Section: Doctrine of Sin

**TEACHING NOTES**

**Q35. How did Adam and Eve sin?**

Satan tempted and deceived Eve to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit, then she gave it to Adam, and he also disobeyed God. Adam and Eve did not fully trust God’s word, so they were vulnerable to temptation.

**Q36. Why does Adam’s sin affect everyone else?**

God chose Adam to act as the representative of the entire human race. With the test that God set before Adam, He was testing the whole of mankind. In this, Adam accurately represented us.

**Federal Headship of Adam**: God chose Adam as the Federal Head (representative) of all mankind. Because Adam failed to obey God’s commands perfectly, all those he represented receive the results of his disobedience. Given God’s perfect wisdom, we can never argue that Adam was a poor choice to represent us. God’s choice of Adam as the first Federal Head was an infallible (perfect) choice; Adam represented us accurately. If we are to be reconciled to God, we need a second and final Federal Head to redeem and represent us. For the salvation of the elect, God ordained Jesus as the second and final Federal Head.

Many people who’ve spent even a little time in a Bible-teaching church knows that what the Bible teaches about what happened in the Garden of Eden *is foundational to how human history has gone*.

Many know that it says that because Adam sinned, things are no longer how they were when first created. *We* know this.

But not all have a fuller knowledge of **why**.

Maybe *you’ve* wondered, “Why does Adam’s sin affect me? Why does *his* life thousands of years ago affect my life so much? Why does his sin make me guilty, and a sinner myself?”

What we’re looking at tonight will give answers to these things.

Let’s read the account from Genesis 2 and 3:

**Genesis 2:** 15The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

18Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” 19Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones  
    and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called Woman,  
    because she was taken out of Man.”

24Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

**Genesis 3:** 1Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?” 2And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

8And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” 11He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” 12The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” 13Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Let’s begin by highlighting a few things from this passage as we break down the catechism answer to our first question, the Q and A is:

**Q35. How did Adam and Eve sin?**

Satan tempted and deceived Eve to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit, then she gave it to Adam, and he also disobeyed God. Adam and Eve did not fully trust God’s word, so they were vulnerable to temptation.

* Now, our answer first states, “Satan tempted and deceived Eve to disobey God...”

We see this in Verses 1-6 of Chapter 3.

We start by understanding that Scripture makes it clear that Satan was the one to bring this temptation to Eve.

We also need to see that it was, in fact, Eve who was *deceived* by Satan, and *she* was the first human to disobey God.

Not only do we see that Eve was the one Satan tempted and deceived there in Genesis, God ordained for us to be reminded of this point again in the New Testament as well. This gives us some personal application right from the beginning here. Look at:

**2 Corinthians 11:3** Paul said: “But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”

And again in:

**1 Timothy 2:14** Paul said: “Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived”

So, we see the narrative in Genesis 3 affirmed in other Scripture.

**And** it’s used as an important basis for *other teachings* in Scripture.

For example, in the 2 Corinthians 11:3 passage, Paul is exhorting his readers to know and keep sound doctrine, not letting falsehood lead them away, because that is the very thing Satan used to deceive Eve. Satan used falsehood.

**Look at the words Satan used**: Genesis 3:1 Satan said “**Did God actually say…?**” “Did God actually say…?” “Did God actually say…?”

This is the deceptive tactic false teachers use to lead people away from God, His truths, and His commands. Think of the current trend in the homosexual and transgender topics…..many false teachers are saying,

“*Did God actually say* that two adults of the same gender who promise to be faithful to one another and claim to be in love are **in sin**?”

Or…“*Did God actually say* He made a biological man to be a man and a biological woman to be a woman—what about their feelings?”

False teachers (or those they have convinced of their falsehood amongst our peers, in our families, etc) are using the same tactic with which Satan used in the garden with Eve.

The tactic is to plant doubt in someone’s mind regarding the word of God and create a ***new possibility***, one that entices or meets a sinful desire.

And that’s how we see many people veering biblical teaching regarding sexuality, gender roles, and so on—leaving teaching that all legitimate Bible teachers and pastors throughout Church history have taught in order to embrace a non-biblical *revisionist* position—they are being deceived by falsehood, carefully planted.

And that’s the case in *all instances* when people abandon biblical, orthodox Christian truths…just like Eve, they are lured away with falsehood.

We see this departure of truth happen in many, many things.

we see this with the denial of God’s sovereignty in salvation,

we see this with the denial of the doctrine of God’s wrath and the reality of eternal hell,

we see this with the so-called prosperity gospel… In these things, falsehood creeps in, and truth is abandoned.

That’s why the Apostles warned the New Testament Christians not to entertain or welcome false teaching in their lives. John wrote for example:

**2 John 1:10** If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching (sound, biblical teaching), do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

What I am saying is: **We** *have to have* the discernment that Eve failed to have. We need to **know** sound doctrine and not accept teaching or ideas that contradict it.

Consider something else, this means, for example, we need to be **very careful of what books we read, for many books claiming to be Christian are not actually biblically sound**.

It’s a sad reality that we can walk through a local “Christian bookstore” or browse the “Christian” section in an online store and spot a significant number of books masquerading as Christian that are actually leading people **away** from sound Christian truths.

The elders can help you know what to read.

Additionally, we need to carefully consider with whom we fellowship and study. Are we welcoming in falsehood even from those who claim to be Christian but are proving they have never been discipled biblically unto maturity worth following or understanding worth gleaning?

Making any needed adjustments here and increasing our decrement would honor God. Let us not be tempted and deceived.

* The next part of our answer says, “by eating the forbidden fruit.”

On the surface, we understand what this means: God told mankind not to eat of the fruit; therefore, it was forbidden.

But there is important detail and theology behind even these details.

One thing being this was literal fruit from a literal tree.

And, of course, Adam and Eve were real human beings; they were literal humans.

If anyone tries to tell us different, we need to be able to spot the error in their claim. It is fundamental to the Bible, human history, and the reality of our God-man Savior that Adam and Eve were in fact literal, real humans.

And in this same lane, the fruit they ate was real fruit.

Exactly what variety of fruit, Scripture doesn’t clearly say, so we don’t need to decide, but it was real fruit.

Another thing to consider is the forbidden-ness of the fruit. Later in the catechism, I will teach more about this point, but for now, the basic premise we need to see is that God did in fact specifically command Adam not to eat of this tree. We saw this in **Genesis 2:16-17**.

This was a specific command given to Adam as part of the covenant God made with Adam. On top of the Universal Moral Law that all humans must obey, God issued an additional requirement to Adam in forbidding the eating from this tree. *It was forbidden by God.*

* Eve ate of this forbidden tree, and the next part of our answer says, “Then she gave it to Adam, and he also disobeyed God.”

In this we see that transition from Satan tempting and deceiving Eve, to *her* giving it to Adam and he also ate of the tree.

Adam’s sin here has eternal ramifications, and we’ll look at why as the lesson continues.

* The next part of our answer says, “Adam and Eve did not fully trust God’s word, so they were vulnerable to temptation.”

What we are highlighting in the end of the answer is the core issue. We spoke to this already, but see clearly that *there was a lack of faith, a lack of trust in our great God*. And this made them vulnerable to temptation.

They should have boldly, accurately, and swiftly rebuked Satan and sent him away. But they didn’t……the truths that God stated to Adam, and the moral law they had written on their hearts, were not honored. When a crafty false teacher came with a twisting of God’s truths, they abandoned what was right for what was wrong.

In this……..we……..you and I…… need to let this be the critical lesson to us. We cannot let falsehood or unbiblical desires lead us away from righty understanding and keeping with God’s truths in Scripture. **We must trust God and know His truths.**

*Make it personal tonight: What is tempting you to not honor God?*

*Don’t be like Adam and Eve, deal with temptation and falsehood swiftly—putting off unbiblical desires and rejecting falsehood.*

As we move on, let me give you some more theological framework as we transition to our next Question and Answer:

In the garden, Adam was in a type of probation, to test his obedience to God. The specific command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was made *a decisive test* of Adam’s obedience.

We learned in a past lesson, Adam had the moral ability to pass this test in that He was created good, blessed, and with no sin. Before eating from the tree, Adam did not yet have a sin nature.

But as we also saw, Adam was not immutable nor infallible. This means he was subject to change, for the better or worse. He was capable of falling from his good, sinless state because he was fallible and mutable.

The testing to which Adam was subjected had to do with whether or not he would trust and depend on God, or whether he would assert *his own desires*.

In essence, the real issue was a test of submission versus rebellion—humility versus pride. It was a matter of acknowledging and submitting to God’s rightful sovereign rule.

The essence of ALL sin involves each of us rejecting God’s rightful sovereign rule by asserting our own desires….our own desired independence.

And, what we have seen is Adam failed this test. He chose what was right *in his own eyes*.

***Now***, in order to understand the significance of Adam’s disobedience upon the rest of mankind, we need to understand God’s choice to deal with us based on representation—based on headship; we need to understand the doctrine of **Federal Headship**.

This takes us to our next catechism question now.

**Q36. Why does Adam’s sin affect everyone else?**

God chose Adam to act as the representative of the entire human race. With the test that God set before Adam, He was testing the whole of mankind. In this, Adam accurately represented us.

When God causes a sinner to believe in Jesus, the righteousness of Christ is credited to that person. This means that God deals with the saved on the basis of Jesus’ perfect obedience and righteousness, no longer on the basis of their own sin guilt. This is the extraordinary good news of the gospel. By grace alone, through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, the righteousness of Christ is credited (or imputed) to a sinner’s account.

We know this. Christians know this glorious truth.

But what many don’t know as well is this is not a different or new way that God interacts with the human race. God has been using this system of representative headship since the beginning.

And that’s what we are looking at now tonight: we are looking at the first instance of this representative headship in the redemptive story. This all goes back to the first man, Adam, and that’s what our catechism question and answer seek to help us understand.

We live in God’s creation—God’s world. The Almighty God made the world and made us who live in it. He sovereignly administers all things in creation. And at the end of your days, you and I will stand before the King of kings, and He will judge each of us.

What we are looking at now is about *how God chose to deal with humans in this*. It’s of great importance that we understand how God’s world, God’s government, and God’s judgment works.

If you were merely going into a court room as an observer, it would not be urgent that you understand how the judge operates. But if you were entering the courtroom as a defendant, it would be of immense consequence that you comprehend the basis on which your case would be decided.

Some day you will stand before the Judge, the final and eternal Judge, the one true God. In this lesson we learn about His system.

Along with other places in Scripture, in Romans chapter 5 we find the Apostle Paul explain how it is that *all persons after Adam born of man and woman are born guilty, sinful, hostile to God, and deserving His wrath—because of what one man, Adam, has done on our behalf*.

And better yet, in Romans chapter 5 we also see how it is that *sinners who, by grace, trust in Jesus can be forgiven and declared righteous because of what one man, the God-man Jesus Christ, has done on our behalf*.

Paul explains the moral government of God that makes this possible.

This doctrine is called **Federal Headship**.

God’s system of government and judgement, as we see in Scripture, is a representative system that has been termed by theologians as Federal Headship. The term **F**ederal **H**eadship primarily speaks to the two specific Federal Heads that God has chosen for representation of people.

Let me note: Being dealt with by representation is not a foreign concept to us. One example of this is when the leaders of the United States declare war, the USA as a whole declares war, and all Americas are at war. If a missile is headed towards your home, you are not able to say, “No, wait, stop; I didn’t declare war!” By way of your representative, you did declare war.

In Scripture, we see the system of headship, or representation, all throughout.

Think of Pharaoh as one example, representing the people under him and the plagues that were brought onto them because of him. His disobedience cost many families their first-born son. And with him being a kind of representative head, God’s carrying through that judgment was just.

So, let’s consider Adam’s Federal Headship over all of mankind. Looking at the text…

**1 Corinthians 15** hits on what we’re talking about in a few well-known words.

Verse 22 says “in Adam all die”

But Romans 5 is a longer passage that teaches us this, so we’ll go there:

**Romans 5:10-19 (ESV)** 10For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

12Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— 13for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Ok, there’s our context.

In Romans 5 Paul makes the following observations about Adam:

“sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin” (v. 12).

“many died through one man's trespass” (v. 15).

“one trespass led to condemnation for all men” (v. 18).

“by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners” (v. 19).

Let’s focus in on verse 12:

**Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned

The “one man” spoken of here is Adam. It is vitally important that we understand the relation Adam has to all of mankind.

He was not only the common parent of mankind, he was chosen by God as our Federal Head, our representative. This means, Adam did not act for himself alone; He acted also for Eve and all who would naturally descend from him.

And unless that fact is clearly understood:

we will not rightly or fully understand God’s dealings with the human race.

We will not rightly or fully understand original sin and inherited guilt.

We will not rightly or fully understand man’s relationship to God’s law.

We will not rightly or fully understand the doctrine of the atonement: how and what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross.

We must understand this doctrine of Federal Headship.

* In verse 12, we first we see that “sin came into the world through one man.”

This tells us that it was because of one man, Adam, that sin came into the human race. It was not by Eve; do you notice that? It was by Adam.

As we pointed out earlier, Eve sinned first. *Chronologically*, Eve was the first human to sin.

Since she sinned first, **why does it not say *sin came into the world through one woman***? It is because *God chose Adam* to be the representative—the Federal Head—not Eve. Adam was the legal, moral representative for Eve and the whole human race.

Additionally……remember that even Eve came from Adam; she was formed by God from Adam’s rib. This is another display of his headship over her.

Upon the eating of the fruit by Eve, *the consequences of the Federal Head failing* were not brought on, but as soon as Adam eats, the consequences due Adam and those he represented begin. The eyes of both of them were opened; they knew they were guilty. They both became immediately aware of their change—things had now turned very bad.

We saw earlier, in Genesis 2:9, that God goes to Adam first about the sin. This is another way Adam’s responsibility and headship is put on display. He goes to Adam to have Adam give an account.

God is omniscient; He knows all things, He knows that Eve sinned first, He knows what happened. But because Adam is the chosen Head over Eve and over all mankind, God goes directly to Adam.

By eating of the fruit, Adam plunged himself, Eve, and all born of man and woman after them into sin.

**Romans 5:12** “…sin came into the world through one man…” Adam.

* Next Romans 5:12 says “and death through sin.”

The death we read about here as a consequence for Adam’s sin is *both* spiritual death and the reality of impending physical death.

Adam and Eve immediately died spiritually…and all persons conceived of man and woman, under Adam’s Federal Headship, are now *spiritually dead in sin* from conception.

Justin will teach more on this point next lesson.

Additionally, all humans have the reality of physical death upon us.

Bodily death and the brokenness of our bodies are consequences of Adam’s sin. Bodily issues and pain and the sorrow of death came through Adam’s sin unto all of us.

So, death came through the sin of Adam: spiritual and impending physical death.

* Next it says, “and so death spread to all men because all sinned.”

Now this part is very important and often misunderstood.

*This statement speaks to prove Adam’s representation of all of us*.

What it does not mean is “death spread to all men because all sinned *themselves*.” This is very important. This is **not** saying we die spiritually and physically only after we ourselves sin. Clearly that is not correct based on what we experience, but more importantly that’s not biblically correct.

This statement, “*death spread to all men because all sinned”*, is precisely saying that the consequences of Adam’s sin (spiritual death, impending physical death, and so on) are a reality for mankind *because in Adam we all sinned*.

I sinned in Adam, you sinned in Adam. When Adam sinned as our representative, his sin was counted or credited to me, you, and everyone else. God brings that judgment, that consequence on all of us, because Adam represented all of us.

We all enter into this world as a guilty sinner, even before you or I committed one sin in our own flesh. That is what our verse (and the rest of Scripture) teaches.

We are legally constituted sinners by the disobedience of our federal head.

Again, what we are seeing is that when Adam sinned in the garden, he broke the terms of the covenant he was in with God, bringing forth hostility between Him and God. That hostility includes not only himself but all of those whom he represented by the appointment of God.

In all of this, we need to understand something: Adam was legally appointed by God. God chose Adam, and God decreed this system.

In this government of Federal Headship, God chose to deal with us like branches on a tree, each on the basis of our connection to the same root.

Naturally this tree’s root is Adam, so when Adam fell, the whole tree fell; when Adam fell, we all fell with him. We all became sinners.

* Now to this, a person may be *tempted* to offer an objection.

They may say, “That’s not fair. It’s not fair that I should be conceived sinful and born into the world under condemnation, spiritually dead, suffering, and headed to bodily death, because of what somebody else has done. That’s not fair!”

There may be a struggle with the temptation to feel that way. This system seems to be so contrary to *human reason* and *our concepts of fairness*. But we must be careful; we must not accuse God of being unrighteous. And we must not reject the teaching of His word because it doesn’t square up with our own fallen opinion of how God should do things.

What do we say to the objection of “that this is not fair!”?

* Well, the first thing I would say to this is language of Scripture itself: Romans 9:20: …who are you, a *mere man*, to talk back to God?

In other words, remember who we are and remember who God is.

Who are you, oh man—*created man*……and if that is not enough: sinful man, finite man, darkened man, foolish man, fallen man—who are you, **oh man**, to talk back to God: your Creator, Sustainer, and Judge, infinite in wisdom, holiness, power, justice, goodness and truth, eternal and unchangeable in the heavens. Who are you to talk back to God?

Would we finite creators, so limited in our understanding and comprehension, take the holy, infinite, good, all wise God to school and teach Him our ideas of fairness?

Does God need to follow our thoughts to learn what is fair and right? Of course not. His ways are higher than our ways.

Christian humility starts and ends with the knowledge and honoring of *God over us*—infinitely over us. God wiser than us—infinitely wiser than us.

Let us humble ourselves in the truth of the Lord.

* Secondly, we need to remember that Adam was our fair and just representative.

R.C. Sproul makes this point well when he said: At no time in all of human history have we been *more* *accurately represented* than in the Garden of Eden. To be sure of this, we did not choose our representative there. Our representative was chosen for us. The One who chose our representative was almighty God.

When God chooses our representative, He does so perfectly. His choice is an infallible choice.

Adam represented each of us infallibly, not because *Adam* was infallible, but because God is infallible. Given God’s infallibility, we can never argue that Adam was a poor choice to represent us.

We must get this: God’s choice of Adam was a perfect choice because God does not and cannot make a wrong choice.

* Thirdly, it helps to know that this passage comes after many other things Paul has said in this letter about man’s sinful condition.

Men are not accounted sinners *only* because Adam sinned. But let’s not be mistaken, in God’s system, that is enough. It is right, by God’s decree, that we are all *children of wrath* because of Adam. Our fall in Adam is enough to condemn a person to hell forever, as we have seen, Adam really did represent us and we really are guilty because of his failure. An example of this is seen in:

Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

From the moment of our conception, we are guilty, in sin. This is a real guilt, and apart from regeneration unto saving faith in Christ, it is enough to condemn a person to hell forever.

But, add to that what Paul has previously taught in Romans before this passage…..**that is all of us are also sinners by personal choice**! And our own personal sins have ***added*** *to our guilt*.

Adam led the rebellion against God, but every one of us has willfully, without the need of any outside influence, affirmed Adam’s rebellion against God and His law.

Paul spent the first three chapters in Romans teaching what we all know in our conscience to be true: namely that every one of us has personally, individually sinned against God in thought, word, and deed, and we are **all** *without excuse*.

* Fourthly and most importantly, if the curse of death and the condemnation of the whole human race still troubles someone, what needs to be seen is that God’s wisdom in arranging His moral government on this representative principle, this Federal Headship principle, **is the only way** by which we can be saved by one Man’s righteousness!

That is the positive point that Paul makes in Romans 5, and that the Bible makes all throughout as well.

CHURCH, this representative appointment by God is not to our disadvantage; it’s our only hope!

Think with me, what if God had chosen to deal with us like that field of corn, each standing on our own basis and record? We can confidently know that we all would have cast ourselves into sinful despair like Adam did.

Additionally, we add to our heinous record of sin in numerous subsequent ways and prove we can never earn reconciliation to God.

What if there was not this way of God dealing with us under this *representative method*? We must not be so prideful to think we would be able to prove God’s choice of Adam wrong, live perfectly and stand to God on our own merit.

We don’t want that, trust me……More so, trust the Bible: you don’t want that.

There would be no hope of union to God and eternal life. We would all be damned.

**BUT**, *praise God He chose from the beginning to deal with man through representation*. In His infinite wisdom and justice, He chose to deal with us like a tree, on the basis of our connection to a root.

In this way, God is able to graft all He has chosen into the root that is Jesus Christ. We can be justified and saved by being connected to the second Adam, the God-man Jesus Christ. We can rest in Him.

Jesus is referred as the second Adam or last Adam in Scripture.

For example, 1 Corinthians 15:45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Jesus is the life-giving Spirit, and here He is called the last Adam. He is the Second and the Last Federal Head to affect eternity for others.

The first Adam’s disobedience was credited to us, **but better yet** Jesus’ obedience and record—His life, under this system, is credited to those who receive saving grace.

By this grace, through faith, **Jesus becomes our new, unchanging, eternal representative: our new Federal Head**. On the basis of Jesus, God is just to save the elect from sin and death—and give them eternal life.

He takes, so to speak, each elect branch from the dead tree of representative Adam and grafts them into the tree of representative Jesus Christ.

Amen and all thinks be to God. ………

I wish we had time to go line by line through the larger portion of Romans 5 to show you all the deep truths in it, but we don’t have that kind time today; **however**, before we finish I want us to see a few more things.

In verse 14, we saw it says Adam “was a type of the one who was to come.”

This is very important. I’ve been telling you this Federal Headship doctrine has two Federal Heads of this kind. And we see here in this verse, Adam was a type of the one who was to come. That word “type” is very important. Theologically, there are types and antitypes. The type is the thing foreshadowing something to come, the antitype. We could use the word *proto-type* in place of *type* to help us.

So, Adam was a type, the proto-type, of the one who was to come, the better unfailing Federal Head Jesus Christ. There are only two Federal Heads in this way. As we saw, in 1 Corinthians 15:45, Paul affirms this by referring to Jesus as "the last Adam."

AW Pink wrote this:

“…Adam represented the whole human race; Christ represented all those whom the Father had, in His eternal counsels, given to Him.”

And this is the good news in all of this. Let’s read:

**Romans 5:17-19 (ESV)** 17For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

There it is: redemption from the fall of Adam is only a reality because of the perfection of the second and final Adam, the one God-man, Jesus Christ. By this, we receive grace and the free gift of Christ’s imputed righteousness!

One last thing about this passage, and Bible reading in general. Look at verse 18 again:

**Romans 5:18 (ESV)** 18Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.

When Scripture uses the word “all,” we need to be very careful to let the full testimony of Scripture help us understand who the “all” is.

Just like you and I use it, “all” does not always mean “every single person.” It can mean that, but it often times does not.

For example, if I say to you, “All the world tuned in to watch the Super Bowl,” then you know I mean a large number but not every person alive. In the same way, we need to respect the full teaching of Scripture to understand what is being said. If we always took the word “all” (or even the word “world”) in Scripture to mean *every single person*, then we will end up believing false doctrine and concluding that God is a liar.

For example, if we did that to verse 18, we end up with the false teaching of universalism, which teaches that there is no eternal hell; instead, all people will end up in heaven. In that false reading, verse 18 would read like this: “One trespass led to condemnation for every single person, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for every single person.”

Since that’s a serious false teaching that contradicts God’s clear teaching on election and also the reality of eternal hell, we know that’s not what the verse means.

Instead, this verse affirms what we have been learning here, the correct understanding of this verse reads this way: “one trespass led to condemnation for every person who was represented by Adam, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for every person who is subsequently represented by and united to Christ.”

This clarity on words like “all” and “world” is very important in our Bible reading techniques or what is called “hermeneutics.”

Namely: The Bible’s teaching as a whole dictates the meaning of the words it contains.

So, let’s wrap this lesson up…

I hope you see how central to the gospel and God’s dealing with man this doctrine of Federal Headship is.

Federal Headship is the wise plan of God. By it, Jesus’ perfect life can count for the elect. By Federal Headship, Jesus can take on the wrath due us on the cross; by it, Jesus can secure our salvation. By Federal Headship, mankind is condemned, and by Federal Headship, God can save His chosen people!

Now that we understand WHY Adam’s sin affects everyone else, next lesson Justin will lead us in looking in more detail at the consequences of Adam’s sin upon mankind, including the sin nature we received from our first Federal Head, Adam.

Until next time.

Let’s pray.