

# Romans 5:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

## Analysis

**Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life**—Paul summarizes the Adam-Christ parallel with striking symmetry. The structure is chiastic: (A) one man's trespass → (B) condemnation to all → (B') righteousness of one → (A') justification to all. Adam's παράπτωμα brought κατάκριμα (katakrima, 'condemnation/guilty verdict'), Christ's δικαίωμα (dikaiōma, 'righteous act/acquittal') brings δικαίωσις ζωῆς (dikaiōsis zōēs, 'justification of life')—not merely legal pardon but life-giving righteousness.

The 'all men' requires careful interpretation: does Paul teach universalism? Context suggests 'all who are in Adam' face condemnation, 'all who are in Christ' receive justification. The parallel is solidarity with representative heads, not automatic inclusion. The phrase emphasizes the symmetry of federal representation and the sufficiency of Christ's work for all who believe.

## Historical Context

This verse became central to debates about original sin and imputation. Augustine used it against Pelagius (who denied inherited guilt) to prove all humanity fell in Adam. Reformers cited it for double imputation: Adam's sin imputed to his descendants, Christ's righteousness imputed to believers. The parallel construction—one affecting many through representation—underpins covenant

theology's understanding of federal headship and Christ's substitutionary atonement.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does the parallel between Adam and Christ clarify what it means for Christ's righteousness to be 'imputed' to believers?
2. If 'all men' in the second clause meant every human without exception, wouldn't Paul be teaching universalism—how does context prevent that reading?
3. What comfort does the symmetry between condemnation in Adam and justification in Christ provide for assurance of salvation?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἄρα οὖν ὡς δι' ἐνὸς παραπτώματος εἰς  
Therefore as by of one the offence judgment came upon  
G686 G3767 G5613 G1223 G1520 G3900 G1519  
  
πάντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς κατάκριμα οὕτως καὶ  
all men judgment came upon condemnation so even  
G3956 G444 G1519 G2631 G3779 G2532  
  
δι' ἐνὸς δικαιώματος εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους  
by of one the righteousness judgment came upon all men  
G1223 G1520 G1345 G1519 G3956 G444  
  
εἰς δικαίωσιν ζωῆς.  
judgment came upon justification of life  
G1519 G1347 G2222

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Corinthians 15:22** (Parallel theme): For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

**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:

**Romans 5:19** (Righteousness): For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

**Romans 5:15** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Acts 13:39** (Righteousness): And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

**Hebrews 2:9** (Parallel theme): But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

**Romans 4:25** (Righteousness): Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

**John 1:7** (Parallel theme): The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

**John 12:32** (Parallel theme): And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

**2 Peter 1:1** (Righteousness): Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

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