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WHO'S YOUR REPRESENTATIVE, ADAM OR JESUS?

Romans 5:12-21

I. Introduction

- A. Paul's Question: "On what principle does God declare sinners to be righteous?"
- B. Paul's Answer: Covenant Representation
 - o Concept of "covenant": An arrangement by which God saves his people
 - *Covenant of Works*: the arrangement in the Garden with Adam and Eve by which they would be saved by works
 - *Covenant of Grace*: the arrangement with his people after the fall of Adam and Eve by which he saves us by his grace
 - o Concept of "representation": In God's covenants, he appoints someone to act on our behalf
 - In the Covenant of Works, *Adam* is our representative—what is true of him is true of us
 - In the Covenant of Grace, *Christ* is our representative—what is true of him is true of us

II. Adam Represents Us in the Covenant of Works

- A. Adam was Disobedient
 - o "sin came into the world through one man (v.12). . . one man's trespass... (v.15). . . one man's sin (v.16) . . . one man's trespass (v.17). . .one trespass (v.18). . . one man's disobedience" (v.19)
 - o What was the sin Adam committed? Why isn't Eve mentioned here?
- B. Adam's Disobedience Results in Condemnation for Those He Represents
 - o "one trespass brought condemnation" (v.16). . . one trespass led to condemnation (v.18). . . by the one man's disobedience the many were made (regarded) sinners" (v.19)
 - o Since Adam represented us, his sin is regarded as our sin; i.e., Adam's sin was *imputed* to us
 - o Thus, every human being is born (a) guilty of Adam's sin, and (b) corrupted by Adam's sin. This is called "original sin"



- o For Paul, this explains why people were regarded as sinners even before the law of Moses was given (v.14)—they were sinners because of Adam
- C. This Condemnation Brings Us Death: “death spread to all men (v.12). . . death reigned (v.14). . . many died through the one man’s treasspass (v.15). . . death reigned through the one man” (v.17)

III. Jesus Represents Us in the Covenant of Grace

- A. Christ was Obedient
- o “one act of righteousness (v.18)...one man’s obedience” (v.19)
 - o Notice that the Covenant of Grace still requires perfect obedience! God’s standard is always perfection
 - o Not only did Christ succeed where Adam failed, but he did it in very different circumstances. What was different about Christ’s situation versus Adam’s?
- B. Christ’s Obedience Results in Justification for Those He Represents
- o “the free gift following many trespasses brought justification (v.16)...one act of righteousness leads to justification (v.18)...by the one man’s obedience many will be made (regarded) as righteous (v.19)”
 - o Since Christ represents us, his righteousness is regarded as our righteousness; it is *imputed* to us.
 - o This is what allows God to declare sinners to be righteous!
- C. This Justification Brings Life: “leads to justification and life for all men (v.18)...leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (v.21)”

**Big take away: Each human being is represented by either Adam or Christ? Which represents you?

Discussion Groups

1. How does the parallel between Adam and Christ help you understand the way your salvation works? Why does it even matter that we understand the specific way our salvation works?

2. How does knowing Christ obeyed perfectly for you give you reassurance your salvation? How does it help you better understand the proper role of your own obedience?

3. How does this passage help you understand that God's plan of salvation involves the whole Bible, starting even with Genesis?

4. What are the implications of this passage for believing Adam is a real historical person, rather than just a myth or a legend?

