

Romans 5:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

Analysis

But not as the offence, so also is the free gift—Paul begins five verses (15-19) elaborating how Christ's work surpasses Adam's ruin. The sharp οὐχ ὥς... οὕτως καί (ouch hōs... houtōs kai, 'not as... so also...') signals dissimilarity within similarity. Both heads affect their people, but the quality and extent differ enormously.

For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many—the παράπτωμα (paraptōma, 'trespass/fall') of Adam brought death to πολλοί (polloī, 'the many'), but God's χάρις (charis, 'grace') through Christ superabounded (ἐπερίσσευσεν, eperisseusen). The contrast isn't numerical (many vs. few) but qualitative: death vs. abundant grace. The double emphasis 'grace of God, and the gift by grace' stresses salvation's utterly gratuitous nature—nothing earned, all given.

Historical Context

Paul's repeated 'much more' (πολλῷ μᾶλλον, pollō mallon) arguments characterize verses 9, 10, 15, 17. This rabbinic-style qal wahomer (light to heavy) reasoning would resonate with Jewish readers: if the lesser is true, how much more the

greater. But Paul inverts expectations—the greater reality is grace's triumph over Adam's fall, not Israel's triumph over Gentiles. Christ's achievement infinitely outweighs Adam's failure.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does grace 'abounding much more' than sin challenge the fear that your sin might outweigh God's grace?
2. What is the difference between the 'free gift' being available to all and being effectually applied to all (universalism)?
3. In what ways does emphasizing grace's abundance protect against both presumption and despair?

Interlinear Text

Ἀλλ οὐχ ὥς τοὺς παραπτώματι οὕτως καὶ τοὺς
But not as which is the offence so also which is
G235 G3756 G5613 G3588 G3900 G3779 G2532 G3588

χάρισμα· εἰ γὰρ τοὺς τοὺς ἐνὸς παραπτώματι
is the free gift if For which is which is by one the offence
G5486 G1487 G1063 G3588 G3588 G1520 G3900

τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀπέθανον πολλοὺς μᾶλλον τοὺς χάριτι
which is many be dead many more which is grace
G3588 G4183 G599 G4183 G3123 G3588 G5485

τοὺς θεοῦ καὶ τοὺς δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τοὺς τοὺς
which is of God also which is the gift by grace which is which is
G3588 G2316 G2532 G3588 G1431 G1722 G5485 G3588 G3588

ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς
by one man Jesus Christ unto which is many
G1520 G444 G2424 G5547 G1519 G3588 G4183

ἐπερίσσευσεν
hath abounded
G4052

Additional Cross-References

Romans 6:23 (References Jesus): For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8 (Grace): For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Romans 5:12 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

1 John 5:11 (References God): And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Isaiah 53:11 (Parallel theme): He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

2 Corinthians 9:15 (References God): Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

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