

Romans 5:18 “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.

This is actually a potential difficult verse. This verse puts us at the opposite end of the Calvinist in theology spectrum. The Calvinist, of course, believes and purports what is known as limited atonement. Now Calvinism is today more of an ideology or a school of thought. It's not necessarily a people. I believe the closest thing you'll find to a proclaimed Calvinist would be the Presbyterians. And there's not too many of them. And if they're anything like other modern day denominations, 75% of them probably don't know their own doctrine.

Now keep in mind, legend has it, that Baptists in the deep South, the same ones that experienced the Great Awakening, John Wesley, George Whitfield, and Jonathan Edwards, were to a certain extent Calvinist. From what I understand, modern day understanding of Calvinism is quite a stretch from what John Calvin actually believed and taught. I've heard it said that nobody believes in eternal security of the believer like the Calvinist.

← Being defined by your opponents

I believe that John Calvin was push back from the power of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church took the extreme road where justification was put into the hands of man or the hands of the priesthood. Salvation could be either guaranteed or taken away by man. It could be worked for, paid for, or earned in some manner by men. So the opposite of that was take it out of man's hands completely and put it into God's hands completely, meaning that man has no say in the matter. God has chosen who is to be saved and who is not to be saved; and thus sprung this doctrine of limited atonement, where the blood of Jesus Christ was shed only for those who are saved. Only for those whom God has chosen to inherit eternal life, only for those who God has elected. Down this road you'll find your Calvinistic doctrines of election and predestination.

So this verse, Romans 5:18, is a problem verse for Calvinists. The Calvinist says that the free gift came upon SOME men unto justification of life. But the bible says the free gift came upon ALL men unto justification of life. So a Calvinist might squirm a little trying to get to through this verse. But here's my point: So do we. This is a problem verse for us Baptists also. Well it is for this Baptist. Why?

Romans 5:18 “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.

To me, there's an obvious question here that comes up. If the free gift has come upon all men, then why does one need to be saved? And it's a valid question. And I'll say this here: There's nothing wrong with asking questions. You'll never learn to really study your bible unless you have questions. I cherish the road to Emmaus experience. The bible says of Jesus and the two on the road, “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” And when their eyes were opened they said, “Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”

If you never have questions, then you'll never get any answers. In fact, learn to ask questions. I think a good teacher enjoys a good question. Don't just take for granted what people tell you. I've found that the masses are seldom right. When it comes to important things like religion, politics, health, wealth, horse training, most people don't know what they're talking about. Or they can't even talk about it. So there's nothing wrong with asking questions. There's a balance like most things. You don't want to be a dead fish

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that just floats down the stream with all the dead fish and believe what everybody else believes. But you don't want to be a fish trying to walk down the path by the stream. You don't want to be a perpetual skeptic and believe nothing and doubt everything and everybody.

So there's an obvious question here that comes up. If the free gift has come upon all men, then why does one need to be saved? Calvinist have drifted off into the ditch on limited atonement. On the other side of the road is unlimited atonement, or universal atonement. This is where everybody is saved. They say that Jesus died for the sins of the world, therefore the whole world is saved. Now do you know anybody that believes that, probably not? But I don't know a Calvinist either.

But it does bring up a serious question. Let's look back at the text. **Romans 5:18** "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."

Now because of the offence of one man, everybody and I mean everybody is doomed to hell. If that is so, then why wouldn't everybody and I mean everybody benefit from the righteousness of one man. I'll be honest with you. If I didn't know anything else about the bible or about Jesus or about the blood and the mercy of God, and someone was preaching on this verse, I'd stand up and say "Hey! Wait a second! Why are you saying that the first guy messed it up for everybody and Jesus fixed it up for everybody, but then turn around and say "Few there be that find it." You just said that by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon ALL men. How can you turn around and say that there's a hell and people on their way there when ALL men have got the free gift?" ; when the free gift has been bestowed upon all men...?

Well then the preacher could show me all the verses on hell and take me to white throne judgment and look at those books and see that not ALL men's names are in those books. Then I might just say, "Well it looks to me like that Bible contradicts itself. Then I don't believe any of it." Let me ask you this: Who ever said that understanding the Bible is easy? Whoever said that understanding the Word of God was a walk in the park? Jesus told those disciples, "**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth...**" You think about those two on the road to Emmaus. They didn't understand a word that Jesus said until what? It wasn't until Jesus opened their eyes. You are going to have a hard time understanding God's word without God.

There's a huge difference between education and revelation. I'm all for education. We ought to learn. We ought to teach. The bible says to teach. Go ye into all the world and TEACH all nations. We're supposed to teach. We're supposed to educate others of the things of God. But when God becomes the instructor, when the Holy Ghost touches the heart and mind, we shift from education to revelation. The bible says, be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

I remember many years ago when I was void of an understanding of God. I had no hope of God, no Holy Spirit. I was lost and ignorant. I used to tell Patty "I can't change the way I think!" But I've learned since then that God can change the way you think. I believe that the primary vehicle in which God uses to change a mind, is to change a heart first. What did those two on the road to Emmaus say when God opened up their understanding? "**Did not our heart burn within us?**" As Jesus revealed himself to them, as God illuminated their minds, as they were experiencing a revelation, they said, "Oh my, I've got heart burn!"

See when we lack understanding or knowledge, especially of the things of God, the answer is not necessarily more education, more programs, more books, and more computers! The problem is not necessarily here (the head). It's right here in the heart. That's ultimately why someone will succeed or fail

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at something. You see it all the time. People who don't have the education, they don't have the proper training, the formal training. They can still win. They can still pull ahead. They can still have victory. Why? It's because they got the heart. I'm seeing this more and more: People who get the job done are the ones that have positive attitudes. The ones that have negative attitudes, they just can't seem to get the job done. Your attitude is a just a condition of the heart. Someone who is humble and contrite and willing to learn, and doesn't think they know everything has a positive attitude. It's spiritual. Someone who is proud, a know-it-all, always trying to teach someone a lesson, has a negative attitude.

Someone who has a negative attitude (or is Contra) is always saying, "It can't be done. It can't be done. It can't be done. It can't be done." It's like what Yoda told Luke, "Always with you what cannot be done!" Then when it's shown to them that yes it can be done, they never learn because their attitude stinks. It's pride. It's a heart problem. It's a spiritual problem. It's not that they didn't have the knowledge to get it done. It's because their attitude stinks. And because their attitude stinks and they're so full of pride, the NEXT time a difficult situation arises, guess what they're going to say. "It can't be done."

You do that enough times, lo and behold, things just don't get done. Things that are so blatantly simple to accomplish, and within a reasonable range of accomplishment, can't get done and won't get done. You've said "It can't be done" so many times that in your head you are convinced that you can't accomplish anything. You don't have the heart to try and are content not even attempting. And of course it doesn't even enter your mind that you failed because you didn't even try. Bad attitudes turn into bad habits. If you keep thinking that things can't be done, your thoughts will become reality.

Now, just because someone is successful doesn't mean he's full of God. It doesn't mean he isn't either. What I'm trying to demonstrate to you is the connection between the heart and the mind. God can and will use the heart to affect the mind. Sometimes, we might need a little heartburn in order to understand the things of God.

Whoever said that understanding the Bible was going to be easy? So Romans 5:18 brings up this doctrine of unlimited atonement, or universal atonement. This is the opposite of limited atonement.

Romans 5:18 "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."

If we take this verse by itself, yes we have a problem. If the free gift has come upon all men, then why are some lost and some saved. In other words, why doesn't it work like it did with Adam. Adam sinned and the whole world is plunged into depravity. Jesus dies on the cross and is raised from the dead, why isn't the whole world plunged into righteousness? We know it's not. Just turn on the news.

Why would Paul say this if it's not so? More importantly, why did God say it? I remember when I was studying for my thesis in college: Acts 2:38. The bible says, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sin and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." I remember I'd ask God, "Why did Peter say this?" If baptism doesn't save and baptism doesn't wash away sins, like I was taught, then why would it say this? Why did God put this verse in the bible? We're taught that we get the Holy Ghost when we're saved, not baptized. If what we believe is true, then WHY does it say this? I was to the point where I was desperate for an answer. I remember one morning in my van pulling into the parking lot at work, weeping, asking God to help me with this verse. In my heart, if I didn't get an answer for this verse, how could I go on preaching what we preach? Why did God put this verse in the bible? Through the ages people have died and burned at the stake for our doctrine of baptism. We've died because we've said, "No, baptism does

not wash away sin." So unless I got an understanding of that verse, all our Baptist heritage and doctrine would be in vain. So God really helped me with that verse to gain an understanding of that section of Acts.

Now, this verse doesn't affect me like Acts 2:38. I'm not going to write a 50 page essay on this verse. But by itself it does have implications that are not consistent with our doctrine. So how do we reconcile this. How does one reconcile all these alls. Judgement came upon ALL men. The free gift came upon ALL men.

Paul repeats this thought in another letter. In 1 Cor 15:22 he writes, **"For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive."**

There's that word again: all, A double L. All means all right. When we say all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all means all right. If all didn't mean all in that verse then that would mean that some haven't sinned and can reach the glory of God, doesn't it. So all must mean all. (Some of you all are thinking, "I can't believe we're discussing the meaning of all) So someone who believed in unlimited atonement or universal atonement would say, I thought all meant all. We're all God's children here. We're all going to go to heaven.

We say "Oh no. We don't believe that doctrine. We believe in heaven and hell. We believe that someone needs to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as the personal Lord and Savior to go to heaven. We believe that broad is the gate that leadeth to destruction and many there be that in thereat, and narrow is the gait and straight is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." You know, it's make my head spin how fast we throw that doctrine out the window everytime a loved one dies. Just hop from one funeral home to the other. Or just read the obituaries. Every single one of them is going to heaven. Every single one of them, the Lord is taking them home. Amen. Ain't none of them going to hell. Oh no, they ALL found the way.

Look in the phone book, and you'll find like 1 Universalist church. That's what they believe. They believe in universal atonement. We're all gonna get to heaven eventually. You'll find 1 church in the phonebook, but when someone dies, everybody becomes a Universalist. He's gone to a better place. He's not suffering anymore. Whatever happened to that old saying, "God have mercy on his soul!"

1 Cor 15:22 gives us the key. And like most keys, they're small. It's that little word IN. **"For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive."**

If you're going to want to be part of ALL, you're going to have to get IN first. If you're not IN, then you're not ALL. Now before I go any further. I want to say again, nobody believes in eternal security like the Calvinist. If you are IN, then there's nothing in this world, there's nothing in heaven or earth, that can take you out of ALL. There is nothing, no nothing, that can change your membership in the ALL club. God gives eternal life to EVERY one that is IN. Of those that are IN Christ, ALL of them will inherit eternal glory. Not one of them will be left behind. Not one of them will miss the blessing. Not one of them that get in the boat will fail to reach the other side. Everyone that gets in WILL make it to shore to that celestial shore.

If you're going to want to be part of ALL, you're going to have to get IN first. If you're not IN, then you're not ALL. So the question is, how do you get in? Well, let me ask you a question. How did you get IN to Adam? You were born into Adam. You were birthed into Adam's race. You were conceived and incubated in the womb of another of Adam's race. And through much travail, you were born into Adam's

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But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were BORN, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

race. There's no other way. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." **That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.** That is how ALL means ALL.

- Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."
- How does ALL apply to this?
- That ALL that are born again WILL see the K.O.G.
- (Every single one to the exclusion of none)

If want to be part of ALL, then your germs have to get IN

"For as IN Adam ALL die, even so IN Christ ~~ALL~~ shall ALL be made alive."

Just like you were BORN into Adam, ye must be BORN into Christ.

- Mico → "Can he only a 2nd time into his mother's womb."
- Jesus said, "No, ye must be born from the Womb of the Spirit!"
- Here in the world are ye going to get in there
- Look at man --- souls from the woman / souls from the man.
- Look at spiritual --- souls from man / souls from God.

What is it from Man? FAITH...

What is it from God? THE WORD OF GOD... Parable of the Sower

- * When the faith of man meets with the W.O.G. a holy conception takes place, where soon there will be a birth....