

Are You in Adam or Christ?

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It is true that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. It's true that Paul has been arguing that there is none good - no not one. Not by nature. When a person is saved, Jesus makes them His workmanship. He makes them those who are zealous of good works. Saved people are capable of good. But in a lost state, man is bad. Man is under the condemnation and the wrath of God. But you know what? In these verses before us (Romans 5:12-21) what the apostle does is he says man has even a more basic problem than even his own sin. He is condemned because of Adam's sin; because of the sin or the trespass or the offense of the one man, we are under condemnation. And we are under the sentence of death.

Brethren, I know, right away, you start talking this way and immediately somebody wants to say - I mean, what do you say when somebody says, "You're guilty because of his sin." Unfair. Let me ask you this. What do we say to this? "You are righteous because of that man's righteousness." I don't hear anybody say, "unfair." But I'll tell you this, God deals with men according to their head. There are two most important men in all the history of mankind. It is Adam and it is Christ.

And Christ, by the way, is called the second man and the last Adam. You know why? Because He is the representative of all those in Him and Adam is the representative of all those in him. And if you're in Adam, you die. If you're in Christ, you live. If you're in Adam, you are condemned. If you're in Christ, you are justified. Brethren, this is the reality. Man at the basic level, his greatest problem is that he is identified with Adam. And you've got to get out of that family tree, folks. You've got to get into another family. You've got to leave that head behind and come under a new Head. And the way to do that is by faith in what Jesus Christ accomplished on that cross.

And brethren, the thing about this is when you go back there and you can see in your mind - and I'll tell you this was such a stumbling block for the Jew - that their Messiah went to that cross. And it was utter foolishness to the Greek and to the Roman. They said what can a dead Jew do for us? But I'll tell you, brethren, we have to understand what happened on that cross there outside of Jerusalem 2,000 years ago. What happened on that cross - just this week, I was looking at footage of Indians and Chinese. Massive countries of just lostness throughout Asia, looking at the vast, teeming multitudes, faces of people. And brethren, when you trace their lineage and our lineage, the lineage of the Jews, all of us, the Chinese, that Hindu bowing down to his multitude of gods. You know what? You trace our lineage back and you know where it all goes? We're all related.

Not very long ago, brethren, you can trace your heritage. You've got parents and you've got grandparents. And they had grandparents and they had parents. And you can trace them back and ultimately we all share the same blood. We can all hang our heads and say, "Adam, Adam, what have you done?" From what Adam did, he took a fruit. He took the forbidden fruit. He took the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which God had told him not to eat of, and He said, "In the day you eat thereof you shall surely die."

And the thing we need to understand about that is when God was speaking, what the apostle tells us is when those words were spoken, they weren't spoken simply for Adam's sake. That those words were spoken representative of the entire human race. When they were spoken to Adam, Adam represented every one of us. And that condemnation promised for taking it would go upon all of his posterity, all of his children, all of his grandchildren. Brethren, if we're connected with him, we're in trouble. And the beauty of what Christ went to the cross to do is to undo what Adam did and it applies to all of us. That's why the writer of Romans keeps saying over and over and over, it's not just to the Jew, it's to the Greek too. There's no partiality.

Brethren, the fact is all men have the same problem. It's all the same everywhere. Sometimes we think about - I don't know if you guys are even up on this, but I can remember one of the missionary trips that I took and how they talk about in the seminaries today, they talk all about this syncretism. If you don't know what that is, that's fine, but it's basically this idea that you go into other cultures and you try to work their cultural peculiarities into the Gospel message and into your ministry. And obviously, we've got to be culturally sensitive when we go in, but I'm telling you, brethren, there is no place when it comes to the Gospel message to try to distort any of this or make it suitable to certain cultures or certain societies or certain countries.

Brethren, you know what, ultimately, I can remember hearing a message on missions - again from our same missionary out of China - and he was saying basically man's problem is essentially the same no matter where you go. They may look different. Their eye shapes may be different. The Chinese have a certain eye shape or skin color. Or you go down to Africa, or you go wherever, but man's problem is ultimately the same. He's bound up with a connection and a heritage that lies in Adam, and he is under condemnation and he faces the wrath of God.

That's why our Gospel - we don't need to be ashamed of it, and it's the same in every country we go into because man's need is the same everywhere. Man is depraved. Man is corrupt. Man lacks the righteousness that he needs to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. He doesn't have it. He doesn't possess it. And he in his own power can't get it. The righteousness of God is revealed and man needs it because of his identity with Adam. He's in Adam and he's in trouble. And that is the reality that we're seeing here. It applies to all men. You saw that there. All men. One offense. And it says condemnation came upon all. It is not a small thing. What Adam did in the garden condemned all mankind. And Christ came to rescue those who are in Adam. He came to rescue us out of it.

And the thing is, I know, I know we have a problem in our culture identifying with how we can be responsible for our father's sin. But you know, in Scripture, I don't know how Middle Easterners think. They obviously think different. Some of these concepts are more readily understandable or conceivable to them. Like, you know how Scripture says "that Levi yet being in the loins of Abraham..."

It's like, what? We don't even think that way. You know when it was said Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek. So the writer of Hebrews reasons, well, because Levi would later come down line like four generations, it's really like saying that Levi gave tithes to Melchizedek. We're like what? How can you say Levi did it when Abraham did it and Levi wasn't even born yet? You see, but that's the way the Middle Eastern mind thinks because there's a reality there you and I have a hard time grasping. I have a feeling for the Jewish mindset, they don't have near the

problem handling that reality that because of Adam's sin, condemnation comes upon us. To us, that seems like injustice.

But brethren, let me remind you, we're talking types here. Adam is a type of Christ. And if the universal federal headship of Adam doesn't work, if it falls apart, then so too does Christ's justification of all those who are in Him. So, before you get too hostile about thinking what? I'm guilty and condemned for Adam's sin?

Just remember two things. You have enough of your own sin to run you deep into hell before you get overly concerned about the imputation of Adam's sin to you. But the second thing is, be grateful that God deals with man that way. Because since He does, if you're in Christ, then He deals with you under the federal headship of Christ, which means everything Christ deserves, you get. Don't complain because everything Adam deserves, you get, being in him. Just get out of Adam and into Christ. And you do that by trusting what Christ did on that cross. Look to Him in faith. Don't complain. Don't argue. Be glad. And see in it the way of your salvation.