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ADAM AND EVE IN HISTORY: A THEOLOGICAL NECESSITY

by Thomas White

Gary Jarrell
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The following is an excerpt from Thomas White's September 16, 2016, presentation during the "In the Beginning: Creation and Your Biblical Worldview" conference September 15–16. During the first half of White's presentation, he laid the biblical foundation for the theological necessity of Adam and Eve, highlighting texts throughout the Old and New Testaments in order to display the comprehensive witness of Scripture to a historic Adam and Eve. The excerpt that follows provides the implications of this biblical foundation. Listen to his full remarks at cedarville.edu/creation.

About the Illustration

Look closely at the illustration on the opening page. What do you see? Yes, it's the guardian cherub blocking re-entry to Eden. But why is Jesus there? Look more closely at Jesus' eye. Notice that it's also a man's head of hair. The moustache? A covering for the man's waist and legs. And Jesus' cheek? A woman covering her face with cupped hands. Gary Varvel's cartoon is a brilliant portrayal of the truth Thomas White conveys in his article: There must be a real Adam and Eve, not metaphors as some claim, for Christ to face the cross. The fall of man is the reason for the death and resurrection of Jesus.

In higher education all across the country, schools are not distinguishing between scientific theory and scientific fact. And when science disagrees with the Bible in any way, institutions of higher education everywhere will place science over Scripture. Here at Cedarville University, we will not place science in authority over Scripture; we will place Scripture in authority over science.

Science is ever-changing. I am a devout lover of salt. I salt everything but ice cream. Watermelon, apples — you name it, I'll salt it. Pizza. I love salt on pizza. So people constantly tell me, "That's bad for your health." Well, there was a time when people said, "It's actually good for you." So I saved those articles that said it was good for you, so that every time they send me an article saying, "No, it's bad," I can send them back an article that says, "This scientist says it's good."

I am firmly convinced that in the academy, you have people who will say on one hand, "Things are bad," and then a new generation rises up and needs to make a name for itself, that needs to publish articles and journals so they can get tenure. What are they going to do? They look back at what was said, they disprove it, they put a new theory forward, and they prove their theory. Then along comes the next generation.

We have general revelation, but we look at general revelation through a sinful, flawed thinking process. We need Scripture as the ultimate authority and the lens of faith that allows us to see clearly what is in general revelation, and to that end, we must have the authority of Scripture.

The authority of Scripture is clear. We have a historic Adam and Eve. The real question is, "Has God really said?" The answer is a resounding "Yes, He has." There is a spiritual war with the devil, that cunning serpent, who undermines biblical worldview and authority. We must stand and say, "Not in our lifetime." We must stand for Scripture.

ARE WE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD AS OUR CREATOR?

If evolution is true, then why am I accountable to God? If God didn't create me, if God didn't give me life, then I have no accountability; I can do whatever I please. I can live life the way I want, and that is what we see happening in society. If you have a secular, humanistic

view where you are your own authority, you can do whatever you please. And there are a lot of people who really want to do whatever they please. But if there's a Creator who gave us life for a purpose, and we're going to stand in judgment for how we stewarded the life He gave us, then that is an entirely different worldview and an entirely different understanding.

DOES GOD HAVE AUTHORITY TO TELL US HOW TO LIVE?

If He didn't create us, why does His Word have authority over how I live? If I'm a cosmic accident of evolution, who can tell me what I'm supposed to do in this life? And here you see our world saying, "How can you tell someone else how they should live if we're cosmic accidents?" That worldview clashes with the biblical worldview, which says for me to truly love my neighbor is to tell my neighbor, "You're headed for disaster." And if I truly love my neighbor, if I'm going to love them as I love myself, I would want somebody to tell me, "You're running off a cliff. You're headed for disaster. Here's the truth. Here's what we have to believe." And true love means you will confront them with the truth of the Bible. Not loving somebody is knowing this book is true and letting our neighbor run off the cliff without saying, "Wait brother. Wait sister. Don't go there. That is utter disaster."

What you believe about a historic Adam, a historic Eve, and about creation affects your view of God. It affects the way you live life. Will there be a judgment or will there not be a judgment? If there is no judgment, if there is no resurrection, Paul says, "Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32).

HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE DOCTRINE OF MAN?

Sanctity of Life. If we are created in God's image, then every life is precious to God. If Psalm 139 is true, that God knew all of our days before any of them existed, then life is sacred from conception to its natural end. If that's not true, then it's okay for the sake of convenience to eliminate a human life, whether that's on the front end or the back end of life.

Racism. We all trace our lineage back to Noah, back to Adam, and we understand that we are all one race.

There is no place for racism in the Christian church. As believers, we should be leading the way against racism of any kind.

Gender Identity. Did God create us male and female or did He not? If He created us male and female, then it is not up to us to choose what we want to be. We must embrace the truth: It's not how we feel on any particular morning; it's how God created us. We understand that; we embrace that; we live the life that God has given us.

Marriage. If God established it, if it's God's design, then no man can put asunder what God has developed. Going back to Genesis 1:27, it's all there. God created in His image. God created male and female. Sexual expression should also then be limited to this context. We should be leading the way to say sex-trafficking, the pornography industry — all of that has to stop.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE DOCTRINE OF SIN?

Without a literal creation and a literal Adam and Eve, how did sin enter humankind? Why is it that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God? How did death enter the world? Did God create a world that evolved to such a point that it had death, chaos, and destruction and then, all of a sudden, He proclaimed it was good? That's not what the Genesis record tells us.

Genesis tells us that He created the world, He created it for a purpose, and it was very good. We sinned. We created the mess we have today. God, out of His love, sent His Son to provide penal, substitutionary atonement on the cross so He could redeem this world, restore it, and make it the way it should be. This is the biblical record. With no explanation for sin, what do we need to be saved from? What are we going to be saved to?

HOW DOES IT AFFECT THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION?

The first Adam's sin was imputed to us. We all fell. You say, "That's not fair." Don't go there too quickly. You may think it's not fair, but it's the second Adam's righteousness that has been imputed to us — that's God's grace. We want the doctrine of imputation so that we can have Christ's righteousness imputed to us. It's not our own works. We can't earn it. We must repent of our sins, place our faith in Christ, and God will impute Christ's righteousness to us. Can it really be that easy? God, in His gracious love, has said so. If we have no union with the first Adam, how do we have union with the second Adam?

The story of creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration rises and falls on creation and a historic Adam and historic Eve. We are all in the first Adam with death. There's a second Adam who was resurrected. If there is no resurrection, we are of all people most to be pitied (1 Cor. 15:19).

It all comes down to authority. Did God actually say? We look at creation and we understand that God created.

God used the biblical record to tell us what He wanted to tell us about Himself. It is God's revelation. It is authoritative. It is inerrant. It is what we must stand on.

That God created the animals and gave Adam delegated authority. That the devil, who had already rejected God, looked up to God and said, "I want to be God." And God looked back at the devil and said, "Not in my lifetime," and kicked him out of heaven. That devil, in the form of the serpent in the Garden of Eden, deceived Eve, who in turn gave the forbidden fruit to Adam, thus setting the entire order of creation on its head.


This same Satan is still trying to distort the biblical worldview, the biblical narrative, and the sources of authority. And we must stand and say, "No. That's not right." God created this earth. God created Adam and Eve. God used the biblical record to tell us what He wanted to tell us about Himself. It is God's revelation. It is authoritative. It is inerrant. It is what we must stand on. And so, the real question is "Did God actually say?"


Recognize today that these theological questions are not trivial. They're not trite. These questions involve wrestling with supernatural enemies, and we must stand and say that — for us, for this institution — we will stand for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.

Thomas White became Cedarville's 10th President in 2013. He earned his Ph.D. in systematic theology from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author and editor of numerous publications, including the recently released *First Freedom: The Beginning and End of Religious Freedom* (B&H Academic).

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Gary Varvel is a national award-winning political cartoonist for the Indianapolis Star. He is the father of Ashley (Varvel) Day '06. Cedarville Magazine commissioned Varvel to illustrate the need of a real Adam and Eve in the Gospel story.