankind is nestled in these verses. After detailing the problem (man’s sin) and giving the solution (justification by faith), Paul explains how it all works. Because we were one with our earthly head, Adam, we now can be one with our spiritual head, Christ. Here is the significance of our being the only creature, out of millions or billions of species, made in God’s image. This is what separates us from the animal kingdom: eternal hope. As we have born the image of the earthly Adam through God’s creative act, so also we will bear the image of the last Adam because of His re-creative act. 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

***(Our having peace with God, access to God, and joy in God [5:1-11] originate in our new position:)***

***Sin and death entered mankind (as God predicted) because of one man’s sin. . .*** v. 12

All men and women who would ever live were “in Adam” when he sinned. All people who were born to the first pair were all “born in sin.” Their universal, subsequent personal sins prove this. Eph. 2:1-3

***That explains why, even before the Law, death was universal, even for those who had not sinned just as Adam had (Adam the pattern for One who would come).*** vv. 13-14

***But there is a contrast between the wages Adam earned and the grace Jesus has provided! While unrighteousness, judgment, and death sprang from Adam’s sin, grace and justification now spring from Jesus’ obedience.*** vv. 15-17

Where the first Adam failed, the last Adam succeeded. The first man gave in to Satan’s temptation, but the second Man, Jesus, did not. In Christ, God’ plan for mankind to rule will be completed. As we were lost in the first, we are saved in the last. Gen. 1:26-28; 1 Cor. 15:45-49

***In fact, God’s grace triumphed so completely in the Cross of Jesus that it overcame even the added condemnation which came through the Law. The result: eternal life conquers death.*** vv. 18-21

**Applying God’s Truth to Life**

*Are you in Adam or in Christ? Two key ideas. . .*

***1. Representation: The triumph of Christ over Adam***

It is difficult for us to grasp, given western individuality, but we will live forever either in Adam or in Christ. God has created us so as to join us with all humanity, including Adam, and potentially, Christ. Unlike angels, who exist as independent beings (not born), we are birthed (in Adam) and potentially, rebirthed in Christ. This is how “mere humans” can be infused with God’s own life, not open to angels. This underlies Jesus’ words to Nicodemus in John 3. Romans 8:12-17, 28-30

***2. Glory: The triumph of grace over sin and death***

Just as difficult to grasp is the panorama of God’s creating the cosmos for His glory. And nowhere is His glory more clearly displayed than in His grace toward sinners through the Cross. By placing us in Christ, God shows forever His faithfulness not only to His nature and righteousness, but also to His promises. If this is not breathtaking for you, ask God to reveal Himself to you through Jesus. Ephesians 1:3-14