

ROMANS

Chapter 5

Peace with God Through Faith

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. 6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Luther: “In chapter 5 [Paul] comes to the fruits and works of faith, such as peace, joy, love to God and to every man, as well as confidence, assurance, boldness, courage, and hope amid tribulation and suffering. For all this follows, if faith be true, because of the superabundant goodness that God shows us in Christ, causing Christ to die for us before we could ask it of him, indeed, while we were still enemies. Thus we have it that faith justifies without any works; and yet it does not follow that men are therefore to do no good works, but rather that the genuine works will not be lacking. Of these the work-righteous saints know nothing. They dream up works of their own in which there is no peace, joy, confidence, love, hope, boldness, or any of the qualities of true Christian work and faith. (TLSB)

“After this he digresses and makes a pleasant excursion, telling whence come sin and righteousness, death and life, and comparing Adam and Christ. He means to say that Christ had to come as a second Adam bequeathing his righteousness to us through a new spiritual birth in faith, just as the first Adam bequeathed sin to us through the old fleshly birth. Thus he declares and proves that no one by his own works can raise himself out of sin into righteousness, any more than he can prevent the birth of his own body. This is proved also by the fact that the divine law—which ought to assist toward righteousness, if anything can—has not only not helped, but has even increased sin. For the more the law forbids, the more our evil nature hates the law, and the more it wants to give reign to its own lust. Thus the law makes Christ all the more necessary, and more grace is needed to help our nature” (AE 35:374–75). (TLSB)

5:1-11 The burden of our text and our message is to relate the peace of Christ to the conflicts within us and the afflictions we face during this life. Though peace with God has been established by Christ, the bitter conflict between flesh and spirit within us remains, and we experience trials and tribulations in this fallen world. Yet Paul argues that even the most distressing troubles cannot destroy the peace brought about by God’s justification of the sinner. Fear has been

dispelled, rebellion muted, and reconciliation with God accomplished. This is the basis for Christian hope. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

This section in Romans 5 is closely related to what Paul develops further in chapter 8: the power and significance of God's grace by which we are justified before God through Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. The love of God is emphasized throughout. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

In 5:1–11 “Paul invites the Christian to join with him in joyful thanksgiving for what the gospel provides.” As a result, the polemical tone of the earlier chapters almost disappears. Under the surface, however, Paul may well be countering either a charge against or faulty conclusion about the Good News he has just expounded. Perhaps the falsehood is that the righteousness of God through faith is: (CC)

no more than a legal fiction—a “declaration” of a relationship that cannot be proved and which effects no change—and requires no change!—in this life and which offers no security for the day of judgment. (CC)

5:1 *have been justified* – δικαιωθέντες – This is an aorist which is forensic and passive, making it clear that by a past decisive act of God those who have faith in Christ have been justified, that is declared righteous. With this on word everything that was said in 3:21 to 4:25 is applied to all believers, including Paul and the Roman Christians. All that follows is the result of this new status before God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

Paul begins to respond in positive terms by stating how and why “being declared righteous” (δικαιωθέντες, 5:1) gives peace in the present and hope for the future. (CC)

Not by works; summary of chs 1–4. (TLSB)

The second Greek word of 5:1, οὖν, “therefore,” is a postpositive word, so its thought comes first. In light of all the first person plural forms in 5:1–11, the section might be tied most directly to the introduction of those pronouns in 4:24–25. But οὖν effectively recalls all of Romans 1–4. As a result, one cannot fully or even properly grasp the content of anything which follows without having an understanding of all that precedes one little οὖν. (CC)

A typical translation of 5:1 is “therefore, since we have been justified *by* faith” (ESV). Here the opening is rendered as “therefore, after being declared righteous *from* faith.” “Declared righteous” is used, first of all, for consistency in utilizing “righteousness” language for δικαιόω and its cognates in English whenever possible. Another, more important, factor is to retain the forensic nature of this declaration by God. The legal metaphor was a dominant feature throughout chapters 1–4. The notion that reality is what God declares or states it to be (4:17) has already been discussed and was evident in the faith of father Abraham (see the commentary on 3:28; 4:3, 8, 22, all of which have λογίζομαι, “to conclude; credit; charge; count”). As will be shown, that view continues to inform this portion of the letter (e.g., λογίζομαι, “to count,” in 6:11; 8:18). (CC)

The use of “*from* faith” for ἐκ πίστεως may sound awkward, but it is the most basic sense of the preposition ἐκ and maintains consistency with its thematic use in 1:17. “Through faith,” used by some English translations, recalls the more common Pauline expression διὰ πίστεως (see “The Place and Coherence of Romans 3:21–31” before the commentary on 3:21–31). Indeed, Paul uses διὰ, “through,” in 5:1 and 5:2, but both times with Jesus as the object. In any case, the meaning “through” is a stretch for ἐκ (“from”). The ESV’s “*by* faith” is not objectionable, but it may be misleading in view of the divine passive force of the verb, “declared righteous” *by* God. If Paul

wanted to state the one by which/whom the action was performed, the preposition ἐκ would be followed by θεοῦ, “God.” The full meaning may be paraphrased as “therefore after being declared righteous *by God*, which (declaration) we receive from faith.” (CC)

The mood of the main verb in 5:1, “have,” provides a classic example used to illustrate the key factors involved in textual criticism (see the fourth textual note on 5:1). The weight of external manuscript evidence supports reading the subjunctive, ἔχωμεν, but any potential notion that “we *might* have peace” seems utterly un-Pauline. As a result, and on the basis of the internal evidence, most commentators and translators accept the indicative as original, ἔχομεν, “we *do* have.” Theologically, the indicative is most satisfying in the context of Paul’s overall thought and the argument of Romans in particular. However, Lenski notes that, first, this ruling goes against the preponderance of the manuscript evidence, and second, “the old canon is not applied in this instance that the more difficult reading takes precedence over the easier one.” Proper caution should be exercised on both counts. (CC)

If the form is read as a subjunctive, the thought is not “let us keep peace; let us be peaceful toward God and stop fighting him!” Instead, on the basis of the switch to first person plural language, Lenski argues: (CC)

Here is direct personal address, which enables Paul to use hortation in the most natural way when he begins the account of the effects. “We have peace” states far less than he wants to say. We have it; but do all of us realize it, get the full effect of it in our hearts and our lives especially also when we are in tribulation? “Let us inwardly, in our very hearts, have and taste this peace in relation to God.” (CC)

The object of whichever form of “have” (ἔχω) Paul intends is “peace” (εἰρήνην). One aspect of contemporary notions about peace tends to match the Greek view. Peace is understood largely in negative terms as the absence of war or conflict. A more positive side prevails in the NT, largely due to the influence of the Hebrew שָׁלוֹם, *shalom*. Here too, however, modern conceptions of peace are often emotional and inward. In response, von Rad points out: “When we consider the rich possibilities of שָׁלוֹם in the OT we are struck by the negative fact that there is no specific text in which it denotes the specifically spiritual attitude of inward peace.”⁴⁵ Here εἰρήνη, “peace,” denotes “not subjective feelings of peace (though these may indeed result),” but much more profoundly “the objective state of being at peace instead of being enemies” (5:10). (CC)

This is reflected in the OT, where peace is often associated with God’s covenant relationship with his people (e.g., Num 6:22–27; Ps 55:18–19 [MT 55:19–20]; Is 48:17–22; Jer 14:19–21). For example, in the Aaronic benediction, which the priests were to pronounce regularly upon the congregation, “peace” (Num 6:26) is the result of Yahweh’s actions of being gracious and showing his favor (Num 6:24–25), with the imposition of his saving covenant name on his redeemed people (Num 6:27). Furthermore, peace and righteousness are often “overlapping or complementary concepts.” Finally, peace is an aspect of OT eschatological hope (e.g., Is 54:10; Ezek 34:25), one which Paul says believers enjoy already now. (CC)

Peace, then, is a relationship we have “toward” or “with God” (πρὸς τὸν θεόν, 5:1). Romans 1–4 has made it abundantly clear that the establishment of this relationship did not come about in any way from us to God, even for Abraham (3:19–20; 4:2). The point is emphatically reaffirmed in 5:8–9. Instead, our relationship of peace with God is inaugurated solely by his declaring us righteous (δικαιωθέντες, 5:1). It is only “through our Lord Jesus Christ” (5:1). This key phrase was discussed in “Introduction to Romans 5 and Romans 5–8” before this pericope. It is retrieved

from 4:24 (which has a similar phrase) and repeated identically in 5:11 (see also 5:21; 6:23; 7:25; 8:39). (CC)

peace with God. Not merely a subjective feeling (peace of mind) but primarily an objective status, a new relationship with God: Once we were his enemies, but now we are his friends (see v. 10; Eph 2:16; Col 1:21–22). (CSB)

Justification does not merely mean escaping punishment; we are now in a positive relationship with God. Luther: “Note how the apostle places this spiritual peace only after righteousness has preceded it. For first he says, ‘since we have been justified ... by faith,’ and then ‘we have peace’ ” (AE 25:285). “Spiritually inexperienced people despise this teaching. However, God-fearing and anxious consciences find by experience that it brings the greatest consolation” (AC XX 15). (TLSB)

Peace (v 1): We can look at Romans 5:1 as a counterpart to the Father’s welcome of the prodigal son in Luke 15. Both passages highlight God’s amazing clemency as he welcomes back the contrite man of faith in peace. Where there is the peace (*eirēnē*, *shalom*) of Christ, there is access to God. Things are as they should be. The peace that Paul presents is not just a mental attitude but a reality, a factual, objective relationship between God and us sinners. Through Christ we become the opposite of what we are by nature: righteous and justified. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

eirana – This is more than the cessation of hostilities. Both in OT and NT signifies a soundness, wholeness and health. It was this peace that was laid upon the people in the Aaronic blessing in Numbers 6:26). Jesus was called the Prince of Peace in Is. 9:6; Mt. 9:5 and Lk. 2:14. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

through our Lord - Reconciliation through Christ: A frequent construction in our text is *dia* with the genitive, meaning “through (Christ)” (vv 1, 2, 9, 10, and twice in 11; v 5 uses the same construction to refer to the work of the Holy Spirit). This construction stresses the mediation of Christ and his present influence as risen Lord. Only through Christ, not through some other human or saintly intermediary, do we have access and reconciliation to God. Jesus alone brings us into the divine presence. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

5:2-5 Hope (vv 2–5): Hope (*elpis*, vv 2, 4, 5), the great Christian virtue, is also emphasized in our text. This hope stems from the promise of the glory of God (v 2). Martin Franzmann¹ says that the Christian “sees the present as the stairway to future glory and resolutely climbs the stairs one by one by the light that falls on them from the opened door at the head of the stairs.” Hope derives from dependence on God’s grace regardless of what comes to us in life. That grace is sure because it depends on God’s love for us in Christ, not on our love of him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

5:2-4 A man named Parnell Baily toured an orange grove once where an irrigation pump had broken. The season was dry and some of the trees were dying because they lacked water. The man giving the tour then took Baily to his own orchard where irrigation was used sparingly. (CSB)

5:2 And there is much more! Through him “we have obtained and retain access [by faith] into this grace” (5:2). The perfect tense of ἐσχίκαμεν conveys both what was received and what is still presently possessed through Christ. Paul describes it as “the access” (τὴν προσαγωγήν). It is

tempting to read this with Hebrews as entrance into the holy places or sanctuary. “We have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus” (Heb 10:19). At Jesus’ death, the restrictive temple veil was torn (Lk 23:45). Thereby, access was granted to us. However, the noun προσαγωγή, “access,” in Rom 5:2 is not used in Heb 10:19, and the term never occurs in the LXX (see the textual note). The reference to Jesus as “Lord” (κύριος) in this verse might point more toward a royal image of entrance before the king. (CC)

Here, Paul says, the access is “by faith.” τῇ πίστει presents another textual issue (see the textual note). If original, the bare Greek dative is not Paul’s common way of using πίστις, “faith,” but it expresses means and is reminiscent of 3:28. Whether or not the noun was in the original of 5:2, πίστις, “faith,” is in 5:1. It is interesting that “faith” (πίστις) does not occur again until 9:30. Furthermore, its cognates are used only once throughout Romans 5–8 (πιστεύομεν, “we believe,” in 6:8). This surely reveals a shift in emphasis from Romans 1–4, where the words are utilized thirty-four times. (CC)

Our access is “into this grace” (εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην). “This grace” expresses the full theological sense of God’s undeserved kindness and favor as described more fully in 3:24 (see the commentary there). “Since a reference to royal ‘favor’ is also a quite natural part of its broader Greek usage, ... its use here strengthens the court imagery of προσαγωγή [‘access’].” In any case, the picture is of God’s gracious presence being a safe and secure location in which to reside by faith. Grace is further defined with “in which we stand” (ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν). It provides a sheltered place. Theologically speaking, we did not stand ourselves up in grace by any exertion of our own. It is God’s declaration of righteousness which did so “through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus” (3:24). The perfect of ἵστημι, “stand,” therefore emphasizes our resulting state of being (see the textual note), but it also provides encouragement to remain standing where God has placed us. (CC)

As we do so, Paul says, “We boast upon hope of the glory of God” (5:2). The entire clause is related to references from earlier in the letter. “To boast” (καυχάομαι) occurs initially in Romans 2. There, the Jewish person engaged by Paul is depicted with καυχᾶσαι twice: “you rely upon the Law and you *boast* in God” (2:17), and, later, “you ... are *boasting* in the Law” (2:23). But by 3:27, the noun “boast” (καύχησις) was shut out. Even Abraham has no boast toward God (4:2). In light of those uses, it is best to maintain the translation “boast” here, rather than switch to “rejoice” (e.g., ESV, RSV, NKJV) and lose the connection. The critical factor is the ground of boasting (see the fourth textual note on 2:17). Boasting in the Law or in our works is excluded. But boasting in the things of God is proper and praised here in 5:2, as well as in 5:11; 1 Cor 1:31 and 2 Cor 10:17, both quoting Jer 9:24 (MT 9:23); Gal 6:14; Phil 3:3. Origen diagnoses why the connotations of “boast” (καυχάομαι) can be either positive or negative: “For if someone rejoices [boasts] in his wisdom or strength or riches, he is wrong to do so, but if he rejoices [boasts] in knowing God and in understanding his judgments of mercy and righteousness, he is right to do so.” (CC)

The basis of our boast is expressed positively by a prepositional phrase, “upon hope of the glory of God” (ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ). “Hope” (ἐλπίς) is discussed extensively in regard to Abraham’s faith in 4:18. Although Classical Greek employed ἐλπίς for simple expectation, the influence of the OT Hebrew verb נָצַח, “to trust,” shaped its meaning in the LXX in a more positive direction. “Hope” (ἐλπίς) became “closely allied to trust, trustful hope, hope as confidence in God.” “Hope” is referred to again in 5:4 and 5:5. (CC)

This hope is “of the glory of God” (τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ). Thus far, references to God’s “glory” (δόξα) have been in negative contexts. “The glory of God” was exchanged away for idolatry in 1:23. In 3:23, Paul charges that “all sinned and are lacking the glory of God” (τῆς δόξης τοῦ

θεοῦ). But now, “after being declared righteous from faith” (5:1), “the glory of God” conveys our hope for a fully restored experience of his image and presence. (CC)

All of the blessed benefits articulated in 5:1–2 flow from faith. These two verses express some of what has already been received, the present state in which we stand, and also our certain hope for the future. The Formula of Concord recognizes the significance of “from faith” (ἐκ πίστεως), which stands prominently in 5:1. It serves as the culmination of Paul’s message throughout Romans 1–4, but also moves us forward with confident assurance into the topic of chapters 5–8, the life that is in our Lord Jesus Christ. (CC)

access. Jesus ushers us into the presence of God. The heavy curtain (of the temple) that separated man from God and God from man has been removed. (CSB)

grace in which we stand – Grace is not a one-time gift; we live in it eternally. John Chrysostom: “If then He has brought us near to Himself, when we were far off, much more will He keep us now that we are near” (NPNF 1 11:396). (TLSB)

hope of the glory of God. The Christian’s confidence that the purpose for which God created him will be ultimately realized. (CSB)

The promise of eternal life in heaven. “St. Paul ... credits the beginning, middle, and end to *faith alone*” (FC SD IV 34). (TLSB)

elpis which is a primary word (to *anticipate*, usually with pleasure); *expectation* (abstract or concrete) or *confidence*:—faith, hope. (QV)

we stand – The verb is in the perfect tense, meaning “in which we have stood, now stand, and will continue to stand. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 13, Part 2)

5:3-5 Paul is not listing virtues that his readers will achieve by their own will. These are effects of the Holy Spirit’s work in Christian lives. As God helps us through suffering, He teaches endurance, He develops character in us, and He gives us hope. Suffering is transformed by our relationship with God. (TLSB)

5:3 “And not only [this],” but “we are also boasting within pressures” (καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν, 5:3). Paul explains that our boasting entails more than confident expectation about the future. It is also “present tense” boasting. Whereas specific suffering, persecution, and tribulation are all included, it is best to understand θλίψις here as Paul uses it most often: it is broadly descriptive of “any ‘external pressure’ ... that may afflict the believer in this life.” The concept of suffering introduces similar linked groupings in 1 Pet 1:6–7 and James 1:2–4. Heb 12:5–6 also speaks positively of the value of discipline and hardship, citing Prov 3:11–12. As in all these other passages, “characteristically, Paul takes an offensive posture. Not only do sufferings not overthrow the reality of the blessings, but they are themselves occasions for joyful boasting!” (CC)

Notice that Paul does not say our suffering itself is good (see 8:28); nor does he mean these afflictions are actually “the basis of the exultation.” But hope enables us to continue boasting even “in the midst” (ἐν) of them. One reason is because hope looks ahead to the ultimate enjoyment of the glory of God. As Basil remarks: “Tribulations are, for those well prepared, like certain foods and exercises for athletes which lead the contestant on to the hereditary glory.”

Even in this present life, boasting is possible because of how *God desires* to move us ahead when we experience any and all sorts of pressures. (CC)

Perhaps “knowing” (εἰδότες) then serves as an often-necessary reminder. We are able to boast amidst the pressures of life while “knowing that pressure is accomplishing patient endurance” (5:3). (CC)

“Endurance” (ὕπομονή) is a favorite virtue for Paul, who praises it sixteen times. It was also “highly prized both within Greek thought, particularly by the Stoics (*TDNT* 4:582–83) and in contemporary Judaism (*Pss. Sol.* 2:36; *T[estament of] Jos[eph]* 2:7; 10:1–2; frequently in *4 Maccabees* to describe the steadfastness of the martyrs ...).” “Endurance” (ὕπομονή) also has significant connections with “hope” (ἐλπίς). In the LXX both words are used to translate the Hebrew noun נִיָּצְוֹ, usually rendered as “hope.” Paul connects the two in 12:12 (which has ἐλπίς, “hope,” and the verb ὑπομένω, “to endure”). In 1 Thess 1:3 he even speaks of “the endurance of hope” (τῆς ὑπομονῆς τῆς ἐλπίδος). (CC)

The noun translated as “patient endurance,” ὑπομονή, is formed from the verb μένω, “remain, abide,” with the prefixed preposition ὑπό, “under.” While one needs to be cautious about reading too much into etymology, the more passive sense of “remaining under” is appropriate to this context. God has stood us up in his grace (5:2). “Patient endurance” means “to stay standing there” in the midst of pressures pushing in various other directions or trying to knock us down. In other contexts, recognizing a more active sense in ὑπομονή is appropriate, for example, “perseverance” in Heb 12:1. But in all cases, the essential point remains. “Where God sustains faith, tribulation produces ὑπομονή [‘endurance’].” (CC)

rejoice in our sufferings. Not “because of” but “in.” Paul does not advocate a morbid view of life but a joyous and triumphant one. (CSB)

Suffering cannot steal the peace Christ brings. Christians do not rejoice in suffering per se, but they realize that God can produce good things through suffering. (TLSB)

Even tribulations are understood by the believer not as manifestations of divine wrath, but rather as occasions for rejoicing and boasting in Christ (v 3). We rejoice in suffering since we have insight into its purpose and significance. God uses it to build perseverance, character, and hope. In spite of whatever present suffering we endure, we keep in mind the promised consummation of history and know that God is in control. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

Glorying in suffering does not deny or exclude pain as a reality. Occasionally, even despondency may occur, but pain and despondency will be overcome as God leads us toward glory. We rejoice in our troubles because of the assurance of God’s grace and his certain promise of future glory. Tribulations are inevitable for the believer (cf. Acts 14:22; Rev 7:14). But tribulations do not change the objective love and grace of God, so we glory also in them as we glory in the peace of God. Though we often cannot know the meaning of the tribulation in which we stand, we know that God knows, and we trust him. The love of God is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, giving us a hope which will not be put to shame (v 5). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

suffering produces endurance – ἡπόμωνα – This is a noble Greek word that represents a combination of manliness and patience, a brave patience, which willingly remains under the a load of affliction without faltering or complaint. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

From cheerful (or hopeful) *endurance, constancy*:—enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting). (QV)

That resilient and athletic temper which is so sure of the future that it can live of the future and bear manfully the pressure of the present. (Franzmann)

5:4 “Patient endurance [is accomplishing] tested character” (δοκιμή, 5:4). The picture here comes from the testing of metals by refining them with fire. This picture aligns well with the use of “pressures” in 5:3. A comparable word, “tested genuineness” (δοκίμιον), evokes the same picture in James 1:3 and 1 Pet 1:7. The implication of testing is also present in Rom 1:28 with the verb δοκιμάζω. There fallen humanity “*did not approve* to have God in [proper] recognition” (οὐκ ἔδοκίμασαν, 1:28). In that instance, the negated verb indicates that the testing resulted in rejection of God. Here the cognate noun, δοκιμή, similarly gives “special ref[erence] to the result,” but now positively expresses that “a process of enduring something amounts to a test that promotes and validates the character of the one undergoing it” (BDAG, 2). It is difficult to translate the entire sequence of “testing followed by examination and evaluation” with a single word in English. “Tested character” or “approved character” are most adequate. (CC)

“And tested character [is accomplishing] hope” (5:4). Paul is back to where he started in 5:2 with boasting “upon hope.” But concluding the progression where it began makes an important point about the linked events Paul has just explained. “The chain sequence certainly implies a process of maturing, but not distinguishable stages in faith ... since its end point is no different from the hope into which they entered on first believing (v 2).” It should also be affirmed that this is *God’s intention* for his people. The reality, of course, is that this divinely intended cycle does not always work out this way in the lives of believers. However, Paul’s words assure us of what God wants to happen when we are afflicted with any and all pressures in this life. God’s intention is that they accomplish (κατεργάζεται, 5:3) patient endurance, which leads to approved character, which then works its way right back to hope. Chrysostom concludes: “Does our good really lie in hope? Yes, but not in human hopes, which often vanish and leave only embarrassment behind. Our hope is in God and is therefore sure and immovable.” (CC)

A Christian can rejoice in suffering because he knows that it is not meaningless. Part of God’s purpose is to produce character in his children. (CSB)

endurance produces character – dokimaz – This verb was used with reference to testing the genuineness and the weight of coins to determine whether or not they met the established standards and requirement. By means of suffering and perseverance, God tests and changes raw recruits into tempered veterans. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

Character paints the picture of a soldier who has been tested in battle. Christian character means that they are real. They are strong, genuine and authentic. (LL)

5:5 In 5:5 Paul adds a concluding thought, as well as his explanation of why all of this is reliably true, even to the point of boasting within it. First, Paul speaks further of the hope depicted in 5:1–4. If accented as a present indicative, as in NA²⁷, the negated verb, κατασχύνει means that hope is not currently “putting [us] to shame.” On the contrary, hope survives and thrives right now in the midst of the trials. This is consistent with Paul’s use of the present tense of ἐπαισχύνομαι in 1:16: “I am not ashamed.” The present tense also correlates with the present impact of the perfect tense of ἐκκέχυται, “has been poured out *and remains*,” in the explanatory “because” (ὅτι) clause that follows. If so, “the present effect of the hope may mark some distinction from the predominantly future-oriented, passive use of the verb in the Jewish tradition.” (CC)

The same letters can, however, be accented as a future indicative, κατασχυνεῖ. This is more in line with the dominant eschatological tone of the verb in the LXX. There the verb is commonly used in relation to the future judgment.^c Paul's use of "will not be put to shame" (οὐ κατασχυνθήσεται) in citing Is 28:16 in Rom 9:33 and 10:11 support reading the verb here in 5:5 as a future. This is also buttressed by the "hope of the glory of God" in 5:2, and the future forms of "save" (σώζω) in 5:9 and 5:10. Paul's point is more likely that the Christian "hope will not put [us] to shame" in the judgment on the Last Day, when unbelievers will be publicly humiliated and shamed. (Cf. 2 Cor 10:8; Phil 1:20; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 Pet 2:6; 1 Jn 2:28; Rev 3:18) (CC)

Paul then proceeds to express the basis for such a confident hope. It exists only "because the love of God has been poured out and remains within our hearts" (5:5). The adjective related to "love" (ἀγάπη), "beloved" (ἀγαπητός), has appeared once thus far, in 1:7. Here is the first of nine occurrences of the noun "love" (ἀγάπη) in Romans (see especially 12:9). The verb "to love" (ἀγαπάω) does not show up until 8:28. It might seem warranted, then, to conclude that "love" (ἀγάπη) is more appropriately associated with John and his writings. However, Paul uses the noun in seventy-five of its one hundred sixteen NT appearances.⁶⁶ Perhaps he is the apostle of love after all! (CC)

Paul employs the phrase "the love of God" (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ) only here and in Rom 8:39; 2 Cor 13:13 (ET 13:14); 2 Thess 3:5. With Augustine, Luther reads the genitive as objective: "It is called 'God's love' because by it we love God alone." Calvin responds: "It is indeed a pious sentiment, but not what Paul means."⁶⁸ The subjective genitive is almost certainly correct. In this context, "a statement of the fact of God's love for us is a more cogent proof of the security of our hope than a statement of the fact of our love for Him would be." (CC)

Paul graphically says God's love "has been poured out and remains within our hearts" (ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, 5:5). Both aspects of the perfect of ἐκχέω are significant, as is the divine passive voice. God's love is in our hearts only because he has poured it out into them. His love seeks to replace the impure desires of a heart which has become senseless and darkened (1:21, 24). At least initially, therefore, his love must come *extra nos*, from "outside ourselves." It does so "through the Holy Spirit, who was given to us." "Given" (δοθέντος) is another divine passive, which makes clear the Spirit is a gift which is freely given (see also Lk 11:13; Acts 5:32; 8:18; 11:17; 15:8; 1 Thess 4:8). The perfect tense rendered as "poured out and remains" also means his love is not without continuing effect. It continues to dwell within our hearts through that same Spirit (as in Rom 8:9, 11). (CC)

The interrelationship between God's love (ἀγάπη) being "poured out" into our hearts "through the Holy Spirit" (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου) is significant. The Spirit and love are also linked by Paul in Rom 15:30; 2 Cor 6:6; Gal 5:22; Phil 2:1; Col 1:8; 2 Tim 1:7. Paul similarly speaks of the Spirit in our hearts in Gal 4:6: "God sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts" (ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν). It is certainly clear that "Paul was not greatly concerned to make a clear distinction between the gift of the Spirit and the outpouring of love." Paul's use of "pour out" (ἐκχέω) both here and in Titus 3:6 (ἐξέχεεν) in connection with the Holy Spirit is aligned with the outpouring promised in Joel 2:28–29 (MT/LXX 3:1–2) and fulfilled in Acts 2 (see Acts 2:17–18, 33; 10:45). The outpouring of the Spirit is a sign that "the end of the ages has come" (1 Cor 10:11). (CC)

The language of being "poured out" coupled with the giving of the Holy Spirit almost certainly alludes to Baptism. This is especially evident in light of passages such as Titus 3:5–6: "he saved us ... through [the] washing of regeneration and [the] renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out upon us [οὗ ἐξέχεεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς] richly through Jesus Christ our Savior." (See also Acts

2:38 and the excursus “Baptism in Paul” following the commentary on 6:1–11). But this verse should not be exclusively restricted to Baptism; the Spirit always accompanies the Word. As Chrysostom puts it: “God has given us the greatest gift possible and in profusion.... What is this gift? It is the Holy Spirit.” Together with the Holy Spirit, we receive the innumerable blessings of God’s love outpoured with his “unstinting lavishness.” (CC)

hope does not put us shame. The believer’s hope is not to be equated with unfounded optimism. On the contrary, it is the blessed assurance of our future destiny and is based on God’s love, which is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and objectively demonstrated to us in the death of Christ. Paul has moved from faith (v. 1) to hope (vv. 2, 4–5) to love (v. 5; see 1Co 13:13; see also note on 1Th 1:3). (CSB)

This is what Christians harbor in their hearts as a result of the love of God in Christ, a hope that is made stronger by suffering and the resultant perseverance and character. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 8, Part 3)

By being false. (TL SB)

has poured out.[†] Through the Holy Spirit God has poured out his love in our hearts, and his love for us continues to dwell in us. (CSB)

An abundance of love. (TL SB)

Holy Spirit ... given to us. The indwelling Holy Spirit shows that our hope is not misplaced. (TL SB)

5:6-8 *God’s love proven by Christ’s death (vv 6–8):* At God’s chosen time (*kairos*) that we could not do for ourselves, Christ did for us by his death: he reconciled us to God. We could not redeem ourselves for, as the heaping up of descriptive terms demonstrates, we were powerless (literally, “weak”) and ungodly (v 6), sinners (v 8), and enemies of God (v 10). Paul concedes that for a good man some noble person might give his life. But Jesus gave his life for sinners—despite and even because of their sin—since no other deliverance was possible for them. The uniqueness of Christ’s sacrifice is contrasted with the noblest sacrifice of other humans. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

With “for” (γάρ) at the beginning of 5:6, Paul begins to reinforce why all of these good things from God have come to fill our lives. Rom 5:6–8 encapsulates the argument of all of 1:18–4:25. It clearly expresses who we were apart from our Lord Jesus Christ and what he accomplished so that we might be reconciled and saved as detailed in 5:9–11. References to God’s “love” (ἀγάπη) in 5:5 and 5:8 nicely frame 5:6–8. Since the structure of these three verses is quite redundant, they are grouped together below and will be followed by summarizing comments. (CC)

⁶For while we were still being weak, yet at the opportune moment, Christ died in behalf of the ungodly. ⁷For only rarely will someone die in behalf of a righteous person. Indeed, in behalf of the good person someone perhaps is brave enough to die. ⁸But God demonstrates his own love toward us in that while we were still being sinners, Christ died in behalf of us. (CC)

The grammar of 5:6–8 seems to stumble at times (see the textual notes), but Paul’s repeated and enhanced descriptions drive two points home clearly. On the one hand, the first is about us. In a manner reminiscent of 1:18–32, Paul depicts humanity in starkly negative terms. In 5:6 Paul

describes us as “weak” (ἀσθενής) and “ungodly” (ἀσεβής). The latter is a key term in 4:5, where Abraham’s faith is defined as believing upon the God “who declares the ungodly [τὸν ἀσεβῆ] righteous” (see the commentary). In 5:8 we are identified specifically as “sinners” (ἁμαρτωλῶν). All of these merge into outright hostility with the enmity conveyed by “enemies” (ἐχθροί) in 5:10. The combined effect eliminates even the faintest notion that “God helps those who help themselves.” Instead, Paul emphasizes that God’s love is a “love that is not the result of any worth in its objects but is self-caused and in its freedom itself confers worth upon them.” (CC)

The hypothetical example of “someone” (τίς) being courageous enough to die in behalf of those who might be perceived to deserve it is introduced in 5:7. The overall notion of dying for a worthy person or cause

was already familiar in Jewish circles as martyr terminology, in reference to the Maccabean martyrs (2 Macc 7:9; 8:21; 4 Macc 1:8, 10; Josephus, *Ant[iquities]*, 13.5–6; cf. John 18:14). Paul was probably aware of this other usage, since his own formula is such a shocking contrast to it: Christ died for the *ungodly*. (CC)

It is difficult to know if Paul intends a distinction between “a righteous person” (δικαίου) and “the good person” (τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ) in 5:7. The most plausible proposal is that the former indicates someone who is upright and the latter encompasses a person who has also done good to you. Even though the chance is still remote, this increases the likelihood that “perhaps” (τάχα) you might give up your life for such a noble person. In any event, the point of both “a righteous person” and “the good person” is one of *extreme contrast* with us who are, in reality, “weak,” “ungodly” (5:6), and “sinners” (5:8). (CC)

There is also a contrast between us and Christ. The second major theme in 5:6–8 is revealed by the final Greek word of each verse. These three verses all conclude with a reference to the death of Christ, each one emphatically ending with a form of the verb “die” (ἀποθνήσκω). The purpose of Christ’s death is described repeatedly through the key preposition ὑπέρ, translated as “in behalf of.” This Greek preposition occurs four times in these three verses. Christ’s death on behalf of sinners is a common theme in Paul. Indeed, it is among the primary elements (ἐν πρώτοις) of the Good News he proclaims: “Christ died in behalf of our sins according to the Scriptures” (Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, 1 Cor 15:3). One need not limit ὑπέρ to convey that his death is either “in our behalf” or “for us.” It is proper to understand that ὑπέρ expresses substitutionary atonement (see the textual note). Indeed, it is ultimately necessary to assert that “his death is *for us* because it is death suffered *in our place*.” (CC)

The timing of the event when Christ “died” (ἀπέθανεν) is expressed in 5:6 as “at the opportune moment” (κατὰ καιρὸν). This is equivalent to “in the present momentous time” (ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ) in 3:26. It emphasizes eschatological fulfillment (as in Mk 1:15; cf. “the fullness of time,” τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου, in Gal 4:4). This coincides with the inaugural outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Rom 5:5. (CC)

This brief section is drawn together in 5:8. In the initial clause the Greek subject (ὁ θεός) is placed last for emphasis, but translated first: “but *God* demonstrates his own love toward us” (εἰς ἡμᾶς). The reflexive pronoun “his own” (ἑαυτοῦ) in between “the ... love” (τὴν ... ἀγάπην) emphasizes the personal nature of his love and reinforces the interpretation of “the love of God” (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ) in 5:5 as having a subjective genitive. God’s own love is not merely a feeling or disposition. It springs into action; it is demonstrable. The present tense of “demonstrates” (συνίστησιν) indicates that the demonstration continues to us in our present, sinful condition (ἔτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν). God’s love was exhibited most fully by Christ’s death in behalf of us

sinner (cf. “for proof,” εἰς ἔνδειξιν, in 3:25). And this same love has been poured out and remains within our hearts through the Holy Spirit (5:5). (CC)

5:6 *the right time*. The appointed moment in God’s redemptive plan (Mk 1:15; Gal 4:4). (CSB)

We can enumerate some of the providences which helped to open the way for the gospel such as the

- ✓ vast extent of the Roman Empire,
- ✓ the spread of the Greek language,
- ✓ the facility of travel throughout the empire,
- ✓ the extensive diaspora of the Jews,
- ✓ its many proselytes from Gentilism, etc.

All of these aided the spread of the gospel. What God saw and regarded as the fullness of the time in the spiritual condition of men, barbarian as well as Greek, is too difficult for us to predicate because His thoughts and judgments are too unsearchable for us. (Lenski)

Romans 5:6, “You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.”

2 Peter 3:8,9, “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Romans 11:33-36, “³³Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” ³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

still weak – Greek term describes someone afflicted with illness, one who is completely powerless. (TLSB)

right time. The perfect timing, known by God. (TLSB)

Christ died for the ungodly. Christ’s love is grounded in God’s free grace and is not the result of any inherent worthiness found in its objects (mankind). In fact, it is lavished on us in spite of our undesirable character. (CSB)

This designates the moral unworthiness and the impotence of mankind. Our problem was and is sin, and we were/are utterly incapable of coping with it. (Stoeckhardt)

Romans 7:18, “I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.”

5:7-8 Humans are reluctant to sacrifice for others. A few people might die for one who seemed particularly righteous or for one who had done them some good, but these are rare occurrences. Christ died, not for righteous people or for those who had helped Him, but for sinners. This is grace. (TLSB)

5:7 *righteous man ... good man.* We were neither righteous nor good, but sinners, when Christ died for us (see v. 8; 3:10–12). – The former means the just man who rarely benefits anyone whereas the good man does good things for other people and therefore someone might dare to die in his stead if the need arises. We were neither righteous nor good. (CSB)

The righteous man is just, upright and honest. A good man is not only just, but kind and compassionate, and governed by love to God and men. (Concordia Bible)

Human love generally doesn't extend to the point of a person's dying for his neighbor. What doesn't happen among people, God did. (PBC)

Naturally, the apostle only speaks of what is righteous and good in the natural sphere, of civil righteousness, in spite of which man remains before God what he is by nature, an ungodly person. (Stoekhardt)

5:8 *God shows his love* – With humans love succeeds, but only in unusual cases. That is the unique, incomparable love of God. It transcends all thought. Even the unjust are not beyond the reach of his bounty. (CSB)

But God has documented His love in an act that lies on another plane Altogether. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, still men in revolt against God, still holding in wild contempt the high majesty of the God who all the while invited our worship and thanksgiving (Rom. 1:19-21). (Franzmann)

The Greek language had a number of verbs to differentiate, to some extent at least, between varying levels of affection and attachment. It is important to realize that the word used here for God's love is *agape*, the term indicating a one-way, unreciprocated love coming entirely from God. There are no endearing qualities in rebellious humanity that moved or influenced God. It wasn't like in human friendship where both parties bring endearing qualities to the relationship so that a mutual affection develops. No, in the situation Paul is describing, all the good things originate on God's side of the relationship. (PBC)

Christ came when we were powerless. Even if we had wanted him to come, which was not the case, we couldn't have anything positive to bring it about. But the infinitely worse situation was that by nature we didn't want anything to do with God and His promised Savior, because we were ungodly. And yet, for such ungodly people as us, the Father sent his Son to die. That's one-way love, the kind one can hardly find even the faintest approximation of in the human experience. (PBC)

God gave His Son, Christ Himself, into death for such who were sinful and wicked, who possessed no moral qualities and were not worthy of any love – nothing being lost has had they been damned. That is the unique, incomparable love of God. It transcends all thought. It surpasses by far all human demonstration and thoughts of love. (Stoekhardt)

We caused the rift in our relationship with God. We had rebelled and declared war. We declared our independence from our King as we walked away from His love. Our actions, hostility, and estrangement made reconciliation necessary. Yet, nothing we could do could make reconciliation possible. (LL)

God alone brought this peace, this reconciliation, through our Lord Jesus Christ. We did not have to agree to it before it became effective. The peace treaty is not bilateral, but unilateral. We declared war on God and His kingdom. But God has declared peace with sinners because of Christ's work for us. (LL)

Isaiah 53:5, "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."

1 Timothy 1:15, "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst."

1 John 3:1, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him."

5:9-11 *Reconciled to God* (vv 9–11): The believer, seeing Christ's sacrifice and its benefits for himself, knows with unquenchable certainty the love of God. God's love has been actively demonstrated: Jesus' blood is the means of our reconciliation to God (v 9). That blood assures the sinner's salvation. Our text describes the gracious act of God in Christ by two terms. The sinner is now justified (v 9); the terms of God's law and justice have been met by Christ. The sinner is also now reconciled (vv 10–11); reconciliation describes grace in terms of interpersonal relationships. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

5:9 *by his death*. By laying down his life as a sacrifice—a reference to Christ's death for our sins (see 3:25). (CSB)

Our redemption required Christ's sacrifice. (TLSB)

wrath of God. The final judgment, as the verb "shall be saved" makes clear (cf. 1Th 1:9–10). (CSB)

We may experience the temporal consequence of sin, but the justified never experience God's wrath in eternity. (TLSB)

Romans 5:1, "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

5:10 *while we were enemies*.† The hostility between God and man must be removed if reconciliation is to be accomplished. God brought this about through the death of his Son (see v. 11; Col 1:21–22). (CSB)

Candid assessment of sin. We were completely opposed to God. (TLSB)

reconciled. To reconcile is "to put an end to hostility," and is closely related to the term "justify," as the parallelism in vv. 9–10 indicates: (CSB)

v. 9	v. 10
Justified	Reconciled
by his blood	through the death of his Son
shall we be saved	shall we be saved

A personal, loving relationship between God and humans has been restored by Christ. (TL5B)

The following points help to further explain reconciliation:

- It is an act of God that is not natural or automatic. The problem with which it deals is a hostility so deep and settled that it would persist indefinitely unless drastic action were taken.
- It has as its chief object man. In his ignorance man either disregards God or fears him. We are cut off from God and he knows it.
- It declares that people who were hostile and alienated are so no longer.
- There is the most intimate connection between our experience of reconciliation and the fact of Christ's death.
- It declares the magnitude of their own sin and the inexhaustible richness of God's love. (1B)

From Kittel we have the following:

- In the NT only Paul uses the word in and God relationships.
- It is not reciprocal in the sense that both equally become friends.
- There is a change not merely in the disposition of man or his legal relationship to God, but in the total state of his life.
- The love of God has become a present and active reality.
- Men are made active in this work.
- Reconciliation of the world is not finished.

Reconciliation is not an especially important word in the cultic vocabulary of Greek religion or Judaism, though it is used from time to time of man's relationship to God. The word appears to belong especially neither to cultic nor legal technical terminology, but rather to the sphere of personal relationships. The noun and the verb appear here in Romans 5:10-11 in the context of God's love. God so loved the world that He makes sinful enemies His friends (Jn 3:16; 15:15). God's justification involves a real self-engagement to the sinner on His part. It is not a matter of a dispassionate judge handing down a verdict. God is a waiting father, eager to be reconciled (Lk 15:20). Christ is loving bridegroom, eager for his bride to be brought into communion with himself.

Restates v 6, emphasizing that natural human beings are not just powerless and ungodly; they are enemies of God. In light of this, reconciliation is an immense and miraculous achievement by Christ. Paul implies that the forensic justification and reconciliation of sinners was the most difficult part of Christ's work. Now that Christ has already accomplished this by his death, we are to rest assured that it easily follows that we will be saved from God's anger on the future day of judgment (v 9). If we have been reconciled to God by Christ's death, then how much more shall we be saved now that he lives again (v 10)! Our risen and living Lord serves as a constant reminder of our future salvation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, "18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."

Colossians 1:20, "and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross."

saved by his life. A reference to the unending life and ministry of the resurrected Christ for his people (see Heb 7:25). Since we were reconciled when we were God's enemies, we will be saved because Christ lives to keep us. (CSB)

Christ's resurrection brings salvation. (TLSB)

Christ has earned for us a share in his resurrection glory. Instead of being afraid of God, the believer can now exult as he or she thinks of God (v 11). No suffering can rob our lives of meaning or sever our relationship with God, for reconciliation is a *fait accompli* through Jesus Christ. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 2)

5:11 Christians pondering what they have received through Christ's death and resurrection will respond in worship and praise. (TLSB)

we have now received reconciliation. Reconciliation, like justification (v. 1), is a present reality for Christians and is something to rejoice about. (CSB)

5:1–11 We naturally seek to avoid pain and suffering. Yet, there are times when suffering is unavoidable. Focused on Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection, we know that suffering is not the whole story. God will use afflictions for our good and to bless others. He will keep His promises, and we will overcome our sufferings by faith. • Lord Christ, You suffered for us. When we must suffer, lead us in faith. Amen. (TLSB)

Death Through Adam, Life in Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men[e] because all sinned— 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 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. 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 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 following many trespasses brought justification. 17 For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, 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. 18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 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. 20 Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

5:12–21† A contrast between Adam and Christ. Adam introduced sin and death into the world; Christ brought righteousness and life. The comparison begun in v. 12 is completed in v. 18; these two verses summarize the whole passage. These two men also sum up the message of the book up to this point. Adam stands for the condemnation of all people (1:18–3:20); Christ stands for the justification of all people (3:21–5:11). (CSB)

5:12 An overview of various commentaries gives the impression that more is written on 5:12 than any other verse of the letter: “On account of this, just as sin entered into the world through one person and death through sin, and thus death passed through to all people on this [reason], that all sinned” (5:12). (CC)

therefore. διὰ τοῦτο—This prepositional phrase occurs sixty-four times in the NT. (CC)

one man – There was no sin in God’s perfect creation until the fall of Adam (Gn 3:1–7). (TLSB)

Paul’s reference to “one person” in 5:12 clearly signifies Adam, who is explicitly named in 5:14. God created a world that was “very good” (Gen 1:31). There was no sin and no death. This stands in sharp contrast to the description of humanity in Rom 1:18–3:20. Rom 5:12 communicates succinctly what intervened and how man disrupted that “very good” existence. “Sin had its origin in one man, Adam” (SA III I 1). Paul does not go into the details of the narrative of the fall (Genesis 3), but this does not mean he is unaware of them. (CC)

Sin came into the world. “Into the world” should not be restricted to humanity. Paul’s main focus here is sin’s impact upon the human race, as indicated by the parallel “(in) to all people” (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους) later in 5:12. But the ramifications are certainly more extensive. (CC)

death. Physical death is the penalty for sin. It is also the symbol of spiritual death, man’s ultimate separation from God. (CSB)

Death is a consequence of sin. (TLSB)

Death then arrives on the scene through sin. This was in keeping with the warning of Gen 2:16–17: “And Yahweh God commanded upon the man, saying, ‘From every tree of the garden you may surely eat, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day of your eating from it you shall surely die.’ ” The penalty is at least partially enforced in Gen 3:19, 23–24. (CC)

spread. Parents have transmitted mortality to their children since the fall. (TLSB)

In chiasmic form, Paul then makes another statement about death, before returning to sin. “And thus death passed through to *all* people” (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους, 5:12). This phrase marks Paul’s first jump from “one” to “all.” He highlights that notion by the prefixed διὰ on the verb διήλθεν, death “passed *through* to all people.” Death has penetrated humanity and taken hold of all. (CC)

because all sinned. Not a repetition of 3:23. The context shows that Adam’s sin involved the rest of mankind in condemnation (vv. 18–19) and death (v. 15). We do not start life with even the possibility of living it sinlessly; we begin it with a sinful nature (see Ge 8:21; Ps 51:5; 58:3; Eph 2:3). (CSB)

Adam’s fall brought sin to all humanity. We inherited his guilt and the desire to sin. Here, Paul stops abruptly, confronting us with the reality of original sin and our guilt. “This hereditary sin is such a deep corruption of nature that no reason can understand it. Rather, it must be believed from the revelation of Scripture” (SA III I 3). (TLSB)

5:13-14 After his opening statement about the entrance of sin and death through Adam, Paul inserts a parenthetical comment in 5:13–14. It makes an important clarification about the role of

the Law in all this, which anticipates the final words of the chapter. “Indeed, until the Law, sin was in [the] world” (5:13). Sin’s presence apart from the Law is evident already from Paul’s description of all humanity in 1:18–32, and it is stated explicitly in 2:12–16. “For as many as sinned without [the] Law, they will also perish without [the] Law” (2:12). People are able to sin “without [the] Law” (ἀνόμως) and are liable to punishment for those sins. (CC)

5:13 *sin is not counted.* In the period when there was no (Mosaic) law, sin (“breaking a command,” v. 14) was not charged against man (see 4:15). Death, however, continued to occur (v. 14). Since death is the penalty for sin, people between Adam and Moses were involved in the sin of someone else, namely, Adam. (CSB)

Though the Torah had not yet been revealed, Adam had heard and broken God’s Law. (TLSB)

With “until the Law” (5:13), Paul is speaking specifically of those who lived “from Adam until Moses” (5:14). The reference to Moses confirms the definition of “Law” (νόμος) as the Torah revealed on Mount Sinai. A tangential point that can be deduced from this is that the patriarchs did not have the Law, and therefore they could not have been accounted righteous through works of obedience to the Law. Paul then adds: “But sin is not being charged to one’s account while the Law is not existing” (5:13). Bultmann charges that this assertion makes 5:13 “completely unintelligible.” But Paul proceeds to clarify exactly what he means. He just asserted: “Death passed through to all people on this [reason], that all sinned” (5:12). As a result, those who lived between Adam and Moses are also included within the earlier assertions that “all sinned” (3:23; 5:12). Paul’s supreme evidence is that death reigned over them (ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ θάνατος, 5:14). They all died; therefore, Paul concludes: they all must have sinned (cf. 6:23). (CC)

Sin is a transgression of a wise and good law. It follows that there was such a law binding on men before the time of Moses, and before any written revelation of the will of God was made to men. There was a law given to Adam from the mouth of God, by the violation of which sin entered and death by sin. There was a law, too, written upon the hearts of all men as moral being. (CB)

5:14 *death reigned* – All humans were mortal and under death’s power. (TLSB)

The point is further clarified by pointing out how death reigned “even upon the ones who were not sinning upon the likeness of the transgression of Adam” (5:14). Once again, Paul’s premise is significant. The people under consideration may not have sinned in the same way as Adam, but that statement is merely an addendum to the fact that they all sinned (ἀμαρτήσαντας, 5:14). The distinction is that Adam received a specific divinely revealed command: “And Yahweh God commanded upon the man, saying, “From every tree of the garden you may surely eat, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day of your eating from it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16–17). Millennia later, God gave further commands in the Law given through Moses. What Paul means by “the likeness of the transgression of Adam” is the breaking of a divinely revealed pronouncement. This is signaled by Paul’s use of “transgression” (παράβασις) in Rom 5:14. He uses the same term when leveling charges against the Jew for breaking specific commandments in 2:23 (cf. 2:27). Those who violate them are being charged, like Adam, with a crime against God’s Word. They are perpetrating sins “upon the likeness of the transgression of Adam.” (CC)

Moses. The writer of God’s Law (Torah). (TLSB)

type. Adam by his sin brought universal ruin on the human race. In this act he is the prototype of Christ, who through one righteous act (v. 18) brought universal blessing. The analogy is one of contrast. (CSB)

Adam violated a specific command that he heard from God. Others may not have heard the command as clearly as Adam did, but they still sinned. (TLSB)

Paul does, however, utilize a significant theological term by referring to Adam as a “pattern” or “type” (τύπος). This term is used to depict “those OT persons, institutions, or events that have a divinely intended function of prefiguring the eschatological age inaugurated by Christ—hence the word ‘typology.’”⁶³ The OT foreshadowing is normally favorable (e.g., Joseph, Moses, David, the sacrifices, temple, and priesthood). But this is not the case in 1 Cor 10:6, where the Israelites who perished in the wilderness serve as “types for us” (τύποι ἡμῶν), that is, as present day warnings to Paul and the Corinthian Christians. Whether the implications are positive or negative, the point of correspondence is “the essential similarity in God’s acts.” Goppelt’s observation regarding the original sense of τύπος as an impression made by a blow provides a key to Paul’s use of the term in Rom 5:14. (CC)

one who was to come. Adam prefigured and foreshadowed Christ (cf vv 15–17). (TLSB)

In the midst of the dismal tone of 5:12–14, Paul concludes 5:14 with a glimmer of hope: Adam “is a pattern of the one [who was] about to [come].” As in 4:24, μέλλω, “to be about to [come, happen, etc.],” is intended from the perspective of OT times. Ever since Gen 3:15, Adam, those between Adam and Moses (such as Abraham; see Romans 4), and all who lived with faith in the promise waited expectantly for the one whose advent was imminent (τοῦ μέλλοντος, 5:14). Notice this is not the messianic title “the coming one” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος), which occurs often in the Gospels (e.g., Mt 3:11; 11:3; Lk 7:19, 20; 13:35; 19:38). (CC)

5:15 *gift is not like a trespass* – God’s grace in Christ. (TLSB)

Adam’s sin. Adam, with his sin, is not a perfect parallel to Christ with His grace. (TLSB)

“Indeed, if by the trespass of the one, the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the undeserved gift in grace which is of the one person, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many” (5:15). The first half of this comparison introduced by “if” (εἰ) reiterates 5:12. Sin or, in this case, “trespass” (παράπτωμα) entered into the world through one person, Adam. With sin came death, a death which passed through to all. By Adam’s trespass, “the many died” (οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον, 5:15). In Paul’s letters, οἱ πολλοί often means “the many” as opposed to “a few.” However, under Hebrew influence, it is also used synonymously with πάντες for “all” (see the textual note). Paul could imply that the sin which entered through Adam leads all to sin, which then results in the death of all. But, as stated above, he does *not* fill in *that* blank here. Instead, he directly asserts that by Adam’s transgression, “the many died.” This is somehow true even of those people who were not yet alive. In some sense, “the sentence of death imposed on all people took place immediately in conjunction with the trespass of Adam.” Paul proceeds to explain this with greater clarity as the chapter becomes more negative, at least on Adam’s side of things. (CC)

many. The same as “all men” in v. 12 (see Isa 53:11; Mk 10:45). (CSB)

Rabbinic form of logic uses contrast to show that one man saved everyone. (TLSB)

All humans are subject to death. (TLSB)

much more. A theme that runs through this section. God’s grace is infinitely greater for good than is Adam’s sin for evil. (CSB)

The terms complement and reinforce each other. (TLSB)

Fortunately, with each step we also get Christ. Paul returns to the rabbinic formula of “lesser to greater” utilized in 5:9, 10 and also in 5:17 (see the first textual note on 5:9). “How much more” (πολλῶ μᾶλλον) completes the parallel thought introduced earlier in the verse by “if” (εἰ). The dominant thought again is of God’s grace. In 5:15 Paul redundantly speaks of “the grace of God and the undeserved gift in grace” (ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι). This again recalls the thought of 3:24 cited above. In addition to “grace” (χάρις), 3:24 also uses an accusative noun functioning as an adverb, δωρεάν, which often carries the meaning “freely,” and which would then reinforce the very essence of grace. But δωρεάν can also mean “undeservedly” (BDAG, 2), which is more appropriate for the context of Romans 3. Here in 5:15 the same noun (in the nominative) functions as a substantive, δωρεά, expressing “an *undeserved* gift.” It is given “in grace” (ἐν χάριτι), which is then modified with the phrase “which is of the one person, Jesus Christ” (τῆ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The trespass which leads to death came by the one man Adam; grace, on the other hand, is defined as “of the one person/man.” It belongs to and comes from Jesus Christ. (CC)

Romans 11:33-36 “³³Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and ^a knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?”^b ³⁵“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?” ³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

5:16 *grace of God.* Salvation. (CSB)

Not like the result. The same “not as” (οὐχ ὡς) formula which began 5:15 also opens 5:16: “and not as through [the] one who sinned [is] the bestowed gift” (5:16). The “trespass” (παράπτωμα) of 5:15 is paralleled by “one who sinned” (ἐνὸς ἀμαρτήσαντος, 5:16). Here is another restatement regarding Adam. The “gracious gift” (χάρισμα) in 5:15 is synonymous with another -μα word in 5:16, “the bestowed gift” (τὸ δώρημα). Here the result of the action indicated by -μα is communicated by translating τὸ δώρημα as “the *bestowed* gift.” (CC)

judgment – Sin rightly resulted in judgment. (TLSB)

Instead of proceeding with the “how much more” formula of 5:15, Paul instead explains further in 5:16 with “for” (γάρ) and by utilizing a μὲν ... δέ construction: “For, *on the one hand*, judgment from the one [is] to condemnation. But *on the other hand*, from many trespasses the gracious gift [is] for a decree of righteousness.” In the first sentence the contrast is not between Adam and Christ, but between Adam’s *one sin* and the *many trespasses* which followed. What comes “from the one” (ἐξ ἐνός), that is, from Adam’s one sin, is “the judgment” (τὸ κρίμα). And this “judgment” results in a “condemnation” (κατάκριμα). The prefixed κατά gives κρίμα the clear sense of a negative verdict, a conviction or “condemnation” (see the textual note; 5:18; 8:1). It would be an overstatement to insist that *in this phrase* “condemnation” (κατάκριμα) must express the condemnation *of all*. Instead, it recalls God’s singular warning to Adam, “In the day of *your* [singular] eating [ἡ ἄρτος] from it, you shall surely die” (Gen 2:17). Whether or not the actual execution of the punishment is included in the meaning of “condemnation” (κατάκριμα) is

debated. But this noun certainly increases the ominous sense of foreboding beyond Paul's use of "judgment" (κρίμα) earlier in the verse. (CC)

many trespasses. The sins of the succeeding generations. (CSB)

5:17 *will ... reign in life.* The future reign of believers with Jesus Christ (2Ti 2:12; Rev 22:5). (CSB)

Cf vv 12, 14. The death Adam merited spread to all humanity. (TLSB)

Much more. The comparison "if ... how much more" (εἰ ... πολλῶ μᾶλλον) is utilized for a final time in 5:17, which begins, "for if by the trespass of the one, death reigned through that one." Here Paul broadens the impact of Adam's sin, as well as the condemnation of death pronounced because of it. By his trespass, "death reigned" (ὁ θάνατος ἐβασίλευσεν). The identical clause was used in 5:14 (but with the Greek words in reverse order: ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ θάνατος); there death continued to reign over those who lived after Adam as well. Similarly here, Paul does not say death simply reigned *over* Adam because of his trespass. Instead, he uses "through that one" (διὰ τοῦ ἐνός). The preposition implies death's reign extends *through* Adam and over all others. Paul has, thereby, moved beyond his earlier statement that "death passed through to all people on this [reason], that all sinned" (5:12). The impact of Adam's trespass is extended further. As in 5:12, the *inauguration* of death's reign came by means of Adam's one trespass (τῷ τοῦ ἐνός παραπτώματι, 5:17). Now Paul adds that "through that one," death's reign has come to cover all people. This is in keeping with how Isaiah pictures death as "the shroud that enshrouds over all the peoples, the covering that is covered over all the nations" (Is 25:7). (CC)

grace ... free gift of righteousness. God gives Christ's righteousness to cover our sin. (TLSB)

reign in life ... Jesus Christ. Death no longer reigns over God's people; God has restored our dominion in life. Cf Ps 8:6–7. (TLSB)

Past events with their resulting present implications, often indicated by -μα words, have dominated on both sides of the battle since 5:12. The main verb in 5:17 is the first future verb form since 5:10. It expresses how those who receive everything discussed above "*will reign* in life [ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύσουσιν] through the one, Jesus Christ." This counters the previous uses of the aorist tense of the same verb to describe the "reign" of death in 5:14 and earlier in 5:17. More powerfully, the emphatic position of "in life" (ἐν ζωῇ) right before the verb (in the Greek word order) moves past all the previous references to death and forward "in life." Previously in 5:10, those who are reconciled through the death of God's Son heard this "how much more": "we will be saved in his life." As with "in his life" (ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ) there, "in life" (ἐν ζωῇ) here in 5:17 is used with a view to the future. "Will reign in life" expresses the ultimate goal of the grace and righteousness received already now. It indicates the direction and forward-focused movement of Paul's argument ahead toward the "not yet." In each and every case, this future reign in life which overpowers the reign of death becomes ours only "in his life" (5:10); it comes "through the one, Jesus Christ" (5:17), which is reminiscent of the thematic phrase of Romans 5–8, "through our Lord Jesus Christ" (5:1, 11; cf. 4:24; 6:23; 7:25; 8:39). But the formula is incomplete here and awaits its full expression in 5:21. (CC)

5:18 Christ's work in death and resurrection. (TLSB)

Therefore. “Consequently then” (ἄρα οὖν), which begins 5:18, introduces two summative comparisons which use the formula of “(just) as” (ὡς or ὡσπερ) followed by “thus also” (οὕτως καί). A similar format is used in 5:15 and 5:16; however, Paul negates the initial clause in both of those verses in order to heighten the contrast. Here the sense is more of a comparison, but the two combatants are once again opposites in both action and effect. (CC)

Condemnation. Although the “sentence” is basically a string of prepositional phrases, the terms in 5:18 are all familiar by now. Paul utilizes them with increasing intensity in order to assert directly how the consequence of Adam’s sin impacts all people. This is evident in the latter part of both “clauses,” where “(results) in, for” (εἰς) expresses a resulting state. The first half of the comparison states: “consequently then, as [what was] through one trespass results in condemnation for all people.” “Trespass” (παράπτωμα) is by now familiar from 5:15, 16, and 17. It clearly refers to the one sin of Adam through which sin entered the world (5:12). In 5:16 Paul says Adam’s one act of trespass led to “condemnation” (κατάκριμα), at least for Adam himself. Now the condemnation is extended to “all people” (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους). Paul did not say all of this in 5:12, but the subsequent progression has brought him to this point. In 5:17 he asserted it was by Adam’s transgression and *through* him that death exerted its reign (over many others). Now in 5:18 he states that “condemnation,” in fact, extended over all. That is the result “for all people” (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους) from God’s condemnation of Adam. “κατάκριμα [‘condemnation’] does indeed result for all men from Adam’s sin, but this κατάκριμα is no absolutely irreversible, eternal fact.” (CC)

Act of righteousness. Jesus’ “righteous act” (δικαίωμα) “results in present/coming righteousness of life” (εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς). As in 4:25, the noun (δικαίωσις) rendered as “righteousness” again carries with it a sense of “process as well as its result” (BDAG). This is fitting here due to the connotations of the genitive noun (ζωῆς) which follows, “of life.” Paul will soon clearly state how believers are now alive in Christ (e.g., 6:4, 11, 13). Yet they still await the future reigning in life of 5:17 (also 6:5, 22–23; 8:11, 13). The translation that Christ’s past act results in the “present/coming righteousness of life” seeks to express both aspects, life now and “the life of the world to come” (Nicene Creed). (CC)

life for all men.† Does not mean that everyone eventually will be saved, but that salvation is available to all. To be effective, God’s gracious gift must be received through faith, a gift of God through the work of the Holy Spirit (see v. 17; Eph 2:8–9). (CSB)

Paul then adds that this life is “for all people” (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους). Previously, it was recognized that “the many” (οἱ πολλοί) can encompass “all” (see the fourth textual note and the commentary on 5:15). Now it might appear that the opposite is the case: either πάντες means only “some” people or Paul is a universalist! Käsemann, for examples, concludes: “All-powerful grace is unthinkable without eschatological universalism.” However, the fact that God’s grace overpowers sin and death does not make his grace irresistible, as Romans 9–11 will make abundantly clear (e.g., 10:16–21). In regard to the matter of linguistic definition, Moo responds: “That ‘all’ [πᾶς] does not always mean ‘every single human being’ is clear from many passages, it often being clearly limited in context.” (CC)

5:19 The format and thought of 5:19 are comparable to 5:18. However, a number of new terms are introduced, namely, the nouns “disobedience” (παρακοή) and “obedience” (ὕπακοή) and the verb “establish” (καθίστημι). The two nouns are rooted in the verb “to hear.” They express two opposite responses to the hearing of God’s Word. Adam heard God’s command in Gen 2:16–17. Note the serpent’s first words, “Did God actually say?” (Gen 3:1). Adam then responded with an action contrary to the command; thus “disobedience” is an appropriate translation. Christ,

however, heard (and acted) under (ὑπό) the Father’s plan and responded appropriately in active obedience *and* passive acceptance (cf. “obedient,” ὑπήκοος, in Phil 2:8). (CC)

Man’s disobedience. “For just as through the disobedience of the one person, the many were established [as] sinners” (ἁμαρτωλοὶ κατεστάθησαν οἱ πολλοί, 5:19). This statement asserts the result of Adam’s trespass. The “many” continues to refer to all people; they are now identified ontologically as “sinners.” This then is different than the assertion in 5:12 that “all sinned” (πάντες ἥμαρτον). One could debate whether Paul understands that sinners are those who (because of their inherited sinful nature) consequently sin, or whether those who sin are (because of their sinful actions) consequently sinners. In his corpus of writings, his answer to both is a resounding yes! But what specifically does he mean here in 5:19? (CC)

by the one man’s obedience – Christ’s fulfillment of the Law and substitutionary death. “God’s eternal, unchangeable righteousness, revealed in the Law, has been satisfied” (FC SD III 57). (TLSB)

Yet “thus also through the obedience of the one, the many will be established [as] righteous” (5:19). Because of Christ’s obedience, all who “were established” (κατεστάθησαν) by God as sinners may also be “righteous.” The numerous legal terms utilized throughout this section, for example, “judgment” (κρίμα), “condemnation” (κατάκριμα), and “righteous act” (δικαίωμα), support recognizing the prevalence of the forensic sense of “establish” (καθίστημι) as well. “Will be established” (κατασταθήσονται) is another divine passive. (CC)

Will be. By virtue of its future tense, “will be established” (κατασταθήσονται) may refer to the eschatological judgment of God on the Last Day, particularly if the fulfillment of “coming righteousness of life” (δικαίωσις in 5:18; cf. it also in 4:25) is in view. But the future tense more likely has a logical sense, looking forward from Easter with the perspective of what follows from Christ’s obedient “righteous act” (δικαίωμα, 5:18). The verdict “righteous” (δίκαιοι, plural, 5:19) stands, therefore, as a present reality based upon the declaration of God which Paul has announced previously (e.g., 3:24, 28, 30; 4:5; 5:1). (CC)

made righteous. † A reference to a standing (status) before God (see 2Co 5:21), not to a change in character. The results (implications) of justification are developed in chs. 6–8. (CSB)

Romans 4:25 “He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.”

5:20 *law came in to increase.* Not to bring about redemption but to point up the need for it. The law made sin even more sinful by revealing what sin is in stark contrast to God’s holiness. (CSB)

As men, after the giving of the written law, had more commands and obligations which they knowingly violated, the number and guilt of their sins was greatly increased. Thus the law, through their opposition to it, and their voluntary disobedience of it, aggravated their condemnation; and was adapted to make them feel that if they were ever saved, it must be by grace, and thus prepare them to believe on Christ. (CB)

increase the trespass. The Law reveals sinfulness. This is its “second use,” a mirror to show sin. (TLSB)

grace abounded all the more. God’s grace is enough to forgive every sin revealed by the Law. “Mercy is more comprehensive than sin” (Ap V 29). (TLSB)

5:21 *grace ... righteousness.* Grace is concretely expressed in Christ's work, which declares sinners righteous. (TLSB)

leading to eternal life. Or, "into" eternal life. Christ's righteousness gives eternal life to sinners. (TLSB)

5:12–21 Adam's sin brought guilt, the desire to sin, and mortality to all humans. We continue to sin and deserve condemnation. Praise God, He did not stop with Adam. He sent a Second Adam to begin a new humanity. Christ fulfilled the Law. He was obedient to the Father, and He paid the penalty for our sin. One man—Christ—has redeemed us and changed humanity forever. • O Lord, Your grace abounds for me so that I may enjoy justification, life, and peace as Adam enjoyed before the fall into sin. Reign over me, gracious Lord, that I may reign over trespasses and death, inheriting all the blessings of the Second Adam—Jesus. Amen. (TLSB)