

## God's Universal Reversal

- Reversal = when situation completely turns around, things are totally changed. If baseball team up 5 runs in 8<sup>th</sup> inning, looking great; but suddenly other team rallies, hits home run, gets few more runs, wins game – reversal. Or if a business doing poorly, not making sales, considering downsizing, even filing bankruptcy; then they rebrand product, sales dept excited, generate momentum, sales go through roof – reversal. Situation is completely turned around.
- Today, talk re reversal – not baseball, business, but in way God completely turned things around, changed deadly situation facing all people. Rom 5 tells story of God's UR. This story begins in Garden of Eden, where A&E living lives of sinless perfection and peace w/God. Evth paradise, until crafty serpent Satan slithered up tree in mid garden; with forbidden fruit, and the fake promise of being like God, tempted A&E to break only comm God had given them. "Don't eat that fruit" he said. But they did; by their disob, A&E forever were cursed, infected with plague of sin.
- This exactly what Paul talking re: **vs. 12, "sin..."** Here's *first* reversal: evth perfect; now evth is cursed. When Adam sinned, it didn't just affect him; whole world. Sin is like hereditary viral infection; gets passed on from gen to gen. We call it original/inherited sin. We inherit curse of sin from parents; we pass on to our children. Fact that we die is proof of that: Adam died; ancestors; we will die; children will. Humans have 100% mortality rate; that's because **vs. 12, phrases**. We have unavoidable connection to A&E: not just because first parents, but because they've passed on to us this epidemic called sin. Sin means broken rel with God; with people around us; means physical death; but more: means eternal death, separation from God forever in hell. Later on in **vs. 18a, "one trespass..."** Condemnation in hell is inheritance our ancestors (going all way back to A&E) have passed on to us.
- So, reversal. God worked a UR. Completely turned things around, totally changed this deadly situation for all people. And Rom 5 presents this UR by making a great big comparison between two people: Adam and Jesus. **Vs. 19** (Adam makes us sinners; Jesus, makes us righteous). Hold onto that word righteous because **vs. 18** (from Adam; from Jesus). So, can see comparison? Adam's trespass brings us death, condemnation. But, Jesus' "**righteous act**" brings us life, justification.
- So what this "**righteous act**" Jesus did? I would say, could summarize Jesus' mission with word obedience. When Father wanted to save world, sent Son, JC; Jesus obeyed. Conceived by HS; means didn't have human father; means born without original sin. Then throughout entire life Jesus always obeyed. At no point in entire life (when toddler, teenage, tempted by Satan in wilderness; when ministry looked successful, super popular; even when soldiers were beating, crucifying) – at no point in entire life ever disobey his Father. Jesus obedient to death, even death on cross (Php 2:8). So God raised Jesus from the dead, glorified him for being obedient and saving world. So when lesson says **vs. 19b & 18b**, those phrases saying that through the sinless life, innocent death of JC, God worked UR for all people. Completely changed our situation. We went from being hell-bound to heaven-bound; condemned, justified; were sinners, now forgiven; faced death, now have life; faced God's wrath, now have God's grace. This is the pure Gospel; the absolutely basic, fundamental message of Scripture; point of whole Bible, around which everything else is centered; nothing is more imp than this simple message of Jesus undoing Adam's sin for benefit of us all. This is Gospel, very heart of God: God's UR.
- Could say amen, end it right there. But I was thinking: evth said so far, you already know. None of this new for you. Most you hearing this message whole life; some coming to this church to hear this Gospel for decades. So unless you are brand new to Christianity, you understand God's UR. So question is: how apply to lives? How keep this Gospel from becoming abstract theological concept hear at church but never really know how to put into practice in daily lives. I have a few ideas:
  1. Realize: this message of God's UR shapes our worldview; (=basic philosophy, standpoint of why things are the way they are in world). Why so much evil; why people die; where do I come from; purpose in life; what happens after die; why? Answers to these questions tied to your WV. Many diff WVs out there; and many people don't share your WV. But God's UR answers these big questions of life: evil

comes from mankind ruining God's perfect creation; that sin brings death; I am sinful descendant of Adam; but Christ is my salvation; my purpose in life is to live for him; because I'm connected by faith to Jesus' death/res, when I die I'm going to heaven. That is the Christian WV that this lesson solidifies for us. We've got to learn to treasure this truth; and learn to articulate it with joy, share with world, because this world is hopeless w/o God's UR.

2. Truly is *universal* rev. Impacts *everyone*. Ever seen ad campaign by Sherwin Williams (paint co.) where gallon of paint being poured out over planet earth? Paint covering planet; tagline: "Cover the Earth." Clever paint commercial. I think about that: Adam's sin covered whole world. But Christ's forgiveness covers Adam's sin that covered whole world. Jesus is topcoat of paint. There is no one who doesn't need, and doesn't have, Christ's forgiveness. That shapes way we look at unbelieving world, and ourselves. Now when look at unbelieving world that rejects Jesus as Savior, we see people Christ loved so much that willing to be tortured to death for them. Now when look at ourselves, we see same thing. So we not boastful of our goodness, but thankful for God's grace, and for faith he's given to us; and we pray more and more people would believe because Christ's reversal truly is universal.
3. Sometimes things don't always seem fair to us. We have natural sense of justice, leads us to say, 'not fair: that God demands perfection yet we're born with original sin; that God lets bad things happen to good people; that unbelievers, decent people, go to hell when die; that my mom, friend, sister, son, died at such young age. Not fair.' Let me tell you what's really not fair. Not fair: that only one who never disobeyed God was punished in place of those who did; that only one who truly loved God's will was killed for those who hated his will; that Creator should subject himself to spit, whips of his creation; that they let Barabbas go; that we were not crucified but Jesus was. God's UR is not fair; we don't deserve grace. But that's what makes it grace. And when we think more like way God thinks (in terms of sin, grace, eternal life – the big picture), that helps us keep our sense of fairness in proper perspective.
4. Finally, realize that God's UR doesn't have two equally balancing counterparts: like Adam ruined this, so Jesus fixed this; now things even. No, Jesus outdid himself. In lesson, see words like: "**gift, grace, overflow, how much more, abundant provision.**" Jesus outdid himself in love for us. Not like we owed God \$1mil, so he paid \$1mil debt. No, we owed \$1mil, so Jesus gave us \$100mil. Covered debt, gave us so much; his love overflows. We see his love on cross; in Word; in baptism; in Holy Communion; his love overflows!

  - God's UR – no abstract theological concept here. No, this is who we are, who we were, and who we will someday be. This is God's grace (for you, me, all people); his Gospel, his love, his UR.

### Romans 5:12-19

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

<sup>13</sup> To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

<sup>15</sup> But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! <sup>16</sup> Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

<sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.