

PEACE ON EARTH

A New Age Has Dawned

Romans Series
PBC 2025

Text: Romans 5:12, 18-21

Two thousand years ago, an army of angelic warriors appeared to a group of humble shepherds who were watching their sheep on a cold night outside Bethlehem with a message for the Shepherds to proclaim to the world—“*Peace has arrived on Earth!*” (Luke 2:14)

You may be thinking, “But that isn’t how I remember the story! Wasn’t it a *choir* of angels? And weren’t they expressing a *wish* for peace on earth and goodwill among men? I am not sure how you got from a choir to an army, and I am even less sure how you got from a wish for peace to a proclamation of it! And if it was a proclamation of peace, then boy, did someone get it wrong, given the obvious absence of peace for more than 2000 years!” But the text in Luke 2:10-14 is clear – and so were the angelic messengers! God, through these Angelic Warriors, was announcing that Peace/Shalom had come to a world ravaged by sin and in open hostility toward Him!

These angelic warriors arrived on the scene of a world broken by the curse, ruined by sin, and under the bondage of death to declare the birth of Someone who would wage war against those enemies and bring peace to the earth and among men who would turn to Him through the gospel.

BUT . . . if you had asked the Shepherds to tell you the gospel and explain how it brings peace on earth to sin-broken, death-tasting sinners, they would have been at a loss for words. And so, to help us understand the magnificent announcement made by these angelic warriors, God inspired Paul to write our text this morning in Romans 5:18-21!

There are many things we could say about the four verses before us this morning, but their focal point is the statement Paul makes when he contrasts the reign of sin in the old age with the reign of grace that matched and expanded the proclamation made by the Angels. However, I want to explore what Paul meant when he announced that ***“grace would reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*** And to do that, I want to ask four important questions about this text:

I. What does Paul mean when he announces the Reign of Grace? (v. 21)

so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. Two Great Kingdoms are Established

- The Kingdom of Sin and Death:
- The Kingdom of Grace and Life:

B. On the basis of a single action by the Founder of each Kingdom

C. Resulting in the installation of the ruling powers over each kingdom (sin and death; righteousness and life)

D. That identify the nature and govern the lives of those living under its sway.

II. How is this reign of Grace established?

so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (5:21)

Paul tells us the reign of Grace is established on two unshakeable, immovable foundations:

- Through (by means of/because of) Righteousness
- Through (on account of / brought about by) Jesus Christ Our Lord

Grace reigns in the New Age and in the Kingdom established by God through a righteousness obtained by Christ that reverses the effects of Adam's unrighteousness, removes the condemnation for Adam's sin, and fully pays the penalty for that sin on our behalf.

And there are at least three massive effects that happen in the life of a person when they are granted permanent standing in the kingdom of Grace (5:2 – “Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand”)

A. Grace reverses the spiritual status of people who were made sinners by Adam but who are now made righteous by the 2nd Adam.

B. Grace reverses the kingdom status of those who are born again, rescuing them from the kingdom of darkness and moving them permanently into the kingdom of God’s dear Son (5:2; Col. 1:13-14).

C. Grace reverses the personal character of people who are made righteous by God through Christ

2 Cor 5:17 “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come!”

- Righteousness **for us** – imputed to our account
- Righteousness **in us** – imparted to us in our character
- Righteousness **through us** – expressed by us in our lives (thoughts, values, words, deeds)
- Eventually Righteousness **around us** (in lives that display shalom and in a world that will one day re-experience full orb ed shalom)

We could say it this way: “Grace reigns through a righteousness that leads to eternal life for those who have a personal relationship and persevere in a life-long association with Jesus Christ!”

III. How does Grace-Sourced Righteousness lead Sinners to Eternal Life in this New Kingdom?

So that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. By Removing Sin’s condemnation over us (5:18-19).

B. By Fulfilling the Law for Us (5:20)

C. By defeating death's power over us (5:17)

D. By Conquering Sin's Mastery over us through the enabling power of Grace so that we live righteously and joyfully in the kingdom where grace reigns! (5:20b-21a).

E. Through our association with Jesus Christ Our Lord (5:1, 21)!

Conclusion: What are the implications of the Reign of Grace for us?

- A. Because I have been justified by grace through faith and not by my own righteous works, **I rest confidently and joyfully in Grace!**
- B. As I live the justified life through the enablement of grace by refusing to let sin reign in me, and through me, **I display the freeing power of grace humbly and consistently.**
- C. As a citizen in the Kingdom of Grace, I live by its values, strive for its purposes, cultivate its effects in my relationships, and spread its benefits with others. **I am shaped by Grace, I showcase Grace, and I spread Grace to others.**
- D. Because I have received grace from God that I did not deserve, **I gladly and graciously give grace** to others who do not deserve it from me.
- E. As an ambassador of Grace, **I share grace with others** and announce it throughout the part of the world where I live.