

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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WITH GRACE
TO REIGN
IN LIFE

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Living Stream Ministry

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GRACE REIGNING

[Romans 5:17](#) says, “For if by the offense of the one death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.” This is the only verse in the Bible that speaks of reigning in life. Going along with [verse 17](#), [verse 21](#) says, “That as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Perhaps you have heard that grace abounds, but probably you have not had the concept of grace reigning. But grace is a king reigning over all things. Although in the text [verse 21](#) comes after [verse 17](#), in experience it comes before [verse 17](#). According to [verse 21](#), grace reigns unto eternal life, which means that the reign of grace results in eternal life. It is in this eternal life that we shall reign.

Although there are many Christian books on victory and overcoming, I do not know of any books on reigning in life. A number of books

have been written about reigning with Christ in the millennial kingdom. However, reigning in life should not be a matter only for the future. This should be our experience today. I am not content with promises about being a king in the future; I desire to reign in life as a king today. In [Romans 5:17](#) Paul does not refer to the millennial kingdom. If you consider this verse in its context, you will realize that Paul is speaking about our present daily life. Praise the Lord that even today we can be kings in life!

A CONTINUATION OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Before we explore further the matter of reigning in life, we need to consider the relationship between the Gospel of John and the book of Romans. Romans is a continuation of John. [John 1:4](#) says, “In Him was life,” and [verse 14](#) of the same chapter says, “The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us...full of grace and reality.” [Verse 16](#) continues, “For of His fullness we all received, and grace upon grace.” Hence, in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, we have life and grace. In [John 10:10](#) the Lord Jesus said, “I came that they may have life and may have it abundantly.” [John 8](#) speaks of certain negative things,

such as sin and death. [Verse 24](#) says, “Unless you believe that I am, you shall die in your sins.” This means that those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus will remain in death. Furthermore, in [verse 34](#) the Lord has a word about being slaves of sin: “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.” In [verse 36](#) the Lord speaks about being set free: “If then the Son shall set you free, you shall be really free.” Those under the bondage of sin and in death can be set free by the living Son of God, the One who is the living reality. Therefore, in the Gospel of John we have life, grace, abundance of life, sin, death, slavery, and being set free from sin and death.

All these matters are also found in Romans, where the truth concerning them is developed further. Although both John and Romans cover many of the same subjects and even use a number of the same terms, the Gospel of John does not speak of grace reigning, nor of reigning in life. The use of the word “reign” in Romans with respect to grace and life shows a significant development over what is covered in the Gospel of John. Although the Gospel of John is rich and deep and although it speaks of the abundance of life, it says nothing about the reign of grace nor about the reign of life. Because Paul was one

reigning in grace and in life, he could speak of such things in Romans. In contrast to many Christians today, Paul was not waiting for the millennium in order to reign with Christ.

In [Romans 5](#) we are told that grace reigns and that those who receive abundance of grace can reign in life. Because grace reigns unto life eternal, we also can reign in life.

To reign is to be a king; it is to subdue something and rule over it. To reign also means to have a dominion or a kingdom. Our Christian life today should be not only a victorious and overcoming life; it should also be a kingly life, a reigning life. Day by day we can be kings.

THREE MAJOR ENEMIES

As kings reigning in life, we must subdue the enemies and rule over them. According to both the Gospel of John and the book of Romans, our major enemies are sin, death, and Satan. Not even your temper is one of the primary enemies. If sin, death, and Satan are defeated, your temper will also be defeated and even become something of comeliness. Sin is what makes your temper so distasteful. In the same principle, the reason the self is so ugly is that sin, death, and Satan make their abode within us. If these things were subdued,

even our self would be beautiful. Therefore, we have just three major enemies—sin, death, and Satan.

Paul deals with these enemies in the book of Romans. In [8:2](#), which speaks of the law of sin and death, we see two of the enemies, sin and death. Then in [16:20](#) Paul refers to Satan: “Now the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” Do not expect to be a king over your wife or husband. Husbands, the Lord has appointed you to be the head with respect to your wife, but not to be a king ruling over her. Parents should not be kings over their children. But we are to reign as kings over sin, death, and Satan. With respect to the members of our family and to the brothers and sisters in the church, we are servants. But with respect to sin, death, and Satan, we are kings.

GOD DISPENSED INTO US

If we would know what it means for grace to reign unto eternal life, we must have a proper understanding of grace. Grace is God Himself given to us in Christ and dispensed into our spirit to be our portion. If we have a thorough understanding of the Bible, we shall realize that God has no intention to give us anything other than Himself. All things other than God are vanity.

Solomon, the wise king, said, “Vanity of vanities; all is vanity” ([Eccl. 1:2](#)). In the words of the Apostle Paul, all things apart from Christ are dung ([Phil. 3:8](#)). Our unique portion is God Himself, and grace is God as our portion for our participation, experience, and enjoyment.

If we consider [John 1:1](#) and [1:14](#) in context, we shall see that grace is God coming to us to be dispensed into us for our enjoyment. [John 1:16](#) says, “For of His fullness we all received, and grace upon grace.” In [Romans 5:17](#) Paul speaks of receiving not only grace, but the abundance of grace. Because grace is living and growing, it abounds. This abounding grace also reigns. Grace is not a lifeless element; it is a living Person, even God Himself.

TWO KINGS

In [Romans 5](#) both sin and grace are personified. As [verse 21](#) indicates, either sin or grace may reign, grace positively or sin negatively. Sin is the embodiment of the evil nature of Satan in our flesh, and grace is God in Christ embodied in our spirit. Therefore, we have two kings—sin and grace—within us. In our flesh we have the king of sin, and in our spirit we have the king of

grace. Within us a warfare is raging between these two kings.

RECEIVING THE ABUNDANCE OF GRACE

You may be eager to know how you can have the abundance of grace. The only way to have it is to receive it. In receiving we neither labor nor pay a price. We simply receive. Both John and Romans speak of receiving grace. We have seen that [John 1:16](#) says that of His fullness we have received grace upon grace. In [Romans 5:17](#) Paul speaks of our receiving the abundance of grace. We need to come to the very God who is grace and receive grace again and again until we are filled with grace. Only when we are filled with grace can we experience the reigning of grace. When grace is allowed to fill us, it abounds in us and then reigns in us. The reigning grace always follows the abounding grace.

If we are short of grace, grace cannot reign within us. Only when grace fills us up to the brim and then overflows from us can we experience the reigning of grace. When grace reigns, sin, death, and Satan are subdued and are under our feet, and we become kings in grace. As grace reigns in us, we reign in life.

Do not consider that the experience of reigning in life by grace is an impossibility. I can testify that it is surely possible for us to reign in life. Whenever we are filled with grace, grace overflows and reigns. Then by grace we reign in life over sin, death, and Satan. We are not only set free from the three major enemies, but we reign over them. The principle of reigning in life is revealed in [Romans 5](#), but the experience of reigning in life is in [Romans 8](#). Reigning in life is greater and higher than being saved in the life of Christ.

OPENING TO BE FILLED

In this matter doctrine, teaching, and exhortation are of no avail. In a sense, not even our prayer is effectual in enabling us to reign in life by grace. The only thing that works is to come to the divine source and open ourselves from the depths of our being to be filled with God as grace. In order to be filled, we must ask the Lord to remove all insulation and frustration. We need to pray, “Lord, I am willing for every hindrance to be removed. I want to keep myself directly open to You. Lord, fill me completely with Yourself as grace.” Wherever you are, at work, at school, or in your car, stay open to the Lord to be filled with Him as grace. This is what it means to receive the

abundance of grace. As you receive grace in this way, you will be filled with grace and eventually grace will overflow from within you. Then you will reign in life by grace over sin, death, and Satan. In your experience these three enemies will be utterly subdued.

Sin, death, and Satan are still working within us. But if we come to the heavenly source and open ourselves thoroughly to be filled with grace, we shall reign over them in life. This is our need today in the church life. Although I appreciate very much all that is in the Gospel of John, we must go on from John to [Romans 5:17](#) and [21](#) to receive abundance of grace so that grace may reign within us and we may reign in life.

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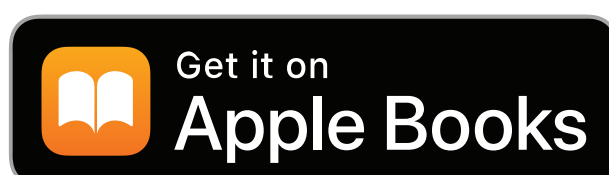
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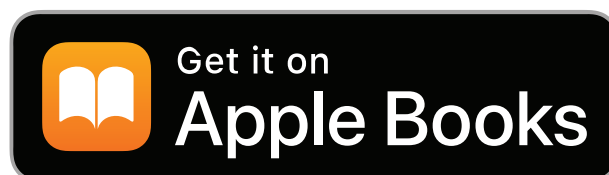
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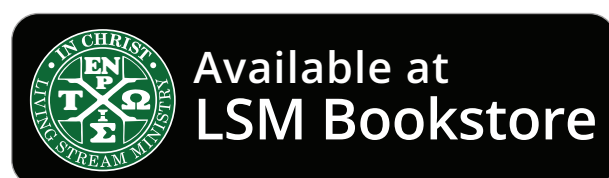
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