

1 Corinthians 15:22 - Is Jesus 'Adam in Reverse'?

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[0 : 0 0] This morning I would like us to turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verse 22. The words are on the screen but in many ways we're going to be using this verse to look at much of the Bible's teaching across the whole canon of Scripture. But we can read this verse because it's highlighting the point that we want to focus on today. 1 Corinthians 15:22, for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. In this verse as you can see Paul is making a direct correspondence and comparison between Adam and Christ and this is something that he does quite often in the letters. He compares Christ to Adam. In fact just a few verses after this in verse Corinthians 15 Paul refers to Jesus as the last Adam and we see a similar thing in Romans chapter 5 and we're going to read a few verses again and as we read these verses just look out for the comparison between Adam and Jesus because this is what we want to focus on today. Paul writes, 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 to come. That's of course referring to Jesus. But the free gift is not like the trespass for if many died through one man's trespass that's Adam's sin much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded to many and the free gift is not like the result of that one man sin for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification 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 and Paul is summing it all up here as one trespass led to condemnation for all men that's Adam. So one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men for as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Paul is comparing Adam and Jesus and in effect Paul is saying that Jesus is Adam in reverse. Jesus has come to put right what went wrong and to undo the consequences of Adam's sin and today I want us to simply ask the question is Paul right? Is Jesus Adam in reverse? And to answer that question we are going to investigate the correspondence between Adam and Christ and we're going to do so by asking two simple questions which simply go to ask what happened to Adam and what happened to Jesus?

And in doing so we're going to look back at Genesis 3 the chapter that we read and then we're going to look at some of the events surrounding the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. So first of all let's ask the question what happened to Adam? Well we read Genesis 3 and I want us just to go back to that chapter and highlight seven key moments that are identified in that chapter concerning Adam. The first of these is concerning a tree. Adam went up to a tree when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight for the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise. She took of its fruit and ate and she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate. Here we have the description of Adam and Eve. They are together they go up to the tree they take of its fruit and they eat of it and of course that was in direct disobedience to the command that God gave. He had said but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. But as we read the devil had of course come to Eve with a false testimony and he had persuaded her that it was God who was lying and that this prohibition regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was actually God trying to negatively control and restrict Adam and Eve. The devil comes and tries to persuade them that God is lying and that God has been cruel by restricting this tree but of course it was the devil who was lying. But Adam listened he went up to the tree and he sinned against God.

The immediate aftermath of that was that Adam realised that he was naked. We read that in Genesis 3:7 the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked. Adam immediately has this sense of personal shame and they try to address this problem. They have the

peace that he had once enjoyed the harmony that he lived in was gone. He felt a sense of shame and he tries to act to address this problem and this highlights the third thing that we want to identify. They sawed big leaves together and made themselves loincloths and in many ways the image here is so tragic because having previously been at peace with purpose, with provision, with privileges, with everything looking so so good for their lives now Adam is trying to scrape together some kind of makeshift garment to cover his shame and they try to hide from God. But as we read God came looking for them asking them about what had happened and as we read Adam tries to shift the blame to Eve.

Eve tries to shift the blame to the serpent and in response God tells them that there will be consequences for all three of them and we can read again from verse 14 the Lord God said to the serpent because you have done this kershto you above all livestock and above all beast of the field on your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life I will put enmity between you and the woman between your offspring and her offspring he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel that was the consequences for the serpent then consequences for the woman to the woman he said I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing in pain you shall bring forth children your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you and then we come to the consequences that will be experienced by Adam himself to Adam he said because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you you shall not eat of it kershto is the ground because of you in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life thorns and this is the child bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground for out of it you were taken for you are dust and to dust you shall return and in here we see three further things that are high that that are highlighted in regard to Adam first we see Adam is going to experience pain the ground has been cursed so has Adam eats of it he is going to do so in pain along with that the earth is going to bring forth thorns that's part of the curse thorns and thistles will come forth for Adam and the breakdown of harmony between Adam and nature means that he is now going to sweat as he labours harvesting eating surviving is going to involve hard labour and toil Adam will sweat on the ground and the ultimate result is that Adam leaves the garden he is driven out therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken he drove out the man and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim the flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life so if we ask ourselves what happened to Adam we can list these seven things first of all we see that he came he walked up to a tree secondly he realizes that he is naked thirdly he makes clothing fourthly he will experience pain fifth thorns come forth sixth he will sweat over the ground and seventh he exits the garden and it's all such a tragic sequence of events if you think about it Adam had been made so special the crowning point of God's creative work he and his wife together bore the image of

[9 : 41] God and had the privilege of dwelling in this amazing creation and they had this wonderful purpose of exercising rule and care over the world that God had made he had been given so so much by God and he had so much to live for he had so much to live for but he threw it all away and ultimately he brought death into his own experience and into the experience of every single one of us and just as an aside here I want to just remember that this is highlighting for us how enormous the effect of sin is and we must never forget that how vast the effect of sin is if you look at Adam his most personal emotions were affected he felt shame his outward relationship with his wife and the actions that he was going to undertake that was affected by sin his inward physical condition was going to be affected by sin he would face pain and he would sweat and his outward work was going to be a toil and a struggle and I am sure every single one of us can say we know how every single one of these feels because inwardly outwardly how we feel what we do it is all affected by sin we all feel pain we all struggle with work we all have vulnerable inward emotions and actions and our conduct and our relationship with the world around us are so often hampered by sin it's it's so easy to see it in the world and you see it so so often that it's in many ways it's the easiest doctrine in the bible to prove the fact that we have fallen into sin it's everywhere and that's why Genesis 3 is the explanation to so many of the times that our experience leaves us asking the question why hard things happen difficult things happen and we ask why or Genesis 3 explains why so that's what happened to Adam and it will come back to these seven things in a moment our second question is what happened to Jesus Paul is telling us that

Jesus is like Adam but is that right and in what way is Jesus like Adam well I just want to briefly summarize some key events that took place as Jesus approached the cross in many ways it starts with Jesus entering the garden of Gethsemane mark 14:32 they went to a place called Gethsemane and Jesus said to his disciples sit here while I pray and John 18 verse 1 describes Gethsemane as a garden and then we can go to Luke's gospel for a description of what went on and it's a very vivid presentation of the anguish that Jesus experienced when he came to the place he said to them pray that you may not enter into temptation and he withdrew from them about a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed saying father if you're willing remove this cup from me nevertheless not my will but yours be done and there appeared to him an angel from heaven strengthening him and being in an agony he prayed more earnestly and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling to the ground it's a picture of agony after this Jesus is arrested and he's brought before the high priest and then he's brought before Pilate and there Jesus is sentenced to crucifixion and we can move across to Mark's gospel to read what happened next says the soldier led him away inside the palace that is the governor's headquarters and they called together the whole battalion and they clothed him in a purple cloak and twisting together a crown of thorns they put it on him again the whole scene is one of pain and agony they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him so they're hurting him physically and emotionally striking him mocking him and then Jesus has led a way to be crucified and as they lead him away they strip Jesus of his clothes and they are divided amongst the soldiers they crucified him and divided his garments among them casting lots for them to decide what each should take and so the result is that Jesus is left naked and then they take him and they nail him to a tree and the cross of course and when it says that Jesus carried his cross he wasn't carrying the whole cross shape he was simply carrying the horizontal beam that was the part that the criminals the condemned criminal was meant to carry the upright section of the cross was a three-stamp that that horizontal beam would be attached to and Jesus was nailed to that and of course Peter in Acts describes it in those terms when he's before the council and he says the god of our fathers raised Jesus whom you killed by hanging him on a tree so Jesus was nailed to a tree and there he died and in all of this we can see that there's seven points that we can highlight summarizing what happened to Jesus we see that first of all Jesus enters the garden and then secondly we see that Jesus sweats on the ground thirdly we see Jesus is crowned with thorns fourthly we see the pain and agony that Jesus experienced fifthly we see that Jesus's clothing is divided and then sixthly we see that Jesus as a result is stripped naked and the end result is that Jesus is nailed to a tree and I hope that you can see what I want you to see that there is an amazing correspondence between what happened to Adam and what happened to Jesus because if you look at it Jesus what Jesus experience corresponds to what Adam did Adam exited the garden Jesus would enter it Adam was to sweat over the ground Jesus's sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground we are told that the curse would bring forth thorns to Adam what was Jesus crowned with he was crowned with thorns they were thrust onto his head Adam was going to experience pain Jesus experienced immense pain both physical and emotional Adam tried to sew clothes together to make a garment Jesus's garment was taken and divided and shared out Adam realized that he was naked Jesus was stripped naked Adam walked up to a tree Jesus was nailed to a tree so is there a link between Adam and Jesus is Jesus Adam in reverse of courteous and Paul is absolutely right Jesus is Adam in reverse and the whole point being emphasized is the fact that Jesus is putting right everything that went wrong in Adam all the awful consequences of Adam's sin one by one by one Jesus is putting right and the great result of all of this is that access to God is being restored remember back in Eden Adam was driven out and the garden was guarded by two cherubim but when the last Adam Jesus Christ died on the cross we read that the curtain of the temple was torn in two and do you know what was on that curtain well Exodus 26 tells us you shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen it shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it and you shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold and hooks of gold on four bases of silver and you shall hang the veil from the clasps and bring the ark of the testimony in there within the veil and the veil shall separate you from the whole you the holy place for you the holy place from the most holy it is bringing separation and on that symbol of separation where cherubim reminding us of the exclusion from Eden that Adam experienced and yet in Jesus that curtain's been torn apart everything that went wrong in Adam is being restored in Jesus Christ there is an amazing correspondence but the vital point here is that all of this is not just about Adam and Christ it's about you and me because the point that Paul

emphasizes when he makes this comparison is the fact that Adam and Christ both function as representative heads of two categories of humanity that's why he talks about being in Adam and in Christ and believe me you are in one or the other we are all in one or the other in fact we are all born in the one we are all born under

Adam's headship in other words we are born with the same sinful nature inherent in us and imputed to us we are born affected by Adam's sin and the fact that every single that the fact that sin affects the experience of us all from our very core outwardly is proof of that as Paul tells us in Romans 5 19 for us by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners the one man is Adam the many are us and on our own we are helpless in that state but God in abundant mercy has sent his son to become one of us to take up our nature so that he can act as a new representative for us and by faith we are united to him so that we are taken from the headship of

[21 : 30] Adam and brought under the headship of Christ and in order to make that happen our sin is placed on Jesus and his perfect righteousness is placed on us which is why the rest of this verse says so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous Christ has come to put everything right and he's come to do that for you and for me so there is an extraordinary and a wonderful correspondence between Adam and Jesus Jesus is Adam in reverse and I want us just to conclude by highlighting three points which arise from all of this first of all in all of this we see that the Bible is perfect this is one of the many areas where you can stand back and you can look at the Bible and then you can look at the thread that runs through it all and you see how perfectly how perfectly it fits together never forget that the Bible wasn't written by one person at one moment who sat down and composed it all the Bible was written across about 1500 years perhaps more 66 different books there's different authors different places different generations different ages of history hugely different contexts hugely different cultures hugely different eras and yet it all fits together so perfectly and it's always good and always worthwhile to spend time getting a grasp of how the whole Bible fits together and never ever ever be afraid to ask questions about that it's a good thing to talk about when you read a passage of the Bible so maybe in your daily readings you might be reading from a Gospel or from a letter or maybe you're reading from a minor prophet or or somewhere else in the

Bible always good to ask yourself how does this fit in to the big to the big picture of the Bible and of course if you if you're not sure how it fits in then then please always ask because when you see how it fits together it's wonderful but it also reminds us that you can have absolute absolute confidence in the Bible that's a really important thing to remember you can always have absolute confidence in the Bible because this is God's word and as God's word it is inerrant and it is utterly reliable and I want you to remember that and I want that to give you immense confidence when you're reading the Bible the Bible is such a wonderful book it is so detailed it is so honest it is so real to life it is so true it is so wise and it all fits together so perfectly and so don't think of your Bible reading as just a duty that you need to do and I've been guilty of that in my Christian life thinking I must just read my Bible and you you you wish through it and you take it off like an item on the list and I've been prone to that so many times in my Christian life we want to sit down and read the Bible and think as I do this I am listening to God and I want to confidently listen to what he says always remember that when you read the Bible you will find coherence you will find coherence in the fact that it all fits together and it's part of God's perfect plan and purpose but you will also find coherence in that it is only by going to the Bible that we can make sense of the world a lot of people try to explain the world in a non-theistic way and in a non-biblical way and ultimately these explanations these worldviews fall so far short but if you want an explanation for the headlines in the newspaper if you want an explanation for the events that you experience in your life if you want an explanation for why there is so much good in the world and also why there is so much evil the only coherent explanation is the Bible it tells us why things are good and it also tells us what we've done to spoil that and so the Bible will bring coherence all this is reminding us how the Bible fits together so perfectly it's an amazing amazing book but in all this we also see that God's plan of salvation is perfect and in particular this correspondence between Adam and Christ is reminding us that detail matters to God detail matters to God the correspondence between Adam and Christ is not vague it's not in general terms it is precise to the minute details and all of that is teaching us that the detail of your salvation matters to God the detail of your life matters to God the detail of who you are and of what you're experiencing that matters to God as we've been saying Adam's sin has had a massive effect the harmony of Eden was lost there is now hostility between humanity the creation

itself is cursed bringing suffering and hardship into our experience of life and even our own peace with ourselves is gone and so often replaced with a sense of shame and perhaps above all else our fellowship with God has been broken in many ways um when you if you imagine taking a vase and if I just threw it on the ground here it would be smashed in so many pieces broken in so many ways and fixing that vase would involve so much detailed work and yet we are seeing in this that God's plan of salvation works to the utmost level of detail and when we think of the detail of God's salvation we see that that God's plan is perfect when humanity sinned in Adam it is though God looked at every single detail of what went wrong and he said I will fix everything I will put every detail right and that highlights the glorious glorious truth that God will never ever miss a detail of your salvation he'll never miss a thing you come to God in faith he will never forget to do something for you or neglect to deal with the needs of your salvation every detail is covered so every stumble that you've had in your life every time you've fallen into sin which we all do all the time every single stumble God would be right every sin that has sprung up in your heart and and you we all know that sin just seems to come from nowhere almost in our heart and yet it springs up in our heart every mistake that you have made and I'm sure we can even look back at the last week and think boy we have made many mistakes and every area where you and I have failed and so often we are plagued by a sense of failure God says I can put every detail right God will never miss a detail of your salvation God's plan of salvation is a detailed perfect plan so we see that the Bible is perfect we see that God's plan of salvation is perfect but we also see that the Savior is perfect when you look at the correspondence between Adam and Christ we see the fact that Jesus is the perfect perfect Savior for the humanity which fell in Adam down to the tiniest detail Adam's sin brought sweat so Jesus had to sweat Adam's sin brought thorns so Jesus had to bear thorns Adam's sin brought nakedness so Jesus had to be stripped naked Adam's sin brought separation so Jesus had to be forsaken Adam's sin brought death so Jesus had to die and Adam's race desperately needs life and the perfect Savior is now risen and exalted and will give life eternal life to all who trust in him

Jesus is Adam in reverse and thank God that he is because just as Paul says for as in Adam all die so in Christ shall all be made alive and please make sure you realize that you are either in Adam or you're in Christ and if you are in Christ then you shall be made alive you have been made of life you have eternal life and if you want to be in Christ today if you can see the urgency of the need of being in Christ what do you do well it's so beautifully simple to be in Christ all you've got to do is put your faith in him and that's a simple a saying to God I want to be in Christ and nowhere else and God grant that that's the prayer that we're all praying today

Amen let's pray God our Father we thank you for Jesus we know that we are part of Adam's race and that we too are affected by his fall and our own experience is proof of that that sin has left such a terrible mark on this world and on our experience and even on our own hearts but we thank you so much that you have not abandoned Adam's race but you have sent the last Adam Jesus Christ who has come to put everything right and how we praise you for the detail of the salvation that we have in Jesus we thank you so much for everything for his willingness to sweat to take that crown of thorns to be beaten to be stripped to be nailed naked to that tree so that we might be saved and how we thank you for Jesus and oh God we don't want to be anywhere else other than in [33 : 40] Christ and how we thank you for him and grant us all oh God that we would see the emptiness of being in Adam and we would run to you and that we find that fullness that only comes from being in Christ we pray in his name amen