

Gamma

Romans 5b

Study 9 Why justification comes

Exegetical Question

1. Looking at verse 14 can your group list down the similarities between Adam and Christ?

Paul calls Adam a “pattern” of Christ (v.14). The similarity is mainly one — that many people have been involved in one man’s deed. Therefore, both Adam and Christ “stand in representation” to a body of people, and in both cases, the merits or demerits of what they do is *transferred* to us. Paul uses several different words to get this across:

v.16 One sin... *brought* condemnation; The gift... *brought* justification...

- A. v.18 The *result* of one trespass was condemnation; The *result* of one act of righteousness was justification
- B. v.19 Through the disobedience of one, the many were *made* sinners; through the obedience of the one, the many will be *made* righteous.

So the similarity is that their action is transferred to us. Adam’s sin “made” us sinners, so Jesus’ act “made” us righteousness. This is a legal transfer — Adam’s guilt to us, then Christ’s righteousness to us.

2. Looking at verse 15-21 can your group list down the differences between Adam and Christ?

Paul says “the free gift is not like the trespass” (v.15), and then goes on to enumerate them. There are at least three contrasts between Adam and Christ.

The *motivation* at the heart of the deed was very different. Paul calls Adam’s deed a “trespass” or sin, but calls Jesus’ deed, the free gift. This means that Adam’s act was a deed of self-aggrandizement as contrasted with Jesus’ act of self- sacrifice. In other words, Jesus deed of dying for us was not simply obedient toward God, but it was undeserved compassion for us. Put another way, Adam’s action was a breaking of

the law, but what Jesus did was an “act of righteousness” (v.18) and “obedience” (v.19) — a total fulfillment of the law.

The results of the two deeds are opposite. The results are at least three: 1.) Adam’s resulted in “*death*” (v.15) while Christ’s results in “*life*.” This is the first of the two consequences of evil listed in the beginning of the passage — physical death. The effects of Christ’s deed undoes the effects of Adam’s. 2.) Adam’s resulted in “*condemnation*” (v.16), and Christ’s in “*justification*.” This is the second of the two consequences of evil listed in the beginning of the passage — legal guilt. The effects of Christ’s deed undoes the effects of Adam’s. 3.) The result of Adam’s sin is that “death reigns” (v.17), but Paul doesn’t say that in Christ “life reigns” but rather that “*we reign in life*” (v.17). This is another contrast Paul is making. Before, death reigned over us and we were in bondage. Now we are free. The old kingdom under which we labored crushed us — we have not traded one slaver in for another. Rather, in the new kingdom of Christ we become kings ourselves! Christ’s kingship makes us kings, but sin’s kingship makes us slaves. The contrast is total.

3. **The power of the two is different.** Paul is at great pains to show that the power and scope of Christ’s work is far greater than Adam’s. He keeps saying how much more to show us that Christ’s work can overwhelm and completely cover and undo all the effects of Adam’s work. The contrast is between “sin” and “grace” or “gift.” Our condemnation is an act of justice, and justice metes out equivalence — exactly what is deserved. But our justification is an act of grace, and grace overflows and abounds, giving us 10, 100, 1,000, and infinity of times more than we deserve.

4. There is another contrast between Adam and Christ Paul does not mention here. Our union with Adam as our federal head is physical, but our union with Christ our federal head is by faith. We make the union when we believe in him. This is why Paul can later say, “we died” with Christ to sin and “were raised” with Christ. It is all covenantal language. Once we are united to Christ by faith **whatever is true of him is true of us!**

“So then, whether we are condemned or justified, whether we are spiritually alive or dead, depends on which humanity we belong to — whether we still belong to the old humanity initiated by Adam, or to the new humanity initiated by Christ.”

C. -- John Stott

Case 1

Lum Kwai Fah was a member of the 3rd Baptist Church and attending one of the Life groups where a young Christian brought in a Non Christian

friend and they talked about the issue of sin in mankind. Once they touched on the topic of the sin of Adam affecting the whole of mankind, the Non Christian immediately reacted angrily and said that is simply not fair, how can a just and loving God condemn us for something our fore father did so many years ago. You mean we were born in sin? We never had a chance from the beginning so what is the point. How can I believe such a cruel unfair God?

Kwai Fah's group leader attempted to diffuse the situation by saying that that doctrine of original sin is controversial and not important part of our faith hence we should not talk about it.

Kwah Fah disagreed and said we should explain it to the person the best we can.

1. Who is correct Kwai Fah or his leader? What is the implication if the original sin is not imputed on us?

Kwai Fah is correct because if the original sin is not imputed to us then neither will Christ's righteousness be imputed to us hence we are lost. If the principle of one affect all is not accepted

2. Can Kwai Fah explain to the Non Christian friend about this issue of original sin using Romans 5

Modern people dislike this teaching because we are highly individualistic. People of other centuries and other cultures are better at accepting the fact of human solidarity. Many other cultures accept the idea that the individual is part of the whole family, tribe, or clan, and is not a whole in and of him or herself.

The idea of solidarity is that **you can have a legitimate relationship with a person so that whatever that person achieves or loses, you achieve or lose.** This is the concept of a representative. A representative involves the represented in the fruits of his/her action, whether for good or ill. This has been called in philosophy and theology, "federal headship." The word "federal" comes from the Latin *foedus*, "covenant." A federal head is a person who, through a covenant relationship, *represents*, stands in for someone else.

In the East today, and former times around the world, it was considered legitimate for some people to have this relationship to you by birth or by assignment. In the western world we only recognize the legitimacy of such a person as we voluntarily choose to be in that relationship. Here are some

examples:

One example is a representative in collective negotiation. If a union would give a representative the right to negotiate and sign a contract on behalf of the union, then he is a “federal head.” (However, most unions insist now on only ratifying such a contract by popular vote, and thus their representatives are not true federal heads.) Sometimes a head of state gives an ambassador the power to negotiate so his/her actions bind the country to the terms of the agreement.

Another example is the power given to elected representatives. A national leader (or the legislature) can declare war. This power to declare war does not belong to the people, even in a democracy. People do not vote popularly on whether to declare

war. Why? Such a decision could not be made fast enough, and sufficient information could not be distributed for an intelligent decision. Therefore, our representatives act for us, and the consequences of their action comes to us. If our federal representatives declare war on a country, we can’t say, “Well, I’m not at war with this country!” Yes you are. If your representatives declare war, you have declared war.

3. Another example is when a defendant enters into a relationship with legal counsel. The lawyer represents the client in court, and has, literally, “power of attorney” to act for the client in many ways.

Here’s a quote from Charles Hodge who discusses Christ’s work for us as federal head:

“The relation of Christ to his people is that of a [legal] advocate to his client. The former personates the latter; he puts himself in his client’s place. It is, while it lasts, the most intimate relation. The client may not even appear [in court]. He is not heard. He is not regarded. He is lost in his advocate, who for the time being is his representative....He, not we, is seen, heard, and regarded.”

When it comes to Romans 5:12-21, the rub for westerners is two-fold. First, we dislike the very idea of someone standing in for us. We say, “That’s not fair that I should be judged for what someone else did! I should have had a chance at the probation in the Garden of Eden myself!” But secondly, even if we grant that federal headship sometimes is legitimate, we **dislike the lack of a choice of our federal head**. What immediately strikes us as unfair is that we did not elect Adam as our representative, we had no say in it. If we are going to give someone “power of attorney” or “power of collective bargaining,” we want to be able to choose someone who is just like us, who would have all our views and perspectives, but who would be highly gifted and able to represent us well.

But if we think of it this way, we are on the verge of understanding how God

did it! First, no one could choose a representative for you as well as God could. We must not think that we could have made a more intelligent selection than God! But second, God did not simply choose Adam, he *created* Adam to be our representative. He was perfectly created and designed *to act exactly as you, personally, as an individual would have acted in the same situation*. You cannot say, “I would have done a better job” because that would be to claim that you could have been or chosen a better representative than God could. No — God was able to give us all probation at once. And so we are guilty in Adam because we actually sinned in him.

Final note: Often the people who are most offended at the doctrine of “federal headship” consider themselves very liberal and open-minded. Yet they refuse to detach themselves in any way from their furious western individualism when they approach this text!

Case 2

Fill in the blanks provided and discuss how different world views will affect our approach to the various issues in life

Issue	Legalism	Gospel	Liberalism
Nature of God	God is Holy	<u>God is holy AND love</u>	<u>God is love</u>
Sin	We are sinful have to earn it	<u>We are sinful and accepted</u>	God accepts all
Righteousness	<u>Earn your righteousness</u>	<u>Receive God's perfect righteousness</u>	You don't need perfect righteousness
Our flesh-bodies	Flesh is bad we are fallen..Ascetism	<u>Matter is good yet we are fallen (Physical enjoyment; yet simple living)</u>	<u>Matter is good; we aren't fallen (Satisfy physical appetites)</u>

Culture	<u>Culture worships tradition or race (Fascism)</u>	Culture worships God (Sin: thus don't idealize state, individual, or racial heritage)	<u>Culture worships individual or state (Socialism)</u>
Sin and society	<u>Sin only effects individual just do evangelism</u>	<u>Sin effects both individual and social systems — do both evangelism and social action</u>	Naïve about depth of human sin ..just social action
Change	<u>People can't change (OR change is easy!)</u>	People can change but no quick fixes	<u>People don't need to change</u>
Guilt	Work off guilt	<u>Go through guilt (rest in Christ)</u>	Go away from guilt ..its ok
Repentance	Repents of sin	<u>Repents of sins AND righteousness</u>	Repents of neither