

How much more!

If, by the trespass of the one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Romans 5:17 (NIV)

In reading this passage I noted Paul's phrase 'how much more', and then I spotted that he used the phrase three more times.

In Romans chapter 5, Paul wrote:

*God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, **how much more** shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, **how much more** shall we be saved by his life! Romans 5:8-10 (NIV)*

*...if the many died by the trespass of the one man, **how much more** did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Romans 5:15 (NIV)*

*If, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, **how much more** will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Romans 5:17 (NIV)*

Each time his statement warrants an exclamation mark for emphasis or how strongly Paul feels about it. **How much more!** In verse 17, Paul describes God's provision of grace and righteousness as abundant, and the result is that we are supposed to reign in life if we receive that grace. What I understand through this emphasis of '**how much more**', and the abundant provision, is that we are supposed to shake off mediocrity just getting by and just being saved, just getting through each day. This is the true prosperity that God has for us, which has nothing to do with materialism and wealth, nor success by the world's standards. Having been justified by the death of Jesus on the cross, and made right with God (the gift of righteousness), being restored to the fellowship with God that he always intended for us to have (reconciled), we are then enabled to move on through the life of Jesus, who overcame the power of death and who gave us his Holy Spirit. Jesus told his disciples that he had to depart this life and return to heaven before he could send his Spirit. That is the fulness of his '**how much more**'; to reign in life, set free from the shackles of death and sin, set free from self and being liberated into a life of glorious sonship and servanthood. How much more have you got for us Lord?