

Christ Our Representative Head

Book of Psalms

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Let's take our Bibles and look together in Psalm 119 and I'm going to read from verse 153 down to 160 and I want to speak with you about representation, "Christ Our Representative Head." The reason that particular title is because this Hebrew letter, *rēsh*, actually means "to be the head or the chief one," and as you read down through this portion, every one of these verses in the original language starts with this Hebrew letter *rēsh*. But you may ask yourself: how does it speak of Christ as our head because we know all of Scripture is about Christ. I'm going to read these portions here and consider his affliction; consider his work of salvation, of deliverance as we've been noting in previous sections of this Psalm. It's not difficult if the LORD gives you eyes to see, that's the key. The Spirit teaches us to see how this would depict the work of the LORD Jesus Christ as the sinner's head, as that representative before the Father. So as we read it, let's consider these as the words of our LORD in his humiliation and suffering as the representative of his people.

So Psalm 119:153, we read,

153 Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.
154 Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word.
155 Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes. 156
Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD: quicken me according to thy
judgments. 157 Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not
decline from thy testimonies. 158 I beheld the transgressors, and was
grieved; because they kept not thy word. 159 Consider how I love thy
precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness. 160 Thy
word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments
endureth for ever.

Now, when I talk about representation, we have examples of it throughout the life, whether it's a family: you've got the husband, you've got the wife, and the husband in Scripture is the head of the household. That's that word that's used so that's the significance of the word or letter *rēsh*, the head, the one that is the chief or the leader. We have it in the workplace. You can't just go up to your boss and tell the boss, "I don't have to listen to you because we're the same." Well, there is representation and if you say that

your boss, he's going to exercise his right to rule and say, "Well then, there's the door." There is a chief, there's an order in how God has established this world. We have it in government, thankfully so. We're all not running to Washington, DC to have our voice heard, we elect representatives. Now, as goes the representative, so goes the economy or the situation. If you have a good representative, then the people benefit; if you have an evil, bad representative, it affects everybody down the line. The military, there is representation from the top down. In the church, in the congregation, there is representation. In Christ's body there is representation. He's the head and all those that he has redeemed that the Father gave him, the Spirit calls, are members of his body.

So as goes the leadership, so goes the rest, but here in this particular Psalm, we see actually two representatives. You say, "How two?" Well, we know that when you read in Psalm 119:153, "Consider mine affliction," that this affliction was not something that was inherent to Christ. This affliction was brought in by another representative head. And when you read down through here, everything that Christ bore as the representative head of his people was due to the failing of a first representative head who was Adam and all of Scripture, everything is summed up in those two representative heads. We're either in Adam or we're in Christ.

And when you consider what the Scriptures say concerning Adam and what he brought upon his race, everything we read in here was due to his disobedience. It was due to his misrepresentation because the LORD told him from the beginning, "The day that you eat of that tree or disobey, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall die." Notice the command was given to him. The fall did not occur when Eve took the fruit and ate of it. You say, "When did it occur?" Well, actually it occurred when Adam, the representative head, in his mind already standing there with Eve, gave her permission, did not intervene, did not stop, gave her permission to take of that fruit and the Scriptures say then when she ate of it, she took and gave to him and he ate. That's why the Scriptures say, "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin."

So here in this portion of Scripture, we have the marks of Adam. We always say that we bear the marks of our parents, our fathers, but here it goes all the way back to Adam. Why is there affliction? Why is there sorrow? Why is there wickedness? You can see the word in 155, "Salvation is far from the wicked." Well, that's what we are in Adam. Why is there death when in verse 154 the plea is, "Plead my cause and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word"? You see, these being the words of Christ, the last Adam, the representative of those sinners who died in Adam but now in God's mercy he has sent his Son to save and deliver, it was necessary as it says in the writings to the Hebrews, that he tasted death. Now, it doesn't mean he didn't die, but that death was necessary; it was necessary that he taste death, that he actually die, but it was not to be a permanent death as would be those left in Adam. He came accomplish a work and even here in Psalm 119:154, our LORD Jesus Christ would be talking to his Father, praying to his Father, pleading his cause as the representative of that people, to be delivered, not saved from the cross but delivered through the cross, delivered through this death and he says, "quicken me according to thy word." In other words, all that God purposed to accomplish through his obedience unto death.

So we have this representation here in this Psalm, that of Adam, everything that flows from Adam is sin, condemnation, death, wickedness, you go on down there, enemies, being enemies of God. We don't become enemies, we are born in our minds and hearts enemies. A lot of times what we like to attribute to just making a mistake or even in our children, it doesn't take long to see that rebellion come out and you really don't have to go all the way back to Adam. We know that it's the result of being sons of Adam but in reality the nut doesn't fall far from the tree. Our children represent who we are, you see, and we're born in our minds, in the hearts, enemies; that it doesn't take long for that rebellion to manifest itself.

It says there in verse 158, "I beheld the transgressors." All of these are terms that are the effect of being sons of Adam. By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. That's all Adam as the representative has given to his race, his posterity. That word "transgressor" there is an interesting word. There are a lot of different words for sin, it's a study in and of itself. If you want, take a concordance and look at all the descriptions of sin. You say, "Well, sin is sin." Yes, but when the light of Scripture is put upon it, you see all the different aspects of sin, just like in looking at rainbow you see all the different aspects of grace and mercy but in looking at what we are in Adam, how deep and how profound is the effect of Adam's disobedience and here this word "transgressor" literally means "to cover as in deceit." It's the word which means "to be deceitful." And again, like I said, you see it in your children but it's in us. Sometimes kids can tell you just enough truth to cover the error. In other words, they were up to no good when they come in, but they start talking about the things they know you want to hear, but even that is a covering for what they don't want you to hear and they're hoping that you'll be just enough distracted by what you want to hear that you're not paying any attention to what's wrong.

That's this word and literally it means "to be unfaithful." Can a person hide behind a false front and maybe in the eyes of men appear to be faithful and yet in reality be deceitful? That's what we are by nature. That's what Adam and Eve were in the garden when their eyes were opened and they saw they were naked. What was the first thing they did? They went back in among the trees where God had said that they could eat so that was their first thought, cover it. And then they thought, "Well, we're back here but how do we explain our nakedness?" Now, they had been naked all along but suddenly now it became an issue for them because their conscious now had experienced something they had never known before: it was guilt, it was fear, it was condemnation, everything the opposite of what they thought in going against what God had said.

So what did they do? They grabbed the scratchiest leaves you could ever try to wear. I don't know if you've ever felt a fig leaf before but I don't know too many people that think that they have to cover themselves, that they're going to grab some fig leaves. Those things are not comfortable. Not that I've ever worn any, I'm just looking at it thinking, "That would not be my way of resolving the issue." But in their blindness they...can you imagine before a holy God, an all-seeing God, standing there in fig leaves? Then when the LORD asks the question, it wasn't because he didn't know; even from

eternity this fall was purposed. It was necessary that this Adam fall in order that the last Adam be glorified and that's what God did in his purpose.

But that's that word "transgression, to cover." And you know, people continue to do it today in religion. They just feel better about themselves if they can get into the middle of some congregation anywhere and just hear even people that profess to know the LORD and sing and pray and get pumped up, and then they go back out there and after a while, they think, "I've got to get back to church again." It's all fig leaves. They're still following their representative Adam and that's why I say we're either in Adam or we're in Christ. Those are the only two representatives. And if not in Christ, in other words, if Christ has not been our representative as revealed here in these Scriptures, then we only have another representative and that's Adam and that is certainly condemnation. It doesn't matter how you wash those fig leaves, change them out, put them on or take them off, it's still condemnation.

Now, coming back to the Hebrew letter *rēsh* here, what is it for Christ to be the head because that's really what this is about. His representation would not be necessary were it not for the fall as so if you're struggling with why God would create a world that would fall, would put Adam in a place where he would fall and you question that, the answer is right here in Scripture because all along God had purposed to honor and glorify his Son. That's what it's all about. It doesn't matter how men reason and rationalize. You can judge everything you see on tv, read in the papers that takes place whether it's someone born in this world or being taken out of this world, no matter what happens, it is all to the glory of his Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. He has made him to be heir of all things.

Now, you don't dispute with an heir. Just because you're not an heir or you don't like that he's heir, it doesn't matter. This is God's heir. He's purposed to glorify his Son and it's against the backdrop of the darkest of times that the light shines the greatest. You go out there at night and right now that's just like a harvest moon out there. That moon, but it shines the brightest against the backdrop of the darkest sky and that's how I see Christ in the fall, the darker, the deeper the sin, the greater and the more glorious the Savior. That's what I see here.

Now, there is one portion that summarizes the headship of Christ. There are a number of Scriptures I could take you to but one in particular in Colossians 1. I know you're probably thinking, "He's going to take us to Romans 5." That would be a good one too but we're going to Colossians 1. Notice we're going to talk about the headship of Christ and what I want to do is read from verse 15 down to 20 and make a few comments, but then come back to this portion here in Psalm 119 and show how it confirms what someone has said that the New is in the Old concealed and the Old is in the New revealed. I like that. It's Old Testament, New Testament, it's saying the same thing but in the Old it was forward looking. So this Psalm here, even though it was David that the Spirit directed to write these things, because we've seen these are not the mere words of David. He's not speaking here just about his experience because he would be lying if it were. When he says, "Consider mine affliction and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law," well, you can go back and see many times where David forgot the law. Forget the

law means you transgressed. We sin daily. So there is no way that that could be David speaking. He's writing on behalf of this substitute, of this representative who was to come.

And here in Colossians 1:15, well, let's go back up to verse 12. "Giving thanks unto the Father," Colossians 1:12, "which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Just that verse alone "being made meet," fit, Adam and Eve could not just put themselves back into rightness with God once they had disobeyed. Remember the little children's rhyme, "Humpty-Dumpty, sat on the wall. Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall. All the king's horses and all the king's men, couldn't put Humpty back together again." When Adam fell, there was no putting back together anything but yet here we read "giving thanks unto the Father." So even through that fall, God purposes that there would be those sons of Adam that were fallen by nature and yet he would make them meet, notice, "to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints," the saints means justified ones, then it says, "in light." Everything that we received from Adam was darkness. How great is that darkness? But here now the contrast, in light.

Notice verse 13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness." This would take a delivering, a deliverance from the power of darkness. That's why God sent his angel with a flaming sword and drove Adam and Eve out of that garden lest that they think that over time continuing to partake somehow they could partake of that tree of life and gain. No. There would be another tree of life that had to be planted who would come and until he did, that sword divided Adam and Eve and any of that posterity from ever partaking again of that tree of life.

You say, "Well, who was that tree of life?" It's Christ. "How is he planted?" In his death and seed, he said, does not produce unless it dies. It is sown in the ground and dies and then when it comes forth, it brings forth fruit unto righteousness. That's the tree of righteousness. That's Christ.

You say, "What about that flaming sword?" It went into him. That sword of God's justice, he bore it. So this is not just a charade of, "Okay, here's where we were now." When it says here, "Who hath delivered us," there was a battle to be fought. The deliverance and none could do it but Christ.

"And hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." There is a translating, a taking from here to here by one representative head. And how was it done? You know, when it says, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness," a lot of preachers and people read that and think, "Ah, that's when I'm converted." No, that's when you're made aware of that deliverance but verse 14 tells us when this all took place.

When was the deliverance? When were those that Christ came to save made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light? Notice in verse 14, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." It required him entering into death, the shedding of his blood unto death, that God might be just and justified. "In whom," there's the representative, you see.

Now, who is he? Well, verse 15, "Who is the image of the invisible God." And here's the key word here with regard to Christ as the head, "the firstborn of every creature." It doesn't mean that he had a time when he didn't exist. There are some running around that that's what they want you to believe. "Oh, look at that word 'firstborn,'" and they'll tell you, "Well, you see, he was a created angel and then God adopted him as his Son and then through him now did everything else." That's not the word "firstborn" here. That's not the sense. The sense is as it was in that culture. The firstborn had priority. The firstborn was the chief. The firstborn was the heir. And I don't know if you've ever lived in that type of society, I know here in the United States we've got to divide everything up equally, especially in Louisiana, it's already preordained, it doesn't matter what your will says. The spouse is getting half and the kids are getting the other half. That's how it is, but in this culture, the firstborn is the heir.

That's why it was significant there when Esau sold his birthright. That was the significance. That meant then that Jacob became the heir and that was according to God's purpose. Do you realize Isaac fought that all the way to the end? Because it had been revealed unto Rebekah that the elder should serve the younger and right up to the end, Isaac was determined that Esau should have that blessing. You talk about God saving a sinner in spite of their rebellion, Isaac's a good case. That's why Rebekah scurried around and got Jacob dressed up smelling like Esau and coming in and fixing that lamb to smell like venison, because everything about it naturally to Isaac was toward Esau and yet God intervened. Why? Because Jacob represented those just like here, that God has purposed to save through his Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. It would be through that seed that his Son would come. But you can see the significance of that birthright.

Well, here in verse 15, "the firstborn of every creature." That's just saying he's heir of all things. And notice, he "is the image of the invisible God." If you ever wonder why the very first commandment of the Ten Commandments is "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not have any graven images." You see, the idolatry again of man in the fall is to create something that represents God. And it didn't take long after, I mean, it came with Adam and Eve. A lot of people ask me, they say, "Well, what is it about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?" Well, that became their god. That became their idol. It wasn't actually even when they partook of the fruit that they fell. The Scripture says, "When they saw that fruit and it was good," even though God said it was not good.

But you want the condemnation of free will, people say today, "Well, I think that God ought to leave the choice up to man." Well, look what happened when he did because an example of free will was when Adam and Eve in that upright state chose to go against God, and I will tell you that that tree of the knowledge of good and evil today represents all of false religion. People can change from one congregation to another, one denomination to another, but all it is is jumping from one branch of the tree of knowledge of good and evil to another. Men still run around trying to figure out what's good and what's evil and every congregation that you ever go into by their bylaws or by what is preached, they're telling people what's good and evil. But I'll tell you this: if it's not the righteousness of God that is in Christ Jesus alone, it's all evil no matter what men say.

But you have people out there, right now they're looking at their morality, they're looking at their personal obedience, they're looking at their personal sanctification, they're looking at what they're working on.

Somebody today, they had their Bible out this past week and they asked, "Well, I'm working on temptation this week. I'm going to try to defeat temptation." All I could say was, "Well, let me know how that's working for you." I mean, it's part of our nature. That's the tree of knowledge. That's looking over here, methods and things and trying to figure out. That's how they read the Bible. "It's all about me. Mine eye." And if you mention, "Well, what about Christ?" "Yeah, that too." But that's the idolatry. There is only one image of the invisible God that God has ever purposed and that is his Son.

And we read here, "For by him," you see, this is where, again, we get back to him being the head. He's the chief in creation. He's the chief in providence. He's the chief in salvation. He's the chief in condemnation. He's the Judge. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him," a lot of people don't have any problem with that but then what's the next three words? "And for him."

Now, let me just ask you a question: that says all things whether they be in heaven or earth, visible, invisible, whether they be thrones, what about Satan? Satan was created by the LORD Jesus Christ and for him so don't think in any way that somehow Satan has the upper hand. You see, that's the problem today in the world, there is this view, a deistic view that somehow you've got good over here, when good happens, it's coming from God, and over here, if evil happens, then it's from Satan and so there is this tug-of-war. Again, people in their fallen estate think that God needs their help. That's why they call you up and say, "Hey, we need everybody praying about this and we need it now." Well, what kind of tug-of-war is there to where God needs our help? If we don't get into this thing and pull somehow it's going the other way? Do you see how foolish that is and yet that's what people believe.

No, all things were created by him and for him. If you want to cut a conversation short when people are trying to twist your arm and get you to pray and do all this stuff, spin the wheel, just says, "Well, the LORD's will be done." Leave it at that. "Well, yeah, but aren't you still going to pray? What are we going to pray about?" It's obvious to me what needs to be, the work of God in the heart is that you bow to his will no matter what.

It says here in verse 17, "he is before all things," there it is, the chief, he's the *rēsh*, he's the chief. "He is before all things and by him all things consist." "Things" is in italics in both beginning and end. "And he is before all." If your mind, your little pea-sized mind begins to think, "Well, what about..." You start creating things, "What about...?" As soon as you say "what about" you still have to go back and read what it says. He is before all and by him all things consist. It doesn't matter whether you feel good about it or not or I feel good about it or not. It doesn't matter whether I think that's the way it ought to be or

not. That's the way it is. And if you have a problem, your problem is with him, that God has established his Son as the chief, as the governor.

It says that's true in the world but here even, "he is the head of the body, the church." That's that word "rēsh." He's the head of the body. "Who is the beginning." In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God. Again, "the firstborn from the dead." It doesn't mean that he was the first to rise from the dead because there were others before him who rose from the dead but as far as the heir is concerned, as far as being the firstborn by right and why is that important? Because there's a will attached to his work and until the death of the testator, the will, the beneficiaries don't enter into the will. We know that just from our own wills. We may have our children named or whoever but until we die, no one is going to grab that will and bring it out and read it. It's at the death of the testator. When were the blessings of what Christ accomplished, when were they accomplished for his church, his people? Well, when he died and when he rose again because it says "firstborn from the dead."

He went into death as the heir of all things and he came out as the heir of all things. Why? "That in all things," it says in verse 18, "he might have the preeminence." There is only one that has the preeminence, that's the LORD Jesus Christ. There used to be that argument, "Well, can a person accept Jesus as Savior and not bow to him as LORD?" You can't divide him. He's prophet, priest and king. This is not a smorgasbord where I go down the line and think, "I like the meat but I don't like the beets." We don't get to choose. It's not by our choice anyway and I will tell you that when God does a work of grace in a heart, there is a complete bowing to him as Savior and LORD, and where you find any resistance, that's a rebel.

That's one that's still in darkness because God by his Spirit reveals in the heart of sinners the glory of the LORD Jesus Christ because it says there in verse 19, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." This is not a cooperation between us and the Father and his Son. Salvation is not a cooperation, it's an accomplishment in, by and through the LORD Jesus Christ.

It says there in verse 20, "having made peace." It's talking about a legal peace, this legal standing and it goes right back up there to verse 12, "to be made meet to be partakers." There had to be that peace established. That sword had to be buried in this representative.

How? "Through the blood of his cross." When was this work done? When were those saved for whom Christ was sent into this world? It was when he finished the work there at Calvary. That's why in a loud voice, a victorious voice he cried, "It is finished!" He didn't die a whimpering victim. No, he died a successful Savior. He died the heir. He died the chief. He was even directing everything from the cross what they were doing to him. He bore it. He was directing it. They didn't do one thing more or less than what he ordained.

It says, "by him to reconcile," and again, "things" is in italics, "all things unto himself," that is, all those the Father gave him, all those who were appointed to be partakers of the

inheritance of the saints, by him at the cross they were reconciled, "by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Whether it be those that are going on to glory or us that remain, it's still going to be by this one Savior, one sacrifice, one offering.

In religion today, people like to ask you, "When were you saved?" You know the answer, don't you? When Christ paid the debt. That's it. It's not about walking an aisle or saying a prayer. You want to get somebody shocked then watch them, "Yeah, but you know what I mean." No, I don't know what you mean because people that reason that way are thinking it's some sort of act of man that saves them. That's not it. Any true confession of Christ is Spirit-born and is the result of the LORD Jesus Christ having already paid the debt as the representative head and reconcile that sinner to Christ. And when the Spirit reveals Christ, that's where they look. If you've been taught of Christ, I know because I know by my own experience. There was a time when I made a profession and my eyes were on that profession but when it pleased God to reveal Christ in me, I can tell you where the LORD turned my eyes and it wasn't anything in here because that's what he was showing me. That was dung. It was to Christ and him crucified. It was through the cross. And that's why ever since I can't stop preaching enough about Christ and the cross. I've had people say that, "Don't you have any other?" Nope. It's like one friend of mine said, "When you have a guitar and you're playing it and it only has one string, it's a little bit tough to make a mistake because all you've got is one string." My one string is Christ and him crucified and as long as he gives me breath, I pray that I'll declare him just as he is here.

We've got a lot more to cover back here in Psalm 119, but as the LORD directs, we'll pick it up again next time. Christ our representative head is literally set forth there.