**God’s Image and the Unfathomable Riches of Christ – Part III**

Previously we saw that our having been made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26, 27) means that when Christ was incarnated also in the image and likeness of God He was uniquely qualified to be a sacrifice on our behalf. Then we turned to another momentous insight: our having been made in the image and likeness of God, and Christ, having been born as a man made in the image and likeness of God, is the essential foundation for the individual believer’s identification with Christ, and our joint identification with Christ.

We will see this morning that our having been made in the image and likeness of God is also the essential foundation for what is called ‘federal headship’. The central passage in the New Testament that expresses ‘federal headship’ is found at the end of Romans chapter 5:

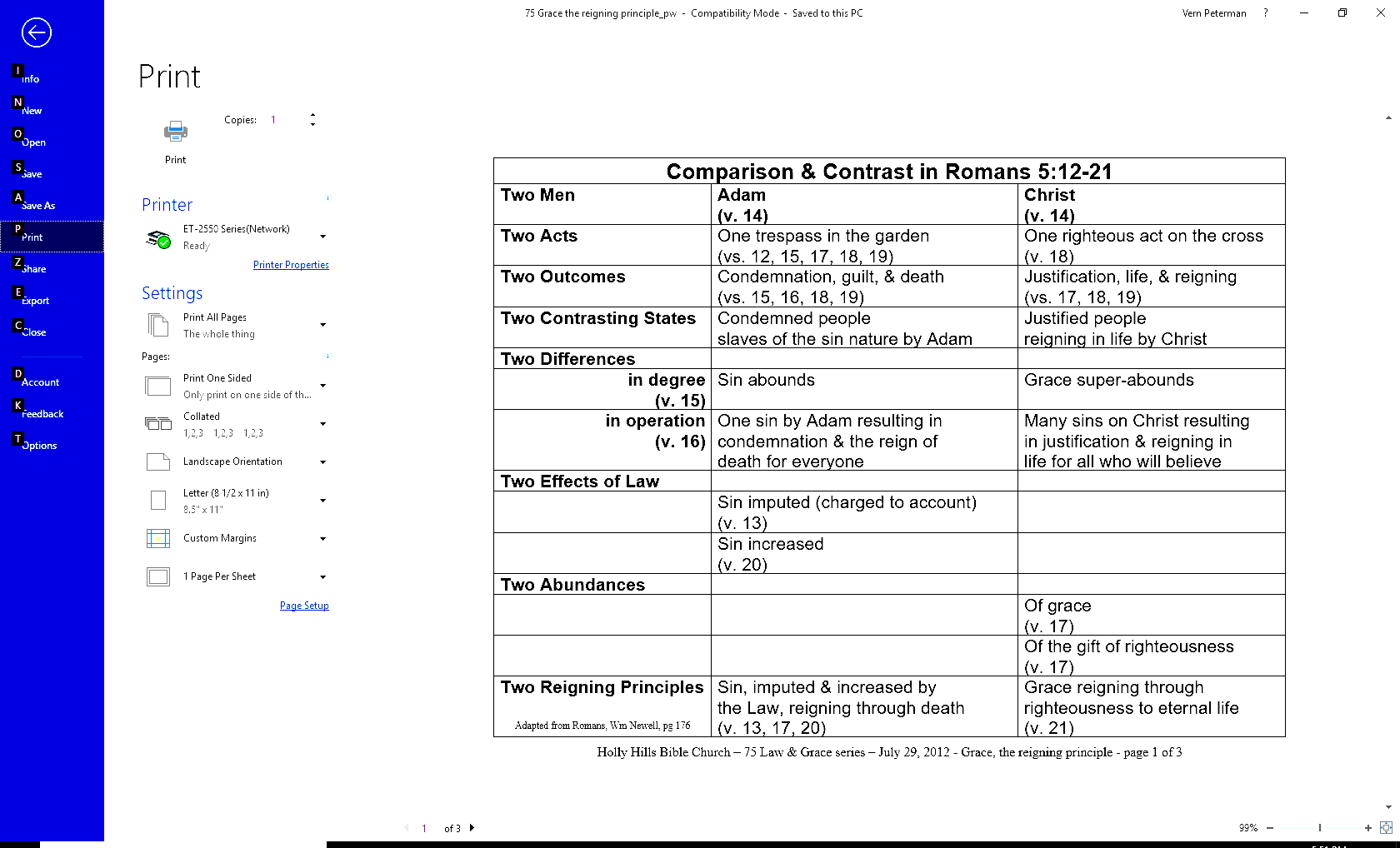
Romans 5:12-21 (NASU [with added notes in brackets])

Therefore, just as through one man [the] sin [nature][[1]](#footnote-1) entered into the world, and death through [the] sin [nature], and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- 13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16 The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. 20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where [the] sin [nature] increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, as [the] sin [nature] reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This passage is presented as a set of comparisons and contrasts in the chart on page 2. Adam and Eve were made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26, 27). When Adam fell in to sin, Adam was the representative man, the head of the fallen race, that is the ‘federal head’ of the fallen race of men (human beings). But Christ, also made in the image and likeness of God by birth through Mary, but with a righteous moral and spiritual nature, became the representative man, the head of the new race of men (human beings) – all those who believe have Christ as their ‘federal head’. But only Christ could qualify as the federal head of those who believe, the new race of men, of human kind.



With Adam as our once federal head, only someone also made in the image and likeness of God, that is, Christ, would be in a place to be the federal head of a new race of men.

**The Grand Conclusion**

Christ, having been made in the image and likeness of God, by His birth through Mary, is uniquely and singularly qualified to be a sacrifice in our behalf, and to be the one with whom we are identified (in His death, burial, resurrection, ascension and seating), and to be our federal head, the head of a new race of men (a new humanity), living under an entirely new reigning principle, now and forever.

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**The term is given because the sin nature does things**

When we get to Romans 5:12, we see ‘the sin’ as the sin nature for the first time in Romans.  ‘The sin’ is used for the next few chapters in reference to ‘the sin nature’ and we know that because we see ‘the sin nature’ progressively doing things:

* By Adam, the sin nature entered the world (5:12)
* The sin nature reigns (5:21)
* The sin nature seeks that we should serve it (6:6)
* Death makes us free from the sin nature that seeks to be served (6:10, 11)
* The sin nature seeks to reign (6:12)
* The sin nature seeks for us to obey its lusts (6:12)
* The sin nature seeks that our bodies be used as its military assets (6:13)
* The sin nature pays a wage for the believer who serves it – death (6:23)
* The sin nature gets stirred up by the Law – just one law is all it takes (7:7-9).

A nature is an inclination to think and to act and to react.  Paul's repeated and deliberate use of the Greek noun that is translated "sin", preceded by the definite article, indicates specificity. Paul is not using the term for 'sin' in general, as he does in Romans 5:13. The sin nature, with the definite article, is specific. Paul is not using the *verb* 'to sin' as an action - it is an abstract noun. Paul is also not using the term for a 'man', as in Old Man or New Man, as these are used of the person who has an identity because of identification (either "In Adam" or "in Christ"). Paul does repeatedly talk about the spiritual and moral inclination to action or natural disposition of "the sin" - it's nature. Paul's use of the term "the flesh" is viewed as the sin nature as expressed through the fallen human body with which that sin nature is associated.

1. The term,. ‘the sin nature’, is taken from it’s observed pattern of use in Romans 5:12 through 7:9. See “The term is given because the sin nature does things”, on page 3, an appendix to this lesson [↑](#footnote-ref-1)