

## **Identity & the New Adam**

We all have an identity problem. Some of us have way too much security in our identities and others of us don't have enough security in our identities. The story of the Bible can be understood as the story of 2 major identities: the identity of Adam and the identity of Israel. Adam was not secure enough with his identity and he wanted to upgrade. Israel was way too secure in their identity and assumed it entitled them. The Gospel is that Jesus Christ solves and fixes the identity problem with Adam and Israel.

**Adam Identity:** Made in the image/likeness of God, the Son of God, King of the Earth

Adam was made in the image of God, created as God's Son. Therefore, he existed to imitate God and be the king of the earth. God gave him a garden to begin his rule; Adam was to cultivate it and protect it. As Adam and Eve would have children, and they would continue to cultivate and protect the garden, their Garden-kingdom would cover the earth and they would reign forever. However, they were tempted by Satan who invaded the garden. He suggested that they upgrade their identities from being God's Sons to being their own gods by eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Remarkably, God encountered them in the garden. Instead of ultimately condemning Adam and Eve as they were identified then as Satan's offspring, God promised to break their identity with Satan. He was going to do this by sending another Son, born of Adam and Eve who would finally destroy Satan. In order to do this, God had to protect the Tree of Life and force Adam and Eve to leave the garden along with the Serpent. As a symbol of His promise of restoration and final victory, God clothed them with new clothing that He had made.

**Genesis 3:15** *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

### **I. Jesus Identifies as a New Adam in His Life**

Adam failed to resemble God and do what he does. The only way for Adam to truly resemble God, was for God to incarnate Adam as Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had to be like Adam because Adam could not be like God. Therefore, Jesus was a new Adam.

God becomes a man:

**Philippians 2:5-8** *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, **though he was in the form of God**, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, **being born in the likeness of men**. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

**John 1:14** *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of **the only Son from the Father**, full of grace and truth.*

**Hebrews 2:14-15** *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, **he himself likewise partook of the same things**, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

He was tempted just like Adam:

**Matthew 4:1-11** *Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, “**If you are the Son of God**, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, “**If you are the Son of God**, throw yourself down, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.” 7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, **if you will fall down and worship me.**” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.” 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.*

**Matthew 12:33-35** *Either make the **tree good** and its **fruit good**, or make the **tree bad** and its **fruit bad**, for the **tree** is known by its **fruit**. 34 You **brood of vipers!** How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The **good** person out of his **good** treasure brings forth **good**, and the **evil** person out of his **evil** treasure brings forth **evil**.*

Jesus was tempted by Satan (Mark 1:12-13), but resisted and cast him out of people everywhere. Jesus was called the Son of God, a title that truly only Adam could claim (Luke 3:38).

## **II. Jesus’ Death and Resurrection Re-Identifies Those in Adam**

Just as Adam corrupted his offspring, Jesus purifies his offspring:

**Romans 5:12-19** *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned-- 13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. 14 Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of **Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come**. 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. 16 And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. 17 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. 18 Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. 19 **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.***

Just as Adam's offspring dies in him, Jesus raises his offspring through His resurrection:

**1 Corinthians 15:21-28** *For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For **as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.** 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 24 Then comes the end, **when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.** 25 For **he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.** 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

### III. Our Identity in the New Adam

His people are now being conformed to his image:

**1 Corinthians 15:45-49** *Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the **last Adam** became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; **the second man** is from heaven. 48 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. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, **we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.***

**Romans 8:29** *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

We identify with the victory of Jesus described from Genesis 3:15:

**Romans 16:17-20** *I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their **own appetites**, and by smooth talk and flattery **they deceive the hearts of the naive.** 19 For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is **good** and innocent as to what is **evil.** 20 **The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

We can now eat from the tree of life as God has brought us back to true Eden:

**Revelation 22:1-5** *Then the angel showed me the river of the **water of life**, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the*

street of the city; also, on either side of the river, **the tree of life** with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 And **night** will be no more. They will need **no light of lamp or sun**, for the Lord **God will be their light**, and **they will reign forever and ever**.

Adam	Jesus
made in the image of God	is the image of God
created as Son of God	eternal Son of God
king of the earth	king of heaven and earth
tempted by Satan	tempted by Satan
sought to be wise	is the wisdom of God
tried to be a god	already is God
failed to imitate God	perfectly imitated God
condemned by God	beloved and approved of God
judged at a tree	judged on a tree
corrupted his offspring	purifies his offspring
cast out of garden with Satan	cast Satan out everywhere
guarded from tree of life	leads people to tree of life
clothed by God	clothes his people in himself

For those of you who struggle with image, with self-esteem issues, with how you look in other people's eyes, and seeking the approval of others, this is good news. The quest for an upgrade of your identity to make you feel better about yourself is a task master. The truth of the matter is, outside of Jesus, you can only downgrade. The quest is actually for a carrot on a stick, a mirage in the desert. If you could truly see and begin to understand who Jesus is and what He has accomplished for all of us who are in Adam, it would completely change your life. Your impulse to upgrade your identity would dissolve, because you would know that in Jesus you have highest identity in the universe. And when you see this God in this gospel, with such grace, such mercy, such glory, such beauty, you will never want to be identified as anything other than a co-heir with Jesus, the true Adam.