

CONDEMNED IN ADAM ROMANS 5:12–14

INTRODUCTION

We return to our series through Paul's epistle to the Romans, **the greatest letter ever written.**

It is Paul's most detailed and profound **explanation and application** of the greatest news we could ever hear—the gospel.

At the heart of this gospel message, as we've learnt, is the doctrine of justification by faith.

As Paul explained in **Romans 3:21–26**, which some have suggested is the most important paragraph in the Bible, the gospel reveals how God is righteously righteousing unrighteous individuals.

That is, God is declaring them righteous, or justifying them, through faith in Jesus Christ and the salvation He accomplished by His atoning death on the cross.

As important as what justification is to Paul and the gospel message he proclaimed, it was not the best part of the gospel.¹

¹ "I do not put the forensic model 'justification by faith' at the center of Romans (see the excursus after 1:17), still less at the center of Paul's theology. But it is an integral and important part of his gospel." Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, ed. Ned B. Stonehouse et al., Second Edition, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 321.

For Paul, justification is a means to a greater end.

That is, God accomplishes something greater than a change in legal status for those whom He has chosen in Christ.

That is what Paul introduces in **Romans 5** as his opening section from **verses 1–11** expounds upon the benefits of justification.

The common thread in these benefits is the believer's new relationship with God.

As we learnt, the best part of the gospel is not the judgement of God that you are saved from, but the relationship with God that you are saved to.

The benefits of justification introduced Paul's larger concern of **chapters 5–8** which is the believer's assurance of salvation.

This is significant because Paul thinks of justification primarily in eschatological terms.

In other words, we are waiting for a future justification on the day of God's final judgement.

God's verdict of "righteous" has already been decisively rendered over those who have faith in Christ, but it has not been announced publicly.

Therefore, Paul wants to assure his readers that they can confidently expect to be saved from God's wrath in the final judgement as He completes their salvation in glorification.

It is that assurance—that confident expectation that Paul calls “hope”—that he introduced in **verses 1–11 of chapter five** and then focusses on for the remainder of the section that runs to the end of **chapter eight**.

If we zoom out for a moment and look over the landscape of this section, we see that Paul assures his readers that God's verdict of their justification is sufficient to deliver them from God's wrath when it is poured out in the final judgment.

As Paul explains, nothing can stand in its way—not death, nor sin, nor the Law.

Paul triumphantly proclaims in **Romans 8:38-39**—

³⁸ **For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,**

³⁹ **nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Zooming in again, as we stand atop a hill and survey the path ahead, Paul's introduction in **verses 1–11** has indicated the destination, but we still need to complete our journey.

Paul has introduced his focus on our assurance of salvation, but now as he moves us forward he provides us with **the basis of that assurance** in **verses 12–21**.

To warn you, this section is by no means easy.

As **Tom Schreiner** admits, “*Romans 5:12–21 is one of the most difficult and controversial passages to interpret in all of Pauline literature.*”²

I think it may well have been this section which Peter had in mind when he wrote in **2 Peter 3:15-16** that “**our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters... in which are some things hard to understand.**”

However, as much as what this section of Romans will exercise our minds, the doctrines it contains are essential to the gospel, which is the grand theme of the epistle.

So it is necessary that we work hard to follow Paul’s reasoning because we will be richly rewarded with a deeper understanding of the gospel and a deeper delight in the the God of the gospel.

At the outset, let me say that one factor that makes this section of Romans so complicated and controversial is that it presents us with doctrines that are hotly contested.

What will help us, though, is to remember that while these doctrines evidently form the theological background to Paul’s thought, they are not his primary focus.

² Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, Second Edition, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2018), 274.

It is certainly necessary for us to wrestle with the theological implications of the text, but we can follow Paul's reasoning with greater clarity and certainty when we don't get distracted from the logic of his argument.

Therefore, we'll approach this section by first following the text closely and then, once we understand Paul's argument with confidence, we'll return in a future sermon to consider the doctrinal implications of this section in greater detail.

So then, let's orient our minds to Paul's argument.

Paul has argued in **verses 1–11** that the hope of believers is secure by virtue of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Now in **verses 12–21** he contemplates the two main powers and enemies that threaten to overthrow the hope of believers, namely, sin and death.

These twin powers were introduced into the world through the sin of Adam and have dominated the human race ever since.

But the hope of believers is not dashed by sin and death.³

Jesus Christ has conquered both powers, thereby securing the believer's assurance of salvation.

These two Adams, the first Adam and the second, greater Adam, stand as the two representatives of mankind and are at the core of Paul's argument.

³ Schreiner, *Romans*, 274.

The basis of our confidence that Christ will save us from God's wrath is that we are no longer in Adam but in Christ, the second Adam.

To highlight the triumph of being represented by Christ, Paul first contrasts the disaster of being represented by the first Adam.

We'll come to see as we progress through this section over the coming weeks that all who are "in Adam" are condemned, whereas all who are "in Christ" are justified.

But before we can find assurance in the righteousness and life that Christ brings to His people, we must understand that Adam first brought sin and death to all His people.

PROPOSITION

In **Romans 5:12–14**, Paul explains that Adam brought sin and death to all those he represented.

Therefore, all who are "in Adam" are condemned.

In order to find assured salvation in Christ's representation, you must recognise and renounce the disastrous results of Adam's representation.

1. **Adam's Representation Explained** (12)
2. **Adam's Representation Evidenced** (13–14)

1. ADAM'S REPRESENTATION EXPLAINED (12)

Paul offers a theologically rich, and yet very condensed, explanation of Adam's representation and its results

As Paul puts it in **verse 12**—

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Essentially, Paul is saying that Adam's failed representation is the reason why we are all corrupted by sin and condemned as a result.

Adam's representation of humanity was disastrous,
and led to both sin and death for all people.

However, Adam's failed representation helps us understand Christ's faithful and triumphant representation by which we are saved.

Paul will argue that Christ has overturned the negative consequences of Adam's sin.

But to understand that, we first need to consider Paul's explanation of Adam's representation.

Before we consider the text in detail, let's ponder this concept of one man serving as a legal representative for a group of others.

This legal representation is a concept that we encounter frequently.

A president can formally and legally represent the citizens of his nation so that they are bound by the treaties he signs and the diplomatic relations he maintains.

A parent can legally represent their child so that they serve as their legal proxy, making decisions about their health and education, among other things.

We even have the common practice of granting another person “power of attorney” so that they legally represent us and we are bound by whatever they sign or agree to on our behalf.

But how far can this legal representation go?

We agree that our representatives can incur a debt that legally binds us—whether its the president on behalf of the nation or the one who has power of attorney acting on behalf of another.

You might start to raise an eyebrow and object, though, as I suggest that our representatives can incur a criminal guilt that legally binds us.

But just think of an accountant who files fraudulent tax claims.

Your accountant might be the one who commits the crime, but SARS will hold you liable and may even pursue a case against you in court.

But have you ever considered the way Achan represented his family as Israel took possession of the Promised Land?

Contrary to Yahweh's explicit command, Achan took some of the things devoted to destruction from the city of Jericho.

As Yahweh warned Joshua, there would be severe consequences for the one who sinned in this way, as we read in **Joshua 7:15**—

¹⁵ “And it will be that the one who is taken with the things devoted to destruction shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has trespassed against the covenant of Yahweh, and because he has committed a disgraceful thing in Israel.”

After Yahweh revealed his sin, Achan confessed, as **verses 20-21** record—

²⁰ So Achan answered Joshua and said, “Truly, I have sinned against Yahweh, the God of Israel, and this is what I did:

²¹ I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight; then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it.”

Though Achan committed the sin, the punishment fell upon all those he represented, as Yahweh had warned.

So we read in **verses 24-25** of the devastating consequences of his representation—

²⁴ **Then Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the mantle, the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that belonged to him; and they brought them up to the valley of Achor.**

²⁵ **And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? Yahweh will trouble you this day.” And all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones.**

Do you think that was fair?

Was it just that one man incurred guilt for his whole family as their representative?

These are the kinds of questions that we’ll confront as we consider Paul’s argument.

He begins by stating that **sin entered the world through Adam**—

just as through one man sin entered into the world

That’s not a controversial statement, especially if you are familiar with the Old Testament.

Clearly, the “**one man**” that Paul is thinking of is Adam.

It is important to note that Paul does not say that sin originated with Adam.

Sin in the world, which is to say, sin within humanity, began with Adam.

Sin originated with Satan, who “**sins from the beginning**” according to **1 John 3:8**.

John does not specify when that beginning was, but it was obviously before the creation of Adam and Eve, because they were tempted by Satan.⁴

Adam’s sin was particularly tragic because, unlike even the most glorious of angels, God had made mankind to uniquely enjoy the privilege of being made in His image.

God made men and women to be like Him and to represent Him as vice-regents over His creation.

The tragedy of Adam’s fall is that sin entered into the world and corrupted those who were meant to reflect God to His creation.

But why is it that Paul speaks of Adam’s sin, and not Eve’s?

To begin with, God had given the command to Adam before Eve had even been created.

⁴ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Romans*, vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 292.

As we read in **Genesis 2:15-17**—

¹⁵ **Then Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.**

¹⁶ **And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may surely eat;**

¹⁷ **but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”**

So God gave Adam one simple command—

do not eat “**from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**”

The consequences for Adam’s disobedience of this prohibition were disastrous for all humanity.

Furthermore, God’s creation of Adam before Eve established a particular role for Adam, as Paul affirmed in

1 Timothy 2:13–14.

Adam’s role established him as the leader of his family and as the representative of the human race.

As Eve’s leader, Adam was responsible for teaching her God’s command and helping her to obey it.

From Eve’s dialogue with the serpent, it’s clear that Adam had indeed told her about the prohibition.

But we read in **Genesis 3:6** that Adam failed to help Eve obey because he did not protect her from the servants deception and temptation—

⁶ Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, so she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Adam was right there with Eve the whole time!

He should have insisted on their mutual obedience to God rather than allow her to lead him into disobedience.

So although Eve disobeyed first, the primary responsibility for the sin was Adam's.

But these two reasons point us towards the most significant reason of all—by creating Adam first, God had appointed him to the unique role of being the “head” of mankind.

Adam was uniquely responsible to represent humanity as a corporate group.

This representation means, at a minimum, that Adam was the physical or biological head of all humans.

As such, his sin corrupted both his own nature and the natures of all those who would descend from him.

As Paul understands it, Adam's first act of disobedience produced within him an indwelling sin nature.

This sin nature eventually led to Adam committing many other sinful acts.

It was this sin nature that Adam passed on to all his descendants.

As **one author** explained—

*“Just as Adam bequeathed his physical nature to his posterity, he also bequeathed to them his spiritual nature, which henceforth was characterised and dominated by sin.”*⁵

Paul is not, however, arguing that it Adam’s representation is merely one of natural, biological representation.

Adam was the legal head of the human race and his actions bore consequences for all of humanity.⁶

Paul, like all ancient Jews, understood the idea of corporate identity.

No Jew would have thought of himself in isolation from his corporate connection to his fellow Jews.

What one of them did affected all the others, and what the others did affected him—in a way that is difficult us with our Western individualism to comprehend.

⁵ MacArthur, *Romans*, 293.

⁶ “Though historically referred to as federal headship, the label representative headship is preferable since it better conveys the fact that both Adam and Christ act as the legal representatives for those who are reckoned to be in them.” John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 465–466.

It was on that basis that God frequently punished or blessed an entire tribe, city, or nation because of what a few, or even just one, of its members did.

We've already seen an example of that in Achan's sin as God held his whole family responsible.

It was on the basis of this same principle of corporate identity that Abraham asked Yahweh to spare Sodom if only a few righteous people could be found there,
as we read in **Genesis 18:22–33**.

In fact, the author of Hebrews makes use of this principle that one person can represent another, or even an entire group, to make a profound argument in **Hebrews 7:7–10**—

⁷ **But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater.**

⁸ **And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on.**

⁹ **And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes,**

¹⁰ **for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.**

In the same way, although with much greater consequences, the sin of Adam was passed on to all of his descendants.

When he sinned in the Garden of Eden, he sinned not only as an individual man, but as the first man who represented all mankind.

Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race is corrupted by sin and condemned as a consequence.

While we protest that this is dreadfully unfair, Paul's explanation of Adam's representation sets the stage for Christ's representation.

Whenever we are tempted to think of original sin as unfair, or unjust, we should remind ourselves that if Adam did not represent all mankind,

then Christ could not represent all mankind as the second Adam.

What was the result of Adam bringing sin into the world?

As Paul continues, he argues that **sin brought the consequence of death—**
and death through sin

This tragic result was the exact consequence that Yahweh had warned Adam about in **Genesis 2:16-17**—

¹⁶ **And Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may surely eat;**

¹⁷ **but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”**

Just as God had given that command to Adam and warned of the consequences of disobedience, so God has written the same warning on the hearts of all mankind, as we read in

Romans 1:32—

³² **although they know the righteous requirement of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.**

When we think of death, though, we should not limit our understanding to physical death.

The Bible speaks of a spiritual death which involves a separation from God, as we read in **Isaiah 59:2**—

² **But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.**

So then, Adam died when he sinned because when he did he was immediately separated from God.

His hiding from God and expulsion from the garden were a sign of his spiritual separation from God.⁷

But just as Adam's sin spread to all his descendants whom he represented, so, too, did the consequence of sin.

As Paul writes elsewhere, in **1 Corinthians 15:22**—

²² **As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.**

⁷ Schreiner, *Romans*, 278.

Paul is thus explaining that through Adam's representation of humanity, sin and death came to rule over all people by virtue of Adam's sin.

As Paul goes further in his argument, he makes a similar statement—

and so death spread to all men

You might think that Paul is simply restating the tragic consequence of death coming to all the children of Adam.

But the next phrase clarifies that Paul is not merely repeating his point, but is going further to say that the death experienced by **“all men”** was—

because all sinned

Now, it is this phrase that is the most controversial in the verses we are studying today.

What does it mean that, **“all sinned”**?

The most natural reading seems to be that since Paul has already established Adam's representation of humanity in the first half of the verse, he is now focusing on the effects of Adam's sin on the individuals that he represents.

That is, all people experience death as a result of their personal sin which flows from the corrupted sin nature inherited from Adam.

Historically, this idea has received support from the likes of Luther and Calvin.⁸

However, as we consider the context of **verse 12** we notice that Paul adds another level of complexity to his argument when he writes in **verse 18**—

¹⁸ **...through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men....**

Therefore, many go further than Luther and Calvin and argue that since Paul claims that we die both because we sin in **verse 12** and because Adam sinned in **verse 18**, we must blend these two ideas together.

In other words, some argues that we all sinned when Adam sinned.

As the representative of the human race, Adam's sin is at the same time the sin of every other human being who ever lives.

The proponents of this view point to the way Levi relates to Abraham in **Hebrews 7:9–10** and argues that it illustrates how we all relate to Adam.

Without wanting to wade into all the technicalities, I think **Doug Moo** offers a commendable approach when he suggests that there is a third option—

“All sinned” means “all people sinned in and with Adam.”

⁸ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 182.

The presence of both ideas in Paul's mind, as he expressed them in **verses 12 and 18**, makes Moo's interpretation the most compelling.

Now you should be aware that this section of Romans, from **verses 12–21**, is the primary text from which theologians develop the doctrine of "original sin."

Since our aim is to follow Paul's argument closely, we're not going to consider this doctrine in detail today.

This is particularly helpful because as much as what Paul may have held to the idea of original sin, that was not the focus of his argument.

Remember that Paul wants to assure his readers of their salvation in Christ, and so he has to establish the superiority of Christ's representation as compared to Adam's.

That said, to briefly note, when theologians refer to "original sin" they mean that all people are born in a condition that consists of:

(1) original guilt—the liability to suffer eternal condemnation; and

(2) original corruption—the sinful nature or tendency toward evil.⁹

It is certainly a difficult doctrine to understand, and even more challenging to accept.

⁹ Gregg R. Allison, "Original Sin," in *The Baker Compact Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2016), 155.

Nevertheless, by the time we come to to the **end of chapter 5**, we'll come to appreciate that the doctrine of original sin is essential to the gospel.

As **one author** claims—

*“A gospel that omits Adam and original sin is actually far less good news, if good news at all.”*¹⁰

As Paul explains Adam's representation, it is a pretty bleak picture!

Adam is both the physical or biological head of all humans and the representative head of the entire human race.

When Adam sinned, all humans sinned because all humans are in Adam.

As a consequence, Adam's sin is imputed to all humans, and all humans are enslaved to sin's dominating power.

Furthermore, as all people sin “in Adam,” they also come to sin “with Adam” as they add their personal sin to his representative sin.

All in all, humanity is plunged into the rule of sin and death.

This death is both physical and spiritual as people are estranged from God.

¹⁰ Michael Reeves and Hans Madueme, “Threads in a Seamless Garment: Original Sin in Systematic Theology,” in *Adam, the Fall, and Original Sin: Theological, Biblical, and Scientific Perspectives*, ed. Hans Madueme and Michael Reeves (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 224.

In short, Adam's representation means that all who are "in Adam" are condemned.

But what if you're not convinced?

What if you think that this doesn't sound fair and God could not justly impute the guilt and corruption of Adam's sin to all of us?

To answer any who might object, Paul defends his explanation of Adam's representation by offering compelling evidence that God did, indeed, impute Adam's guilt and corruption to his offspring.

2. ADAM'S REPRESENTATION EVIDENCED (13–14)

Paul interrupts his sentence to answer a clarifying question.

How can the reason all humans die be that they are "in Adam" and thus have Adam's sin imputed to them?

Why do they not die solely because of their personally and individual sin?¹¹

¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the trespass of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

¹¹ Andrew David Naselli, *Romans: A Concise Guide to the Greatest Letter Ever Written* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022), 76.

Though at first glance we may be puzzled by what Paul is arguing here, he is actually providing clear and compelling evidence of Adam's representative headship.

In **verse 13**, Paul asks us to consider people who lived between Adam and Moses.

During this time period, Paul contends that the sin that came into the world through Adam was still active in the hearts of men.

What is crucial to Paul's argument, however, is the difference between the sins committed by the people of this time period and those before and after.

They did not disobey what God explicitly commanded in the same way Adam and the Israelites did.

That is, Adam had received a specific and explicit command not to eat the fruit.

Likewise, the Israelites under Moses received the specific and explicit commands of the Mosaic Law.

In Paul's understanding, the violation of a specific command is sin, but it is a specific kind of sin—**transgression**.

The penalty of such transgression is death.

Genesis 2:17—

¹⁷ **from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat from it; for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."**

Exodus 19:12—

¹² **And you shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.’**

As Paul argues, that explains why Adam died and why those who had the Mosaic Law died.

But why did people who did not have any specific, explicit commands from God to transgress nevertheless still die?

The answer is that they died because they were in Adam, not because they transgressed God’s law since, as Paul writes in **verse 13**—“**sin is not imputed when there is no law.**”

Paul has actually made a similar point already in **Romans 4:15** when he wrote that—

¹⁵ **the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no trespass [transgression].**

As Paul affirms in **Romans 5:14**, the reign of death over the people who lived between Adam and Moses proves their condemnation.

Paul is not denying that people during that time sinned personally.

Nor is he denying that God judged them for their personal sin.

But he is arguing that their death was the result of imputed guilt which could not have been the case since they had no law to violate and incur condemnation and death.

As **Andy Naselli** correctly states, *“The fundamental reason sinners between Adam and Moses died is that they were ‘in Adam’ since they did not flagrantly transgress God’s spoken or written law the way Adam and the Israelites did.”*

For Paul, this is sufficient evidence.

The presence of death even when there was no law implied, according to Paul, that the condemnation was a result of guilt that was imputed from Adam’s failed representation.

If you look at the end of **verse 14**, we find that Paul doesn’t leave us without hope.

He writes that Adam **“is a type of Him who was to come.”**

That is, Adam is a type as he foreshadows the coming second Adam, Jesus Christ.

Here we see the point of all that Paul has been explaining and defending.

He is setting up a critical contrast between the result of being “in Adam” and the result of being “in Christ.”

The contrast between our condemnation in Adam and our justification in Christ is where Paul is taking us.

He wants us to find assurance of our salvation in the supremacy and security of Christ’s representative headship of His people.

CONCLUSION

After Paul has both explained and evidenced the concept of Adam's representative headship, he has left us with a rather bleak picture to behold.

As he develops the basis for our assurance of salvation, this stage of his argument serves one purpose—to drive us to Christ.

Friend, can you not see that all humanity is divided into two groups—those represented by Adam and those represented by the second Adam, Jesus Christ?

It is your natural state to be “in Adam” so that you are condemned under his headship.

Both the guilt and corruption of sin are yours because of Adam's sin and, as a result, you are naturally a sinful enemy of God who is under the wrath of God which is what it means to experience spiritual death.

Your only hope is Christ!

There is salvation for all who are “in Christ” through faith in God.

In that state of grace, you are justified and assured of a full and final salvation under His headship.

Just as Adam brought sin and death to all he represented, so Christ brings righteousness and life to all He represents.

To live “in Christ” is to be made right with God and reconciled to God so that you have the confident hope of eternity with God.

But you will not embrace Christ's headship until you despair of Adam's.

So stare with horror at all that you inherit from the disastrous representation of Adam and then cling to Christ!

Your assurance of salvation is based solely upon being found “in Him.”

Every believer should be filled with confidence and hope, since sin and death have been defeated by Jesus Christ.

The only question for you, then, is who is representing you?

BENEDICTION

*Now the Saviour who died,
who rose, and who reigns,
grant you joy in the midst of labor,
peace in the midst of troubles,
hope in the midst of despair,
and faithfulness in the midst of temptation.
Amen.¹²*

¹² Dale Ralph Davis, *Grace Be with You: Benedictions from Dale Ralph Davis*, New Edition (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2019), 40.