

## GOD IN ACTION



**ONE ARMY: We see a God-raised, Spirit-filled Army for the 21st century - convinced of our calling, moving forward together**

We will...

- deepen our spiritual life
- unite in prayer
- identify and develop leaders
- increase self-support and self-denial

**ONE MISSION: Into the world of the hurting, broken, lonely, dispossessed and lost, reaching them in love by all means**

We will...

- emphasise our integrated ministry
- reach and involve youth and children
- stand for and serve the marginalised
- encourage innovation in mission

**ONE MESSAGE: With the transforming message of Jesus, bringing freedom, hope and life**

We will...

- communicate Christ unashamedly
- reaffirm our belief in transformation
- evangelise and disciple effectively
- provide quality teaching resources

*\*God in Action Bible Study Manuel produced by Captain Michael Ramsay at the Swift Current Corps of The Salvation Army, September 2012.*

**In this Bible Study we will be looking at different ways in which God is active in our world today. We will look at various scriptures and ask ourselves, ‘what are we going to do about it’?**

## **Lesson 5**

We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God(Romans 5:12-21; see also Genesis 1:27-31, 3:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22).

### **Romans 5:12-21**

**Background and context:**Paul’s letter to the Romans was written in the mid-to-late 50s and is arguably addressed to a Gentile dominated church. In the mid-to-late 50s, Rome was by far the Mediterranean world’s dominant power and Nero was the Roman Emperor (54-68 AD, Proconsul since 51AD). Immediately prior to this time, in 49 AD, Nero’s predecessor, Claudius had banished the Jews from Rome. The bulk of the remaining Christians then would be non-Jews. When Nero officially ascended the throne in 54, many of the Jewish Christians returned. Things had changed and this was the historical context of Paul’s letter. Paul’s letter to the Romans is clearly an important work. N.T. Wright claims that “Romans is neither a systematic theology nor a summary of Paul’s lifework, but it is by common consent his masterpiece.”<sup>1</sup>

#### **Romans 5:12-14:**

1. What does it mean and how did it happen that sin entered into the world through one man? (See Genesis 3:1-17)
  
2. How and why did death come to all people?

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<sup>1</sup> N.T. Wright, *The Letter to the Romans*(NIB 10: Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1995), 395.

3. What does it mean that “all sinned”?

4. Given that Sin was around before the Law was around, what does it mean: “death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam”?

### **Death is the result of Adam’s sin for all of us: an analogy**

Death was the natural consequence of Adam’s disobedience to God. We all experience that consequence even though we were not born; how does that work? An analogy would be as follows: My fore parents moved from England and Scotland in the 1600s and 1700s respectively. As a consequence to this I - through no fault or credit on my part - was born in North America. If we think about it, there are many parallels to descendants being born into a different world than their fore parents due to the actions of those who went before them. This is the same with us, people who are living generations after Adam and Eve. They were relocated outside of the garden and were denied the fruit of the tree of life so their descendants inherited death.

### **Romans 5:15-17**

1. What is the difference between the gift and the trespass (sin)?

2. Where and from whom did the Sin’s and its consequences originate?

3. From whom did the gift originate?

**Romans 5:18-19**

1. What are the similarities and differences between Jesus and Adam here listed?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does it mean that “through one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man many will be made righteous”?

**Romans 5:20-21**

1. What was the purpose of the Law?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What was the result of the Law?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Fill in the blanks and explain your answer:

\_\_\_\_\_ = death and \_\_\_\_\_ = eternal life.

Does all of the above apply to us today? If so, how does it apply? If not, why not?

### **Romans 3:23: “for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God”**

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The Greek word for ‘sinned’ in this passage (*hamartanō*) carries with it the classic definition of sin that we have probably heard before: that of ‘missing the mark’. It brings to mind the idea of an archer shooting for a target and falling short – missing the target. On the surface this seems innocuous enough but if we then find out that that archer is William Tell – who is famous because he shoots apples off of people’s heads – and if we then find out that indeed the apple is about to be placed on our heads, it becomes important. You don’t want him to miss the mark. William Tell, of course, used to shoot the apples off the head of his own sons and so if he missed, the consequences could be most devastating for both father and son (as is our own sin). When we continually sin – the consequences are often fatal. Romans Chapter 3 tells us that indeed, we have all sinned, we have all fallen short of this glory of God (Romans 3:23) and Romans 1 and 2 tell us that because of that we deserve to die (Romans 1:32, 2:12).

John Phillips, tells us:

‘Paul describes sin as a coming short of the divine standard: Two men went to the recruiting office in London to join the guards regiment. The standard height for a guardsman was a minimum of six feet. One man was taller than the other, but when they were measured officially both were disqualified. The shorter of the two measured only five feet seven inches and was far too short; his companion measured five feet eleven and a half inches and, stretch to his utmost, as he did, he could not make it any more. Nor did his pleas avail. It mattered nothing that his father was a guardsman, that he promised to be a good soldier, that he had already memorized the drills and knew the army regulations by heart. He was short of the standard.’<sup>3</sup>

*Scriptures for further exploration: Genesis 1-4, 8:20-9:7, Deuteronomy 4:26-31, Psalm 5:4-8, 8:4-8, 51:1-5, Isaiah 43:27-28, 48:9-11, 59:2, 64:6, Jeremiah 2:20-21, Matthew 5:48, Luke 16:9-31, John 3:19-36, Romans 1-8, 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, Ephesians 4:24, James 3:9, 1 John 1:18, Jude 20-21, Revelation 2-6.*

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<sup>2</sup> By Captain Michael Ramsay, *Romans 3:22b, 23: There is no difference, for all have sinned...* Presented to Swift Current Corps, 12 July 2009. Available on-line <http://sheepspeaks.blogspot.ca/2009/07/romans-322b-23there-is-no-difference.html>

<sup>3</sup> John Phillips, ‘Exploring Romans’ (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1969), 67.

### **Further Reading:**

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## **Doctrines of The Salvation Army**

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.
2. We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.
3. We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost - undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.
4. We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.
5. We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.
7. We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.
8. We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.
9. We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.
10. We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
11. We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.