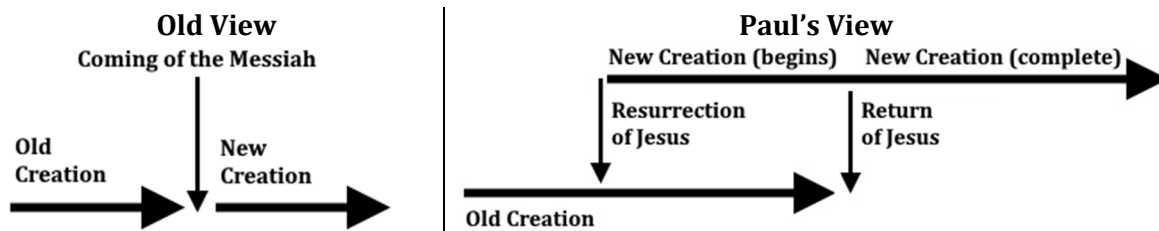


The Life and Theology of Paul: Adam and Jesus

Review

- Paul's letters contain not just words, but a *pattern* of words: "Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus," (2 Tim. 1.13). This is *theology* – an organized system of thought about God, man, Christ, and the Christian life. As we learn this pattern, we will be better equipped to read Paul's letters and the whole Bible.
- The foundation of Paul's theology was the *fact* of Jesus' resurrection. Before the Damascus Road, the Law was the axis of Paul's mind. But from the moment he met the risen Christ, the living, resurrected Lord became his new center and non-negotiable foundation (1 Cor. 15.12-23).
- In light of these facts, Paul realized the cosmic "day of the LORD" foretold by the OT prophets began with the death and resurrection of Jesus – meaning our graph of history must change:



- This reoriented view of history gives Paul's theology an "already/not yet" character:
 - The new creation has already begun: Christ's resurrection is the 'firstfruits' of the final resurrection (1 Cor. 15.20, Col. 1.18); Christians are raised with him now (Eph. 2.6, Col. 3.1).
 - Yet new creation is not yet complete: we and the creation groan as we wait (Rom. 8.22-23).

Two Human Teams: Adam and Jesus

- Paul knew that God had placed mankind over the rest of creation (Gen. 1.26, Ps. 8.5-9). If this was true of the old creation, then it must be true of the new creation. Just as Adam ruled over the old creation, Jesus must rule over the new creation (Eph. 1.22).
- Therefore, just as there are two creations, so there are two human families: Adam's and Christ's. This insight has major implications for how we understand what it means to be human:
 - The fundamental unit of humanity is neither the individual nor the society.
 - The fundamental unit of humanity is the team headed by an "all-in-one" captain:

1 Cor. 15.21-23: For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

1 Cor. 15.45-49: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit... The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.
- Analogy: In modern team sports, the actions of the team captain affect the whole team.¹ If he incurs a penalty, the whole team suffers. If he scores a goal, the whole team shares the credit:

Rom. 5.12, 17-19: Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned... For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.
- Important: Christian conversion is *not* just a minor rearranging of our mental state. Christian conversion is a complete change of: our *team, destiny, energy, and identity.*

¹ Robert Letham, *Union with Christ: in Scripture, History, and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2011).

Union with Christ

- From this understanding of two human teams flows Paul’s idea of “union with Christ.” John Murray wrote: “Union with Christ is really the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation.”²
- All of salvation flows from union with Christ – uniting to Jesus and his team through faith:
 - 1 Cor. 1.30:** And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption...
 - Eph. 1.3:** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...
- Being united to Jesus changes our destiny:
 - **Election:** “...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world,” (Eph. 1.4).
 - **Justification:** “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God,” (2 Cor. 5.21).
 - **Sanctification:** “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body...” (Rom. 6.11-12).
 - **Glorification:** “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his,” (Rom. 6.5).
- Being united to Jesus gives us new energy:

Rom. 6.5-11: For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

“old self”:	our link with Adam
“body of sin”:	the poison of our whole nature inherited from Adam

Rom. 8.10-11: But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
- Analogy: A house connected to a malfunctioning power grid:³
 - A house connected to a malfunctioning power grid has two problems:
 - 1)** the bad link to the bad grid, and **2)** the damage already done as a result of that link.
 - To fix the house therefore requires a threefold solution:
 - 1)** cut the old link, **2)** replace it with a new link to a better grid, and **3)** restore the house.
 - What Paul is teaching in Romans 6.5-11 and 8.10-11:
 - Dying with Jesus cuts our link to the “Adam grid,” stopping it from controlling us.
 - The Holy Spirit links us to the “Jesus grid,” restoring us with his resurrection life.

A New Identity

- Christians are those who have changed teams forever. This change of team gives us a new destiny, and gives us new energy for new activity. The Christian life therefore consists in *living consistently with our new identity*. New living flows out our new identity (Col. 3.1-17).
- When tempted to sin, we tell ourselves: “This isn’t me. I’m no longer a slave to sin. I don’t live in Adam anymore; Christ lives in me now (Gal. 2.20)! I belong to a better world! I’ve been invited to a great feast (Isa. 25.6, Rev. 19.9), and there is no need to go dumpster-diving on the way.”

² John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1955).

³ Letham, *Union with Christ*.