

Questions and Answers on *From Eternity to Here*

In chapter 8, you footnote your reference to Mary Magdalene as being the unnamed woman in Luke 7. Although the chapter is beautifully written and the point driven home about the importance of awareness of one's own darkness, it seems a bit reckless to confidently make a correlation that remains unverifiable.

Answer: The footnote on page 80 reads: "According to most traditional scholars and the testimony of ancient church history, Mary Magdalene is the unnamed woman described in Luke 7:36-50. She is not to be confused with Mary of Bethany, who anointed the Lord in the home of Lazarus near the end of Jesus' earthly life." One cannot prove if this woman was or wasn't Mary.

But I go with those scholars who believe it was, and it makes sense to me seeing that she's mentioned right after the story. I believe Luke didn't want to denigrate her. I don't see how using her in the story the way I did and footnoting the reason why can be considered "reckless." Nonetheless, if you don't believe the woman is Mary, no worries. It doesn't affect the story or the points I make in it. Let's be careful not to strain at gnats and swallow camels.:-)

In the beginning of the book, you talk about Eve being formed on the 8th day and there's a footnote about Eve begin in Adam on the 6th day (Genesis 1). Can you elaborate? It makes sense to me, but I have friends who don't get it.

Answer: This is hard for some Westerners to "get" because we are taught to linearly read Genesis 1 and 2, which is the typical way modern Western Christians approach an ancient Jewish text. Adam is said to be created on the 6th day. he is already there in Genesis 2 before Eve appears. She comes out of Adam in Gen. 2.

I agree with those scholars who have pointed out that the woman mentioned in Gen. 1 (Eve isn't mentioned, just "woman") is speaking of her being inside of Adam. Her coming out of Adam on the 8th day fits all the types and shadow of the new creation being born in resurrection perfectly. (8 is always the number of resurrection and new creation. The church was born on the 8th day. And Eve is a type of the church according to Paul). We have to understand how the OT is written. So I wish to be faithful to Scripture even if the modern Western mind doesn't understand it. Here is the way one scholar put it in his commentary on Genesis 1: "Eve received all her blessings in Adam: in him, too, she got her dignity.

Though not yet called into actual existence, she was, in the purpose of God, looked at as part of the man." The view that "Adam" in Genesis 1 included Eve before she was taken out of him was argued by A.B. Simpson, C.H. Mackintosh, and Asbury Theological Seminary Professor Donald Joyce in his excellent book, *Bonding*.

Male and female were included in Adam before God "split the Adam" and took the woman out of the man. This understanding is also articulated in the Jewish Midrash.

I want to know about your opinion about the role of the Jews in God's eternal purpose. I know this is a controversial question among Christians but since I have some friends who are messianic Jews who I want to share your book with I know this question will arise.

Answer: God's passion is for the church, where "there is neither Jew nor Gentile." (I'm quoting Paul.). The middle wall of partition has now been broken down, and God's heart is set on "one new humanity" (Eph. 2). I don't know what God's plans are for the nation of Israel or the Jews as an ethnic people. And I don't believe anyone else does, despite those who sound certain about it.

Romans 9-11 are difficult texts to interpret. My view of those texts are along the lines that the ekklesia doesn't *replace* Israel, she *fulfills* Israel's original commission.

Let me say a word from my experience. When a local expression of the church of Jesus Christ is operating and functioning as she should, and God's people in that church (both Jew and Gentile) are revealing Jesus the Risen Messiah together, it provokes the religious Jew to jealousy. Interestingly, this is what Paul said would and should happen in Romans.

First, I want to thank you Frank for working hard to get this revelation out. This book has seriously transformed my relationship with Christ. It has really helped me to strip away so many minor details that often cloud the big picture of the gospel. My question is, Do you think systems and traditions are ok as long as they produce loving relationships and don't override New Testament principles?

Answer: I'd prefer to say that they are ok so long as they do not 1) hinder the organic expression of church life 2) suppress the functioning of the Body of Christ and the full operation of the priesthood of all believers, and 3) subvert the living headship of Jesus Christ and obstruct God's eternal purpose in Him.

So much has been taught in the 'church' regarding God's purpose is mainly 'to save the lost'. Do you feel that your presentation slights that or seeks to simplify that both are in essence the same?

Answer: The teaching that says that "saving the lost" is God's desire is certainly correct, but it's not complete. God's purpose was in view before the fall ever occurred. Humans came into this earth not in need of salvation. Consequently, there was something else in God's heart that provoked creation, and He's never let go of it. This is what the book explores.

Who was your cover designer? I love it. I always wash my hands before reading it because I want it to stay white :) Love what I've read so far, it's been a great study book for me. I'm about halfway through. Blessings from Ocala! Leslie.

Answer: The graphics designers at David C. Cook are great. They deserve all credit.

Man, Frank, I don't think I knew the heart of the Lord really until I read your book. I'm returning to my first love and falling in love all over again. I think I might be able to write my own psalm now. OK my question. When is your next book coming out? You have moved my heart so close to him with this writing thanks. No really. THANKS BROTHER!!!!!!

Answer: Thank you for the kind words. I usually release two books a year. You can view all my book releases here.

What suggestions do you have for incorporating this paradigm into group situations? (Small groups, friends' discussions, Sunday School classes, etc.)

Answer: Discussion coupled with open-hearted prayer are the first steps, I think. There's [a group discussion guide](#) that goes with the book on this website.

When did you get the idea for this book? Looks like a captivating concepts with excellent endorsements.

Answer: I've been speaking on the eternal purpose since 1992. But the actual idea to put the message into a book of this type occurred to me around 2005, I believe.

On page 68, you say that God could have divorced Israel. But doesn't the Bible say that He did divorce Israel?

Answer: During Hosea's day, which I talk about in that section, God did not divorce Israel. Years later, the Lord gave the northern kingdom of Israel a certificate of divorce, but not the southern kingdom, Judah (Jer. 3:8). He eventually took her back, so it wasn't really divorce, but more like a temporary separation.

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