

# Ancestral Sin



*Why we struggle*

# Creed

*I. I believe*

*in One God,*

*the Father*

*almighty.*

*Maker of all things visible*

*and invisible.*

# Invisible & Angels

*Maker of all things visible and invisible.*

# Invisible & Angels

- ✦ What is meant by *invisible*?
- ✦ **Spiritual world** where angels belong  
All we cannot see or understand.
- ✦ What are angels?
  - ✦ Incorporeal Spirits, having intelligence, will and power engaged in unceasing praise of God.
  - ✦ Word means **messenger**.  
God sends them to announce **His will**. Gabriel sent to announce to Mary the conception of the Savior.
- ✦ First the invisible realm was created, then angels, then the visible realm.



# Angels

- ✦ Hierarchy of angels
  - ✦ Seraphim, cherubim and thrones illumined by the divine light and partake of divine mysteries of Godhead directly
  - ✦ Dominions, powers, authorities
  - ✦ Principalities, archangels, angels receive illumination by devolution through the higher ranks
  - ✦ There are “*tens of thousands*” or “*thousand thousands*” angels.



# Invisible & Angels

- ✦ Are all Angels good and beneficent?
  - ✦ No. there are also evil angels called devils & demons.
- ✦ How did they become evil?
  - ✦ They were created good but failed to be obedient to God and fell away from His with self-will, pride and malice.
  - ✦ *Apostle Jude says, they are “the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.” (Jude 6)*

# Who is the Devil?

Jesus says: *“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. (Luke 10:18)*

John relates: *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon [snake] and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:7-9)*

# Fall & Salvation

*Genesis gives important story*



# Creation Review



- ✦ God created **all things** visible and invisible out of nothing.
- ✦ The development of His creation appears to have taken place over a **long period** of time.
- ✦ It was **good** and beautiful: God caused every tree **beautiful** to the sight and **good** for food to grow from the ground. (Gen 2:9)
- ✦ **Man** was formed out of what had been created previously, as **pinnacle** of Creation, giving living beings a **living soul** made in the **image and likeness** of God
- ✦ Given the responsibility to be the **steward** over all God's creation.
- ✦ In **direct** communion with God.

# Genesis

- ✦ Story of Genesis shows us what we **were** and what we have **become**.
- ✦ What comes next after the Creation?
  - ✦ Knowing Man needed to be perfected in love with free will, he **demande**d love, to remain in union with Him, with **penalty of death**.
- ✦ What unfolds is part of God's **process** of **perfection** of Man.
- ✦ Enter **serpent** - the tempter: *“Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made.”* (Gen 3:1)



# Genesis

- ✦ Serpent is same “*great dragon [who] was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world*” (Rev 12:9).
- ✦ He who was once the Light-bearer (Lucifer) who fell away from God’s love and became the enemy of all that is good becomes the tempter of Humankind.
- ✦ Evil enters the world not by the will of God but by whom?
- ✦ Humans who fell, beguiled by the Devil, disobeyed God, began believing in themselves rather than God.
- ✦ We are not by nature evil but as all God’s Creation we are “*Very Good*”

# Man created in Paradise in full communion with God.

- ✿ Story takes place in Paradise. What is Paradise like?
  - ✿ A mystical and subtle subject
  - ✿ It existed before the Fall and exists now.
  - ✿ The goal of our earthly life.

# Where is Paradise?



*Saint Paul the Apostle*

*I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into **Paradise** and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. (2Cor 12:2-4)*

- ✿ At the time of Paul, Paradise was beyond earth in the third heaven.

# Paradise

- ✦ *What did man do in Paradise?*
- ✦ *The Lord God took man and put him in the garden of Eden **to till and keep it.** (Gen 2:15)*
- ✦ *Saint Ephraim*  
*The tilling consisted of **keeping the commandments of God...***
- ✦ *Saint Nilus of Sinai*  
***Prayer is the tilling of Paradise.***

# Paradise

- ✦ *In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of learning the knowledge of good and evil. (Gen 2:9)*
- ✦ What was the **Tree of Life**?  
A reward.
- ✦ What was the **Tree of Knowledge**?  
An object of contest and struggle -

Chrysostom

*To show Love of God.*



# Paradise

Man created in paradise in full communion with God.

Saint John Chrysostom

*Before the fall men lived in Paradise **like angels**; they were not inflamed with lust, were not kindled by other passions either, were not burdened with bodily needs; but being created entirely incorruptible and immortal, they did not even need the covering of clothing.*

*Homilies on Genesis 13:4, 15:4*





# Fall of Mankind



*Michelangelo's  
Temptation and  
Fall from the  
Sistine Chapel  
Ceiling.*

*Now the serpent... said to the woman, “Has God indeed said,  
**‘You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?’**”*

*And the woman said..., “We may eat the fruit of the trees of  
the garden; but of the fruit of the **tree** which is in the **middle  
of the garden**, God said, ‘You shall not eat from it, nor shall  
you touch it, **lest you die.**”* (con)

# Fall of Mankind

- ✿ *Then the serpent said..., “You **shall not die** by death. For God knows in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like gods**, knowing good and evil.”*

*So when the woman saw that the tree was **good for food**, was **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree **beautiful to contemplate**, she **took** of its fruit and **ate**. She also gave it to her husband with her, **and he ate**. (Gen 3: 1-6)*

# Fall of Mankind



- ✦ *What happened here?*
- ✦ ***Tempted** to put their own will and desires above God and become god.*
- ✦ *Because of their **pride** they no longer focused on God but on their own needs and desires.*
- ✦ *Made a **created object** their **desire** instead of God.*
- ✦ *Wanted to be their **own god**.*



- Genesis continues the story:
- *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were **naked**; and they sewed fig leaves together and **made** themselves **coverings**. (Gen 3:7)*

# What is the Significance of Hiding Their Nakedness?

Lost glory of God and now only saw lower things of this earth.

**Soul** came under the **domination of the body** and its passions.

Became **Self-centered**.

**Separated** themselves from Spirit.

Lost their dispassion and **began the passionate earthly life.**



# What Was God's Response?



- ✿ Genesis story continues:

*And they heard the sound of the Lord **God walking** in the garden in the cool of the day... Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “**Where are you?**”*

- ✿ “**Where are you?**” What does this indicate?

Indicates **separation** from God and God's immediate searching for them to return.

God is calling for them to **repent**.

See how foundational this idea of repentance is?

# How Did Adam and Eve Respond?



Adam says:

- ✦ *I was **afraid** because I was naked; and I hid myself.”*  
*“The woman whom You gave to be with me, **she gave me** of the tree, and I ate.”*



Eve says:

- ✦ *“The **serpent deceived me**, and I ate.”*

# How Did Adam and Eve Respond?

- ✦ Responded with **self-justification**.
- ✦ Adam blamed Eve
- ✦ Eve blamed the snake.
- ✦ There was **no humility**, no remorse, no repentance.





# What are Consequences of the Fall?

- ✦ We inherited **Death**.
- ✦ *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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.**” (Gen 2:15-17)*
- ✦ What also happens?



# Man lost his home in the Kingdom of God.



*The Lord God said, “Behold, the **man has become like one of Us**, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— therefore the **Lord God sent him out** of the garden of Eden to **till the ground** from which he was taken.*

*So **He drove out** the man; and He **placed cherubim** at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, **to guard the way** to the tree of life.*

*(Gen 3:22-24)*

See God’s mercy?

By not allowing man to live forever in this condition of separation, He sends him on a **path of perfection.**

# The Fall

- ✦ What did they do when expelled?
- ✦ *“Adam sat before Paradise and, lamenting his nakedness, he wept: ‘Woe is me! By evil deceit was I persuaded and led astray, and now I am in exile from glory... now I am in want.”*
- ✦ They had children Able and Cain, but Cain killed his brother out of jealousy.
- ✦ Cain’s descendants soon forgot about God and organized their earthly existence. He built a city.
- ✦ One of his descendants was *“father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle”*, another was *“the father of those who play lyre and pipe,”* yet another was *“the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron.”* (Gen 4:17-22)



# Did God Reject Man?



- ✦ Pursued a life without reliance on God.
- ✦ God did **not** reject man.  
He did not take away His image,  
freedom of his will, nor his reason.  
Man still had **image of God** - tarnished.
- ✦ God desires Man's **perfection**. Called to **cooperate** to  
become in His **likeness**.
- ✦ Needed help of a supernatural power to **overcome death**,  
sin and **return** to a **union with God**.

# Reflect

- ✿ Man created with “*living soul*” in **full communion** with God.
- ✿ Made what is **created** the **object of his desire**.
- ✿ Gave priority to self-centered **pleasure** from things (fruit of the tree) **of this world** rather than following will of his **Creator** - pride.
- ✿ **Separated** from God relying only on **own** will.
- ✿ Brought consequence of **death** upon them and all ancestors who followed.
- ✿ This is what we call **ancestral sin**.  
Condition we inherit **without guilt**.  
Our Fallen nature part of our genetic makeup.

# How does reality of Death impact us?

- ✿ Self-Preservation, fear and anxiety:  
Self-assertion, egoism, hatred, envy.
- ✿ Fear of life becoming meaningless:  
Strive to prove ourselves, seek self-worth, compliments and success, fear insults, envy others success and desire to be liked.
- ✿ Seek security and happiness in wealth, glory and bodily pleasures
- ✿ Zealous over idealistic principles of love yet hate closest neighbor.

# Death A Consequence Not Punishment

- ✦ Fear of death comes from a separation from God and leads us to tendency for sinful actions:

- ✦ Paul says:

*As by one man sin entered into the world, and **death** by sin; and so **death** passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

*(Rom 5:12)*

- ✦ “*For that*” refers to **death** not Adam as some erroneously interpret.

- ✦ Paul also says: *The wages of sin is **death**.* *(Rom 6:23)*

*Last enemy to be destroyed is death* *(1Cor 15:26)*

- ✦ We are sinful because of death not because of guilt from Adam’s sin.



# Guilty of Adam's Sin?

- ✿ The idea of receiving guilt from Adam is **error** & misleading.
- ✿ Issue is **reality of Death** that was a **consequence** of Adam's pride. This is cause of our tendency for sin.
- ✿ We have a **disease** due to our separation from God, our self-centeredness. We need **healing** spiritually.
- ✿ We **do not have guilt** as the result of "Original Sin." Have the fear of death and sickness.
- ✿ With Humility we can become obedient & overcome fear of death and **death itself**.
- ✿ We only owe God our humility with faith & **give priority to His will**.



# Ancestral Sin

- ✦ We are descendants of Adam and take on his nature.
- ✦ Human nature has been infected by sin in general. It is not a passing on of Adam's sin but matter of assuming the consequences of his sin..
- ✦ We have FREE WILL and this means?
  - ✦ We are only responsible for our own sins.
- ✦ We share Adam's sin in that we all share his fallen nature.
- ✦ St. Macarius of Egypt speaks of a "*leaven of evil passions*" and of "*secret impurity and the abiding darkness of passions*", which have entered into our nature in spite of our original purity.
- ✦ Tendency for sin became rooted in human nature so all descendants of Adam have hereditary predisposition to it.

# Ancestral Sin

- ✦ Would it be just to punish the entire human race for Adam's sin?
- ✦ As we will see later there is an atonement for this general nature inherited from Adam in Christ.



Paul writes, “...*As one man's trespasses led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and **life for all men**. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous...so that, as **sin reigned in death**, grace also might reign through righteousness to **eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**” (Rom 5:18-21)*

# Review: Spiritual Message

- ✿ What is our fallen nature inherited from Adam?
  - ✿ Lack humility, pride, we are separated from God.
  - ✿ Live in fear of sickness & death.
  - ✿ Self-centered orientation for seeking pleasures.
  - ✿ Have image and potential to become in His likeness.
- ✿ This is message of the Genesis story:
  - Though Fallen, with humility and love of God, we have potential for perfection.
- ✿ Now in **need of savior** to free us from our enslavement by death and renew our nature to reunite us with God.
- ✿ Our loving God provides this through **Christ Event**.



**Body**



Our Present Condition



*God*

*Soul*

**Body**

Our Natural Condition

# Ancestral Sin

◆ Questions?

# Our Aim

# What is Our Aim?



- **Perfection** - to be reunited with God.
- First, we must have humility by overcoming pride.
- Pride is the wall that separates us from God.
- Root is self-love.
- Before the Fall God was the only object of human love.
- But with desire for “good food” human needs became the focus instead of God. God was no longer omnipresent.
- God remains open for our repentance with His unending love.

# Our Aim

- Requires our **cooperation** but depends on **grace**.
- Through God's grace we gain understanding, deep knowledge and **capability** to carry out His teachings.
- Our spiritual energies and powers are **intensified** to **help others**.
- As we approach His likeness we may experience the uncreated light Christ refers to.



# Theosis is the Aim



- This union we call **Theosis**
- To reach Theosis we first must be **purified** of our pride.
- Purification involves **asceticism** as Paul taught.



*Run is such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is **temperate in all things**. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an **imperishable crown**.*

- ✦ *Therefore **I run thus: not with uncertainty**.*
- ✦ *Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air, but **I discipline my body and bring it into subjection**, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should **become disqualified**. (1Cor*

*9:24-29)*

# Theosis is the Aim



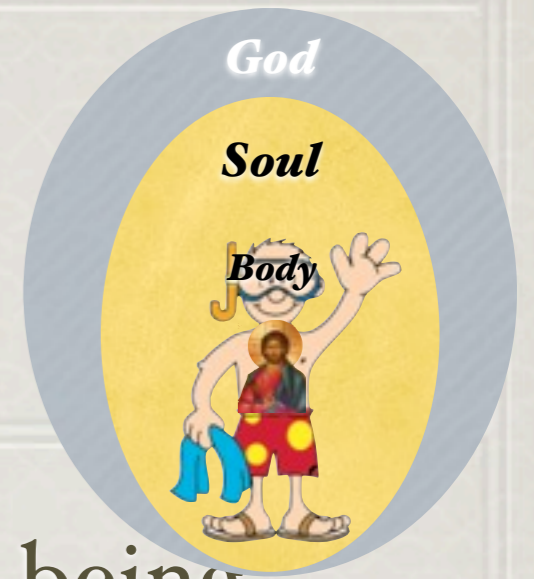
- We are called to “**mature in Christ**” with striving and toil.

To those **God chose** [believers] to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the **glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

- *Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man **mature in Christ.***
- *For this **I toil, striving** with all the **energy** which **He mightily inspires within me.** (Colossians 1:24-29)*
- With humility and faith we become His agents in perfecting Creation.



# Theosis is the Aim



✦ Theosis is

Not about being **legalistically justified** or being declared innocent of our sins.

Not about being “**good**” or “**bad**”.

Not by **adhering to dogma**

About being humble, having faith, taming our passions, coming into **union** with God - discovering silence and the **God within** our heart - knowing **directly** the personal Trinitarian God.

Then we will receive capability through His grace to do His will, becoming obedient as Christ Himself.

# Theosis is the Aim



- Found through a loving relationship with God.
- For most it involves a process of many steps and great discipline.

Relationship we seek is a **personal mystical** one.

The apostle Paul says, “*I live; yet not I, but **Christ lives in Me***” (Gal 2:20)



# Theosis

*Grace is constantly present,  
and is **rooted** in us,  
worked into us like leaven, from our earliest years,  
until the thing thus present becomes **fixed** in a man like a  
natural endowment,  
as if it were **one substance** with him.  
**God visibly fills us, unites Himself with us and  
communes with us.***

Saint Macarius

# Path to Theosis



- How does this path begin?
- Begins with our **Awakening**
  - ✦ We search and discover God.
  - ✦ God reveals Himself.
  - ✦ With humility we believe in the Christ Event
  - ✦ But God is still outside.
- Through **Baptism** or Confession
  - ✦ God enters our soul by His grace and is in living communion with us.
  - ✦ We become part of Him through our membership with the Church Community of Believers

# ORTHODOX WAY OF LIFE

Potential  
Salvation -  
Theosis

God

Likeness  
of God

Grace  
&  
Cooperation

Image  
of God

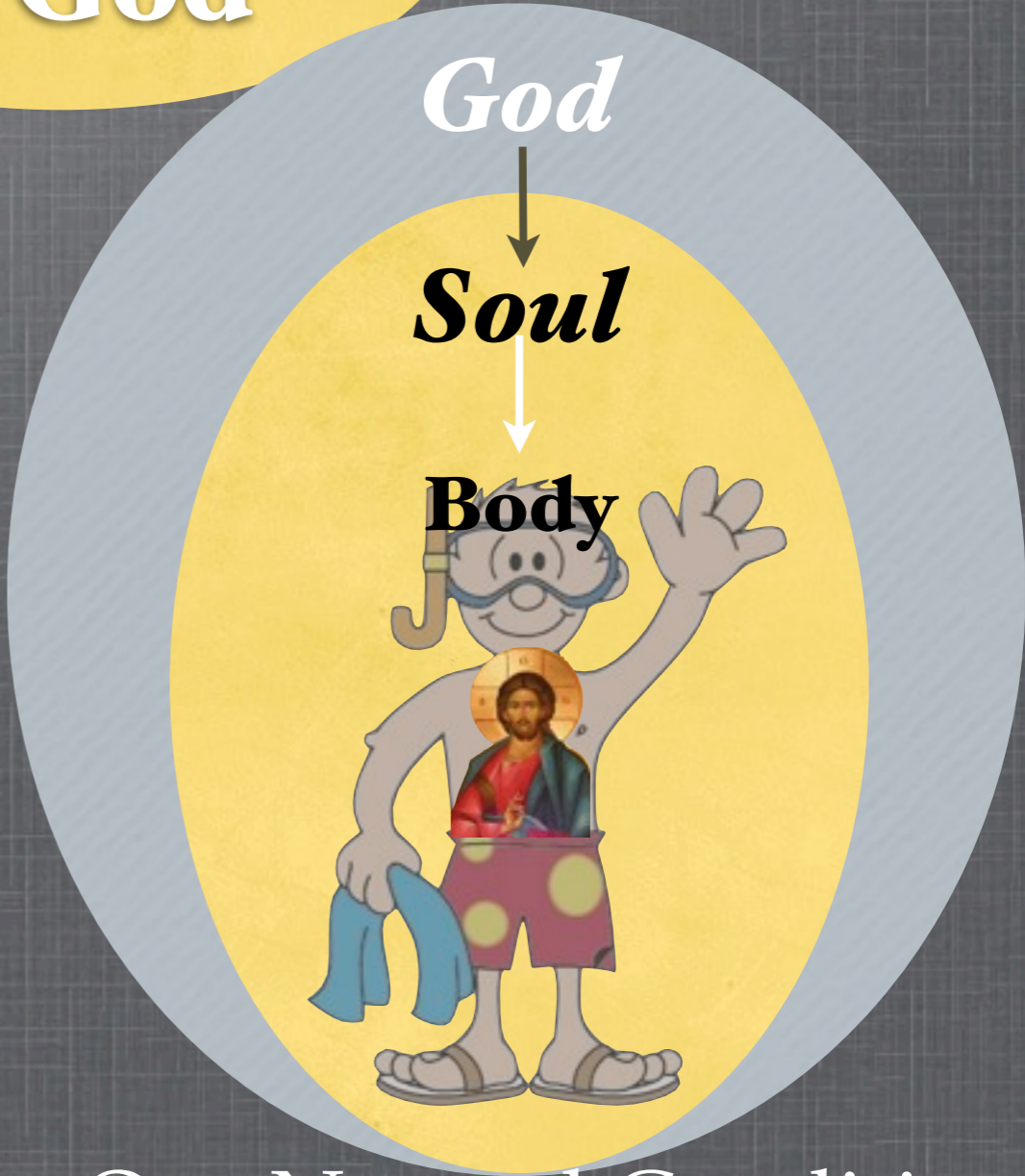
Body  
(Brain)

Soul

Free Will



Our Present Condition



Our Natural Condition

God Prepares the  
Way for Christ Event



# He Prepares the Way



- ✦ God did not abandon, but led Mankind toward salvation.
- ✦ The **Great Flood**.
- ✦ **Race of Abraham** for preservation of piety and faith in True God and the coming Savior.



# He Prepares the Way

- ✦ **Guided Moses** to lead them out of slavery & preserved them in the desert
- ✦ Settled them in land with milk and honey.
- ✦ Made **covenants**.
- ✦ Sent **judges and prophets**
- ✦ Led them **out of captivity** in Babylon.
- ✦ **Prepared a chosen one** to give flesh to the Son of God.



# Prophecies

- ✦ Prophecies where communicated of His coming.
- ✦ Jacob in blessing his son before his death: *“A ruler shall not fail from Judah, not a prince from his loins, until there come the thing stored up for him (in Hebrew there come a reconciler) and he is the expectation of nations”* (Gen 49:10)

# He Prepares the Way

- ✦ **Prophecies** where communicated of His coming.
- ✦ **Moses:** *Thy Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethern, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken* (Deut. 18:15)
- ✦ Jesus also referred to this: *“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me”* (John 5:46)



# Prophecies

- ✦ Numerous other Prophecies
- ✦ Isaiah speaks of the birth of the Messiah from a virgin: *“Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, that is God is with us.”* (Isa 7:14)
- ✦ He foretells the birth of the Child and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him.
- ✦ He speaks with such a power and realism that as only a person who has seen Christ could.



# Great Expectation

- ✿ Time of His coming was given to Daniel by Angel Gabriel.
- ✿ Samaritan woman to Jesus: *“I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things.”* (John 4:25)
- ✿ Also in works of Plato, Plutarch, Virgil, and in history of ancient religions.
- ✿ By the time of Christ the expectation of a Messiah was universal.



# Fullness of Time

- ✦ Conquest of **Alexander the Great** provided a common culture and the Greek language.
- ✦ **Diaspora of the Jews** brought them into contact with pagan peoples.
- ✦ **Septuagint Bible** (In Greek) two centuries before.
- ✦ **Roman empire** united Civilized part of the world.
- ✦ In **fullness of time**, *“The promised and expected Son of God came to earth.”*



# Fullness of Time



- ✿ *“When the fullness of time was come”* (Gal 4:4)
- ✿ When descendent of fallen Adam knew the sweetness of doing good and the bitterness of evil-doing
- ✿ When most of mankind had reached extreme degree of impiety and corruption
- ✿ When the best but smallest part had a great thirst and longing to see the promised Redeemer
- ✿ When the civilized part of the world had been united under Rome.
- ✿ *“The promised and expected Son of God came to earth.”*



# Faith and Works

- ✦ Disagreements stem from a difference over the meaning of sin.
- ✦ Many Protestants assume **sin is like a legal transaction** that affronts God's honor and raises His wrath.

Therefore it is God's anger (wrath) that must be appeased. A "payment" is due....

# Faith and Works

- ✿ We all see through differing glasses.
- ✿ Many Protestants see through the lenses of Martin Luther, Anselm of Canterbury, Augustine, and the error of indulgences in the Roman Church.
- ✿ They ignore all earlier commentaries by early Church Fathers claiming Luther was first to properly understand the teaching of Paul 1500 years later.
- ✿ Reality is that a judicial model is not a constant theme of the Gospel. (Mainly only in Romans and Galatians)
- ✿ Major themes of Gospel are mercy, healing, and love.

# Faith and Works

- ✦ God is not just, but is **good and merciful** and always acts with love towards His creation.
- ✦ Sin is **not a crime** against some divine justice
- ✦ Sin **is a sickness** that destroys man and he needs healing.
- ✦ Christ came **not to heal God's wounded honor**, His honor is without question,  
He came **to heal mankind**.
- ✦ Man sickness stems from **death**, the devil's greatest oppressive force.
- ✦ Christ came to defeat death, to free Mankind from this slavery, and open possibility of renewal and eternal life.

# Ancestral Sin

◆ **Questions?**