



DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONS

This past Sunday we looked at Romans 5:12–19 and considered the great contrast between Adam and Christ. We saw why the world feels so broken, why guilt and death run so deep, and why none of us can save ourselves by effort, morality, or religious performance. But we also heard the better word of the gospel: that the free gift is not like the trespass, and that in Jesus Christ God has done much more than undo Adam’s ruin. In Christ there is justification instead of condemnation, life instead of death, grace instead of guilt, and a new kingdom for all who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness by faith.

Monday

Scripture Reading:

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned... Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses...” - Romans 5:12–14

Devotional:

The Bible is painfully honest about the world we live in. It does not pretend that sorrow is small or that death is natural in the sense of being harmless or good. Romans 5 tells us that sin entered through one man, and death through sin. That means the world is not broken because God made it badly. It is broken because humanity rebelled against God. We live east of Eden, and every funeral, every hospital room, every guilty conscience reminds us that something has gone terribly wrong.

This also means our deepest problem is not merely external. We do not just live in a fallen world. We are fallen people. Adam was not only the first sinner in a long line of sinners. He stood as the head of the human race. His fall reached farther than his own life, and we prove our solidarity with him by our own sin. We do not need a little polish or a little therapy for the soul. We need rescue. We need mercy. We need a new representative.

Lent, and really the whole Christian life, begins with truth telling. We must stop calling sin a mistake and death a harmless part of the cycle of things. Scripture calls death an enemy. Scripture calls sin rebellion. And only when we are honest about the disease will we rejoice in the cure. The dark backdrop makes the

diamond shine. When we tell the truth about Adam, we are finally ready to hear the good news about Christ.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where have you recently felt the weight of living in a fallen world?
2. In what ways are you tempted to minimize sin or rename it?
3. Why is it important to understand the seriousness of the problem before we can appreciate the gospel?

Prayer

Father, teach me to tell the truth about sin, death, and my need for grace. Keep me from shallow thinking and from false peace. Show me the depth of my need so that I may treasure the greatness of Christ. Amen.

Tuesday

Scripture Reading:

“But the free gift is not like the trespass... much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many... 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.” - Romans 5:15-17

Devotional:

These verses are full of music. Paul keeps returning to the same bright phrase: much more. That is the rhythm of grace. Adam’s trespass brought death, yes. But Christ did not come merely to match Adam’s damage point for point. He came with superabundant grace. He came with a gift that outruns the ruin. The gospel is not God reluctantly patching up a mess. It is God pouring out mercy with open hands through his Son.

Many Christians live as though grace were thin, hesitant, and hard to come by. They imagine that God saves grudgingly and blesses sparingly. But that is not how Paul speaks. He speaks of abundance. He speaks of a gift. He speaks of grace that abounds. The Lord is not a miser with mercy. In Christ, he is generous beyond all our deserving. The cross was not a narrow escape hatch. It was the overflowing triumph of divine love and justice meeting in the obedience of Jesus.

There is a kind of sadness that looks pious but is really unbelief. It says, “My sin is greater than God’s grace.” Paul says otherwise. He says “much more.” Christ is not a small Savior for manageable sinners. He is a great Savior for ruined sinners. So do not measure the love of God by your feelings, your recent performance, or the strength of your repentance. Measure it by Christ crucified and risen.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you tend to think of God's grace as abundant or reluctant?
2. Where are you most tempted to believe your sin is too much for Christ?
3. What does Paul's phrase "much more" teach you about the heart of the gospel?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you that your grace is greater than my sin. Deliver me from small thoughts of your mercy. Help me to believe that your gift truly is free, abundant, and enough for all my need. Amen.

Wednesday

Scripture Reading:

"Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 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." - Romans 5:18-19

Devotional:

Paul places two men before us, and in doing so he places two humanities before us. Adam stands at the head of one. Christ stands at the head of the other. Adam's story is the story of disobedience, condemnation, and death. Christ's story is the story of obedience, justification, and life. The great question is not whether you have flaws or burdens or regrets. The great question is this: whose story are you in?

This is one of the humbling glories of the gospel. We are not saved by becoming our own saviors. We are rescued by union with another. Adam ruined us as our representative, and Christ saves his people as their representative. His obedience matters because ours is never enough. His righteousness matters because we do not have any of our own to bring before God. The gospel takes us out of ourselves and fixes our hope entirely on Jesus.

There is comfort in this as well as correction. If your standing before God rested on your consistency, your best day would still not be good enough. But if your standing before God rests on Christ, then the ground beneath your feet is solid. You are not carried by your grip on him so much as by his grip on you. The strength is in the Savior.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does this passage humble human pride?
2. Why is it good news that salvation depends on Christ's obedience rather than yours?
3. In what ways do you still drift back toward trusting yourself?

Prayer

Father, thank you that my hope does not rest on my obedience, but on the obedience of Christ. Keep me from pride, and keep me from despair. Teach me to rest in the righteousness of Jesus alone. Amen.

Thursday

Scripture Reading:

“It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” - Romans 3:26

Devotional:

At the cross, God did not stop being just in order to become merciful. He remained just, and he became the justifier of the ungodly who trust in Jesus. That is one of the great wonders of the gospel. We often think of mercy and justice as if one must swallow the other. Either sin is punished, or sinners are forgiven. But at Calvary, God upheld both. Sin was not excused. It was judged. The guilty were pardoned through a substitute.

That is why justification matters so much. It is a legal declaration from the Judge of all the earth. In Christ, the believer is declared righteous because Christ has borne our guilt and fulfilled all righteousness in our place. The courtroom verdict changes everything. The condemned are welcomed home.

This truth brings great rest to a troubled conscience. Many believers live as though they must keep returning to court, hoping for a better verdict each day. But the gospel says that in Christ the verdict has already been spoken. That is why the cross is necessary. Without it, there is no peace with God.

Questions for Reflection

1. Why is it important that God be both just and the justifier?
2. How is justification different from personal moral improvement?
3. Where does your conscience tend to seek peace apart from Christ?

Prayer

Righteous Father, thank you that at the cross your justice was upheld and your mercy was displayed. Give me confidence in the finished work of Christ. Quiet my accusing heart with the truth of your gospel. Amen.

FRIDAY:

Scripture:

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” - Romans 8:1

Devotional:

These are words for weary people. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Not less condemnation. Not delayed condemnation. No condemnation. The Christian life begins with this verdict and continues under its shelter. We still battle sin. We still grieve over our failures. We still repent. But condemnation is no longer our address. Christ has borne it already.

The enemy loves to whisper in half truths. He will gladly remind you of sins you actually committed. He will rehearse old failures, present weakness, and shameful memories. What he will not tell you is the whole truth. He will not tell you that Christ has answered for those sins. He will not tell you that the debt has been paid. He will not tell you that the Judge has already spoken a better word over your life than your conscience can speak against it.

Living in that freedom does not make us careless. It makes us courageous. People who know there is no condemnation are finally free to be honest. They can confess sin without being crushed by it. They can forgive others without guarding a fragile righteousness of their own. They can serve without applause and repent without theatrical despair. When condemnation is gone, gratitude can finally grow. Holiness rooted in grace is stronger than holiness driven by fear.

Questions for Reflection

1. What condemning thoughts most often trouble your heart?
2. How does the promise of “no condemnation” give strength for honest repentance?
3. What would change in your daily life if you really believed this verse?

Prayer

Lord, when my heart accuses me, teach me to answer with your Word. Thank you that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Help me live today as one who has been truly forgiven. Amen.

SATURDAY:

Scripture Reading:

“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.” - Romans 8:11

Devotional:

The gospel does not stop at forgiveness. It does not even stop at justification. It reaches all the way to resurrection. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in believers now, and that means our future is not dust and silence. The Christian hope is not a vague spiritual survival. It is bodily resurrection. It is life after death, and then life after life after death, in a renewed creation under the reign of Christ.

That future hope changes the present. We still bury our dead with tears. We still feel the ache of frailty and the humiliation of decay. But we do not grieve as those without hope. Every cemetery, for the Christian, is a field awaiting harvest. Every weary body held by Christ is a body that will one day be raised in glory. The empty tomb of Jesus is not merely a happy ending to his story. It is the beginning of ours.

This means the Christian can face suffering, aging, and death with steady hope. Not with denial. Not with shallow cheerfulness. But with confidence grounded in the risen Christ. The body that weakens now will be raised. The life hidden in Christ will be revealed. The reign of death will not have the final word. Jesus will. And because he lives, all who belong to him will live also.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does the promise of bodily resurrection deepen Christian hope?
2. What fears about suffering or death do you need to bring before the Lord?
3. How would resurrection hope change the way you live this week?

Prayer

God of life, thank you that the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in your people. Strengthen my hope in the resurrection to come. Teach me to face weakness, sorrow, and even death with my eyes fixed on the risen Christ. Amen.