



**“We Believe...”**  
**Great Truths of the Christian Faith**

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**“Image Bearers Who Sin”**

March 17, 2019

**Dr. James D. Smith III**

**Theme:** “Nobody’s perfect.” This folk wisdom recognizes some moral / ethical standard *and* the reality that no one fully embodies it. The cultural temptation is to conclude either “free pass” or “people stink” (Judges 21:25). God’s Word reveals the meta-story of humanity’s divine creation, dire fall, erratic ways - and the gracious offer of deliverance and re-storation through The Son’s incarnation and atonement (Romans 6:23). Touched by this, we worship God as “You/Thou,” and offer our hospitality to others as “you” – instead of treating all as “its.” (Martin Buber)

**Outline:**

- 1) Triune God, with love, created all things good, including humanity (Genesis 1:30)
- 2) Humanity, male & female, was made *imago Dei* for co-stewardship (Gen 1:26f)
  - a. Heart’s affections, soul’s exertions, mind’s reflections, strength... (Mk 12:28-31)
  - b. So human life has sacred worth. Qualities include choice, communion, creativity
- 3) But each chose to “play god” - breaking relationship, wounding character (Gen. 3)
- 4) How does this act affect our human DNA?
  - a. Historic Jewish view: tug-of-war between the good and evil *yetzer*.

- b. Jesus “made like us in every way” (Jas 2:17) and w/o sin; babies no original guilt
  - c. Paul’s symmetry: both trespass & redemption await our ratification (Rom 5:19)
  - d. Tertullian (ca. AD 200) describes effects as *vitium*: a wound, weakness, defect
  - e. Augustine (ca. AD 400) roots a wandering past in original guilt; baptize infants!
- 5) Sum: “God created humankind upright – but they have gone in search of many schemes/devices [*chishshabon*]” (Ecclesiastes 7:29).
- 6) Life East of Eden: what are the trails and traps of sin?
- a. The Law: human trespasses/debts against divine markers (I John 3:4)
  - b. The Conscience: knowing what’s right, but rebellion/indifference (Jas 4:14)
  - c. The Spirit: guided toward faith-fulness, yet shrink or surge (Romans 14:23)
- 7) The Timeless Call: Repent – not as transaction, but in relationship!
- a. Direct: 1-on-1 with God - “If we confess sins, He is faithful to forgive...” (I Jn 1:9)
  - b. Assist: with soul-friend/healer – “Confess to one another, and pray” (Jas 5:16)
  - c. Public: when many affected, David’s confession and prayer a model (Ps. 51)

**Takeaway:** Today’s “identity cultures” often foster outrage and stigmatize others without redemption. We have a God who loves, creates, teaches, identifies, redeems. So we confess both faith and flaw – and by grace we imitate the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:1). This is our vision for life!

**Next Cove:**

Date: March 24, 2019

Title: The Person (Christology) & Work (Redemption Accomplished) of Christ