

Foundations Class – Week 9 “The Antithesis with Two Prongs”

1. The Antithesis Defined

14 *The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”* Genesis 3:14-15.

2. The Antithesis—The Unbelieving World

A. Noah – Genesis 6:5-8, 11-13, 18-22

5 *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD ... 11 Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth ... 18 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. 21 Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.” 22 Noah did this; he did all that God commanded.*

B. Unequally Yoked -- 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

*“I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.*

*17 Therefore go out from their midst,
and be separate from them, says the Lord,
and touch no unclean thing;
then I will welcome you,*

*18 and I will be a father to you,
and you shall be sons and daughters to me,
says the Lord Almighty.”*

C. Spiritual Warfare – 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

3. The Antithesis – The Unbelieving Church

A. Old Testament

- 1) Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-10)

- 2) Jacob and Esau (Malachi 1:2-3; Romans 9:6-13)

- 3) Elijah (1 Kings 19:18)

4) The Prophets

a) Covenant Prosecutors

b) Ezekiel's Temple Vision (Ezekiel 8-9)

3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist. 4 And the LORD said to him, "Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it." 5 And to the others he said in my hearing, "Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. 6 Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the house. Ezekiel 9:3-6

B. New Testament

1) Jesus and the Pharisees (e.g., Matthew 23:1-39)

2) Paul and the Judaizers (Galatians 5:7-12)

7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion is not from him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump. 10 I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. 11 But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. 12 I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

C. The Reformation

"I deny that See to be Apostolical, wherein nought is seen but a shocking apostasy—I deny him to be the vicar of Christ, who, in furiously persecuting the gospel, demonstrates by his conduct that he is Antichrist—I deny him to be the successor of Peter, who is doing his utmost to demolish every edifice that Peter built and I deny him to be the head of the Church, who by his tyranny lacerates and dismembers the Church, after dissevering her from Christ, her true and only Head." – John Calvin, "On the Necessity of Reforming the Church" (1544)

4. Implications

- We must beware of compromise with the unbelieving world.
- We must beware of compromise with unbelief in the church.
 - Indwelling Sin in Believers (Romans 7:19-25)
- Denial of God's Authority in the Church (e.g., J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*)
- Compromised forms of Christianity (Cornelius Van Til, "Mr. Black, Mr. White, and Mr. Grey") – the often-subtle threat of man-centeredness

14 *They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace.* 15 *Were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not at all ashamed; they did not know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown," says the LORD.* Jeremiah 6:14-15

5. Conclusion

- We believe that the truths regarding God, his Word, and his Gospel which were rediscovered during the Reformation are essential to our spiritual well-being and ministry. (E.g., Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Canons of Dordt, Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism)
- We prayerfully seek consistency of expression of these truths in our lives and ministry.
- We are praying for God-centered revival in which all of life is built out according to the revelation of our eternal, triune God and the Gospel of his grace. All to his glory.
- Question: What might such a revival look like in your own heart? Will you pray for renewed joy in God? In his Gospel and in his glory?