

Jesus Christ Birth

Grace Fellowship Church

A Child in God's Family

Ambrose Bierce, once said that human birth was "the first and direct of all disasters." Although he was an agnostic, he hit the mark dead on in regard to our human birth. You see, there is a sense in which human birth does share in a "great disaster," because each of us is born into this world with a sinful nature that was passed down from our fathers. In addition, at the moment of our physical birth God inputs to every baby, Adam's original sin that finds its home in our genetically inherited sin nature. This results in our instantaneous spiritual death. It is that spiritual death that is the "first and direct of all disasters," because it means that we have been separated from a relationship with God and without eternal life.

It does not take new parents long to discover this sad fact about their little darlings. As David said in **Psa 51:5**, "**Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.**"

The "great disaster" occurred when our first parents disobeyed God and plunged the whole human race into sin, **Gen 3; Rom 5:12-21**.

Rom 5:12, "**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.**"

God created us in His image, **Gen 1:27**, but we are also born in Adam's image, **Gen 5:3**; and that makes us sinners. The Old Testament story reveals how sinful we really are, because it is "The book of the generations of Adam," **Gen 5:1**. When we were born, we were born into "the Adam family," which is the same as saying; we were born with a sinful nature, **Eph 2:1-3**.

Eph 2:1-3, "**And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.**"

But that is not the end of the story. The Old Testament may be "The book of the generations of Adam," but the New Testament opens with, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," **Mat 1:1**. After our first parents fell, God in his grace started a new family!

It is possible for you and me, Adam's sinful descendants, to be born again and start a brand-new life! The first Adam brought sin and condemnation into the human race, but the Last Adam, Jesus Christ brought righteousness and salvation, **1 Cor 15:45**.

1 Cor 15:45, "**So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.**"

The good news of the gospel is that sinners may be forgiven and experience the miracle of being born again into the family of God through personal faith in Jesus Christ.

And that is why He, Jesus Christ came in His First Advent, born of the Virgin Mary, so He could go to the Cross and take on the sins of the entire world. At the Cross, God the Father imputed to Jesus every sin we would ever commit, including Adam's original sin, He was judged for those sins and paid the penalty for them, so that we would not have to.

Therefore, through the imputation of Adam's original sin to the new born baby, spiritual death results for the child; a great disaster! But also through the imputation of our sins to the sacrificial lamb of God, Jesus Christ, (another great disaster), mankind could have eternal life resulting in a great victory!

Therefore, God became a child in the person of Jesus Christ who paid for our sins. Now that our sins have been paid for, whoever would believe in Jesus Christ and His efficacious work upon the Cross, would be "born again" and receive eternal life, becoming "a child of God."

Let us now examine three aspects of this miracle of the new birth, and discover what it means to be a child in God's family.

Entering the Family, John 3:1-16.

The only way to get into a human family is by birth, and the only way to get into God's family is by birth.

John 3:3, 7, "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see (experience) the kingdom of God. 7...You must be born again."

The term that theologians use for this experience is regeneration, which simply means "born again."

Our Spiritual Parents:

As you know, children must have parents, one male and one female; that is the only way to be born in this world. God's children also have two parents, two spiritual parents that conceive our spiritual birth.

- The first parent is God the Holy Spirit, **John 3:5.**

John 3:5, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

- The second parent is the Word of God, **1 Peter 1:23-25.**

1 Peter 1:23, "For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring Word of God."

The miracle of the new birth takes place when the Spirit of God applies the Word of God to the heart, (right lobe of the soul), of the sinner, and this Word, (the gospel of Jesus Christ), generates faith, **Eph 2:8-9**. The sinner who believes on Jesus Christ, receives new life, and is born again into the family of God, **John 1:12-13**.

John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

In **John 3:7**, Jesus said that we must be "**born of water,**" as well as "**born of the Spirit.**" Does this mean that water baptism is necessary for salvation? No. The phrase "born of water" does not refer to water baptism, because in the Bible, water baptism is associated with death and not with birth. "Born of water" means physical birth, what Nicodemus referred to in **vs. 4**. "Born of water" is the same as "**born of the flesh**" in **vs. 6**. Anyone who is acquainted with human birth knows that water is involved; the baby is "born of water." First, comes the physical birth, and then comes the spiritual birth.

John 1:13 tells us that the new birth is not the result of our own efforts, sincere and religious as they may be. You cannot be born again through your human family connections, or by means of the religious acts that you do, i.e., "the will of the flesh," or the good works that others may do to you or for you, "the will of man." This marvelous spiritual birth can only come from God. The Greek word translated "**again**" in **vs. 3** and **7** is **ANOTHEN** – **ἄνωθεν** that also means, "from above," cf. **John 3:31; 19:11**. Therefore, instead of "born again," we could say, "born from above," which we are, having been entered into the family of God. No earthly, religious ceremony can impart heavenly life. Water baptism was an important testimony of what God has done for us, **Acts 2:41; 10:47**, but it does not save us from sin.

Spiritual Travail:

Human birth involves travail. We thank God for all the modern scientific equipment in the obstetrics ward of the hospital, but the mother must still travail if the child is to be born. One doctor said, "Never forget that mothers go down into the valley so that their children can come into the world." It is a sobering thought!

But similarly, our Lord Jesus Christ had to travail in death on the Cross, so that we might experience our new birth, **Isa 53:11; John 3:14-16**.

Isa 53:11, "As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities."

John 3:14-16, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; ¹⁵so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal

life. ¹⁶For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

The new birth is all of grace. It is free, but it is not cheap. It is the most costly gift you could ever receive, because it cost the pain, suffering, and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The “Birthmarks” Of God’s Children:

Can a person really know that he or she is a child in God’s family? Of course! The First Epistle of John was written to assure believers that they are the children of God, **1 John 5:11-13**.

1 John 5:11-13, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. ¹³These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

Seven times in this letter, the Apostle John uses the phrase “**born of God.**” If you put these statements together, you discover four “birthmarks” of the true believer:

- Practicing righteousness and not sin, **1 John 2:29; 3:9.**
- Loving God and other believers, **1 John 4:7; 5:1.**
- Overcoming the world, **1 John 5:4.**
- Overcoming the devil, **1 John 5:18.**

John was not suggesting that God’s children never sin. The tense of the verbs in **1 John 2:29 and 3:9** literally means, “everyone that practices (**POIEO – ποιέω**) righteousness” and “does not practice sin.” God does not want his children to sin at all, **1 John 2:1**; but if they do sin, He has made provision for their cleansing, **1 John 1:9**. Christians are not people who are sinless, but who do sin less. The focus of their life is toward godliness and obedience.

Along with these “birthmarks,” the believer has the witness of God’s Word, **1 John 5:9-13**, and the witness of God’s Spirit, **Rom 8:9, 14-17**.

Rom 8:14-15, “For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

These two witnesses are like “spiritual birth certificates” that assure us we are God’s own children.

Therefore, we see that Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago, who is God, chose to become man through the virgin birth. That little baby boy born in the manger in Bethlehem was born so

that He could arrive at the Cross. And through our faith in Him, we too become the children of God. That is what we celebrate!

By way of summary we have noted:

Entering the Family, John 3:1-16. The only way to get into a family, human or God's, is by birth.

John 3:3, 7, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see (experience) the kingdom of God. You must be born again."

Our Spiritual Parents:

- The Holy Spirit, **John 3:5.**
- The Word of God, **1 Peter 1:23.**

Spiritual Travail: Our Lord Jesus Christ had to travail in death on the Cross so that we might experience our new birth, **Isa 53:11; John 3:14-16.**

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Now that we have noted the concept of entering the "Family of God," we will understand two more aspects of being in "the Family of God." And keep in mind, that because we have been blessed to be born in the "Church Age" dispensation, also known as "The Age of Grace," we have the unique qualification of being part of "The Royal Family of God," **1 Peter 2:9; James 2:8.**

We will now note the next concept of being "Children in the Family of God" by noting how we should be:

Enjoying the Family God.

Our heavenly Father is the one **"who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy," 1 Tim 6:17.** To look at some Christians, you would never suspect that the word "ENJOY!" is even in the vocabulary of the Bible! Well, it is; and those who are God's children and really understand all that their Heavenly Father has given to them, will radiate His joy, (+H) through their lives. It is sad to see when Christians mill around in life down trodden, with doom and gloom hanging over them. That is not what God has designed for you, regardless

of your means or circumstances in life. That is why we need to understand the blessings the Father wants His children to enjoy!

Enjoying the Family Freedom, Rom 8:12-18; Gal 5:1.

Gal 5:1, "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery."

Then in **Rom 8:12-18**, it describes a special relationship with the Father called "**adoption**," which must not be confused with the type of adoption we have today in the Western world. As we noted in our recent study of the Book of Galatians, especially **chapter 4:1-11**, this adoption is the act of God; whereby, He gives each of His children an adult status and standing in the family the instant he or she is born again. You do not get into God's family by adoption but by regeneration. Why? Because an adopted child does not have the same nature as his adoptive parents. Yet we, God's children, have God's own nature, because we have been born of God's Spirit, **2 Peter 1:4**.

2 Peter 1:4, "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

Adoption has to do with our standing in the family. It simply means that God treats us as adults, not as babes, and gives us adult privileges.

For example, a baby does not even know he is a baby, and he certainly does not know his own parents. Even if a baby did know his own father, he would not be able to speak to him. But God's children know they are God's children! They not only know who their Father is, but they are able to speak to him and call him "Abba (Papa), Father!"

For the most part, children live in bondage and fear until they are old enough to care for themselves; but God's children are free from both bondage and fear.

Why does God adopt His children and give them an adult standing in the family? So that they will have the freedom to draw upon all of His resources and grow into mature sons and daughters. We are free to walk with Him and talk with Him, free to hear His Word and follow His Spirit. Even though we constantly need to grow, we do so in a family atmosphere of freedom and grace, not bondage and law.

Enjoying the Family Food:

As you know, in most cultures, the family sits around a table and enjoys food bought and prepared by the parents. This food is very important for the child to grow and be healthy. If children are to grow, they must have food; and God has provided His Word as our spiritual nourishment, **Jer 15:16; Job 23:12**.

Job 23:12, "I have not departed from the command of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."

Jer 15:16, "Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts."

God's Word is also compared to being bread, **Mat 4:4, "milk," 1 Peter 2:2, "meat," Heb 5:12-14; 1 Cor 3:1-2,** and "honey," **Psa 119:103.**

Mat 4:4, "But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

1 Peter 2:2, "Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."

As we learn God's Word, the truth is "digested" inwardly, and we receive strength, **Josh 1:6-9.** This is what we call the metabolization of Bible Doctrine.

Josh 1:8-9, "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. 9"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

As babes, we received the milk or "the basics" of God's Word, (the gospel and elementary principles of Rebound, Faith Rest, eternal life, etc.), from our loving caretakers, Pastor-Teachers, **1 Thes 2:7-8.** But as we grow spiritually, we then need to feed on the meat or solid food of God's Word, "advanced doctrines," which too is prepared for us by our Pastor-Teacher. In all phases of our spiritual growth, the Word of God is like honey, sweet to the taste and enjoyable to eat, as we enjoy the full diet of God's Word that results in our inner peace and happiness, +H, the Joy of God.

Enjoying the Family Fortune:

When we were born the first time, "born of the flesh," we were born poor slaves; but when we were born the second time, "born of the Spirit," we were born rich sons. This is the contrast between Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, the slave and the heir, **Gal 4:21-31.** If we continued to be slaves, we could never inherit our Father's fortune. But because God has given His children an adult standing through adoption, we can claim His wealth as our own and use it for His glory, because we are "**heirs of God," Rom 8:15-17.**

Rom 8:16-17a, "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ..."

What kind of wealth does the Father share with us?

"The riches of His grace." We begin with **Eph 2:7**, "the riches of His grace," keeping in mind that our Father is as **1 Peter 5:10** tell us, "**the God of all grace,**" and our Bible is as **Acts 20:32** tells us, "**The Word of His grace,**" and the Holy Spirit is as **Heb 10:29** tells us, "**The Spirit of grace.**" Likewise, God's throne used to be a throne of judgment to us, but now it is a "throne of grace" where we can as **Heb 4:16** tells us, "**find grace to help in time of need.**"

As **John 1:16** tells us, "**For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.**" Or as the NIV puts it, "**From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another.**" That is why it is important that God's children study His Word and get to know all the grace that is available to you through Jesus Christ.

"The riches of His mercy." Not only do we share the "riches of His grace," but we also share as **Eph 2:4**, tells us, "the riches of his mercy." There is a difference between grace and mercy; God in His mercy does not give us what we deserve, and in His grace, He gives us what we do not deserve.

Lam 3:22, "**It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.**" Therefore, God's children experience **Psa 23:6**, "**goodness and mercy,**" each day of our lives as God is loving and patient with the sinners that we are.

"The riches of His glory." Spiritual commodities like "grace" and "mercy" may seem rather nebulous to us, especially when it comes to paying our bills and keeping life going. But remember, God knows our daily needs and has provided for us "the riches of His glory." He has given us this promise to claim them, **Phil 4:19**, "**But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.**" It means that God will provide all of our daily needs through His Logistical Grace blessings. In that we must remember that God does not satisfy our "greed's," but he does supply our needs, **Mat 6:19-34**.

"The riches of His wisdom." "The riches of God's wisdom" are available to the child of God when God's children need to make decisions, **Rom 11:33**. God's Word that we have learned will lead us to make good and righteous decisions on a consistent basis. That is why it is important to have **EPIGNOSIS – νιγνωσις** doctrine resident within your soul, because we need God's Word resident within our souls, in order to use His wisdom correctly and make good decisions.

James 1:5, "**If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.**"

"The riches of His goodness." Finally, God's children can draw upon **Rom 2:4**, "the riches of His goodness." **Psa 100:5**, tells us, "**For the Lord is good.**" **Psa 31:19** tells us, "**How great is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You, which You have wrought for those who take refuge in You, before the sons of**

men!" As **James 1:17** also tells us, God is the source of every good and perfect gift, and we can trust Him to give what is right, in the right way, and at the right time.

James 1:17, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow."

So, these are the riches of God that He freely gives to His children in time. And there are even greater riches waiting for you in the eternal state. So, no matter how you look at it, God's children are rich indeed!

Enjoying the Family Fellowship:

As children in God's family, we belong to each other, and we need each other. God does not want His children to live in isolation, **Eccl 4:9-12**. This is one reason why our Lord established His church on earth: It is a living fellowship, in which His children can worship Him in unity, witness of His grace, and encourage one another in the things of eternity, cf. **1 Cor 12:14-26**.

In the Greek language, the word "fellowship," **KOINONIA – κοινωνία** means, "**to have in common;**" and the children of God have much in common. They share the same life, the same Word, the same love for Christ, the same concern for a lost world, and the same desire to glorify God.

One of the first symptoms of a weakening fellowship with the Father is a believer's carelessness about fellowship with God's people.

Heb 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," is a commandment from God, and we should obey it.

The first Christians in **Acts 2:44-47, "Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."**

This reminds me of a nice story given to me several years ago by my friend and fellow believer, John Woodford. It speaks to the importance of our fellowshiping together. It reads, "a pastor in a country church heard that one of his parishioners was going about announcing that he would no longer be attending church services stating that he could communicate just as easily with God by himself at home in the comforts of his home as his place of worship. One cold winter evening the Pastor called on this reluctant member of his church for a friendly visit. The two men sat by the fireplace making small talk, but avoided the issue of church attendance. After some time, the Pastor took the tongs from the rack next to the fireplace and pulled a single coal from the fire. He placed the glowing ember on the hearth. The two men watched as the coal quickly ceased burning and turned an ashen gray while the other coals in the fire continued to burn brightly. The Pastor remained silent. Then the parishioner said, "I'll be at church next Sunday."

Fellowship means that we are concerned about one another. In fact, the phrase “**one another**” is used nearly fifty times in the New Testament to describe how believers should minister to each other. “**Love one another**” is repeated at least a dozen times, e.g., **John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; Rom 13:8; 1 Thes 3:12; 4:9.**

In that, we are also commanded to: submit to one another, **Eph 5:21**; encourage one another, **1 Thes. 4:18**; care for one another, **1 Cor 12:25**; forgive one another, **Eph 4:32**; and edify one another, **Rom 14:19; 15:2**, to name but a few.

Fellowship involves sharing ourselves with others.

Roy Hession wrote in “The Calvary Road”, p. 22, “*The only basis for real fellowship with God and man is to live out in the open with both.*”

Enjoying the Family Fashions:

God’s children have taken off the filthy garments of sin and have put on the garments of God’s grace, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, **Gen 3:7, 21; Isa 61:10; 64:6; 2 Cor 5:21.**

We have as **Col 3:9-10** tells us, “**Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, ¹⁰and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.**” **Col 3:1-14** describes the “family fashions” for the Christian, the garments of grace that the inner person ought to be wearing.

Just as Jesus commanded the grave clothes to be removed from Lazarus in **John 11:44**, so too should we put off, by faith, the grave clothes of our old life. After all, we share God’s life; and nobody will believe that we are alive, if we do not dress like it!

Enjoying the Family Future:

God’s family is the only family that has a future hope, for there is no hope for the unbeliever in Adam’s family, **Eph 2:12**. Yet, we have a living hope, **1 Peter 1:3-4**, because we trust a living Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-4, “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.**”

As we speak our Lord is preparing a home in heaven for His people, and He will return to take us there, **John 14:1-6**. One day we shall see Him and become like Him, **1 John 3:1-3!**

Nobody knows when the Lord will return, but when He does, He will gather His family together, the living and the dead, and take them to glory, **1 Thes 4:13-18**. What a future!

When you consider the joys that God's children can experience, and we have not begun to consider all of them, you wonder about two things: 1) Why more Christians are not rejoicing in their wonderful position in the family, and 2) Why more unsaved people are not anxious to get into the family and start enjoying abundant life in Christ.

Perhaps if the children of God were more satisfied and joyful, the children of this world might want to trust Christ and be born again. How we live is as much a witness as what we say.

Enlarging the Family

When our Lord met the unbelieving Saul on the road to Damascus, He identified the great commission He was appointing Saul to undertake. This same commission is also ours, having been appointed to the Family of God.

Acts 26:18, "To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."

This verse is the greatest example of the true essence of the message of a disciple of Jesus Christ in all of the New Testament. God's first sovereign work of grace is summed up in the words, **"that they may receive forgiveness of sins."** The only sign that a person is saved is that he has received something from Jesus Christ. Our job as workers for God is to open people's eyes so that they may receive forgiveness of sin, and therefore salvation.

When a person is born again, he knows that it is because he has received something as a gift from the Almighty God and not because of his own decision. Salvation means that we are brought to the place where we are able to receive something from God on the authority of Jesus Christ, namely, forgiveness of sins. This is followed by God's second mighty work of grace: **"an inheritance among those who are sanctified."** In sanctification, the one who has been born again deliberately gives up his right to himself to Jesus Christ, and identifies himself entirely with God's ministry to others.

You see, God wants His family to grow. And His children are the ones to accomplish that growth by witnessing for Christ and pointing others to the Savior. Whether you are a new believer or have been a believer for years, it is part of your job as a Christian. New believers may not be ready to serve as teachers or spiritual leaders in the church, **1 Tim 3:6**, but they can be faithful witnesses who share the gospel, **Acts 1:8**.

Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

A witness is simply somebody who tells others what he has seen or heard, As Peter and John noted in **Acts 4:20**, **"For we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."**

I have been called to witness in a court room only once, and I discovered very quickly that the judge was not interested in my opinions on the case, only the facts. All he wanted me to do was to tell what I really knew from my own personal experience. Too many Christians think that they are prosecuting attorneys or judges, when God has called all of us to be witnesses.

But the fact is, every believer is a witness for Christ, to the unbelieving world, as we are Ambassadors of Christ, **2 Cor 5:18-21**, chosen by God. And we fulfill that appointment by sharing the Word of God and trusting the Spirit of God to lead sinners to personally receive Jesus Christ.

We may not always have the privilege of personally leading each person to Christ that we witness to, but we can prepare the way for others. Witnessing is like farming, it is a cooperative effort. One plows, one sows, one waters, and God is the one who bring forth the harvest, **1 Cor 3:6-10; John 4:31-38**.

1 Cor 3:6-10, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. ⁸Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. ¹⁰According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it."

John 4:37-38, "For in this case the saying is true, 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸"I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor."

It is interesting to examine the statistics recorded in the Book of Acts. About 120 believers met in the Upper Room for prayer after our Lord's ascension, **Acts 1:15**. Three thousand were converted at Pentecost, **Acts 2:41**, and later the number grew to be about five thousand, **Acts 4:4**. Day by day, believers were added to the Lord, **Acts 5:14**, so much so that the apostles had to appoint assistants to help them, **Acts 6:1 ff**.

Act 6:7, "And the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

If we are to help enlarge God's family through our witness, we must first be sure that we are filled with the Spirit of God; because it is only through His power that our witnessing glorifies God and brings true conviction to sinners, **Acts 1:8; John 16:8-11, cf. 1 John 1:5-10**.

Through the filling of God, the Holy Spirit, we speak of the things we have seen and heard, (i.e., experienced personally), about the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Certainly, God wants us to share our personal experience of salvation, but remember that He can only use that experience as it is related to the Word of God, and as it magnifies the Son of God.

Second, we must sincerely desire to win the lost. Witnessing for Christ is not something we turn on and off, like a TV set. Every believer is a witness at all times, either a good one or a bad one. We are in full time Christian service. And a burden for the lost keeps us asking God to make us good witnesses for Jesus Christ. If we start each day yielding ourselves to the Lord, **Rom 12:1-2**, and seeking His blessing, He will use us to share the gospel with others.

Rom 12:1-2, "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."

This leads to the third principle: As witnesses, we must keep in constant fellowship with the Lord so that we have something fresh to share. That means we need to be learning the Word of God consistently. The Holy Spirit testifies to us through the Word so that we may bear witness joyfully **John 15:26-27**.

John 15:26-27, "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, ²⁷and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

If we are prepared, we can then use these opportunities wisely, when He opens the way. It is not necessary to have a "canned sales pitch" ready to go. The Spirit gives us the words we need, when we need them, if we are praying and walking in the Spirit. Jesus adapted His approach as He witnessed to people, and we should follow His example.

Our final and fourth principle is: We need to "follow up" with the new believers we have helped to lead to the Lord. After their salvation, we now help them grow in the Lord. After all, that is what any family is for: to love, protect, and nurture the new babies so they can successfully mature.

There is a sense in which the child of God becomes a "spiritual father" to his fellow believers who he has led to Christ; first bringing others into the family of God and then nurturing their faith, **1 Cor 4:14-15**.

Paul stated to the Corinthians in **1 Cor 4:14-15**, **"I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. ¹⁵For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel."**

Just as the Pastor, as a "spiritual father," sometimes needs to warn the children, **1 Cor 4:14**, discipline them, **1 Cor 4:17-21**, encourage them, **1 Thes 2:10-12**, feed them, **1 Cor 3:1-3**, and protect them from false teachers, **2 Cor 11:1-5**, so too does the ambassador for Christ who has led someone to salvation. This is not an easy job, and each member of the family needs to help.

In Summary: To be an effective witness for Christ:

- Be filled and led by the Holy Spirit.
- Have a sincere heart to win the lost, having a yielded heart towards the Lord's service.
- Be consistent with your intake of Bible Doctrine, having fresh material for the Holy Spirit to work with.
- Follow up with the new believers and be a "spiritual father" to them.

In Summary of our overall topic of being a child in the Family of God:

Three Questions:

- Have you entered the family of God, and do you have full assurance that you are His child?
- Are you enjoying being in his family as you draw upon all the privileges that are yours in Christ?
- Are you helping to enlarge the family by witnessing for Christ as the Lord gives you opportunity?

The Importance of Jesus Being Born in the Likeness of Adam

One of the important Doctrines of Scripture and the gospel is the substitutionary spiritual death that Jesus Christ suffered on the Cross for the entire world. His spiritual death on the Cross, signified when He cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me," propitiated the righteousness and justice of God the Father in regard to the penalty of sin in the human and angelic races, **2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:8; Col 1:19-20.**

Phil 2:8, "Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

2 Cor 5:21, "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Col 1:19-20, "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

In order to be our substitute and pay the price for our sins, Jesus had to be like us, true humanity, and as you know, He became man through the virgin birth. Likewise, to be the substitute for the entire human race, Jesus had to also come in the form of the head of the human race, Adam. As Adam was created in perfection, (i.e., without sin or sin nature), Jesus too had to come into this world without sin or a sin nature, and then remain perfect to qualify as our substitute on the Cross.

It is the fact that Jesus came in the form of Adam that inspired this study. Therefore, we will note all of the instances the name "Adam" is used in the New Testament. I think you will find these fascinating in regard to the story it unfolds, as well as give you a sense of awe at the omniscience of God, in regard to the Holy Spirit's inspiration of the Scriptures.

Adam is mentioned in 7 verses in the New Testament, **Luke 3:38; Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:22; 45; 1 Tim 2:13, 14; Jude 1:14.**

The first mention of Adam in the New Testament is in **Luke 3:38** where we have the genealogy of the humanity of our Lord through Mary.

- **Luke 3:23, 38, "When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli (Mary's father)³⁸the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God."**

The context of this passage is to prove the blood line of Jesus Christ from Adam through Mary. We not only see that Jesus Christ came in the flesh from Adam, but that God was the creator of Adam, and therefore his father, so too is Jesus Christ in His humanity a son of God, just as Adam was, and just as you and I are too.

Mark 1:1, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Mark 15:39, "When the centurion, who was standing right in front of Him, saw the way He breathed His last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!""

Right away we see that Jesus Christ became true humanity in the likeness of Adam as a son of God, which is also in the likeness of every member of the human race. Therefore, He could be a substitute for the sins of the "entire world", (i.e., every member of the human race), because He is just like Adam and you and I; a man. Being of like kind is the first qualification Jesus had to accomplish to propitiate the righteousness and justice of God the Father regarding our sin.

And interestingly when we look at numerology, the number one in Scripture represents "unity;" therefore, Jesus Christ became one of us so that we could be "in union with Him."

- **Rom 5:14, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."**

The second time Adam is mentioned is in **Rom 5:14**, and is mentioned two times, (the number of division). The first principle we note in this verse is that "death reigned" beginning with Adam. Here we note that as Adam chose to sin (being disobedient to God's Word) in the Garden of Eden, **Gen 3:6**, it resulted in his spiritual death, (meaning division or separation from a spiritual relationship with God), signified by 1) "knowing that he was naked," and 2) as foretold by our Lord in **Gen 2:16-17**, that death would occur if he ate the forbidden fruit. This is what is called a real spiritual death. Adam actually died spiritually when he committed the first sin, eating the forbidden fruit.

The "reigning" of death means that sin is now the ruler of man's soul, not the human spirit. This reign remains in man, unless he accepts Christ as his Savior.

Notice also that Eve was not yet created, making it Adam's responsibility to pass down the information to his wife and protect her with the Word of God, yet he failed in this area. As a result, they both died, not physically but spiritually, as noted in the facts that, 1) They remained alive after eating the forbidden fruit, and 2) The Lord clothed them with skins made from a slaughtered / sacrificed lamb, **Gen 3:21**, (i.e., He covered their nakedness/sin). This was the first and a beautiful picture of the substitutionary saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross.

The next principle made of this verse is the fact that Adam's real spiritual death would be passed down from generation to generation, "death reigned from Adam to Moses." This is the

result of Adam's original sin, in that the sin nature was now part of his flesh, and would be passed down through the male from generation to generation. Therefore, at conception, the male passes down the sin nature. Then when every baby is born, God imputes Adam's original sin to that new baby, because it has a "home" or "holding place" to receive it. The result of the imputation of Adam's original sin to the genetically passed down Old Sin Nature (OSN) is real spiritual death for all of mankind at the moment of our birth.

That is why it was so important for our Lord to be conceived, not by man, but by the Holy Spirit, **Mat 1:20; Luke 1:35**. The virginity of Mary was important to demonstrate that Jesus did not have a human father, and therefore no genetically passed down sin nature at birth. As a result, there was no "home" for the imputation of Adam's original sin. Therefore, Jesus was born spiritually alive, perfect and impeccable, just like Adam was created.

Interestingly, as Joseph and Mary could find **"no room at the inn"** for the birth of Christ, **Luke 2:7**, Jesus had no room for the imputation of Adam's original sin.

The third principle of this verse tells us that Adam was "a type of Him who was to come", (i.e., Jesus Christ). That means that just as Adam was created in perfection, Jesus was born in perfection, spiritually alive in the likeness of Adam's creation. Jesus then entered the world as Adam did and was under the same code as he; one sin would remove that perfection and cause real spiritual death. This began the process of Jesus' earthly walk to prove the power of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, in order to remain without sin, thereby qualifying Him to be our substitutionary sacrifice.

- **1 Cor 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."**

This is also noted in **Rom 8:17**, **"For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ."**

There are two categories of spiritual death in human history, 1) The Real Spiritual Death of Adam and the human race, that means total depravity, total separation from God, and total helplessness to attain a relationship with God on the basis of any human function, and 2) The Substitutionary Spiritual Death of the humanity of Jesus Christ on the Cross being separated from God in a state of total perfection and impeccability. Only the perfect, impeccable humanity of Jesus Christ became our substitute when he received the imputation and judgment for all sins in the history of the human race, down to the last sin of the Millennium.

Rom 5:8, **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

Rom 8:3, **"For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh."**

1 Peter 2:24, "And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

In **1 Cor 15:22**, our third comparison, (the number of Divine Perfection), between Adam and Jesus is in regard to the believer's resurrection to eternal life, **"all will be made alive."** Here we are told by whom we receive eternal resurrection life, which is Jesus Christ.

The first half of this verse tells us that **"in Adam all die."** This refers to what we just noted above, the passed down sin nature coupled with the imputation of Adam's original sin that results in our spiritual death at the moment of our physical birth. We are brought into this world spiritually dead. As long as any member of the human race remains solely in their Adamic state, by not believing in the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, they will remain spiritually dead and not have eternal life.

Yet, in the second half of this verse we have the contrast that tells us if we are **"in Christ"** we will be made alive, which means born again spiritually to eternal life, **John 3:3, 16-18**, where one day we will receive our final resurrection bodies.

To be **"in Christ"** is the result of your faith in the God/man Jesus Christ's work on the Cross for the atonement and forgiveness of your sins. From the moment you believe upon Christ, you are born again to a new spiritual and eternal life. As a result, you will receive a resurrection body to use for all of eternity, **Rom 2:21, "For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead."** Cf. **1 Cor 15:51-56; 1 Thes 4:14-17.**

1 Thes 4:14-17, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."

- **1 Cor 15:45, "So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit."**

The fourth (the number of God's creative work and material completeness) mention of **"Adam"** tells us of the difference between our physical (Adamic natured) bodies compare to our resurrection (Christ natured) bodies that we will receive in heaven.

The preceding three verses in **1 Cor 15:42-44** compare and contrast the two types of bodies the believer will have, natural versus spiritual. The natural human body is said to be, "perishable, dishonorable, and weak: earthy." Whereas, the resurrection body will be, "imperishable, glorified (honorable), and powerful: heavenly."

In **1 Cor 15:45**, we have received this perishable, dishonorable, and weak earthly body from Adam who was created by God and is called a "living soul," yet from Christ we receive an imperishable, honorable, and powerful heavenly resurrection body, also created by God.

Once again, we see that if we remain in our Adamic nature, we will only have soul life which is condemned to eternal judgment in the Lake of Fire, **Rev 20:11-15**, yet if we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior (the life-giving spirit), this natural body will put on a spiritual body suited for living in heaven with God for all of eternity that is "imperishable, glorified, and powerful."

Summary:

Thus far we have seen in the comparison between Adam and Jesus that they both are true humanity and "sons of God." Being just like man, Jesus was qualified to be our substitute for the payment of the penalty of our sins. Being qualified, He suffered the substitutionary spiritual death for our sins on the Cross. Because of Adam's original sin, death reigns in man, meaning the sin nature controls his soul, unless He believes in Jesus Christ and His covering substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross. In addition, through Christ, we receive an eternal resurrection life, and in heaven, we will receive a resurrection body that will be "imperishable, glorified (honorable), and powerful." All of this, and the things we will note in our comparison next week, are a result of Jesus Christ being born in the likeness of Adam.

- **1 Tim 2:13, "For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve."**

The context of **1 Tim 2** is authority orientation. This verse tells us of Adam's headship over the woman in marriage, with the understanding that Adam was created by God first and then Eve, coming from Adam's rib, cf. **Gen 2:7, 21-23**. In the typology of Adam foreshadowing Christ, we understand this verse in conjunction with **Eph 5:23-24** that tells us that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, and therefore we are His bride.

Eph 5:23-24, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything."

As the previous New Testament verses about "Adam" pointed to Christ for our salvation and subsequent resurrection, these verses tell us about living the spiritual life post salvation with Christ as the authority over our lives. Five being the number of grace in scripture which tells us of God's provision for our salvation and spiritual walk post salvation.

Therefore, just as the wife is to be in subjection to her husband, if she wants to live a relatively tranquil and happy life, then all believers must place themselves in subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ, if we want to have a truly tranquil and happy life too.

This means we must learn God's Word, which is the mind of Christ, **1 Cor 2:16**, and apply it (i.e., be in subjection to it) on a consistent basis. Just as the woman should seek counsel and approval from her husband before making big decisions in life, so too should the believer seek out Christ by His Word (and pray to the Father), before making decisions in life.

The word of God is alive and powerful and available for our every need in life, giving us guidance and protection. It is our guidebook to living the unique spiritual life while here on earth; that is grace! If we are obedient to it, we will have a good life, but if we step out on our own as Eve did, we will have trouble.

- **1 Tim 2:14, "And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression."**

This verse takes us back to our first point in **Gen 2:17**, where Adam was first given God's command to not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and was supposed to protect the woman by instructing her of the doctrine and watching over her application of it, thereby guarding her soul and well-being, in which he failed.

Because of Adam's failure, the woman was left to her own when the temptations of the serpent appeared. Because she did not have the proper protection, she was easily deceived and fell into sin. This shows us the weakness of mankind when we are left to our own human resources. Without the power and protection of God's Word in our soul, we are easy prey for the temptations of Satan and our sin natures.

E.W. Bullinger, in his book, "Number in Scripture" says about the number six, "Six is either 4 plus 2, i.e., man's world (4) with man's enmity to God (2) brought in: or it is 5 plus 1, the grace of God made of none effect by man's addition to it, or perversion, or corruption of it; or it is 7 minus 1, i.e. man's coming short of spiritual perfection. In any case, therefore, it has to do with man; it is the number of imperfection; the human number; the number of MAN as destitute of God, without God, without Christ."

And that is what happened to Adam and the woman when they stepped out on their own. The principle here is that when we are left to our own ways and means, we will be tempted and easily fall into sin, which God does not want for us, and through the actions of the woman in the garden, God is warning us to NOT leave ourselves out in the cold and instead have authority orientation by picking up and putting on the full armor of God found in His Word, cf. **Eph 6**, so that we have protection from the evil serpent and his cosmic system, as well as our own OSN. When we do, we are exercising Faith-Rest, **vs. 15**, and will not fall easily into sin.

Therefore, when we are oriented to the authority of Jesus Christ by the intake and application of Bible Doctrine post salvation, we will not be easily deceived by the temptations of Satan's cosmic system or our own Old Sin Nature. But without it, operating in our human / Adamic nature, we are defenseless in the spiritual life.

- **Jude 1:14, "And it was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones."**

Interestingly, this discussion about Enoch and Adam is a summary and conclusion to the whole. The context of Jude is warning the believer against a sinful lifestyle, with poor

examples of believers and unbelievers. It also warns against false teachers of false doctrine who keep others from believing in Christ's saving work, leading them into sin.

Jude 1:11, "Woe to them, (false teachers)! For they have gone the way of Cain (jealousy), and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam (lustfulness), and perished in the rebellion of Korah (no authority orientation)." In all cases, we see the result of the arrogance complex of sins.

Seven is the number of "Spiritual Perfection / Completeness," and it is very interesting what Jude says about Enoch. He was "in the seventh generation from Adam," bringing our 7-fold mention of Adam in the New Testament to completion by reminding us of God's judgment towards sin and the sinner, and that the first Adam brought sin into the world and that the last Adam paid the price for it, as eluded to in **vs. 15**.

As for Enoch's prophecy, this is an apparent quote from the now inexistent Book of Enoch. Jude quotes Enoch to remind us of God's judgment toward sin and false doctrines, like that of the Serpent in the Garden of Eden that led to Adam's and woman's sin. What is fascinating about this is that Enoch was the first member of the human race to be Raptured, **Gen 5:24, "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."**

Jude 1:15, "To execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

This judgment is done by God in the hopes that the spiritually dead, sinful, soulish, and unregenerated man in Adam who is living on earth in their perishable, dishonorable, and weak physical bodies would repent from their sins by believing in the substitutionary spiritual death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross for the payment of the penalty of the sins of the entire world, with the result that they would be born again to a new, eternal, and spiritual life with its imperishable, glorified, and powerful resurrection body.

Therefore, we see the principle of our Rapture or Resurrection in view, made possible by the Father judging our sin in person of Jesus Christ. And this is in regard to a discussion about the harm that false doctrines bring, causing the unsuspecting unbeliever to remain in their unregenerated state – never to be resurrected; and also in regard to the believer who walks in sin, losing out on rewards and blessings in the eternal state.

Conclusion:

The first Adam, created in perfection, fell and brought death to the entire human race. The second Adam, Jesus Christ was born in perfection, remained in perfection (without sin) and was qualified to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins, bringing us eternal life, (i.e., Spiritual Perfection), by God the Father judging our sins in His person upon the Cross. Adam's spiritual death was real and was perpetuated to the entire human race through physical birth. Yet, our Lord's spiritual death was substitutionary and provides eternal salvation at the

point of faith in Him with resultant regeneration of spiritual life. Therefore, the real spiritual death of Adam in the garden resulted in the substitutionary spiritual death of Christ on the Cross, and the substitutionary spiritual death of Christ on the Cross resulted in potential salvation for the entire human race through personal faith in Him.

1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit." Cf. Gal 3:13.

And one last thing, of the seven passages that the name "Adam" is used in the New Testament, sometimes his name appears twice in the passage, as noted at the top of this lesson. Therefore, the word "Adam" appears 10 times in the New Testament and the number 10 in Scripture signifies the "perfection of Divine order and completeness." So, as we have seen, by the text and by number, the analogy of the first and last Adam tells the whole story; from man's fall, to his salvation by faith in Christ's substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross, to his resurrection to eternal life; God's Divine Order!

Cf. **1 Cor 6:9-10**, (10 sins exemplifying the unbeliever), with **Rom 8:38-39**, (10 assurance of eternal life for the believer).

Doctrine of the Swaddling Cloths

"Wrapped him in cloths" is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb SPARGANOO, σπαργανόω that means, "To wrap in swaddling clothes, or to swathe." SPARGANOO is used for strips of cloth like bandages, wrapped around young infants to keep their limbs straight, and to help the baby transition from the womb (a very snug place) to the outside world. It was a word that appeared in ancient medical writings. In NT times, the baby was wrapped in a large square of cloth and strips of cloth were tied around the square to keep it in place. In ancient times, like today, a swaddled infant was safe if wrapped and watched properly.

In the LXX, the word occurs just twice, both times metaphorically. In **Ezek 16:4**, wicked Jerusalem is compared to a newborn; uncared for, cast out, not wrapped in swaddling clothes. In **Job 38:9**, the Lord speaks of His creation of the sea as though it were a newborn which He wrapped in the swaddling clothes of the mist. In light of the OT usage, this probably carries the unspoken implication that the baby Jesus was treated with love and properly cared for.

Another instance of SPARGANOO occurs in the Apocryphal book Wisdom of Solomon 7:4, that reads, "I was nursed in swaddling clothes, and that with cares." This is Solomon recounting his birth as the future king of Israel, being the son of David, as he was born in a humble state just as all are born, vs. 5-6, "For there is no king that had any other beginning of birth. For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out." With this we see another allusion to the birth of Jesus Christ: humbly born, as the king of Israel, as the Son of David.

SPARGANOO is only used in the NT here and in **vs. 12**, at the angel of the Lord's announcement to the shepherds in the field as a "sign" of the baby born **"today in the city of David,"** who was **"Savior, who is Christ the Lord," vs. 11.**

Some believe there was an additional emphasis to this, in that the wrapping of the baby was a further sign to the shepherds who were watching over the sacrificial lambs. They are called "Levitical shepherds," who upon the birth of a lamb would wrap them with cloth to keep them "without spot or blemish," so that they would qualify as sacrificial lambs cf. **Num 6:14**. Thus, this ties Jesus' birth with His sacrifice upon the Cross as THE sacrificial lamb, **Heb 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19.**

Some also believe the swaddling clothes were a foreshadowing, a prophetic reference, of Jesus' burial cloths. Although it may have symbolism, it cannot be shown linguistically, as the Greek word SPARGANOO is only used here and in **vs. 12**, and it is never used in the NT to

refer to burial cloth. In the descriptions of Jesus' burial, we see variations on the phrase "wrapped in linen cloth," and different Greek words are used like ENTULISSO for "wrap," and SINDON or OTHONION for "linen or cloth." The swaddling clothes could prefigure Jesus' burial, as the Magis' gift of myrrh in **Mat 2:11** did, but the link cannot be proved linguistically.

Other than the symbolism of being loved and cared for, Luke is laying the foundation for the "sign" the Jewish shepherds would receive to know that this baby was the one foretold to them by the Angel of the Lord, **vs. 8-12**, as this word is only used here and in **vs. 12**.