

Read: Romans 5:12-19

Greater Than, Less Than, or Equal To?

Romans 5:19

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.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Greater than, less than, or equal to. At one point or another, we all learn those phrases in math class. They are used in comparisons. For example: Is the number 5 greater than, less than, or equal to 3?

Five is greater than three, right?

In our reading for today, the apostle Paul is making a comparison. He is comparing Adam, the first man, to Jesus.

Adam and Eve, the very first people to live on earth, were also the very first people to sin against God. Their sin changed everything. Their sin brought death into our world. From Adam and Eve, sin and death have been passed down from grandparents to parents and to their children.

Because of Adam, we all have sinned, and we all will die.

Before we point the finger and put all the blame on Adam, however, we need to remember that we can't blame anybody else for the choices we make. We are the ones who choose to lie. We are the ones who choose to fight. We are the ones who choose to get mad. We are ones who have earned God's punishment of death and hell.

But now let's compare: Is Jesus greater than, less than or equal to Adam and us? Thankfully, he's greater! Where Adam and we disobey, Jesus obeyed. Where we lie, Jesus told the truth. Where we fight, Jesus forgave. Where we get mad, Jesus loved.

In fact, he loved us so much that he died the death we deserve in our place. He died for all our wrongs so that we could be right before God. Because of Jesus and through faith in him, God the judge declares us innocent even though we are guilty. Through faith in Jesus, we receive life instead of the death we inherited from Adam.

In math terms, there really is no comparison. Jesus' obedience is greater than Adam's (and our) disobedience.

Jesus is the greatest! For us, that equals heaven.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- In what ways is Jesus greater than Adam?
- Think of three gifts given to you. Now think of three gifts God has given you. Which list of gifts is greater?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Paul uses the word “trespass” when talking about our sins. Why is “trespass” a good word to describe sin?
- Prove that Jesus is greater: Instead of finding us guilty, he declares us _____. Instead of giving us death, he gives us _____.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- *True or false:* The only way to heaven is by being perfectly obedient.
- Do you consider yourself a “righteous” person? Explain your answer.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for the gifts of forgiveness and heaven that you won for me. There truly is nothing greater than you. Amen.