

Romans 5:12–6:23

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Session 7

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Keywords

Adam, Christ, Baptism, Romans, Craig Keener, Augustine, Original Sin, Corporate Identity, Grace, Righteousness

Abstract

This lecture explores the profound theological shift from justification by faith to the transformative new life in Christ, focusing on Romans 5:12–6:23. Dr. Craig Keener contrasts the corporate identities of Adam and Christ, illustrating how Jesus reverses the legacy of sin and death with superabundant grace. He examines the historical context of baptism as a conversion ritual symbolizing a definitive break with the past and entry into a new identity. Finally, the lecture highlights the tension between the indicative of who believers are in Christ and the imperative of living out that righteousness as willing slaves to God.

Outline

- **I. Introduction to Romans 5:12–8:39**
 - A. Shift from righteousness by faith to new life in Christ and the Spirit
 - B. Mere knowledge of the law does not produce righteousness
 - C. Theological debates on the division of Romans 5 (Abraham to Adam shift)
- **II. The Contrast Between Adam and Christ (Romans 5:12–21)**
 - A. Solidarity in Adam vs. Solidarity in Christ
 1. Human alienation and the spread of death because all sinned
 2. Augustine's Latin translation error regarding inherited guilt
 3. Comparison with late Jewish pseudepigraphal documents (4th Ezra, 2nd Baruch)
 - B. The Role of the Mosaic Law (Romans 5:13–14)
 1. Law as an explicit standard that reckons or calculates sin

- 2. Sin and death existed before the law (paleontological and biblical evidence)
- C. Historical and Literary Precedents for a "New Adam"
 - 1. Parallels in Genesis (Adam, Noah, Abraham)
 - 2. Critique of Hellenistic Jewish views (Philo's first/second man contrast)
- D. Paul's Rhetorical Strategy (Romans 5:15–21)
 - 1. Use of synchresis (point-by-point comparison)
 - 2. Paired antitheses and the Jewish principle of *Kava Omer* (lesser to greater)
 - 3. Lopsided parallelism: Christ's grace far exceeds Adam's transgression
 - 4. Key terms: *paraptoma* (transgression) and *dikaiosis* (verdict of righteousness)
- **III. Radical Identity Shift and Baptism (Romans 6:1–10)**
 - A. Death and Resurrection with Christ
 - 1. Believers' old Adamic self died in Christ's once-for-all death
 - 2. Transition to a new corporate identity
 - B. Historical Background of Baptism
 - 1. Jewish conversion practices (proselyte circumcision and water immersion)
 - 2. Ceremonial lustrations in ancient Judaism (the *mikvah* and *mikvahot*)
 - 3. John the Baptist and the early Christian baptismal movement
 - 4. Baptism as a public covenant ritual (the "engagement ring" analogy)
 - 5. Later Jewish and early Christian developments (the *Didache* and infant baptism)
- **IV. Living Out the New Identity (Romans 6:11–23)**
 - A. The Mind and Self-Image (Romans 6:11)
 - 1. "Reckoning" oneself dead to sin and alive to God (Greek term *logizomai*)

2. Aligning one's perspective with God's objective verdict
 3. The indicative (what we are in Christ) vs. the imperative (how we must live)
- B. Slavery to Sin vs. Slavery to Righteousness (Romans 6:12–23)
 1. Roman cultural context of slavery, manumission, and mutual obligations
 2. Presenting members of the body as weapons (*hopla*) or instruments of righteousness
 3. Contrasting outcomes:
 4. a. Slavery to sin leading to death
 5. b. Slavery to righteousness leading to consecration and eternal life
 6. The Wages of Sin vs. the Free Gift of God (Romans 6:23)
 7. a. "Wages" (*opsōnia*) as military and slave terminology
 8. b. The contrast with God's free gift (*charisma*) of eternal life