

The Last Adam



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) August 19, 2019

Finding Our Victory in Jesus' Work for Us

“And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven” (1 Corinthians 15:45-47, NKJV).

The apostle Paul speaks here of two Adams, a first and a last. The first Adam, of course, was the first human being on earth. He was created by God and placed in the Garden of Eden. The last Adam is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As Paul points out, the first Adam was natural, physical, born of a lump of clay. Only when God breathed into this Adam did he have life; but the last Adam, Christ, is spiritual and heavenly. He has within him the very life and substance of God.

Both Adams have great significance in the daily life of every Christian. The fleshly Adam sinned, rebelling against God's commandment and infecting all his descendants with his sin nature: “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12).

God was not blind-sided by the total breakdown of Adam's race through history. All along God had a plan to rescue humankind, and he spoke of it to Abraham: “I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you” (Genesis 17:7). God was telling the world, “A new race is about to be born on the earth. I am sending to you a second Adam, and he will be the firstborn of this new race. He's going to raise up a spiritual seed made up of multitudes worldwide, and this seed will be a heavenly people. Their birthright will not be of this world but of my kingdom.”

Christ's appearance on the earth heralded a new man.

Paul tells us Jesus was “the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29). Even though Jesus came as a heavenly, righteous man, he took on the fleshly nature of the old Adam as well. Why? He did it to fulfill everything Adam's seed couldn't. Christ was the last Adam.

Under the terms of the New Covenant, God no longer recognized the old Adam; he saw only the new man: Christ. Therefore, the old Adam—the natural, fleshly race—no longer had any standing before God. The Lord declared, “Only one man can stand before me now. I will recognize nobody except this last Adam, Christ. Nothing of the old Adam's nature can approach me. No work, no ministry, no sacrifice will be accepted, except as it is done in Christ. He is the only seed I recognize.”

To have fellowship with God, we have to become part of this last Adam. We have to be incorporated into him to become his seed in this new race. How is this accomplished? According to Paul, we are translated out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light. This translation is a work of grace alone, and Jesus

accomplished it for us on the cross. Paul states plainly, “[God] has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love” (*Colossians 1:13*). Now, Scripture says, when the Father looks at you, he sees you in his Son. You have taken on Christ’s nature.

You see, when Jesus died, he took the old Adam with him into the grave. When the Lord rose from the dead, he left the old Adam there. In God’s eyes, that old man remains dead. He was crucified with Christ, along with all flesh. “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me” (*Galatians 2:20*). “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

You may say, “I know I’m in Christ by faith. I realize I’m a new creature, but I still struggle terribly with a habit. It gets me so discouraged.” Satan would love to convince you God has given up on you. He wants you to think God sees you as dirty, filthy with sin, but it’s all a lie. What you’re experiencing is the flesh battling against the Spirit in you. This battle is common to all believers. While you’re in the midst of it, Satan wants to convince you that the “old man” is still in control.

No matter what your condition, God does not waver in his love for you. God never stopped loving Adam’s race in spite of all its wickedness and idolatry. He preserved us throughout history to the moment of the cross when he stepped in with his rescue plan. Our victory comes solely through repentance, faith and trust in God’s care for us.

Paul explains, “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (*Romans 6:4-5*).

Our old man is legally dead in God’s eyes, and the new man, Jesus Christ, lives in us. If you are in Christ by faith, it doesn’t matter how you feel about yourself. The only thing that matters is how God sees you, and when he looks at you, he sees Christ.

I have read many sad, pitiful letters from believers who are still bound by sinful habits.

I want to ask all such believers: Are you struggling to gain victory by your willpower? Are you fighting the battle in your old nature? Paul points out, “Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness” (*Romans 4:4-5*).

Beloved, settle this truth in your heart: The first Adam in you is dead in God’s eyes. That old man simply can’t help you against the enemy. Your victory must come not through weeping or striving but by faith that Jesus Christ has won the battle for you. Indeed, Paul says there is only one condition attached to God’s promises: “If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister” (*Colossians 1:23*).

Christ, the last Adam, demonstrates that the result of a firm faith is love. “Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world” (*1 John 4:17*). John is saying, “The Father’s love for you is secure. Now, follow Jesus’ example.” Christ lived his entire life on earth wholly dependent on the Father. Passage after passage shows him healing people, working miracles and performing wonders, but according to his own testimony, he said and did nothing without consulting his Father: “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner” (*John 5:19*).

Christ surrendered everything to his Father to be a totally obedient Son. We are to do likewise, becoming totally dependent on the Father just as he was. The problem is that so many Christians spend their days straining to break the power of sin over their lives. Many have grown weary of striving in their flesh and are giving up on their marriage, on their faith, on any hope of ever being free. Many have told me, “I’m in a living hell. The Lord didn’t prove himself real to me. I prayed for years, but he never set me free.”

Whenever I hear this, I always turn back to God’s many promises to us, promises to keep us from falling, to break every chain, to set every captive free, to crush Satan’s dominion, to dwell in us and give us resurrection life daily.

These promises convince me that the Father didn't send the last Adam in vain, and the last Adam, Jesus, didn't die in vain. I tell you, if faith in Christ's victory on the cross isn't enough—if it isn't a victory for every child of God—then Christ's death was in vain. It's that simple.

Do you believe in God's love and care for you?

Do you trust his Spirit to keep you? When the enemy comes in like a flood, make this your prayer: "Lord, by your grace and mercy, you have placed me in Christ. In your eyes, I no longer have any part in the old Adam, and he no longer has any power over me. I now appear before you clean and holy, by my faith in Jesus' work for me. I'm weak, but you said your Holy Spirit would empower me. I submit to you now, knowing you have made every provision." Amen.

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