

THE LAW AND THE TRIUMPH OF GRACE

ROMANS 5:20–21

INTRODUCTION

All who are “in Adam” are condemned before God because his headship brought sin and death to everyone he represented.

Conversely, all who are “in Christ” are justified before God because His headship brings righteousness and life to everyone He represents.

Therefore, our salvation and the assurance thereof, rests upon our union with Christ.

But what if there was another way?

What if we wanted to represent ourselves and stand before God on the basis of what we have done, not on the basis of what someone else has done on our behalf?

As Paul knew after almost **twenty-five years of experience** preaching the gospel, these questions were frequently posed by the Jews who did not fully comprehend the need for grace.¹

After hearing Paul’s argument that assurance of salvation is based on our union with Christ, many of Paul’s Jewish opponents would object that he had overlooked the Mosaic Law as God’s gift to reverse the effects of Adam’s sin.

¹ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 17.

So was there another way? Did the Law offer another solution, especially for the Jews to whom it had been entrusted?

Well, after twenty-five years of experience, this was not, as we say, Paul's first rodeo.

He had taught this before and knew to anticipate the Jewish objection that they did not need the grace that is "in Christ" because they had the help that is "in the Law."

We may approach Paul's teaching that we are condemned "in Adam" and justified "in Christ" from a different perspective than Paul's hypothetical opponent,

but we nevertheless need the same clarification on the function of the Law in relation to the gospel of grace.

Does the law offer us a solution to our sin problem "in Adam"?

Can we represent ourselves and stand before God on the basis of what we have done in obedience to His commands?

Few can offer us a more compelling picture of how we misunderstand the Law's purpose than **John Bunyan**.

He wrote one of the best-selling and most influential books ever published—**Pilgrim's Progress**.

This allegory of the Christian life was written by Bunyan while in prison with the pastoral intent of shepherding his readers through the fundamentals of our faith.

Bunyan pictured the dangers of misunderstanding the function of the Law at first when he described the pilgrim—Christian—desperately seeking to get rid of the crushing weight of his guilt.

He encountered a **Mr Worldy Wiseman** who counselled him falsely to seek relief from his burden through **Mr Legality** who lived in the village of **Morality**.

This took him to the aptly-named **Mount Sinai**.

As Bunyan then wrote—

“So Christian turned out of the way to follow the road to Mr. Legality’s house for help.

But when he came near the hill, it seemed very high, and the cliff next to him appeared to extend out over the road.

Christian was afraid to venture any closer lest the cliff should fall on him.

There he stood, not knowing what to do. His burden seemed heavier now than before. Also, flashes of fire came out of the hill, which made him sweat and tremble. He was sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldy Wiseman’s advice.”²

After being rescued by Evangelist and helped back onto the good way,

Christian entered by the wicket gate and arrived at Interpreter’s house and **one of Bunyan’s most profound illustrations about the Law** and its relation to the gospel of grace.

² James Thomas and John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress in Today’s English* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2024), 22.

As Bunyan writes—

“Then he led him into a very large parlour that was full of dust. When they had observed it for a moment, the Interpreter called for a man to sweep it. When he began to sweep, the dust rose and filled the whole room so that Christian almost suffocated. Then the Interpreter said to a maid who stood by, “Bring water and sprinkle the room,” which she did. Then the dust settled, and the maid swept the room clean.

CHRISTIAN: What does this signify?

INTERPRETER: *This parlour is the heart of man that has never been sanctified and cleansed by the grace of God through the gospel. The dust is his original sin and corruption that have defiled the whole man. The man who began to sweep at first is the law. The maid who brought the water and finished the job is the gospel.*

The man, though working with all his might, could not clean the room; he only stirred up the dust and made it worse to live in. This shows you that the law, by its working, instead of cleansing the heart from sin, only revives sin, causes sin to show its strength, and increases its activity in the soul. Though it discovers and forbids sin, it does not give the life and power to subdue it. So man cannot of himself give up his sin, without first receiving divine life and help from above.

This is why the maid came, sprinkled the room with water, and cleaned it with all ease, to show you that when the gospel of Christ comes to the heart, with all its sweet and gracious influence, new life comes in, sin is subdued and vanquished, and the soul is made clean by simple faith in Christ.”³

³ Ibid., 34–35.

Bunyan profoundly illustrates the very thing that Paul teaches us as he concludes his argument in **Romans 5**.

As Paul will explain, contrary to the expectation of many, the Law does not solve the problems of sin and death.

The good news of the gospel is that God does provide us with a solution to those problems, but the solution is the grace we receive through our union with Christ.

We triumph over our enemies of sin and death not through the Law, but through the grace that is “in Christ.”

PROPOSITION

As we turn our attention now to the text of **Romans 5:20–21**, we'll find that Paul offers us **three lessons on the Law and grace** in order to teach us that **the only solution to our sin problem is found “in Christ.”**

1. The Purpose of the Law
2. The Powerlessness of the Law
3. The Power of Grace

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

We know by now that Paul's overarching concern in the larger section of **chapters 5–8** is the believer's assurance of salvation.

He introduces this concern by way of the relational benefits of the gospel—we are not only made right with God judicially, but we are reconciled to God relationally.

To assure his readers that their justification is sufficient to escape the final judgement of God and enjoy the fullness of a new relationship with God in glory,

Paul writes this challenging section on representative headship and our corporate solidarity.

All who are “in Adam” are condemned before God because his headship brought sin and death to everyone he represented.

Conversely, all who are “in Christ” are justified before God because His headship brings righteousness and life to everyone He represents.

By doing so, Paul has summarised all of salvation history in terms of Adam and Christ.

His Jewish readers, however, would certainly wonder why he had overlooked the pivotal figure of Moses and the Law that God gave to Israel through him.

So as Paul summarises God's saving work throughout human history, he addresses the matter of the Law and the purpose for which God gave it to Israel.

As **Doug Moo** explains—

“The law of Moses, the Torah, was considered God’s special gift to Israel, often being viewed as in itself virtually guaranteeing Israel’s salvation. It is, then, no wonder that Paul feels it necessary to interject a comment about the role of the Mosaic law in salvation history.”⁴

So with a particular concern for his Jewish readers, Paul offers an important lesson for both Jews and Gentiles as he writes in **verse 20**—

²⁰ **Now the Law came in so that the transgression would increase...**

We know from Paul's use of the term “**Law**” in **chapters 2–4** that he is not simply referring to God's moral requirements in general.

Paul is referring specifically to the Law of Moses given to Israel.

He uses a fascinating word, though, to describe the Law's entry into salvation history.

There is a distinct negative connotation to his description of the Law “**coming in**.”

⁴ 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), 373.

A better translation would be that the Law “**slipped in,**” because the Greek term Paul chose was widely used in Greek literature to describe the secret entry of someone to a city or home, often for unwelcome or unwanted purposes.⁵

At a minimum this choice of verb indicates that the Law had a subordinate and secondary role in salvation history compared to the role of Christ.

It also prepares us for the idea that Paul didn’t think that the Law came with a positive purpose.

Paul makes that explicit when he writes that the Law slipped in with the purpose “**that the transgression would increase.**”

This would have been shocking for Paul’s Jewish audience to hear because Jews believed that the Law restrained people from sin and was instrumental in inclining people to righteous living.

In other words, for most Jews the purpose of the Law was to solve the problem Adam introduced into the world.⁶

Paul upends that thinking by contending that the Law did not bring relief from the condition of sin and death that came through Adam—instead, the Law made it worse.

⁵ Frank Thielman, *Romans*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 293.

⁶ 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), 300.

Stop for a moment and consider the incredible lesson that Paul is presenting us with.

As he has been discussing the universal problem of sin and death, he indicates that God did not give Israel the Law as the means of deliverance from these terrible enemies.

God's solution to sin and death is not the Law.

Instead, as **one commentator** put it so well—

“God’s purpose for the law was not to distinguish Jewish righteous from gentile sinners, but to make Israel more conscious of its solidarity in sin with the rest of Adam’s offspring.”⁷

That is what Paul means when he writes, **“that the transgression would increase.”**

Now Paul is clear in the language he uses that this is God's purpose for the Law.

But what precisely does he mean that its function is to increase transgression?

Some refer to the idea of “forbidden fruits.”

By forbidding certain activities, the Law makes those activities appear more attractive to depraved people, leading to an increase in sinning.

⁷ James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, vol. 38A, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1988), 286.

However, Paul deliberately used the singular form of the word “**transgression**” which rules this interpretation out.

“**The transgression**,” as Paul refers to it, clearly alludes to Adam’s one transgression by which he brought sin and death upon all humanity.

Paul is explaining that God’s purpose—or at least one of His purposes—in giving the Law of Moses to Israel was to “intensify” the seriousness of sin.

Paul believes that the Mosaic Law, by making people accountable to a specific and detailed series of commandments, brings greater judgment on those sins.⁸

At this point we must surely ask, does that mean that the Law is bad?

Not at all!

When Paul returns to give a fuller treatment to the subject of the Law in **chapter seven**, he maintains that the Law is good, as he writes in **Romans 7:12**—

¹² **The Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.**

He writes elsewhere in **1 Timothy 1:8** that—

⁸ **We know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully [legitimately]**

⁸ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 185.

So then, we can be confident that Paul is not critiquing the Law per se, but he is critiquing the Jewish idea that the Law was the solution to sin and death.

God's solution to sin and death is not the Law.

God's purpose in giving the Law to Israel was to “intensify” the seriousness of sin and convict them of their guilt and corruption in Adam.

The purpose of the Law is to point to grace as God's solution to sin and death.

This purpose corrects our misunderstanding of the Law that it might serve as another way to be made right with God.

Paul's second lesson reinforces this first as he alludes to the powerlessness of the Law—

2. THE POWERLESSNESS OF THE LAW

As we noted, Paul returns to the subject of the Law in greater detail in chapter seven, but even here in his explanation of Adam and Christ's representative headships we find him clearly alluding to the powerlessness of the Law.

This reinforces his lesson on the purpose of the Law, because the powerlessness of the Law explains why it cannot be used as a solution to our problems “in Adam.”

We can see the powerlessness of the Law as Paul continues **from verse 20 into verse 21**—

²⁰ **Now the Law came in so that the transgression would increase, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,**

²¹ **so that, as sin reigned in death...**

As Paul describes how ineffective the Law is at solving the problems we experience under Adam's headship, he teaches us that there are two things that the Law is powerless to do:

- a. The Law is powerless to save you from sin and death
- b. The Law is powerless to provide you with righteousness and life

This is like describing the two sides of one coin, but it's easier to grasp the inability of the Law to help us if we consider it from both the negative and positive aspects.

a. The Law Is Powerless to Save You from Sin and Death

Paul makes a subtle shift from referring to the increase of **"the transgression"** to the increase of **"sin."**

We should think of these concepts as largely synonymous, but sin is the larger category of the two.

All transgression is sin, but not all sin is transgression.

Transgression is the sinful violation of a specific command, which is why the Law's introduction made people accountable to a specific and detailed series of commandments and thus increased the seriousness of their sin.

The gravity of sin is magnified when the Law that God revealed is defied.

At the same time, an increased gravity of sin most certainly leads to an increased frequency of sin.

When you ignore the conviction of your conscience and become comfortable in your hardened rebellion against God's commands, you certainly also become more comfortable in sinning more often.

So then, as Paul explains, the Law is powerless to save you from sin because when God gave the Law to Israel it wasn't able to stop their sinful rebellion.

In fact, it had the opposite effect!

The Law was powerless to save Israel just as it remains powerless to save you from either Adam's guilt or the corruption by which you continue to sin.

As Bunyan illustrated so well through the lesson in **Interpreter's house**—

"The man, though working with all his might, could not clean the room; he only stirred up the dust and made it worse to live in. This shows you that the law, by its working, instead of cleansing the heart from sin, only revives sin, causes sin to show its strength, and increases its activity in the soul. Though it discovers and forbids sin, it does not give the life and power to subdue it. So man cannot of himself give up his sin, without first receiving divine life and help from above."

In other words, the Law is unable to save you from the power of sin.

Therefore, it should not surprise you to learn from Paul that the Law is unable to save you from the consequence of sin either.

The Law is powerless to save you from death—either spiritual or physical—as Paul says in **verse 21**, “**sin reigned in death.**”

We should be careful to follow Paul’s reasoning since he does not mean that sin reigned by means of death.

We can be certain of that because death is the consequence of sin, not its cause or instrument.

That’s what Paul affirms later in **Romans 6:23**—

²³ **The wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Instead, Paul means that sin reigned in the sphere of death.

As **one author** put it—

“Sin generates death and rules as a harsh taskmaster over the morbid kingdom it has created.”⁹

To put it another way, death has its own dominion.

Death’s dominion is over all those who are “in Adam.”

And in that dominion, sin is in control—it “**reigns**” and rules harshly over its subjects.

⁹ Thielman, *Romans*, 294.

As before, we shouldn't separate spiritual death from its consequences of physical death and, ultimately, eternal death which is damnation under the final, fiery wrath of God.

Since the Law is powerless to save you from either sin or death, why would you ever look to it as a solution to these problems?

The positive aspect makes this even clearer as we see that there is a second thing that the Law is unable to do—

b. The Law Is Powerless to Provide You with Righteousness and Life

Throughout this section of Romans, we've seen Paul contrast Adam and Christ.

The contrast to Adam's headship which brought sin and death to all those he represented is Christ's headship which brings righteousness and life.

So clearly, then, the opposite of sin is righteousness even as the opposite of death is life.

But as Paul clarifies especially for his Jewish readers, the Law is powerless to make anyone righteous so that they will experience and enjoy spiritual and eternal life.

This should hardly be surprising to a careful reader of Romans because this is the point Paul laboured to establish in **chapters 2–4**.

The Law is effective at revealing God's requirement of righteousness, but it is utterly ineffective at giving His people a right standing before Him.

In chapter two, Paul called out the Jewish hypocrisy as they relied on the Law for righteousness while continuing to transgress its commands.

Romans 2:17-23—

17 But if you bear the name “Jew” and rely upon the Law and boast in God,

18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law,

19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,

20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,

21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?

22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

23 You who boast in the Law, through your transgression of the Law, do you dishonour God?

Continuing into chapter three, Paul was crystal clear that the Law is powerless to justify anyone—it is powerless to provide a judicial right standing before God.

Romans 3:19-20—

19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are in the Law, so that every mouth may be shut and all the world may become accountable to God;

20 because by the works of the Law NO FLESH WILL BE JUSTIFIED IN HIS SIGHT, for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:28—

28 For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

Paul makes the same point in his letter to the Galatians.

If Romans is Paul's most profound explanation of the gospel, then Galatians is his most passionate defence of the gospel.

The Galatians had fallen into the same error as the Jews by looking to the Law to provide them with righteousness.

Therefore, Paul confronts and corrects them as he writes in

Galatians 2:16—

16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.

Later he makes the same point that the Law is powerless to make one right with God as he says in **Galatians 3:10-11**—

¹⁰ **For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse, for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM.”**

¹¹ **Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident, for “THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”**

Far from believing that the Law is defective, Paul's explanation that it is powerless to provide the solution of righteousness and life is based upon his understanding of its purpose.

The reason why the Law is unable to save you from sin and make you right with God is that God never intended it to.

The Law is not God's solution to our problem of Adam's headship.

God's purpose in giving Israel the Law was to point to grace as His solution to sin and death.

Therefore, God never gave the Law the power to justify anyone, as Paul wrote plainly to both the Roman and Galatian churches—**no one is justified by the Law before God.**

Here's the critical point—that includes Jesus Christ.

We are frequently taught that Christ had to live a perfect life of Law-keeping obedience so that God could impute that Law-based righteousness to our account.

But as we've seen Paul clearly assert, the Law has no such ability.

The Law certainly affirmed Christ's perfect, sinless righteousness but it was not so that a lifetime of righteous acts, of Law-based obedience, could be imputed to us.

The Law affirmed Christ's perfect, sinless righteousness that uniquely qualified Him to sacrifice His life in place of ours on the cross.

As John the Baptist said in **John 1:29**—

²⁹ **“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”**

That is why Paul does not point to God's solution in Christ as the accumulation of countless acts of righteousness under the Law.

Rather, as we learnt this past Sunday, he points very specifically in **Romans 5:18** to **“one act of righteousness”** through which **“there resulted justification of life to all men.”**

That **“one act of righteousness”** was the death of Christ on the cross which is imputed to all who are united to Him through faith.¹⁰

¹⁰ See Jesse Randolph, “The Lamb and the Law: A Historical, Biblical, and Theological Assessment of the Doctrine of the Imputation of the Active Obedience of Christ” (Master of Theology thesis, Shepherds Theological Seminary, 2026) and Larry D. Pettegrew, “An Assessment of Covenant Theology,” in *Forsaking Israel: How It Happened and Why It Matters* (The Woodlands, TX: Kress, 2020), 169.

Now, as much as Paul has had to correct a Jewish misunderstanding of the Law and, by **his first two lessons** of its purpose and powerlessness, cast a rather negative light on the Law,

the Law remains God's gift given to Israel with an ultimately positive role in the history of salvation.

In the words of **one commentator**—

“The effect that the toxic mixture of sin and law had on rebellious human beings did not lie outside the gracious purposes of God.”¹¹

That is, God intended that the Law should increase the trespass so that, as Paul says, His grace might **“superabound.”**

The Law points us to the grace of God as the solution to sin and death, as Paul teaches in his **third lesson**—

3. THE POWER OF GRACE

Paul's lessons on the Law set the stage for his emphasis on **the triumph of grace**, as, again, he writes in **verses 20–21**—

²⁰ **Now the Law came in so that the transgression would increase, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,**

²¹ **so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

¹¹ Thielman, *Romans*, 293.

As Paul elaborates on the power of grace which stands in stark contrast to the powerlessness of the Law, he begins by teaching that while sin may have increased,

God's response was the **“super multiplication”** of His grace.

21 ... grace abounded all the more

In other words, God's grace is more than sufficient to overcome the increase in the power and seriousness of sin brought by the Law.

As the Law fulfilled its negative purpose of radicalising the power of sin,

God overcame that power through the provision and power of His grace.

However deep in the power of sin Israel may have sunk, God's grace was deeper still.

That is why, as Paul continues in **verse 21**, we see the power of grace in its triumph over our enemies of sin and death—

²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We learnt earlier of the horrifying reality of death's dominion in which sin rules, but Paul assures us that grace, too, exercises its rule and reign.

The means by which grace rules over our hearts is **“through righteousness.”**

That is, the power of grace is demonstrated in its provision of righteousness as the solution to all that is wrong “in Adam.”

As Paul declares exultantly, grace triumphs over sin and death by providing righteousness and life.

This “righteousness” is first and foremost the forensic righteousness that Paul has been referring to throughout **chapter 5**.

That is, it is the changed legal status by which we stand in the right before God.

In short, grace is empowered to provide justification.

That is what Paul referred to in **verses 16–17**—

¹⁶ ... **the gracious gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification.**

¹⁷ **For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**

But as Paul will soon go on to explain in **chapter six**, the reign of grace also produces righteous living.

The gift of righteousness inevitably involves a changed life.¹²

Again, we can see the brilliance of **Bunyan’s illustration** as **Interpreter explains**—

¹² Schreiner, *Romans*, 301.

“This is why the maid came, sprinkled the room with water, and cleaned it with all ease, to show you that when the gospel of Christ comes to the heart, with all its sweet and gracious influence, new life comes in, sin is subdued and vanquished, and the soul is made clean by simple faith in Christ.”

As grace reigns, it is empowered by God to provide righteousness as the solution to our sin “in Adam.”

And the goal of this righteousness is that grace will provide “**eternal life**” as the solution to our death “in Adam” too.

Simply put, the grace of God, unlike the Law of God, has the power to make us righteous so that we will enjoy eternal life with God.

We shouldn’t forget Paul’s larger concern of explaining the basis of our assurance of salvation—

We can confidently anticipate our final salvation and eternal life because of the power of God’s grace to overcome sin and death and provide us with righteousness and life.

To put that differently, the very grace of God that justifies us will also save us from His wrath in the final judgment because it has triumphed over sin and death.

But returning to his concept of representative headship, Paul reminds us that we can only triumph through the power of grace when we are united to Christ—

That is, when we are under Christ’s headship.

As Paul says, we receive all that God has given us by His grace, “**through Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

All this—our righteousness and life—is possible because of the atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Paul wrote earlier in **Romans 4:25**—

²⁵ **He who was delivered over on account of our transgressions, and was raised on account of our justification.**

And then again in **chapter five, verses 9–10**—

⁹ **Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.**

¹⁰ **For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.**

Surely when Paul refers to “**Jesus Christ**” as “**Lord**” we are reminded of these verses and the importance of His resurrection to the triumph of God’s grace over sin and death.

We can only receive this triumph of grace
if we are united to Christ.

So as Paul reminds his readers, and us among them, the **fundamental division in humanity** is not between those who have the Law and those who do not, but between those who are “in Adam” and those who are “in Christ.”¹³

¹³ David G. Peterson, *Romans*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander, Thomas R. Schreiner, and Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021), 256.

That is the point of Paul's three lessons on the Law and grace.

He wants you to be fully convinced that because of the purpose and powerlessness of the Law,
it offers no solution to your sin problem.

The only solution to sin and death is the grace of God which is empowered to provide you with righteousness and life.

But Paul's point is that you can only receive this grace of God if you are united to Christ.

The only solution to your problems "in Adam" is the grace that is "in Christ."

Therefore, as Paul had to explain to his Jewish readers, there are only two groups of people—

It's not those who have the Law and those who do not,
but those who are "in Adam" and those who are "in Christ."

CONCLUSION

As we conclude, Bunyan's words again come to our aid as he beautifully illustrates what it is to find your salvation and assurance "in Christ."

As the pilgrim, Christian, finally understands the very lessons that Paul has taught us today, Bunyan describes what follows:

"Now I saw in my dream Christian walking briskly up a highway fenced on both sides with a high wall. He began to run, though he could not run fast because of the load on his back. On top of the hill, he came to a cross. Just as he got to the cross, his burden came loose, dropped from his shoulders, and went tumbling down the hill. It fell into an open grave, and I saw it no more.

*Now Christian's heart was light. He had found relief from his burden. He said to himself, 'He has given me rest by His sorrows, and life by His death.' He stood gazing at the cross, wondering how the sight of the cross could so relieve one of guilt and shame. He no longer felt guilty of anything. His conscience told him that all his sins were forgiven. He now felt innocent, clean, happy, and free. He knew his sins had all been paid for by the death of the One who died on the cross. They were gone, buried in the Saviour's tomb, and God would remember them against him no more forever. He was so thankful and so full of joy that the tears began to flow."*¹⁴

¹⁴ Thomas and Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, 43–44.

BENEDICTION

*Now the God who is mighty,
the Lamb who is worthy,
and the Spirit who is near,
fortify you to live faithfully in these days
and all the days until Jesus comes.
Amen.¹⁵*

¹⁵ Dale Ralph Davis, *Grace Be with You: Benedictions from Dale Ralph Davis*, New Edition (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2019), 43.