

Title: **“THE MAN IS BECOME
AS ONE OF US.”**

Text: Genesis 3:22-24

Subject: *Adam Driven from Eden*

Date: Sunday Evening — January 2, 2011

Tape # AA-1

Readings: *Larry Brown and David Burge*

Introduction:

Tuesday night Bro. Lindsay Campbell asked me if I could explain the meaning of Genesis 3:22. When I looked at the text, I was baffled. So I walked over and picked up my reliable theology professor, Dr. Gill. After reading Dr. Gill’s comments, I was helped but not satisfied. The text has been on my mind all week. I believe I know what it means. So I want you to open your Bibles to Genesis 3:22.

(Genesis 3:22-24) “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he

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drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us.” — What a statement that is! This is not the statement of a mere man. — **“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us.”** I repeat, What a statement that is! What an astounding statement that is! What can it mean?

GENESIS 1-3

In my opinion, no portion of Holy Scripture is more important than the first three chapters of Genesis. If a man truly believes and understands Genesis 1, 2, and 3, he has grasped the whole system of divine truth, for he has grasped the foundation of all truth. If we fail to understand what is revealed in these three chapters, we cannot understand anything else in the Sacred Volume. Perhaps that is the reason Satan has always raised up false prophets to twist, pervert and deny the opening chapters of Genesis.

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Chapter 1 reveals the origin and creation of the universe and the formation of man from the dust of the earth. — *“In the beginning God.”* — Those four words show us that the Lord God is the Creator, Ruler, and Disposer of all things. — *“All things were made by him and for him; and without him was not anything made that was made”* (John 1:3).

Chapter 2 reveals the happiness, power, and greatness of man before sin entered into the world. In the garden, in his innocence, Adam was the object of God’s favor and delight. God made him lord of the earth. All creatures were under his dominion. He lived in harmony with God, the holy angels and the beasts of the field in perfect happiness. But Adam did not continue in this blessed, happy condition very long.

Chapter 3 reveals the temptation and fall of our father Adam and the consequences of it. What a sad, sad picture! Man created in the image of God, man to whom God had given the whole world, man,

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the prince of God’s creation rebelled against his Creator and lost everything!

When we had lost everything, when Adam and Eve were trying to hide themselves from the Lord God, trying to cover the shame of their sin and their nakedness from God, the Lord **God stepped in**, not to destroy them, but to save them by his grace! (Genesis 3:9).

(Genesis 3:9) “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”

God Himself preached the first Gospel message, promising and promising to destroy the enemy (3:15).

(Genesis 3:15) “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Then He made a sacrifice for our fallen parents and clothed them with the skins of the slain

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sacrifice (3:21), picturing the garments of salvation with which He would clothe His elect.

(Genesis 3:21) “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

Then, we are told, in Genesis 3:22-24 — *“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”*

This, too, was an act of God’s grace. It was not, as many suppose, an act of His wrath. The Lord God drove Adam and Eve from the garden **“to keep the way of the tree of life,”** that is, to preserve and protect **“the way of the tree of life.”**

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Proposition: I want you to see that God’s grace, not His wrath, is revealed in driving Adam and Eve from the garden “*to keep the way of the tree of life,*” that is, to preserve and protect “*the way of the tree of life.*”

Divisions: Let’s focus our attention primarily on verse 22. In this message want to raise and answer four questions:

1. Who is speaking in this text? — “*The Lord God said.*”
2. What is the meaning of the Lord’s words regarding the condition of man? — “*Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil.*”
3. What is the tree of life?
4. Why was Adam prevented from eating of the tree of life after the fall?

1. WHO IS SPEAKING IN THIS TEXT?

When Moses wrote, “*The Lord God said,*” who did he have in mind? It is Jehovah-Elohim speaking; but he says, “*The man has become as one of us.*” One Person is speaking, but more than one person is

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represented. The Person speaking is Christ, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God, Jehovah-Elohim. He is speaking for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

You can mark this down — Anytime we read of God speaking to man, or of God being revealed to man in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, or in eternity, the Person speaking, the Person revealed is the son of God, our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:37).

The only way God deals with men, the only way God speaks to men, the only way God reveals himself to men is in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Christ is the Word of God, the Revelation of the Triune God (John 1:1-3, 14, 18).

(John 1:1-3) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

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(John 1:14) “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

(John 1:18) “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”

When Moses penned these words, “*The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us,*” the Spirit of God was, in this Book of Beginnings, revealing four facts that are essential to the Christian faith.

- **The Pre-existence of Christ Before His Incarnation** — “*Before Abraham was, I am.*” (John 8:58). — “*He is before all things, and by him all things consist*” (Colossians 1:17). Our Lord Jesus Christ is not a creature of time. He is the Creator, the I AM, Who is, Who was and Who is to come.

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- **The Eternal Deity of Christ** — In our text, the Divine Mediator is called “*The Lord God,*” Jehovah-Elohim, because Jesus Christ is God (Isaiah 9:6; Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 3:16; John 10:30-33). — He claimed to be God. — Angels and men worshipped him as God. — The Jews crucified him because he claimed to be God.
- **The Plurality and Unity of The Eternal Godhead** — “*Us.*” When the Lord God spoke and called himself “*Us*” he was declaring the plurality of Persons in the Godhead. We are Trinitarians! We worship one God in the Trinity, or Tri-unity, of his sacred Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 John 5:7). This is a matter constantly held before us in Holy Scripture. We see the doctrine of the trinity in the baptismal formula given by Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). **John Gill** said, “Go to Jordan, and there learn the doctrine of the Trinity.” We also see the Trinity in the baptism of our Master (Matthew 3:16-17) and in the benedictions of grace (2 Corinthians 13:14).

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- **The Mediation of Christ** — Christ Jesus is our Mediator, our only Mediator; and He has been our Mediator from eternity (1 Timothy 2:5). In this third chapter of Genesis, our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed in all three of His mediatorial offices, Prophet, Priest, and King. — **In His kingly office**, He arraigned fallen man before His bar of judgment, convicting him of treason, and passed upon him the sentence of death. — **In His prophetic office**, He promised redemption and salvation to the fallen pair, and told them how it would be accomplished. — **In His priestly office**, He made a sacrifice for the guilty and clothed our parents in the skins of the innocent victims.

The Person speaking in our text is the Lord God our Savior, Jehovah- Elohim, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, the Son of God, our Mediator, our blessed Redeemer. And He is speaking to the fallen, sinful man, our father, Adam.

2. **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF OUR LORD’S WORDS REGARDING THE CONDITION OF THE MAN?**

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“The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.” — What do those words mean?

The text might be translated, “Behold, the man was as one of us, knowing good and evil.” If the words are taken in that sense, they are an expression of great pity. God is saying, “Behold, the man, now fallen, sinful, ruined, depraved, and dead; he was as one of us, knowing good and evil, but now only evil.” You see, man was created in the image and likeness of God as He is revealed in Christ, Who is the image of the invisible God (Genesis 1:26).

Adam was created in the image of God in the form and constitution of his body and his human nature. The first Adam was formed in the image of Him Who was to come as the second Adam, Christ, the God-man. Adam did not crawl out of some slime pit of primeval sludge, or drop out of a tree. He was created in the image of Christ, Who is the image of God. The Son of God came to be partaker of our

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flesh and blood, that we might be partakers of his flesh and of his bones (Ephesians 5:30).

Adam was made in the image of God in moral uprightness and righteousness too. Man came out of his Creator’s hands a holy creature. And when God makes a man new by His grace, He restores holiness to him. This renovation of grace is called, *“The new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness”* (Ephesians 4:24).

The image of God in which man was created is also reflected in his mental capacity. Like his Creator, Adam was wise, rational, and full of knowledge. He named all living things. He knew his wife when she was brought to him. He knew both good and evil. Though, like Christ himself, before the fall, Adam knew no sin by experience, he knew the nature of it. He knew that it was contrary to God’s Being. And he knew the consequences of it. In this sense, I am sure Adam knew both good and evil far more fully before the fall than he did afterwards.

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Again, the image of God in which man was created is seen in Adam’s dominion over all earthly creatures. As I said before, Adam was made lord of God’s creation (Genesis 1:26). The majesty of God was seen in him by the universal subjection of all creatures to him (Psalm 8:5-8).

(Psalms 8:5-8) “5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all [things] under his feet: 7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, [and whatsoever] passeth through the paths of the seas.”

If we read the text this way, as referring to what man was originally, (**“Behold, the man was as one of us, knowing good and evil.”**) the sense of this text is, “Behold, the man was as one of us, but what is he now?” **His body**, so strong and full of life, is now feeble and dying! **His soul**, so pure and holy, is now depraved and vile! **His mind**, so full of wisdom and

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knowledge, is now darkness and ignorance! The man who was the darling of heaven is now alienated from God!

All of those things are true and taught plainly in the Book of God; but I am inclined to think that our KJV translation is best. — *“Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.”*

First, this is a declaration of the fact that Adam was a type and picture of Christ our Substitute, as the Holy Spirit tells us in Romans 5:14, “the figure of him that was to come.” Nowhere do we see the love of Christ for his Church set forth so fully as in the case of Adam’s love for Eve. **The popular notion is that Eve beguiled Adam. Eve did nothing of the kind.** Satan beguiled her, allured her by deception into sin and rebellion against God; but the Holy Spirit tells us plainly that *“Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression”* (1 Timothy 2:14).

Adam was not deceived to any degree, neither by the devil nor by his wife. He knew exactly what he

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was doing and sinned with his eyes wide open. He saw her in the depths of her guilt and shame; and out of nothing but love for her, **before he would be parted from her he would be damned with her.** He cleaved to his wife, for they were one flesh. And into ruin he plunged himself for her sake. In all this he was the figure of Him that was to come. **So it was with our dear Savior!**

The horrid load of all my guilt
Was on my Savior laid;
He loved me so that, for my life,
My sin His own He made!

Forsaken, there, by God in death,
His heart was fixed on me!
His love embraced my guilty soul,
When nailed to the tree!

For me He took the cup of wrath,
And drank damnation dry!
His love sustained His soul in death, —
That I might never die!

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Oh, love amazing! love beyond
The reach of human thought!
That love shall be my endless song,
Which my salvation bought!

This is also a declaration of Adam’s present state and condition, and of ours, in Christ. Though fallen by nature, we are now, as Adam was, restored by grace. What God here says of Adam is true of every believer. Though in Adam we fell, in Christ we are restored, just like Adam was.

- By the call of Grace — *“Where art thou?”*
- By blood Atonement — The sacrifice!
- By Imputed Righteousness — The skins!

Illustration: Two Coats — *“He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none”* (Luke 3:11).

Like Adam, we have been clothed with Christ’s righteousness and we are *“righteous, even as he is righteous”* (1 John 3:7; Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16). — Like Adam, being renewed by grace, we are now created in the image of Christ, conformed to him,

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created new by the grace of God “*in righteousness and true holiness*” (Ephesians 4:24). — Like Adam, we are now reconciled to and one with God in Christ (John 17:21).

Enmity has been put away! Reconciliation has been made by God! Now, we are in a state of friendship with God! But more, in Christ, we are one with God. — **Like Adam, having been called from darkness to light in Christ, we know both good and evil.**

- We know the goodness of God!
- We know the evil our own hearts!

3. WHAT WAS THE TREE OF LIFE WHICH GOD WOULD NOT ALLOW ADAM TO TAKE BY HIS OWN HANDS?

I do not doubt for a minute that this was a real tree in the Garden of Eden. Adam knew where it was, and how useful it was as the tree of life. “It is highly probable, that it might be useful for the invigorating of Adam’s body...during his state of innocence” (John Gill).

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But it was also a symbolical tree. **It was a symbol of Adam’s dependence upon God for his life.** Every time he saw it and ate its fruit, Adam was reminded that his life came from God, was preserved by God, and belonged to God.

The tree of life was also a symbol of Adam’s preservation in life, so long as he was obedient to the will of God. Perhaps it stood right beside the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. I don’t know. But every time he passed by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and ate only of the fruit of the tree of life, Adam had confirmed to him the promise of life for his obedience to God.

You can be sure of this: — **The tree of life was not a tree by which fallen Adam might have been translated from his fallen condition to a state of heavenly, eternal life** (Galatians 3:21). When God prevented Adam from eating the fruit of this tree it was not for the purpose of keeping Adam from obtaining life. It was for the purpose of revealing His grace in Adam and preserving, or keeping, “*the way of the tree of life*” (v. 24). This is great mercy indeed:

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— The Lord God would not allow Adam to show him that there could be no life without satisfaction for the sin committed, to show him that there no other way of salvation and life than by Christ, the true Tree of Life. **You see, that tree of life was a picture, a symbol, a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.** — He is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon Him (Proverbs 3:18; Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14).

(Revelation 2:7) “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

(Revelation 22:2) “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

(Revelation 22:14) “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates

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into the city.”

Christ is our Life! He is the Author and Giver of Life! As our Mediator, He asked the Father for our life. As our Redeemer, He purchased a right to life for us with his own blood. As our Advocate and Intercessor in heaven, He secures us in life in himself. — *“Your life is hid with Christ in God”* (Colossians 3:3; John 10:27-30).

4. SO WHY WAS ADAM, AFTER THE FALL, PREVENTED FROM EATING THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE?

The reason was just this: The Lord God taught Adam as he teaches us throughout the Scriptures, that there is no hope but Christ. I repeat: this was an act of grace! **Though Adam had forfeited all claims to life, God kept open the way of life, and kept him from seeking life anywhere else but in Christ.**

If the Lord God had not prevented Adam from eating the physical fruit of that physical tree, Adam might well have thought to himself — As this tree was

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useful before in the preservation of my life, it might still be. God has promised me a Redeemer, but why should I wait for him. I can save myself by my own hands. All I have to do is eat the fruit of the tree of life.

To keep Adam from that evil, the Lord God removed the temptation from him. He thrust him out of Eden and placed a guard around the tree of life.

You see, there is nothing a man is more prone to do than to seek salvation and life anywhere but in Christ. We are all base idolaters by nature. We want to be saved. We will do anything to be saved, except trust Christ alone (John 5:40).

- Israel and the Brazen Serpent.
- Crosses! — Morality! — Prayers!
- “Sacraments!” — “Holy Living!”

Man would rather take a pilgrimage, barefoot on broken glass around the globe than trust Christ. He would rather climb the steep, dark, terrifying slopes of Sinai than simply look to the Christ of Calvary.

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But God has declared that Christ alone is Savior (1 Corinthians 1:30). Sinners cannot come to God any other way. By your own works of righteousness you cannot be saved. **As Gill put it**, — “He who seeks for righteousness and life by his own doings, runs upon the flaming sword of justice; and whilst endeavoring to insure his own salvation, he is pulling ruin upon himself.”

Blessed be God, he still keeps “the way of the tree of life!” He still keeps chosen sinners from self-destruction by self-righteousness! He blocks up the way of his elect and graciously forces them to flee to Christ, the true Tree of Life! (Hosea 2:6).

APPLICATION

Let us ever be aware of the wretched, vile nature of sin (Romans 5:12). Every hope of salvation by something we do is utter vanity and folly. It is not only something God has not ordained. It is something against which God has set himself. All who seek to save themselves are fighting against God (Galatians 5:1-4). Forever bless, praise, and magnify the Lord

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our God for providing Christ the Savior for lost sinners (1 Corinthians 9:15).

- Provided before We Sinned.
- Revealed before Adam was Driven from the Garden.

Cease from all self-righteousness and lay hold upon Christ alone. He *“is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon him; and happy is everyone that retaineth”* him (Proverbs 3:18).

Look once more at our text — (Genesis 3:22-24).

“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

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That flaming sword which no creature could ever take away might well alarm all who read these words. It, at first glance, appears to block all access to the Garden of God. What a relief it is to see that flaming sword of inflexible justice sheathing itself forever in the heart of our dear Savior, when He was made sin for us!

(Zechariah 13:7) “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.”

Blessed be the name of our great God forever, since He who is God the Son became one of us and was made sin for us, since He died in the room and stead of chosen sinners, the Triune God declares, — **“BEHOLD, THE MAN IS BECOME ONE OF US!”** — *“And as He is so are we in this world!”*

Amen.