



April 30, 2023

**Abounding Grace: Belonging
God's Family**

Ephesians 1:3-10

For Discussion and Reflection

1. Look over Genesis 1:26-28. Notice that God commissions Adam: blessing him, commanding him (be fruitful and multiply, subdue the earth, rule over the earth). G.K. Beale calls this, "the first great commission." (Union with the Resurrected Christ, pg. 31) Adam and Eve fail in their task, resulting in the promised descendent from Adam who would take up that commission and fulfill it. Compare that commissioning with the covenants of promise: Noah, Gen. 9:1-7; Abraham, Gen. 22:17-18; Isaac, Gen. 26:4,24; Jacob, Gen. 28:3-4,13-14, 35:11-12; David, 2 Samuel 7:10-16. Did you notice that God is continuing his mission to secure his family?
2. Now consider how Christ, the descendent of Adam, raised from the dead, given "all authority," commissions his people, Matthew 28:18-20. Is Jesus, as Adam, Abraham, and David's promised descendent, raised to fulfill God's commission and mandate to mankind (in Adam)? G.K. Beale says, "It is this commission, which the first Adam failed to carry out, that the last Adam did carry out." (Ibid., p116) How is Christ taking up Adam's commission?
3. Look at Luke's genealogy of Jesus, Luke 3:23-38, focusing on the last verse, "...the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God." Luke does two things: first, he presents Jesus as the son of Adam; second, he presents Adam as the son of God. Why does he refer to Adam as the son of God? Why does he make a point to present Jesus as Adam's descendent? What does this have to do with Adam's commission?
4. Consider Romans 5:15-21. Paul connects the failed work of Adam with the faithful work of Christ. Paul refers to Jesus as, "the last Adam," 1 Corinthians 15:45. Consider how Christ fulfills Adam's mission.
5. Can we bring the thoughts of 1-4 together? Adam, God's son by creation, bearing his image and likeness, representing our race, failed to fulfill his calling to build God's family. Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man, as Paul says, "born of a woman," fulfilled Adam's mission to secure and build God's family. Consider Paul's description of Jesus' work in 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.
6. If Adam and Eve were meant to build God's family, securing them through their obedience, how does Christ fulfill that mission? Consider several passages: Romans 8:12-17, Galatians 4:1-7, Ephesians 1:3-14, Colossians 1:13-20, Hebrews 2:5-18.
7. Read how Peter speaks of Christ's work as the new Adam in 1 Peter 2:4-10, or Paul in Ephesians 2:11-22. How is Jesus building the family of God? How is he expanding it beyond its tribal roots in Abraham?
8. What did you learn today? What is the Spirit teaching you? What does it mean to be in God's family?