

The Church, In History

Connecting 'Genesis' to 'Golgotha'

Luke 3:23, 38 ²³ Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli ... ³⁸ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

We belonged before we believed.

John 17:6 *I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.*

Our predecessor message has revealed that the Christian Church is a people, giving us a solid foundation upon which to build what follows. Where did the people begin? The Book of Genesis presents man as beginning pure from God in the Garden of Eden, starting with Adam, the first son of God in the flesh. Adam's disobedience threatened to sever man from his Maker and, of course, from the intended fellowship God foresaw. God then withdrew for a while from His fellowship with man.

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That He did in order to action His plan to deal with man's sin and disobedience. The plan was to restore fellowship through His Son in the spirit – this time, he would not just be a living person but a life giving spirit (1 Cor. 15:45).

The activity of the first Adam therefore negatively affected the last or second Adam, requiring him to experience a painful physical death in order to redeem mankind. The activity of the last Adam (Christ) has positively affected the first Adam, making it possible for him to resurrect, in due season, alongside all others confined under sin.

Between the fall of man in the first Adam and his rise in the last Adam (Christ), a whole lot of interventionist activities by God have taken place in order to keep God's name as Maker and Keeper of the whole wide world fresh in the mind of man. He called Noah (Gen. 6) and then Abram, later Abraham (Gen. 12), promising him what came to perfect fulfilment in Christ.

He called Moses as deliverer of His people to illustrate what He purposed to do in Christ, giving him the semblance of worship rituals in Law (Heb. 9:1-8 and Col. 2:16-17).

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He gave prophecies to His people, putting His words in the mouths of the prophets to proclaim to the people His intent in Christ. He also spoke many Messianic prophecies through the psalms of David, the sweet psalmist of Israel (Luke 24:44).

After John the Baptist's preparatory message, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (the barrier to the fellowship between man and God), the man, Jesus Christ, died on a tree to remove both the curse and the barrier. Jesus died on a tree to remove the curse on man because it was in relation to a tree that the curse came.

Jesus's death redeemed us, removing the barrier caused by disobedience, but it also reminds us that we WERE God's children even before the foundation of the world for fellowship with God. He died to remove the barrier in our minds due to disobedience caused by ignorance (Hos. 4:6, 2 Cor. 4:6).

Today, two thousand years after the crucifixion, the church is divided. There are many denominations and many different statements of belief.

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Some denominations have debated, and in some cases condoned and even practised what God has called an abomination. What some would consider to be “strange fire” (Lev. 10:1) is being offered in the form of man-made ‘holy days’, titles, and a ‘liturgical’ calendar which at the very least obscures the plan of redemption.

If the world does not know about the harvest and judgment, it is because the church has hidden them.

Lost sheep search online or stand outside the local church building looking in, wondering whether they have come to the right place. In some places the church has compromised so much with the world that even a “babe not yet weaned” can see that the practice does not match the Book that the church purports to follow.

We know from 1 Cor. 11:19 that heresies must come:

1 Cor. 11:19 *For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.*

We also know that to be “approved to God” we must study and rightly divide the word of truth:

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2 Tim. 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Somehow, the church has lost its way, not enduring sound doctrine. The New Testament is being interpreted whilst ignoring the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi, which sets out the character, ways and righteousness of God. Reverence and godly fear have been lost. The yoke is broken, the bonds are burst.

Jer. 5:5 (KJV) *I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.*

But we know He will yet once more shake the earth, so let us be prepared, for our God is a consuming fire:

Heb. 12:25-29 ²⁵ *See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven,* ²⁶ *whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.”* ²⁷ *Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are*

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being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

This book series has one purpose: to bring the church back to the Word of God.

Isa. 55:7 ... *Let us return unto the Lord our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

Evaluation Questions & Answers

1. The history of man is that he came from God. To whom or where shall he go after here?
 - * Back to God. “The spirit returns to God who gave it.” (Eccl. 12:7)
 - * For the church – those in Christ – we go to “be with Christ, which is far better” (Phil. 1:23).
 - * For those outside Christ, “into everlasting punishment” (Matt. 25:46). History ends in two destinies: fellowship restored or fellowship lost forever.

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2. We learnt that God made us for fellowship. What does He expect us to exchange with Him?
 - * Fellowship. “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” (1 John 1:3)
 - * We give Him worship, obedience, love (Mark 12:30).
 - * He gives us life, righteousness, sonship (John 10:10; 2 Cor. 5:21).
 - * It is ‘koinonia’ – sharing of all things.
3. How does the Old Testament serve to restore the rift in man’s fellowship with God caused by the first Adam?
 - * By types, shadows and promises pointing to Christ (Heb. 9:18; Col. 2:17).
 - * The Law showed sin (Rom. 3:20), sacrifices covered sin (Lev. 17:11), prophets promised the Sin-Bearer (Isa. 53). All were tutors to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24).
4. Why is Christ the substance of what the Old Testament foreshadowed, as we read in Col. 2:16-17?
 - * Shadows have no reality without the object.
 - * The Passover lamb pointed to “Christ our Passover” (1 Cor. 5:7).

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- * The tabernacle pointed to “God with us” (John 1:14).
 - * Jesus is not part of history – He is history’s purpose (Luke 24:28).
5. Why was it imperative that the last Adam (Christ) should die on a tree?
- * Because the curse came through a tree (Gen. 2:17, 3:6).
 - * “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” (Gal. 3:13, Deut. 21:23)
 - * The Last Adam undid at a tree what the first Adam did at a tree. The barrier of disobedience was nailed with Him (Col. 2:14). He became the curse to break the curse.

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the tree where my curse died.
I nail my ignorance there today. In Christ’s name,
Amen.