

Title: Christ, the True and Better Adam

Theme: We live in a world made by two men. Adam's sin plunges the world into chaos and curse and gives us an inheritance of sin, shame, guilt, hell, and death. But Christ comes as the true and better Adam to undo Adam's sin and our's, and give us new life.

- I. Barbara Johns was one of the most important teens in American history you've never heard of.
 - A. She led 400 students on a walk out of her segregated high school on Apr 23, 1951 in FarmVille, VA.
 - B. She and the students demanded the all-white school board address the disparities between her all-black high school and the all-white high school across town.
 - C. The Board refused and she convinced the NAACP to join her lawsuit.
 - D. The lawsuit became Brown vs. Board of Education, and in 1954, the Supreme Court outlawed public school segregation.
 - E. One person can make a difference. Maybe you were a beneficiary.
- II. Max Jukes was a prisoner in the NY correctional system.
 - A. 100 years later there were still 48 prisoners related to Jukes in prison
 - B. 7 murderers
 - C. 76 criminals
 - D. 18 brothel keepers
 - E. 120 prostitutes
 - F. 200 homeless paupers
 - G. Salmon Rushdie, "There is no magic on earth strong enough to wipe out the legacies of one's parents."
- III. John Paul Sartre and Autonomy
 - A. John Paul Sartre argued that a sovereign God and free will of the individual are contradictory, therefore God cannot exist.
 - B. Sartre's definition of free will was "autonomy. Auto means self. Tomas means law.

- C. That's our current culture: self law, self identity, fluid ideas of right and wrong.
- D. Choices matter, but we all are impacted by the choices made by people who came before us.

Text: 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

⁴⁵So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. ⁴⁷The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. ⁴⁸As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

IV. 2 Men, 2 Destinies

- A. Our world is shaped by two men: Adam and Christ.
- B. Adam means human or humanity. So what Adam does impacts all of humanity.
- C. Adama means earth. So what Adam does impacts all of earth.
- D. God makes Adam King over all creation.

VI. Forbidden Fruit

16 ... "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

- A. The first phrase of verse 16 is "you are free"
- B. God's garden is like the garden of Hesperidis with a 100-headed dragon providing security.
- C. Adam is free and God gives the garden to mankind.
- D. The idea of forbidden fruit causes us to wonder what's so great about the thing God denies me.

VII. The serpent

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1)

- A. “Did God Really Say?” The Serpent calls into question whether we can actually trust God.
- B. Eve commits the first mistake humanity makes by adding to the word of God. “You must not touch it,”
- C. It’s not God who is the cosmic legalist, it is humans.

VIII. The first lie

⁴“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:4-5)

- A. Satan contradicts God when he says “you will not certainly die.”
- B. God lies about God and thereby appeals to Eve — and Adam’s — pride when he promises if they eat they will be “like God.”
- C. Pride goeth before the fall. (Proverbs 16:18)
- D. We see Satan’s pride as he contradicts God then lies to Eve, and we see it in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

¹³You said in your heart,
 “I will ascend to the heavens;
 I will raise my throne
 above the stars of God;
 I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly,
 on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon.
¹⁴I will ascend above the tops of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High.”
 (Isaiah 14:13-14)

- E. It’s not enough that God has given them every good thing, Adam and Eve want to be like God so they make alliance with Satan and betray God.

IX. The only explanation for the sin in the world

- A. We think blaming us for Adam’s betrayal is unfair, but we all like Adam have sinned. We share his family tree.
- B. We inherited Adama’s exile from the life souring love of God.
- C. We inherit Adam’s grasping and pride.

- D. We mistrust the goodness of God so we chase after false idols we believe will give us pleasure or meaning.
- E. We inherit selfishness.
- F. Like Paul, we do the evil we do not want to do and do not do the good we want to do.

¹⁹For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. (Romans 7:14-20)

- H. We are like sweet smelling flowers cut from their stalks and perishing. Like dead flowers humanity is headed for the compost heap.

X. Dust to Dust

⁴⁶The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. ⁴⁷The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. 1 Corinthians 15:46-47

- A. Physically, our destiny is dust for that is what we are.
- B. Spiritually we are also estranged from the God of life.
- C. We can only ever have a future hope if our basic essence as dusty, earthbound, creatures is transformed.
- D. The outer darkness (Matthew 8:11) is hell.

XI. Are you adequately outraged over sin?

- A. Stephen Fry is outraged, but not outraged enough.
- B. “Bone cancer in children. What’s that about? How dare you? How dare you create a world in which there is such misery that is not our fault? It’s not right.” (Stephen Fry)
- C. You believe in evil, but if you don’t believe in God, then on what basis do you judge something evil?
- D. C.S. Lewis moved from atheism to Christianity because he wrote that he only realized all the crooked lines were crooked because he expected them to be straight.
- E. We can’t really believe in evil unless we first have a conception of good.

- F. Believing in other gods or naturalism exacerbates the problem of evil because they have no category for evil.
- G. We know evil when we see it. If not when we see it done to others, certainly when we experience it being done to us.
- H. But non-believers who have substituted a false view of God, or a philosophy of humanism, don't have a big enough problem with evil.

XII Only Christians have to explain suffering

- A. Job and the laments of Psalms show that God cares about suffering.

How long oh Lord, will you forget me forever? (Ps. 13:1) Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble? (Ps.10:1) My tears have been my food day and night. (Ps. 42:3) My God, My God, why have You forsaken me? (Ps. 22:1). And on and on they go.

- B. Only Christians say we are right to be outraged by innocent suffering, because we uniquely claim a sovereign, all-mighty, all-knowing God of pure love.
- C. If you create a God by what you see in the world, he'd look a lot more like the gods of Egypt, Rome, or Greece. Or he'd look like Satan.
- D. Jesus says. He says Satan is the prince of this world. (John 12:31, 14:30; and 16:11) Paul calls him the god of this age. (2 Corinthians 4:4).

XII. The true innocent sufferer

- A. God doesn't give Job or the Psalmists an answer for their pain, and He doesn't give us an answer. He gives us a person. Jesus Christ.
- B. Jesus is the true and ultimate innocent sufferer and the true psalmist who prays lament.
- C. Only a suffering God makes sense of a loving, all-powerful, God who coexists with a suffering world.
- D. In Adam, we inherit hell. But in Christ, we are offered heaven.

⁴⁸As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:48)

- E. Jesus joins us in our suffering, painful, hateful, evil world, taking responsibility for Adam's betrayal and He sets things right.

XIII. The Son of God

- A. The Stephen Fry's of the world aren't buying it. They may think Jesus is a good man, a wonderful teacher or a moral philosopher, but they don't believe Him when He says He is the Son of God.
- B. Where does that leave us? Are we in this together? Have we dug a hole from which we can't escape?
- C. If Jesus is who He said He is, then His dying in shame, forsaken by heaven, and suffering hell is our only hope out of the pit we are in.

XIV. You are invited

31 "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31)

- A. Jesus says the people who know they are sick and need salvation are welcomed.
- B. He shows that the things Adam has broken can be fixed.
- C. This is the choice He places before all humanity. Adam? Or Christ?
- D. If Jesus is life, then rejecting Him means death. If He is love, then rejecting Him means alienation. If he is light, then rejecting Him means choosing outer darkness.
- E. Come to Christ or keep the inheritance you have in Adam.

⁴⁹And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.

- F. "In Adam, all die, so in Christ, all will be made alive (1 Cor. 15:21)
- G. How can one man change the world?
- H. Adam betrayed God and plunged the world and all of humanity into curse and suffering and death and darkness.
- I. But thanks be to God for the true and better Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ

The Table of the Lord

Benediction

May the grace of Christ our Savior,
And the love of God our Father,

And the fellowship of the Spirit be with us.
Forever and ever, forevermore. Amen.