

Current Positional Truth: One Transgression & the Many Died—One Gift for Many Sins & One Act of Justification, Rom 5:16; God Did Not Decree at Any would Perish, Human Free Will Chooses that Option; *Metanoia*: Does Not Mean “Repent,” but “to Change One’s Mind,” 2 Pet 2:9;

(11) Verse 16 explains the a fortiori arguments of verses 15 and 17:

Romans 5:16 - In fact, the gift [**Jesus Christ**] is not like what occurred through the one who sinned: for on the one hand the judicial verdict came by one transgression [**the original sin**] resulting in condemnation [**spiritual death**], but on the other hand that gracious gift [**the person and work of Christ**] was given because of many transgressions [**the personal sins of the human race**], resulting in one judicial act of justification [**the imputation of divine righteousness**].

- (1) Paul analyzes the sequence of events associated with hamartiology (the doctrine of sin) and soteriology (the doctrine of salvation).
- (2) The first Adam committed one sin and the many – the human race – were condemned. The Last Adam was judged for the sins committed by the many resulting in one act of justification.
- (3) Since the many were condemned by the act of one man, Adam, then the many are eligible to be justified by the act of the one Man, Jesus.
- (4) All mankind is blessed by the fact that personal sin is not the cause of our condemnation. We are condemned at physical birth by the imputation of Adam’s sin to our genetically formed sinful nature.
- (5) In human history, the sovereignty of God and the free will of man must coexist by divine decree. It is the sovereign will of God that any who believes in Christ shall be saved but the free will of man may reject the love of God for other perceived solutions to their sin problem.
- (6) God does not decree that anyone would perish, but human volition is free to reject His grace:

2 Peter 2:9 - The Lord is not delayed concerning His promise [**Second Advent**] as some who overthink conclude God is slow, but He is patient toward you, not decreeing [**βούλομαι (boulomai)**] anyone to perish but that all should come to repentance [**μετάνοια (metanoia)**].

- (7) God’s timing is perfect. The fact the Rapture has not yet occurred is not only a part of God’s perfect timing but also means that at all times the Second Advent remains at least seven years and one second in the future.
- (8) In the meantime, unbelievers have the option of salvation. God does not *decree* that anyone should perish – anyone!
- (9) This verse is controversial and the source of debates between those who subscribe to unlimited atonement and those who endorse limited atonement.
- (10) The key to translating this verse is to remember that in human history the sovereignty of God and the free will of man coexist by divine decree.

- (11) The word translated *decreed* is the present middle participle of the verb **βούλομαι (*boulomai*)**. The use of this word in the New Testament is important therefore we must examine its etymology:

βούλομαι outside the New Testament. The original difference between βούλομαι and θέλω [*thelō*: to desire] is disputed in philological investigation. Two dramatically opposing views confront one another. The one finds in θέλω impulsive and unconscious desire, and in βούλομαι rational and conscious. θέλω thus signifies volition by inclination or natural instinct, while βούλομαι denotes a decision of will based on deliberate resolve. (p. 629)

If a decision must be made concerning the original meaning, the fact that “to prefer” or “to choose” seems to be the first sense of βούλομαι in Homer, and Herodotus strongly favours the view ... that βούλομαι originally means volition on the basis of choice, preference or decision. (p. 630)

βούλομαι in the New Testament. The most important point in terms of biblical theology is the emphasizing of the will of God, His Son and the Spirit. In the sense of the economy of salvation it is argued in Hebrews 6:17 that God willed to manifest more fully to the heirs of promise the immutable nature of His counsel. Here βούλομαι expresses the eternal divine purpose. Similarly in 2 Peter 3:9 the word expresses the divine will to save.¹ (p. 632)

- (12) From this we are able to discern that God did not decree that anyone should perish, i.e., be transferred to the lake of fire. Had He done so would mean that the contention by proponents of limited atonement would be true: all who are not elected in eternity past by the sovereign decision of God are left reprobate.
- (13) Such was not the case and not only this but we also find He decreed that “all should come to repentance,” another word that has led many to draw erroneous conclusions. In the Greek it is the noun **μετάνοια (*metanoia*)**: to change one’s mind.
- (14) Somehow, somewhere, someone came up with the idea that *metanoia* would be best translated into English by the word “repentance.” I think it instructive to go back to the Founding and discover how the word was translated then:

Repentance. In *theology*, the pain, regret or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, because it exposes him to punishment. This sorrow proceeding merely from the fear of punishment is called *legal repentance*, as being excited by the terrors of legal penalties, and it may exist without amendment to life.

Real penitence; sorrow or deep contrition for sin, as an offense and dishonor to God, a violation of his holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is called *evangelical repentance*, and is accompanied and followed by amendment of life.

Repentance is a change of mind, or a conversion from sin to God. *Hammond*.²

¹ Gottlob Schrenk, “βούλομαι,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 1:629–30; 632.

² Noah Webster, “repentance,” in *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), 2:55.

- (15) These are good definitions of the word “repentance,” but except for the quote by a Mr. Hammond, they have nothing to do with the definition of *metanoia*.
- (16) *Metanoia* does mean to change one’s mind but it does not go farther than that to include any attendant emotion behind that decision:
- “Repentance,” *matanoia*, is a vastly misunderstood term. Many people think repentance means to feel sorry for sins, an emotional repudiation of sin. What does repentance actually mean? It means “change of mind”—serious thinking, not temperamental emoting. (p. 12)
- However, emotional garbage in the soul must be eliminated. Hang-ups, defense mechanisms, denial—all psychological garbage must go! *Metanoia* is the result of eliminating all the refuse of emotional activity. Garbage includes feeling sorry for your sins, going through penance, pleading with God for forgiveness, agonizing, feeling guilty to get back in fellowship. All these false principles preclude rebound. Rebound requires no emotional activity.³ (p. 13)
- (17) The emphasis in this excerpt is on rebound but it applies to 2 Peter 3:9 where the subject is salvation.
- (18) It is the sovereign will of God that all mankind come to repentance — *matanoia*: a change of mind regarding Jesus Christ as Savior, but a person’s volition may reject the love of God by making the decision not to change his mind thus rejecting the claim that Jesus can deliver him from eternal punishment and provide eternal life.
- (19) In verse 15 we learn that if the justice of God provided the greater in justifying the lost then it follows a fortiori that he can provide the less by providing believers the capacity for blessings in time.
- (20) In verse 17, we will discover that if the justice of God provided the greater in justification it follows a fortiori that the justice of God can provide the less — the reality of blessing for those who make the advance to spiritual maturity.

Romans 5:16 - In fact, the gift [Jesus Christ] is not like what occurred through the one who sinned: for on the one hand the judicial verdict came by one transgression [the original sin] resulting in condemnation [spiritual death], but on the other hand that gracious gift [the person and work of Christ] was given because of many transgressions [the personal sins of the human race], resulting in one judicial act of justification [the imputation of divine righteousness].

³ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Rebound Revisited* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1995), 12–13.