

# Followers of the Way

## Man of sorrows - obedience and the second Adam

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1 Corinthians 15:45-49 & Romans 5:12-19

### "Finding Hope Through The Obedience Of The Man Of Sorrows—The Second Man"

- 1) Eg. The daily news headlines are usually full of despairing circumstances—wars, stabbings, abusive relationships, and etc.
  - a) At the heart of most of these despairing circumstances can be found a direct or indirect link with the fallen, sinful nature of humankind that is manifest through selfishness and greed, hatred and bitterness, jealousy and envy, or a lack of love and total disregard for one's neighbour.
  - b) And some of these despairing circumstances might involve any of us either directly or indirectly.
- 2) But before we are tempted to point a finger of blame at others for the despairing circumstances that affect us in some way, we need to humbly realize that we have all followed in the footsteps of the first man—Adam—who disobeyed God and sinned against Him and fell short of God's intended standard of perfection.
- 3) Adam—whose name is the Hebrew word for "man" or "humankind"—had been commanded by the Lord God, as we read in Genesis 2:17: *"you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*
  - a) But Adam gave-in to the temptation to eat from that tree and to disobey God.
  - b) And as a consequence, as Romans 5:19 declares: *"... through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners..."*
- 4) From this first man—Adam—all of humanity has subsequently inherited Adam's DNA with a fleshy, sinful nature that has a natural tendency to sin and to disobey God's laws and His perfect will for our lives.
  - a) Eg: We can look at the life of any two year old child and see the first man—Adam's DNA being outworked in that child.
    - i) You don't have to teach that two year old child to covet or to be envious of another child's toy—it comes quite naturally to that child.
    - ii) You don't have to teach that child to become upset or to throw a temper tantrum when they don't get their own way—it comes quite naturally to that child.
  - b) And as Romans 5:18 declares: *"Consequently... the result of one trespass (by the first man—Adam) was condemnation for all men..."*
  - c) So each one of us has inherited a fleshy, sinful nature with its tendency to sin against God from this first man—Adam.
- 5) So how can we be rescued from our predicament?
  - a) Humankind needed a new genealogical line.
  - b) And God's answer to the need for a new genealogical line was in sending

a new man—a Second Adam—who was born of the Virgin Mary but who was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

c) Thus this new man or Second Adam would be fully human and fully divine.

6) And this new man or Second Adam would also be known as the Last Adam since He was the end of the genealogical line of the first man, Adam, because the power and condemnation from sin would be broken!

a) This new man or Second Adam, who was to be called Jesus Christ, would be victorious over sin and yielding to the temptation to disobey God's commands.

b) It was at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, which we read about in Matthew 4:1-11, that Jesus was "*led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.*"

c) And the writer to the Hebrews confirms in Hebrews 4:15 that it is in Jesus Christ that "*... we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.*"

d) So Jesus Christ proved Himself to be this new man or Second Adam with a new genealogical line through His obedience to do His Father's will even though He was severely tested and was tempted to sin against His Heavenly Father.

e) And so 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 declares: "*So it is written: 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.*"

7) So we can have hope in the midst of the despairing circumstances of our world because we can be adopted into this new genealogical line.

a) We can be one of those who are born of His Spirit "*who are of heaven*" and who "*bear the likeness of the man from heaven*"—the Second Adam.

b) And Romans 8:15-17 assures us: "*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*"

8) So how can we become one of "*God's children*" and receive "*the Spirit of sonship*"?

a) Since as human beings we are all under the condemnation of sin, we must first get rid of that condemnation.

b) Romans 3:23 and 6:23 declare: "*... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*" AND "*the wages of sin is death...*"

c) But Jesus Christ—through His sacrificial death on the Cross—paid "*the wages*" or penalty for the sin of all mankind so that we might be free from condemnation of sin.

i) Knowing what He must suffer for our sake, Jesus Christ chose to be obedient to His Father's will in paying the price of redemption for all mankind.

ii) On the night before His crucifixion, it was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus prayed, as we read in Mark 14:36: "*'Abba, Father,' he said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me [this cup' was the extreme suffering of a cruel death on a Cross]. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'*"

iii) God's Word declares in Philippians 2:8: "*And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross!*"

iv) Isaiah the prophet had prophesied about *"this cup"* of suffering that Jesus was to endure in: Isaiah 52:13 – 53:5

v) *"By his wounds we are healed"* from the despair and condemnation of sin, *"the wages"* or penalty of which is death—all because of what this *"man of sorrows"* did for each of us through His extreme suffering in taking upon Himself *"the punishment that brought us peace"*

vi) And Romans 5:19 assures us: *"For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."*

d) And it is when we choose to believe and to put our faith in Jesus Christ as the only One who can save us from perishing as a consequence of our sin that we are *"made righteous"* and brought into a right relationship with God.

e) And being free from the condemnation from sin, a holy place is made ready within our heart. We are made ready for this *"second man from heaven"* to make His home within us by birthing His Holy Spirit in us.

i) Jesus declares in John 3:6-8: *"Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

ii) And Jesus goes on to declare in John 14:23: *"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."*

iii) So through our faith alone in Jesus Christ, we become part of His family and a new genealogical line of those who are *"born of the Spirit"* *"who are of heaven"* and who *"bear the likeness of the man from heaven"*—the Second Adam.

9) So what difference does becoming one of those who are *"born of the Spirit"* and who *"bear the likeness of the man from heaven"* make when it comes to obeying God's commands?

a) If we try to obey God's commands by the power of our own fleshy strength, we will fail.

b) We'll find that we will be no different from the Apostle Paul when he wrote in Romans 7:18-24: *"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"*

c) This *"law of sin"* that originates from our fleshy, sinful nature manifests itself in all kinds of self-centred, prejudiced and sinful attitudes and actions.

d) Eg: Doubling or tripling the number of law enforcement officers across the country would still not eliminate this *"law of sin"* that is at work within each of our hearts that causes people to keep on doing the things that they know that they should not do. And they are unable to control their wrong attitudes and actions by the power of their own fleshy strength.

e) Eg: We should not be at all surprised by police officers who themselves find it

difficult or impossible to control their own wrong attitudes and actions because of this “*law of sin*” that is at work within their own hearts.

f) When we come to admit that we, like the Apostle Paul, are “*a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members*” then we, like the Apostle Paul, need to cry out “*What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?*”

g) And the answer is found in “*the law of the Spirit of life*”—that comes from the Second Adam, the “*man of heaven*” who will come to live within us by His Holy Spirit.

h) The Apostle Paul answers his own question — “*Who will rescue me from this body of death*”—in the verses of Scripture that follow in Romans 7:25 and 8:2: “*Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! . . . because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*”

i) God’s Word declares in Colossians 1:27: “*. . . Christ in you, the hope of glory*”—the glory of “*the second man from heaven*” coming to live within us by His Holy Spirit.

j) And when we are tempted to disobey God’s commands through wrong attitudes and actions, the promise of God’s Word to us is this in 1 Corinthians 10:13:

*“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”*

10) What difference does the glory of “*the second man from heaven*” coming to live within us by His Holy Spirit make in our response to those who treat us unjustly?

a) Illus: I received a telephone call a few days ago from someone who was asking if I would pray for them.

i) Someone else had given this person, whom I have never met, my mobile number.

ii) The person who called me, who said that they were a Christian, has worked for a number of years for one of the largest employers in the UK.

iii) But they shared how for the last few years they have been treated in many very unjust ways.

b) So what are we to do, and how should we respond, when we suffer the pain of being treated unjustly in our workplace or in our community? The answer lies in this “*man of sorrows*” working within us by His Holy Spirit so that we “*bear the likeness of the man from heaven*”

c) In dealing with this problem of being treated in unjust ways, the Apostle Peter instructs us in 1 Peter 2:19-24: “*For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”*

i) Healed from condemnation due to our own sin as well as finding healing from the pain of being treated unjustly by the sinful attitudes and actions of others.

ii) Finding healing through this “*man of sorrows*” working within us by His Holy Spirit and who left us an example that we “*should follow in his steps.*”

d) 1 Corinthians 15:45: “*So it is written: ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.*”

e) “*... Christ in you, the hope of glory*”—the glory of “*the second man from heaven*” coming to live within us by His Holy Spirit. (Colossians 1:27)

11) “Finding Hope Through The Obedience Of The Man Of Sorrows—The Second Man”