

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Humanity and Sin, Session 16, Original Sin, Romans 5:12-18, Continued

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on the Doctrines of Humanity and Sin. This is session 16, Original Sin, Romans 5:12 to 19, Continued.

We continue our study of Original Sin in the classical text therein, Romans 5:12 through 19.

We just got bogged down in the five views of Romans 5:13b. I want to consider them in context and try to give my own less-than-infallible interpretation, but I think it's a good idea to review the five views. The social diatribe view says, our confusion here, the difficulty comes from Paul using the technical language of diatribe, a genre, and that he's going back and forth with an opponent, and we're to supply some of those other words.

Respectfully, I don't agree. The absolute sense view, which says we need to take words exactly literally, I think is definitely wrong, and that's why we have four other views because we move away from the so-called reformers' plain and simple sense when the plain and simple sense doesn't make sense. And to say that sin was not counted against them is impossible.

There's death at the flood, at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. There's death, there's sin, it's counted. The fifth sense distinguishes between sin and transgression; I don't think it's right either.

So, these two seem to be the best. Murray and Hendrickson say, yes, there was a law, but it's the law of God written on the heart, which is spoken of in 2.14.15. Perhaps the least bad one, the least bad one, is the relative or comparative sense view of Calvin and Cranfield, which I will give now when I try to put these things together. But this much is plain.

5:14, the end, says that Adam is the type of Christ. That is really critical. And the *gar*, the word for introducing 13, indicates in some way that 13 and 14 explain further what he just said in 12:12, the incomplete condition, the if without the then clause, and that has to do with humanity sinning when Adam sinned.

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, death spread to all men because all sinned. For sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. There was sin, and there were sinners.

But, sin is not counted where there is no law in the sense of a prohibition, such as Adam and Moses had. Sin is not counted where there is no law as it is counted when there is a prohibition, a distinct law. Yet, nevertheless, death ruled from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam.

My understanding thus is that Paul points to Adam's original sin as the explanation, not for the presence of death between Adam and Moses, but for the reign of death between Adam and Moses. Because there was sin then, he says it. And guess what sin presupposes? Death.

But death is not reckoned where there's no law as clear as the Adamic prohibition or the Mosaic Decalogue, as it is where there is a law. Because where there is that prohibition, man, sin is in bold letters. You are guilty that you broke the Ten Commandments.

Adam, you broke the one prohibition you had. That's the best I can do. In any case, notice this.

Death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those whose transgression was not like Adam's. Even over those, this much is clear: who did not have a direct prohibition that they violated? The transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come, namely, Christ.

This is important. Adam is a type of Christ. One type is an Old Testament prefiguration of Christ and the Gospel.

It's a historical personage, an event, or an institution. Adam is a type of Christ. Hebrew 7. Melchizedek is a type of Christ.

Event. The Exodus is a type of the redemption Jesus brings. Institution.

Prophet, priest, and kingship are all institutions ordained by God that had historical actuality and historicity but spoke beyond themselves in God's plan to something greater, one greater, Jesus, and the salvation he would bring. Now, I know what's going on in 15, 16, and 17, too. Adam was a type of the one who was to come.

Starting with 12, he began a comparison, saying how Adam and Christ are different. He did not complete the comparison but rather went off in those two strange verses to show somehow that the time between Adam and Moses spoke of human beings whose fate was somehow connected to Adam's sin. And now, he says, there's a sense that Adam is like Christ.

Right away, he recoils, because in the next three verses, he does not show that Adam is like Christ. That occurs in 18 and 19. In the next three verses, he says, they're not alike, they're not alike, they're not alike.

Adam was a type of the one who was to come. 14, the end. Paul explicitly says Adam is a type of Christ, the one who was to come in fulfillment of Old Testament promises.

This is the first mention of Christ in this passage. So, it is about original sin. Bigger context, no, it's more about justification.

But it is about original sin. Remember, I've already argued the passage has more to do with Christ and salvation than with Adam and original sin. Here, the apostle introduces Christ as the fulfillment of Adam, who prefigured him in some sense.

5:15, but the free gift is not like the trespass. The apostle is immediately compelled to show how different Adam and Christ are and what their respective effects are on the human race. But not as the transgression is, I'm translating literally, but not as the transgression is, so also is the free gift.

Paul means that there are many important differences between the sin of Adam and the free gift of righteousness. Verse 17, which Christ brought. First of all, the free gift far exceeds the effects of the sin as the greater exceeds the lesser.

For if by the transgression of one man, the many died. This comparison states that if Adam's sin was the means or cause of many over against the one man, Adam, dying, how much more will the salvation which was obtained by the means of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to many? I'm going to read it without my parentheses. If Adam's sin was the means of many dying, how much more would the salvation that was obtained by the means of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many? Paul does not simply say salvation, as in my paraphrase.

Instead, he says, quote, the grace of God and the gift given in grace, close quote. This is Paul's way of saying the gracious gift of saving righteousness. Putting our understanding of verses 14C and 15 together, we have, although Adam is a type of Christ, Adam's sin is very unlike Christ's gift.

For if by Adam's sin many people died, how much more did God's grace and the gracious gift of righteousness, which came by the second man, Jesus Christ, abound to many people? Sin came, but grace and saving righteousness abounded. As soon as he says, Adam is a type of Christ, which is the foundation for completing the incomplete condition of 12 and is the key to 18 and 19. Oh, he can't stand it.

He cannot let Adam and Christ be in the same breath. Go, just slide by. Oh, no, no, no.

They're not alike. And he says it two more times. In verse 16, once more, Paul deliberately tells how the free gift and effects of Adam's sin are vastly different.

And not as sin and death, which came and not as sin and death, which came through the one who sinned. I can't read my own scribble. Excuse me.

It is the gift. The free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. Not as sin and death, which came.

There's an ellipsis here, which can be seen by comparing the two parts of the comparison. There's nothing in the as clause to correspond to the gift of the so also clause. From this context, I suggest sin and death, which come through the one who sinned.

Is to be supplied here, as is clear from a comparison with the syntax of the beginning of verse 15. Paul goes on to explain that the verdict came as a result of one transgression and led to punishment. God pronounced a verdict over Adam's sin.

The result of that verdict was the punishment which follows the sentence. In contrast to that, the gift came from many sins unto justification. Here, from means as a result of.

In a different sense than it does in the preceding clause. Here it means is based on in the sense of establishing legal grounds.

Here, it means a gracious consequence in the plan of God. The apostle is not equivocating. There are differences between the way God deals with sin in judgment and in grace.

Paul uses the linguistic identity of form to communicate semantic differences. Paul is contrasting the one sin that caused the downfall of so many, with the many sins that were forgiven in the gracious gift of justification.

Adam's one sin plunged the human race into ruin. Christ-free gift. Atone for many sins.

And results in justification. Paul is also contrasting the condemnation brought on by sin of the first man. And the justification brought on by the second man.

You're going to be happy when we get to 18 and 19, my friends, ever since the mention of Adam as a type of Christ in the end of 14. Paul has been contrasting the two.

He does it again in 17. For if by the transgression of the one man, death reigns through the one man. By means of Adam's sin, death ruled over other men.

Here, the sin of the one has a great effect on the many. Adam's sin is the means by which the intruder, death, ruled as king over humankind. Perhaps confirming our less-than-positive identification of 13b is the hard part.

Paul completes the thought. How much more will those who receive the abundance of grace. And the abundance of the gift of righteousness reign in life through one man, Jesus Christ.

Here Paul is at his best. Exalting in the grace of God in Jesus Christ. His main thought is: How much more will those who receive Christ's gift of righteousness. Reign in eternal life through Christ. The reign of eternal life is much greater than the reign of death.

Once again, he's showing a contrast between the two Adams. God has thrown the usurping death out. Paul is exuberant.

Abundance, abundance by ellipsis. Death reigned through Adam's sin. How much more, arguing from lesser to greater.

Will those who receive grace and justification. Reign in eternal life in Christ, through Christ. Adam brought the reign of death.

Christ brings the reign of life. Here, it is probably viewed eschatologically. The future tense of reign.

By the way, he breaks up the parallelism very effectively. He says, death reigns through the one man. He doesn't say life reigns.

He says, those who receive the gift of grace. And the free gift of righteousness. They will reign.

So it's the reign of death. And the reign of God's people in life. It's beautiful.

Verse 18. In verses 18 and 19. Hallelujah.

Paul returns to the original if clause. The protasis from verse 12. To summarize it.

And completing it with the long-awaited then clause. A protasis. So then.

As though the one transgression. This resulted in condemnation for all men. With his so then, Paul draws his argument to an important conclusion.

Through Adam's transgression. This resulted in condemnation. For all men.

The result of condemnation. It's a telecuse. For, with reverence and respect to all men.

Here the one sin of Adam is the basis for the condemnation of the race. So also, through one act of righteousness. This resulted in the justification of life for all men.

The so also establishes now the similarity. Between the two Adams. And their respective effects.

On their races. Christ, one act of righteousness. Parallels Adam's one transgression.

After distancing Adam and Christ in 15, 16, and 17, he returns to 5, 12 to complete the thought. I am using the important contribution of the end of verse 14.

Adam is a type of Christ. That is, they are similar. They're similar in that they're representative heads of their races.

My own view comes out as Adam's sin brought punishment to all men. So Christ's righteousness.

Righteous deeds brought justification. That results in life to all men. Christ, one act of righteousness.

Refers specifically. To his being, quote, obedient unto death. Even death on the cross.

Philippians 2:8. Christ saving death. This corresponds to Adam's one transgression. Paul is teaching that Christ is obedient unto death.

Procured saving righteousness for believers. I will speak to the problem of the many and all. In our text.

When we read that, we are condemned by Adam's sin. Or that many will be saved through Christ. We smile.

These statements fit our theology. However, when we read that, many fell with Adam. Or all will be saved by Christ's righteousness.

We begin to worry. Does Romans 5 teach that some were not affected by the fall? Only many? Does Romans, does it teach universalism? As Karl Barth and his disciple, unfortunately, Cranfield. The great British Anglican exegete.

Held. Although Barth denied it. In another context, in a bigger context.

Although in fairness to both, they qualify universalism with the Bible's teaching about judgment. They still do not satisfy me, however. I think we err if we push either many or all in this passage.

That's not the point. When Paul says many, he means many, not over against all.

He's not contradicting himself in the space of two verses. Many don't mean many instead of all. And all doesn't mean all instead of many.

No, no, no, no. Many mean all. Many means many as opposed to one.

Adam or Christ. All means all as opposed to one. Adam or Christ.

When Paul says many, he means many over against the one man, Adam. Or over against the one man Christ. He's distinguishing the one and the many.

He does not mean many as opposed to all. When Paul says all, he means all over against the one man Adam or Christ. He does not mean all as opposed to many.

It's beautiful language to indicate these two Adams had catastrophic effects on their respective races. Adam, the human race. Christ, the race of the elect, the race of believers.

Hence, both many and all are relative expressions that speak of the great effects of the two Adams on the human race. To determine the extent of the effects of Adam's sin or Christ's righteousness, we must look at the total context of this passage and of scripture. Adam's sin affected the whole human race.

As shown by the fact that all die. Compare 3, 9 to 20. 22c to 23.

Christ's saving righteousness avails for all, verse 17, who receive the gift of righteousness. In verse 19, Paul repeats his message. The many will be made righteous.

This verse parallels the previous one. It's a comparative clause with the following protasis if clause. Just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many became sinners.

Through Adam's disobedience, his people were caused to become sinners. Adam's sin is presented as the means by which his race became sinners. His race here is designated by the word many, but actually, it means the whole human race.

It's many as opposed to the one Adam, but that many doesn't tell us the exact amount. Paul completes the comparison. So also, through the obedience of the one man, the many will be made righteous.

Here Paul deliberately sets the second Adam over against the first. Christ's obedience offsets Adam's disobedience. Through Adam, many were made sinners, but through Christ, many will be made righteous.

The parallelism is unmistakable. Christ's obedience in going to the cross is the means whereby his people will become righteous. Justification is presented here as yet future, and it will be made righteous.

We usually associate justification with the already, with the past. As soon as someone believes, he's declared righteous by God. Verse 19 teaches a future aspect to justification, as does Matthew 12:36, 37.

Justification is not yet in the sense of the final settling of accounts in the court of God. God's righteousness will be finally vindicated before the universe. In that day, the wicked will be justly condemned, Romans 2:5. And the righteous declared righteous, Romans 5:19.

One may put these things together and say that the present announcement of justification in the gospel is the anticipation of the verdict of the last day. Compare John 3, 17 and 18. If this understanding of the New Testament is correct, great urgency is added to our preaching of the gospel.

Men and women do not have to wait until the last day to hear the final verdict from God. Based upon the response of Jesus Christ, they can now be assured of the judge's final declaration. 5.20, Paul has concluded his explicit comparison of the two Adams and their effects upon their respective people.

In verses 21 and 22, he contrasts law and grace in the economy of God. Law came in order for transgression to increase. The law of Moses, compare verses 13, 14.

Not only did it make sin more evident, but it actually served to incite sin. There's some truth to the words of the elderly lady who complained when her pastor preached on the Ten Commandments. Pastor, why do you have to go and put all those bad ideas in the people's minds? Due to our sinfulness, prohibition serves to provoke us to sin.

And that is not only true of little children. Do I tell her not to touch that thing? She probably never would think of touching. If I do, I'm giving, putting the idea into her head.

Oh, yikes. Of course, the law is divine. Due to our sinfulness, prohibition serves to provoke us to sin.

Of course, the law is a divinely given sin detector that causes sin to be recognized as exceedingly sinful. Paul goes on to explain that God's grace is greater than all our sin. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more.

Notice how Paul uses sin and transgression as synonyms here. They're not to be distinguished as a solution to the hard text. Paul is magnifying the grace of God by showing how God lavished it upon his people.

God would not allow the enemy, sin, to defeat him. His grace swallowed up the multitude of sins stirred up by the law. 21, this is a comparative clause within a purpose clause.

The superabundance of grace in verse 20 was for the purpose of establishing the reign of grace. Reign of sin, reign of righteousness, reign of grace. There are lots of rulings going on here.

The usurper, sin, and death were deposed by the rightful monarch, Grace. Just as sin reigned with death or by means of death, sin and death. Sin and death through sin, verse 12, exercised an evil reign over humankind.

We can be thankful to God that there is a then clause to the comparative clause. So also grace might reign through the righteousness unto eternal life, through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the apostle's first mention of either of the two Adams in verses 20 and 21.

He had not left them totally behind, however. He had just shifted his imagery, the primary focus of his imagery, to God's grace over against sin. The sin and death spoken of in verses 21 and 22 are the results of the sin of the first man.

The grace is not apart from Christ, as verse 21 shows, over against the ugly reign of sin and death. Grace comes to the throne, quote, through righteousness, close quote. Paul here shows that, quote, it is through the gift of righteousness that grace reigns, Cranfield.

God could not merely wink at sin in Romans 5 any more than in chapter 3. He's a righteous God whose grace saves through righteousness. The result of the reign of

grace is eternal life. That replaces the death that was the companion who tagged along after sin.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord indicates it is through him that the reign of grace is established and sustained, Cranfield. The following chart may help us understand the comparison and contrast of Adam and Christ. Here's Adam, and here's Christ.

The headings are the act, oh good, God's verdict, and the result. I'm going to explain this chart and its ramifications, and there's a real blessing here. Then, the next lecture takes up the views of original sin and the evaluation thereof.

The act, Adam's act in this passage is variously called sin, trespass or transgression, and disobedience. I'm summarizing. Adam's act was an act of sin.

God's verdict: what verdict must the holy and just God give in light of Adam's sin? There's no question. Guilty, condemned, condemnation is the verdict. The result in the passage plainly again and again is death, physical and spiritual death.

Paul is right. Adam is a type of the one who is to come. Romans 5.14, call it C, the very end.

If Adam's one act was sin, disobedience, or trespass, Christ's act is called righteousness or obedience in this passage. Christ's one act of righteousness overturns Adam's one sin, one act of disobedience, one transgression or trespass. What verdict must a holy and just God give in light of Christ's righteousness? There is only one verdict, and that verdict is justification.

The vilest sinner who truly repents and believes in Jesus receives the same verdict that any other believer in Jesus receives. I speak reverently. God must declare righteous anyone who believes in Jesus.

This must is not a comparison, a forcing of God from the outside, an external pressure on him, an external demand. No, God delights to honor his son, and because his son's death was a propitiation because it was one act of righteousness, Romans 3.24-26, Romans 5.18-19, there's only one verdict a just and holy God can give, and he must give it to be true to himself and the work of his son. Righteous is the verdict.

Justified, justification. Biblically speaking, condemnation and justification are exact opposites. God must condemn Adam's sin, and there is such a thing as original sin taught in the Bible.

Some people don't like it. Well, who says they have to like everything the Bible teaches? Eternal hell isn't something that we especially like, but we submit to it

because it is the teaching of God's holy word. In a similar way, Adam's one sin brought God's verdict of condemnation on the human race, and Christ's one act of righteousness, his propitiatory sacrifice to the Father, brought God's necessary verdict of justification for whosoever believes in Jesus.

The result, even as Adam's sin brought God's verdict of condemnation, and the result was death, both physical and spiritual, Christ's righteousness demands God's verdict of justification, with the result being eternal life to everyone who believes in the Son of God.

I will summarize this chart again next time. In the next lecture, we will be introduced to a presentation of the views of original sin, an evaluation of the same, and finally, some pastoral and practical applications for our lives. Thank you for your perseverance through a painstaking lecture on Romans 5:12-19.

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