



Links Players

Christianity As Worldview | What's Wrong with the World?

NOTE: This series is a slight departure from our typical series. Re: If we are to commend and defend the faith once and for all delivered to the saints, we are, because of the rapidly changing cultural climate and the many worldviews invading the West, duty-bound to understand and communicate the worldview found in Scripture.

But like Adam, they [Judah] transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me. (Hosea 6:7, ESV)

—One well-known celebrity and his notoriously flawed swing made its way to television for all the world to see.

I am not sure what Stan Utley discovered that Hank Haney missed, but Charles Barkley's swing has dramatically improved. Finding the cause has virtually eliminated that nasty hitch in his get-along.

It is not just Charles's swing or our swings that go wrong; something is wrong with the world. One question among many is, "What caused the massive malfunction in our world?"

Nobody likes talking about it, but, from a biblical perspective, the problem is "sin." If we are to get to the root of our broken lives, we must listen to the biblical diagnosis.

Whatever Sir Charles's issue was, it was deeper than first suspected. Humanity's problem is deeper than first suspected, too. While our moral behavior matters profoundly, the issue is deeper still.

The deeper issue behind our behavior is our willful refusal to live under the authority of our King. Like a petulant toddler, we say to God, "You're not the boss of me." The sin issue, however, is deeper still!

Our will determines our behavior, and our nature governs our will. Our nature is corrupt, and that corrupt nature is inherited from Adam. Our sin issue goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden.

As our devotional text shows, Adam broke the covenant with our Creator. A working definition of covenant is a sovereignly initiated relationship in which God promises blessings for obedience and punishments for violations of duty.

God's Covenant with Adam was a Covenant of Works. It went like this:

If you obey, you will be rewarded. If you disobey, you will be punished.

In the covenant between God and Adam, Adam was humanity's representative. Adam's treacherous violation of the covenant brought him and all his offspring [us] under severe punishment.

We tend to balk when we first hear this. We reason, "How is it fair that we are punished for the actions of another?" We typically forget that much of our life is like this.

To illustrate, when any President declares war on another nation, we say, "America is at war." The decision of one man, whether we like it or not, affects us all. Many other illustrations could be offered.

Much of our struggle with this truth stems from a failure to understand that Scripture is an ancient text describing ancient Near Eastern Cultures, especially the Hebrew way of life.

In ancient Near Eastern cultures, particularly in Israel, the idea of radical individualism, as we have in America, would be as strange to them as covenantal structures are to us.

Think of the many covenants in Scripture: Adam's, Noah's, Abraham's, Moses's, David's, and the New Covenant. In each covenant, God related to families and nations through the covenant made with one man—as goes the man, so goes the nation.

Many people, upon learning they are born in Adam and live under the consequences of his disobedience, get angry. When they grasp the flip-side of this truth, everything changes.

Just as the first Adam failed and flung the whole world into ruin, the last Adam "kept covenant" perfectly. God offers the New Covenant of Grace to sinners precisely because Jesus, as Last Adam, kept the Covenant of Works as our Representative.

The choice falls to us! Remain in the First Adam and suffer the consequences of his and our disobedience, or flee to the Second Adam, Jesus, and live in the rewards of his obedience.

As counterintuitive as this may be to the modern mind, from an ancient biblical perspective, there are only two men God considers: the First and the Last Adam. Every person ever born inherits Adam's sinful nature. To reap the benefits of the Last Adam, we must be "born again."

Prayer: Father! Aid us in the power to flee to Jesus and live in the blessings and rewards awarded to Christ in the New Covenant.

READING

Hosea 6:7; Romans 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-10;
Matthew 26:26-29; (optional Galatians 3 and 4).

1. How do you handle a “slump,” that is, when you get a hitch in your get-along, do you forget mechanics and play through it, seek out an instructor, or consider quitting?

2. In the Old Testament, multiple Covenants culminate in the New Covenant in Christ. After reading Romans 5:12-21, discuss the significance of the transition from the First Adam to the Last Adam, Christ Jesus.

3. Application: Wrestle with the challenge of assessing the relevance of ancient covenants from Israel and the New Covenant to our lives today.



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