

# When it's Not Working it's Working (Nuts)

Romans 8:15-39

*Romans (no. 22 in the series)*

May 15, 2022

Peter Hiett

*Video and audio versions available online:*

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/when-its-not-working-its-working-nuts/>

*Transcript document prepared by: Brett Eades ([brett@thesanctuarydowntown.org](mailto:brett@thesanctuarydowntown.org))*

*This document was prepared by Brett Eades using Peter's notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please let Brett know. Thank you!*

---

## Prayer

God, the sun, the moon, and the stars, they shout your reverence and Lord God, we shout your reverence as we proclaim your glory. God, I believe it was you that led us as a church to this very point. Our Boast is in you. But I saw the financial report for April: expenses are up 7.5%, giving is down 7.5% over last year—a Covid year. Attendance on Easter was lower than any year—non-Covid—year, that I can remember. Sometimes God, I feel like I can't hold this thing together.

Fifteen years ago, I was pastoring one of the fastest growing churches in America—had book contracts and agents. Then I thought I did just exactly what you asked, and some of the people in this room followed me, as I followed you and you know this Jesus. I often feel like you've just led us into the wilderness to die. What's the point of preaching? What's the point of even trying? This whole thing feels just futile. Only in you do we boast. But you have rejected us and disgraced us. You have made us like sheep led to slaughter. Wake up God. Why are you sleeping? And help us preach, in Jesus' name Amen.

## Message

Now, if my prayer made you feel uncomfortable, you need to know:

1. It's honest. That's genuinely how I feel a great deal of the time
2. It's basically Psalm 44. Read the whole thing some time, but we just prayed the highlights

### **Psalm 44:**

**<sup>8</sup>In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to your name forever. Selah <sup>9</sup> But you have rejected us and disgraced us...<sup>19</sup> you have broken us in the place of jackals and covered us with the shadow of death. [*tsalmaveth*: "deep darkness, primordial ooze"]...<sup>22</sup> for your sake we are killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. <sup>23</sup> Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord?<sup>ii</sup>**

That's Psalm 44 and that means it's literally part of the program. It was literally in the ancient hymnbook of the Israelites. To complain about God alone in their own tent was a grievous sin. But to come to the Sanctuary of God and complain together was literally part of the program: the liturgy of ancient Israel. Psalm 44 is the most depressing of all the Psalms, for it doesn't even end with a happy thought, just a desperate plea: "Help us! Deliver us for the sake of your love."

Well, that was our prayer. Now let's read our text for the morning:

**Romans 8:31-32:**

**What then shall we say to these things? If God is for [hyper]<sup>iii</sup> us, who can be against us? That's a good question. God speaks reality into existence<sup>iv</sup> <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up [*paradoken*] for [hyper] us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?**

*Paradoken* [ from *paradidomai*] is maybe the most fascinating word in all the New Testament. It literally means "give over." And it's translated as "deliver" and "betray." People think it's a bit horrid that God "gave over" his own son. But we forget that God handed him over to us. And we forget that his Son did the same with himself; he went to Jerusalem. And then we forget that they both, Father and Son, did the same with their Spirit, for on the tree in the garden Jesus delivered up his Spirit, that now fills us, his Sanctuary.

We also forget that an only son is a good father's greatest treasure. So, Paul asks, "How will he not, with him, give us all things?" Wouldn't "all things" include all people and not endlessly burning in fire? And wouldn't it include all moments in all space and all time? Wouldn't it include everything, except maybe nothing. But once you name nothing, it too becomes a something? Like your sin.

**Romans 8:33a:**

**Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?**

Elect means chosen. Did God choose to make Adam, or was that an accident? It is God who justifies.

**Romans 8:33b-34a:**

**It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn?**

Paul already made this very clear. Romans 3:23—Remember? All have sinned, and all are justified by God's Grace in Jesus. So who is to condemn? Well, liars like me and you and satan. When you condemn others, and when you condemn yourself, maybe for condemning others. Who the hell do you think you are?

**Romans 8:34b-37a:**

**Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us**

**from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” <sup>37</sup> No...**

Now, pay attention. Paul is giving the most profound exposition of the all-powerful relentless love of God, our Father and then he chooses to quote Psalm 44—that I prayed at the start of our service. I’ve always been a bit confused by the quote, but especially the “no.” Is Paul saying that the Psalmist was wrong?

I think that’s the way American Evangelicals read the text, kinda like, “Maybe the Jews were led to the slaughter, but because of Jesus we’re not led to the slaughter, and we don’t have to deal with futility.” You know the Jews were (and are) God’s sheep, and through Moses, God led them into the wilderness, and they cried out “did you lead us here to die?” And Moses and all the Israelites did die. Only one, Joshua and Caleb (which means dog) only Jesus and his dog entered the promised land, at that time.

Paul writes “we who live are always being given over [*paradidomai*] to death...”<sup>v</sup> AND “I die daily”<sup>vi</sup> “The Lord is my Shepard. I shall not want...

“Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death [*tsalmevath*: primordial ooze], I shall fear no evil.” “He prepares a table before me, in the presence of my enemies” Have you ever wondered: What’s on that table? Bread and wine? Maybe Lamb?

Well, that word, “no” in Romans 8:37 is not actually in the text. <sup>vii</sup> There’s a perfectly simple Greek word for “no,” but the word translated “no,” here in our bibles, is the Greek word “*alla*.” It occurs 637 times in the New Testament, most all of those times it’s translated as “but;” 4 times in the ESV it’s translated “yes;” and 2 times it’s translated “no.” So, it should be translated “but” or maybe “yes and no.” “Yes” we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered and “No” this will not separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

**Romans 8:37b:**

**in all these things we are more than conquerors** [*hypernikomen*: literally “hyper+conquerors” or “super+conquerors”] **through him who loved us.**

From our study of The Revelation, you may remember that Jesus sends letters to the seven messengers (or seven spirits) in the seven churches. And in each letter, he says, “to him who conquers” and then just makes outrageous promises like “you will sit with me on my throne.”

And so, it raises this question, “Who can conquer?” [*nikao*, same word.] Then, the heavens open up and John begins to weep for no one in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth has conquered, and so no one is worthy to open this scroll... in the hand of God Then a voice says “Weep no more for the lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered...” And then John looks but he doesn’t see a lion; he sees something else. And then, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea and all that is within them begins worshipping—the super conqueror.

**Romans 8:38-39:**

**For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,<sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Jesus has conquered, so why are we still being led, like sheep, to the slaughter? Jesus has conquered; Jesus is the eschatos Adam, the super man, the true man. So, what could separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?

Well, let's review. We just read the last verses in Romans Eight—Romans 8:31-39. Let's now read what came before; What we started reading on Easter.

**Romans 8:15b-20:**

**...you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of ~~adoption as sons~~ [huiiothesias: "sonship"], by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [So the Spirit of Christ helps our spirit believe just who it is, that we already are: "the children of God."] <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in [epi: "upon," "on," or "to"] hope [futility].**

Futility is things "not working" in time, right? You hope to build a house, raise a child, make a life but then in time you encounter all sorts of obstacle, and say "this is futile."

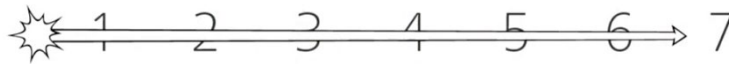
- Futility is the experience of chaos while you hope in logos.
- Futility it the experience of death while you long for life.
- Futility is the knowledge of evil.

God doesn't do futility; But God does subject us to futility. No good parent chooses futility, but every good parent subjects their children to futility, in hope—the hope that their child would freely choose the good. My daughter used to love to say "I do it! I do it! I do it!" I knew that it would fail, but at a certain point, I'd say "OK, do it." And then after a painful experience of futility, she'd say "Daddy, help me do it." As I told you, one day she chose to have no Daddy, and by the end of that day she threw herself across my lap saying "I want a Daddy. I love you, Daddy."

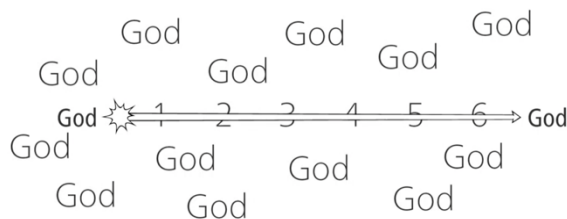
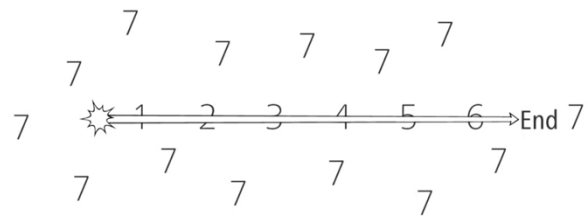
God subjected creation to futility in hope. But "in hope" is more literally translated "upon hope," "on hope," or "to hope." I get why the translators would translate it as "in hope," but see why Paul wrote "upon, on or to hope", for what does it mean for God to hope?<sup>viii</sup> God knows the end from the beginning, and his Will actually is the end and the beginning... God is eternal.

I subjected Elizabeth to futility, in hope, that she would soon choose the good. But when God subjects all things to futility, he already knows if we will, or will not, choose the good. If you knew that you would create a child, whom you would love, but be forced to torture in endless pain and unspeakable wrath for that child would never choose the good. Wouldn't you maybe just say, "Let's wait a second honey, and I'll send over another seed, another *sperma*, I've got billions."

Well, God not only foreknows, and he not only predestines; He is Eternal. He doesn't simply Hope; He is Hope and Christ in you is the hope of glory.



That means God is not a thing in time; He's the Creator of time. And yet in him we live move and have our being. I think that means that eternity is not "timeless," so much as "time-full." And that's why I keep showing you this picture. I believe that this is how the ancients, viewed time. This age, or these ages, are like a timeline of chronological time, in which one moment necessarily follows another.



The Bible refers to six or seven ages of chronological time. But there is an age to come, that is also at hand.<sup>ix</sup> It's as if chronological time is a womb in the eternity of God. And yet time has been impregnated with eternity.

And you have become impregnated with eternity. You see: Christ in you is eternal life in you; It's eternity now. And Christ in you is the hope of Glory.<sup>x</sup> God doesn't simply hope; He is hope.



**Romans 8:20b-24:**

**the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, ["upon" or "to"] hope<sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption ["decay" (NRSV)] and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.<sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.<sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for ~~adoption as sons~~ [huiiothesian: sonship], the redemption of our bodies [One day the old stone temple that is you will be entirely filled with the Spirit of God, who is eternal life]<sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. (In this hope we are delivered.)**

As we said last time, “decay,” (the second law of thermodynamics), is a function of time and it’s how we know that we’re stuck in time—we die. But eternity is freedom from the bondage of space and time.

Paul talks about God foreknowing us. To Jeremiah God even says, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.”<sup>xi</sup> God foreknows us, predestines us, and Paul even talks as if He has already glorified us, seated us in the heavenly places, and created us in his image. Ephesians 2:10 “...we are his workmanship (masterpiece) created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we would walk in them...” Ephesians 3:22, So “put off the old man and put on the new man created after the likeness of God”

People argue about the pre-existence of souls, but eternity is not simply pre-existence or post-existence, but existence beyond our concept of time. And we’re not simply talking about some weird bubble of consciousness called “a soul,” but a finished person, existing in perfect and absolute freedom.

Freedom is so hard to talk about, in this world of time, because I suppose, it’s the presence of eternity but when I think of freedom, I picture something like this:



*Oliva, J. (2021). One-of-Three Lamborghini Miura SVJ Comes Up For Sale [online image]. Motor1.com. <https://www.motor1.com/news/520034/lamborghini-miura-svj-for-sale/>*

Freedom for Peter Hiatt feels like driving this 2-million-dollar 1972 Lamborghini Miura, the entire length of I-70 with no speed limits, and the Rolling Stones blasting on the stereo, while my lovely bride, in a string bikini, sits in the passenger seat staring at me in admiration and loving devotion. And I think God is saying to you and to me, “With certain modifications, this is what you actually are.”

Perhaps you, yourself, are a new Corvette, or maybe a Jeep Wrangler, or a 67 VW bus with a peace sign on the side. But basically, that’s what you are but don’t know that you are, but it is what you hope you will be.



(Disintegrating X press document). *Disintegrating X* [photograph]. MB&F M.A.D. Gallery, Genena, Switzerland.  
<https://www.madgallery.net/geneva/en/press/fabian-oefner-disintegrating-x>

Three years ago, I found this picture online and kept it in my computer. I recently learned it's titled "disintegrating X." We think it's a 1972 Lamborghini Miura exploding, for that's the only way we could make sense of all those nuts and bolts flying through the air in space and time—it's a disintegrating 1972 Lamborghini Miura. But it's actually a reintegrating 1972 Lamborghini Miura being reassembled in space and time.<sup>xii</sup>

The Swiss Artist, Fabian Oefner, took 1500 pictures, over two years, of his friend's 1972 Miura as it was being reassembled by mechanics. And then he compiled all the photos in this one image. "When I started working with this car," he shares, "I was seeing it 'just' as a Lamborghini Miura. But as the days went by, it became more and more special. To me, it's not just a Miura anymore, it's become a bit like a person. Now it rolls on the road, finished and fully restored and every time I see it, I'm like, 'Oh, I know you!'"

See, I think a day is coming, when God will hold up a mirror and you'll get a good look at yourself, and exclaim, "I know you, and in some weird way, I think I've always known you, and I've always wanted to be you, but couldn't be you. You are truly who I Am. Your name is Peter, and your name is also Jesus. I don't know if I said that right.



Oliva, J. (2021). *One-of-Three Lamborghini Miura SVJ Comes Up For Sale* [online image]. Motor1.com.  
<https://www.motor1.com/news/520034/lamborghini-miura-svj-for-sale/>

But I do think God looks at you and says, "You are my masterpiece, this is who you truly are." But you look in a mirror in space and time





And all you see is this, a nut and maybe a couple of loose screws.



Satan comes along and whispers, “That’s all you are: “nuts, but you should be a 1972 Lamborghini Miura.”



So, what do you do? Well, you start gathering nuts and bolts and various car parts, trying to build a 1972 Lamborghini Miura.

And what do you build? You build something that maybe has the shape of a car, but it is absolutely not a 1972 Lamborghini Miura, it is a false 1972 Lamborghini Miura—an Anti-Miura and it does not work; it’s utterly futile, and if it were to ever work it would have to be disintegrated, and reintegrated; deconstructed, and reconstructed; destroyed, and rebuilt.



*Auto parts giant Continental cuts outlook as supply bottleneck tightens [online image]. ETAuto.com (2021).  
<https://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/auto-components/auto-parts-giant-conti-cuts-outlook-as-supply-bottleneck-tightens/87210420>*



Well, you're not a car, but you actually are a temple, and that temple is a city, and that city is actually a body, and actually a bride, named the New Jerusalem. It's astonishing how many times Jerusalem has been built, destroyed, and then rebuilt, all in attempted obedience to God's command. And then The New Jerusalem comes down new from heaven, not made of stone, but flesh and blood and filled with eternal life—the very Glory of God.

**Romans 8:24-28:**

**...in this hope we were saved [delivered]. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup> And we know that for those who love God [literally: “those loving God” (present active participle)] all things work together for good...**

If you're to translate this literally, this is a present active participle and it would go like this: we know that for those loving God (that's the participle; one word), all things work together for good. So, in moments in which “I am loving God,” all other moments (past present and future... even moments I wasn't loving God) work for my good. But in moments that I am not loving God, the same is not said. It's like “I” really do have two “me's.” One that believe it is the creation of Love, who loves in return. And another that believes it is its own creation but is only an Illusion (a false me).

I really am like an infant being born; If I identify with that child—that infant—when the labor pains start and my world contracts, all things really are working for my good. But if I identified with that womb world, that umbilical cord or the placenta (genetically they are baby flesh, although that is not where “consciousness” resides), then, perhaps that couldn't be said—or maybe it could: I'm learning that I'm not an unconscious piece of meat; I'm not the afterbirth; I'm the treasure of God.

**Romans 8:28-30:**

**we know that for those loving God all things work together for good, for those who are called [literally, “being called”] according to his purpose. [Those loving God have been called by God, and known by God... 1Cor.8:3 “if one loves God, he is known by him.”] <sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.**

You are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus. And if you're not predestined, then you were not called by the Word who creates all things, and you were not known by the one who knows all, and so you don't actually exist—you are an illusion, that cannot hear what I just said.

But you do hear what I just said. So, you are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Now, if anyone ever did just exactly what God asked, it would've been Jesus. Now if there was ever anyone that did exactly what God asked, it was Jesus and this is what he looked like in the end, from the standpoint of time.



*Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.*

The cross was designed by the Romans to utterly dismantle a person's psyche. Has there ever been a greater picture of bondage, and futility, than a naked man, covered in blood, nailed to a tree? The cross was designed to disintegrate a man's ego.



*Worthy. Marcia Hinds.*

And now this is an artist's depiction of what Jesus looked like in the end that is the beginning—This is what he looks like from the standpoint of eternity. This is what John saw, when he turned after the voice said, “behold the lion of the tribe of Judah has conquered.” He saw a lamb standing as if it had been (and always were) newly slain.<sup>xiii</sup> And Paul writes that this was the plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him<sup>xiv</sup>—the slaughtered lamb standing on the throne: the firstborn of all creation Cross and Throne—same thing— one from the standpoint of this womb world, and the other from the standpoint of eternity, that is, reality. Somehow, we actually got the Biblically insane idea that Jesus suffered and died, so we would never have to do so. But Scripture just screams that Jesus suffered and died so we would suffer and die with him, then rise with him, and join him on the throne of God. God subjected creation to futility and leads us to slaughter so we would conquer with him, reign with him, and create reality with him, and know just who it is that we are—the good and finished workmanship of the living God.

We have been predestined to be conformed to the Image of Christ, the perfect image of the invisible God. And we have been predestined to absolute freedom. Jesus is so free that he speaks reality into existence, and he freely chooses to choose reality with you from the throne in the inner Sanctuary of your soul. And check this out: he has not only predestined you to freedom in the future; you have been predestined to a freedom that is now.<sup>xv</sup> The creation groans to obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God—those that have the first fruits of the Spirit. I think that must be, “Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness, Faith, and Self under Control.”

You know when I try to create those things, I seem to create the opposite of those things.

- Have you ever told yourself, “You better love our else?” It will make you hate everyone else, including yourself, your neighbor, and our God.
- Have you ever tried really hard to be joyful? You make yourself miserable.
- Have you ever gotten really stressed about peace or grown impatient with your own lack of patience?
- Have you ever beaten yourself up for being unkind? It won't make you kind.
- Have you ever taken the Good, trying to make yourself good? It will make you a slave to evil—which is utter bondage to futility.

And yet, you have experienced moments of Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, and Faith. And when was that? Well, not in moments that you comprehended them (you probably weren't even thinking about them). Not in moments that you comprehended them; but more like moments in which they comprehended, that they knew you.

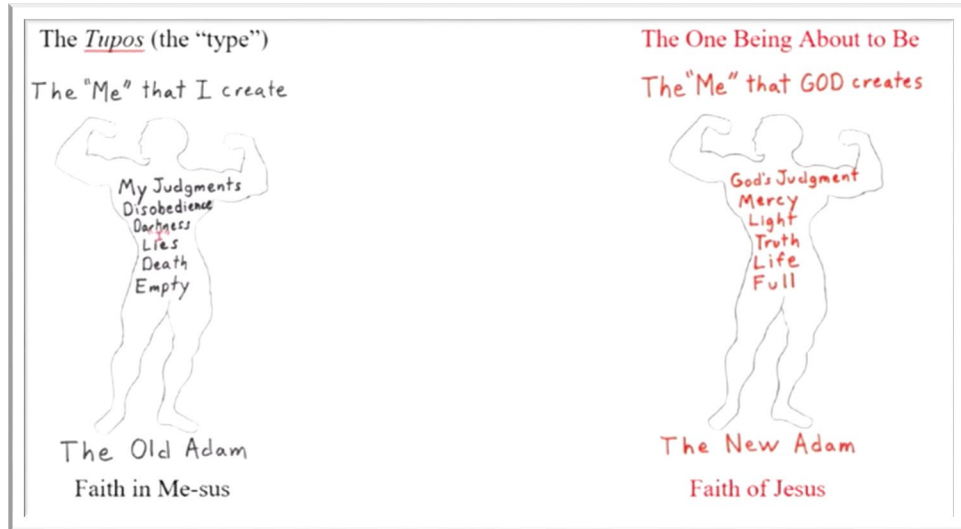
And what are they? Well, they're not things you can see, and yet they're the only things that make anything that you can see, valuable or worthwhile. I mean Golden streets and Lamborghini's are utterly worthless if you can't drive them, or drive down them, with someone you love, who loves you, like God.

The Fruit is unseen and it's unchanging and it's free—for it's eternal. It's birthed from the bride that is me, when I am known, and I am loved. I can't comprehend love, I can only surrender to love, right now.<sup>xvi</sup> Now is the moment that eternity touches time and I become who I am, who it is that I already am, a 1972 Lamborghini Miura, so to speak.

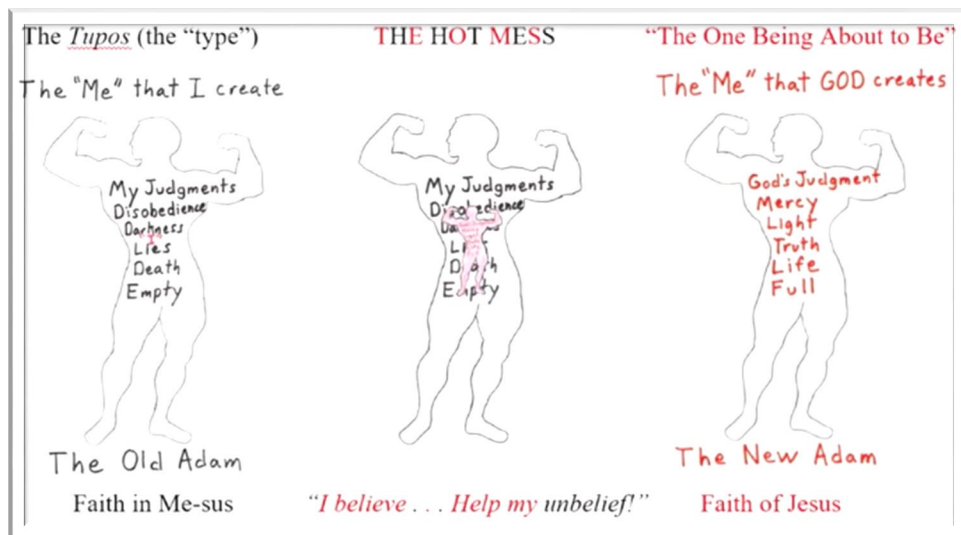
You know when I preach because I think I have to build a church or make myself into a successful pastor—I just die inside and everything seems futile, whether there are book contracts and thousands of people or not. But usually, each time I preach, I have these moments, when I forget about me, for I get caught up in Him, and there he tells me who I am, and then I think It doesn't matter what happens, I just have to preach Good News. And in those moments, I experience Love, Joy, Peace, and Freedom—I feel like a 1972 Lamborghini Miura driving 200mph down I-70 with the Rolling Stones' *Can't You Hear Me Knocking* playing on the stereo and my wife looking at me with admiration and devotion—I feel free.



On Easter, you'll remember that St. Paul borrowed my tent to explain who it is that each of us truly are. We're like the old stone temple in Jerusalem constructed by human hands, that contains the inner tent—the sanctuary, constructed by God.

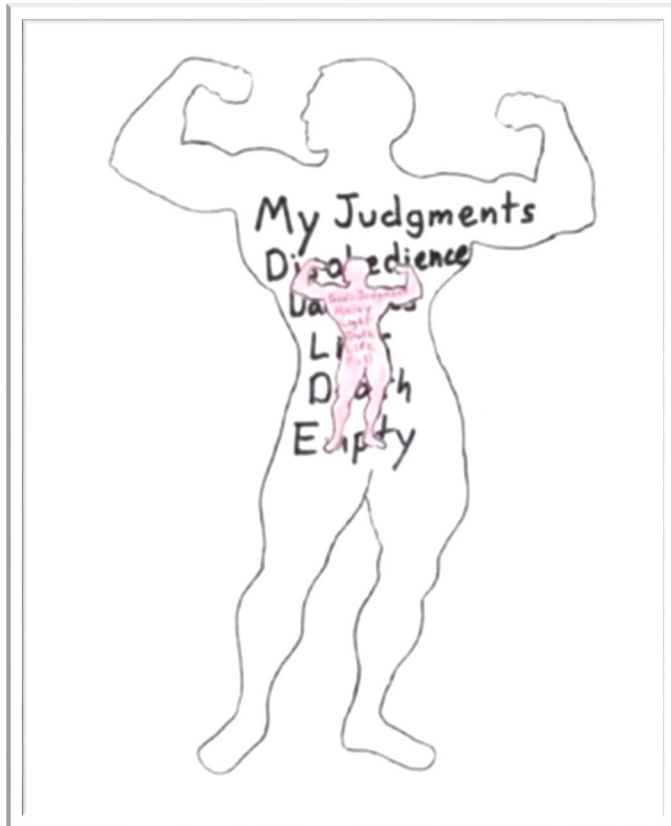


That old stone temple is like the "Me" that I think I create—the old Adam.  
And the inner sanctuary is like the "Me" that that God creates and has created—the new and eternal Adam.



And then we learned that our "Old Adam," constructed with our judgments is literally pregnant with our "New Adam," constructed with God's Judgment.

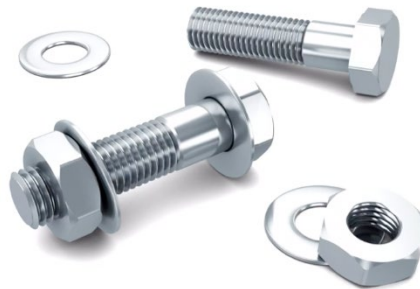




And, that new self grows within the old self, not by trying to grow with its own judgment and willpower, but by surrendering its own judgements to the judgment and willpower of God our Father. So, when you try to justify yourself, you only increase the bondage. But when you enter the inner sanctuary and surrender to the judgment of God your father, and so, believe that you are justified the new self grows in time, although it is already finished in eternity.

And that means that when you wreck your life, you haven't wrecked your life. You're still just waiting to be born. Your new self is literally constructed with Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, the Good and the Faith of Jesus. Those are literally the eternal judgments of God manifest in the temporal failure that you thought was

yourself, but is, in fact, an illusion. Your new self is the birth of eternity in time... and so it's free, although it will cost you all of your temporal illusions—your EGO will get slaughtered.



So, the Word says that you are God's masterpiece created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that you should walk in them. But you look in the mirror and you see a nut and a couple of loose screws.



Satan whispers “That’s all you are: nuts... but you ought to be a 1972 Lamborghini Miura”



So, what do you do? You start gathering all the nuts and bolts you can, maybe you steal some from other cars.



*Hans Hansen, photography of a disassembled Golf CL, 6,843 parts, 1988. Commissioned by Volkswagen Company, Germany.  
AD Dietmar Meyer. © Hans Hansen, Volkswagen AG*

Whether you think you take them from others or come by the pieces yourself—God puts them all in your life. (You can only steal from him, and then, only because he lets you.) The pieces are people and things and events and experiences in space and time; they are “all things.” That would include your parents, People that blessed you; people that cursed you. Things you have judged a success, and things you have judged a failure. It would include your good deeds, and what you call your sins. It would include blessings you’ve been given



and even the most heinous crimes committed against you, like being stripped naked, beaten, bloodied, and perhaps, nailed to a tree.

“All things work together for the good with those loving God, those being called according to his purpose.” Jesus was called according to his purpose. Adam was also called according to his purpose, even if he didn’t know it at the time. “All things work together for the good with those loving God, those being called according to his purpose,” whether or not they are aware of it at any particular moment in time, for the one who calls is eternal. Jeremiah was known and called long before he was ever able to love God in time. So was Paul and so are you.



*Auto parts giant Continental cuts outlook as supply bottleneck tightens [online image]. ETAuto.com (2021).  
<https://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/auto-components/auto-parts-giant-conti-cuts-outlook-as-supply-bottleneck-tightens/87210420>*

Well Satan whispers “Your nuts and you ought to be a Lamborghini.” And so, in fear and shame, you try to make yourself into the image of God. You try to arrange the pieces of your life, so they somehow resemble Jesus. But at a certain point you realize that all your efforts are futile. You realize:

- that trying to Love God, you’ve only come to hate God
- that striving for Joy, you’ve made yourself miserable
- that working for faith, you find yourself filled with doubt
- that taking the Good, you have only crucified the Good and killed the Life

In other words: It’s not working, but that’s precisely when it is working. For God has subjected all creation to futility in hope and for the sake of hope because He is hope. Christ in you, is the hope of Glory.<sup>xvii</sup>



You are a nut, but you are also something like a 1972 Lamborghini Miura. So, you’re not a random nut; you’re not an accidental nut; you’re a very specific and irreplaceable nut, to a

Lamborghini Miura, but still a nut. In shame fear and wantonness, you try to put yourself together, and—sorry for the pun, but it's not actually a pun—you get screwed. And you just crucify those around you, but even that—the very worst of all evils—reveals the greatest of all good, the Glory of God.

On the cross we all took the Life of God, the Lamb of God. And on the cross the Lamb of God, delivered himself up for us. He delivered up his Spirit, who is our helper, who descends into our hearts. And counsels us to hope, not in ourselves, but in God our Father. He draws us into the inner tent, into the very judgment of God. And so, in Christ, even as the Body of Christ, we lose our lives and find them as we listen to the Judgement of God our Father. "You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

What I'm trying to say is that eternity, is not based on our judgments in space and time. But all or our Good Judgments, and all our Free Judgments, in space and time are based upon eternity. When we try to create ourselves with our own judgments, we put all the pieces together with the wrong meaning, and trap ourselves in insanity, illusions, and the deepest bondage. So, what can separate us from the love of God? Well only the illusions that we create in our own mind... but then only for a time, for in Christ God speaks an Eternal Word into our heart right now.

Right now, and in any now, you can enter the inner sanctuary in the temple of your soul, commune with the Word of God in Spirit, and give birth to Love Joy Peace Patience Kindness Goodness and Faith—the Judgment of God. And that is who you actually are: you are not what you think you have accomplished; you are what God has accomplished from the foundation of the world and in you right now. And when you become who you already are, all the pieces, all the events, all things in your life will come together in a remarkable new way, and you will begin to drive down the road in freedom. And you'll begin to say "Hey, I know you; I've always wanted to be you, and now, by the Grace of God, I am. Thank you Jesus!" You will know the evil, but constantly choose to be yourself: The Good. And you'll give God all the glory, even as he gives it back to you—you'll worship. Wow.

You're not a car; You're not simply a house or a city; You are a Bride and a Body—the eternal body of our living Lord. You cannot create yourself, but you are giving birth to yourself. And when you realize that it changes everything: past, present, and future.

Video clip: <i>Monk</i> USA Cable Network (Season 6, Episode 3, 2007)	
<i>The scene opens with Adrian Monk (Tony Shalhoub) talking quietly with his counselor Dr. Charles Kroger (Stanley Kamel).</i>	
Monk	There's something I never told you. Something happened when I was a boy. There was an incident with a - with a man.
Dr. Kroger	Who was that?
Monk	I'd never seen him before; stranger. [He looks down.]
Dr. Kroger	How old were you?
Monk	I don't remember. Young. I was, so small. I remember, I remember [broken voice] I was naked. [He stands and grabs a tissue from the coffee table nearby.]
Dr. Kroger	Take your time.

Monk	I was so naked. I hated being naked. And I remember, I was crying, and then, he hit me.
Dr. Kroger	Adrian, I'm so sorry.
Monk	There was blood. There was blood everywhere. I was screaming. I wanted him to stop. And my mother, my mother was smiling. [Wipes a tear with tissue.]
Dr. Kroger	Wait, your mother was there?
Monk	Why didn't she stop him? She was supposed to protect me! He kept hitting me, swinging me around, upside down. [Leans forward and voice breaks as he pauses.]
Dr. Kroger	You were upside down?
Monk	[Nods affirmatively and puts face in hands.]
Dr. Kroger	Was he wearing a mask?
Monk	[Points with his right pinky as he nods.] Yeah. [Clasps hands in front of face and leans elbows on knees again.] I never wanted to be naked again.
Dr. Kroger	Adrian, that man was a doctor. You're remembering your own birth.
Monk	[Looks in astonishment at the therapist.] Doctor?
Dr. Kroger	Anybody else and I wouldn't have believed it but with you...
Monk	Doctor?
Dr. Kroger	Um-hmm
Monk	Well, that would explain a lot, actually. Lights, and my father [gesturing to different places] in the doorway holding a balloon.
Dr. Kroger	[Nods and smiles.]
Monk	[Sighs and sits back in relief.]
Dr. Kroger	Do you feel better?
Monk	Yeah, I do. Wow.

I love that clip—the moment that the genius Adrian Monk wakes up to reality. You see it isn't God that's sleeping. It's always us dreaming that we are our own creators and creation.<sup>xviii</sup>

### **Romans 8:31-38:**

**What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." <sup>37</sup> [YES! BUT], in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

## Communion

And so, the Lamb of God prepared a table before us. He took bread and broke it saying, “this is my body given to you.” And he took the cup saying, this is the covenant—eternal covenant—in my blood. Drink of it all of you.” Drink logos into chaos; Drink light into darkness; Drink truth into your lives. Drink eternity into time.

---

When you come to the table this morning, the person holding the bread will also be holding a bowl of nuts. I invite you, To take a nut and put it in your pocket, remembering that you are nuts. Then take the body and blood, remembering that you are also something like a 1972 Lamborghini Miura. Then, when you feel nuts, life feels futile, and you just want to quit, hold that nut and pray:

Father, I’ve been trying to put my life together and made a mess of things. Thank you that you will put my life together and have always been putting my life together in time, and now we will put our life together, in the inner sanctuary of my soul, and I will know me as I am, in you. Wow, Amen

## Benediction

And so, one thing remains, and you might think “Ok but what happens to all the other things? What happens to no-thing?” Well, Saint Paul says that, in the end, God fills everything. So even no-thing becomes God’s something and it’s all love. And in case you were wondering, well, what happened to those Israelites that died in the desert? Paul is going to be talking about them in chapters 9, 10, and 11. And, just to give you a preview, Moses, who died in the desert, showed up on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus. So, the story’s not over with those folks.

If you’re feeling like a nut this week (sometimes you feel like a nut; sometimes you don’t), if you’re feeling like life is futile and you want to quit, just remember that you ARE a nut AND you’re something like a 1972 Lamborghini Miura in absolute freedom. And if you say to yourself, “well, you know, I don’t feel like that right now,” I say of course—a baby doesn’t feel that way at 3 weeks of gestation in the womb; it doesn’t feel free. God is revealing that in time and God will finish what he started. And maybe you say, “well God, look at them, they look like they’re so together.” Well, maybe they’re a tricycle, easy to put together. Do you know how hard it is to put together someone like a Saint Paul? Maybe that’s you. Whatever the case, that’s what you are, a masterpiece, the workmanship of God our Father. So all I’m saying is, in Jesus’ name, believe the Gospel, Amen.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>i</sup> What day? Maybe the 6<sup>th</sup> day—Friday.

<sup>ii</sup> We preached on Psalm 44 a few years ago: <https://relentless-love.org/sermons/ptl-honest-to-god/>

<sup>iii</sup> *Huper*: for, over, above, on behalf of... where we get our words, "hyper" and "super"

<sup>iv</sup> To say he's powerful is an infinite understatement... he is all power, power itself.

<sup>v</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. —2 Corinthians 4:8-11

<sup>vi</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:31 NKJV

<sup>vii</sup> The word "no" in Romans 8:37 is in the RSV, NRSV, ESV like the "nay" in the KJV.

<sup>viii</sup> It would be accurate to say that he is hope. "Christ in us" is "the hope of glory." He doesn't simply hope; He is Hope... and Christ in you is the hope of glory.

<sup>ix</sup> *Aion* means "age" and *aionios* means something like "of the age," which usually refers to God's Age, and is normally translated eternal. So eternity is not endless chronological time, but something more like end-full and beginning-full time—time that's full of the logos of God.

<sup>x</sup> Colossians 1:27

<sup>xi</sup> Jeremiah 1:5

<sup>xii</sup> <https://mymodernmet.com/lamborghini-miura-disintegrating-fabian-oefner/>

<sup>xiii</sup> <sup>19</sup> Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, <sup>20</sup> by the new [*prospatos*: "newly slain"] and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, <sup>21</sup> and since we have a great priest over the house of God, <sup>22</sup> let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. —Hebrews 10:20

"Prospatos" is a word that only appears here in all of Scripture. It's two words combined as one "pros" meaning "before" and "sphazo," "to slay." It meant "latently slaughtered, freshly killed."

<sup>xiv</sup> Ephesians 2:10-11

<sup>xv</sup> Men are therefore foreordained by God, because they are known of Him: *If any man love God, the same is known of him* (1 Corinthians 8:3). Here it is that we encounter the secret of predestination to blessedness, which Augustine and the Reformers represented in mythological form as though it were a scheme of cause and effect, thereby robbing it of its significance. No doubt human love of God, the ordination of men to Sonship, and their calling to be witnesses of the Resurrection, are genuine occurrences, consequent upon God's knowledge of men and taking place in the knowledge of the true and only God. But this must not be taken to mean that His love has brought in to being a particular temporal human being and having and doing, which is the result of a divine causation which took place concretely as the first of a series of temporal occurrences. Predestination means the recognition that love towards God is an occurrence, a being having and doing of men, which takes place in no moment of time, which is beyond time, which has its origin at every moment in God Himself, and which must therefore be sought and found only in Him. The man who loves God can never ask 'Is it I?' or 'Is it Thou?' Such questions are relevant only in the context at which the Apostles formulated them at the Last Supper. The Lord knoweth His own. He knows the prisoner to be free, the sinner righteous, the damned blessed, the dead alive. He is the Judge; and men have sinned and can sin only against Him. The truth of the love of men towards God is His Truth, not man's; in Him it is constituted and realized; He sees it and rewards it; He knows it; and it is existential only in Him. But the knowledge of God is eternal and unobservable; it occurs altogether beyond time. It must therefore be distinguished absolutely from temporal human knowledge, of which it is the KRISIS, the presupposition, and the dissolution: *If any man thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know* (1 Corinthians 8:2).

-Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* pp.324-325

<sup>xvi</sup> Martin Buber the existentialist theologian taught that we can have two kinds of relationships: I-it and I-thou. I-it is objective knowledge: science, programs, fact. We relate to people as "its" all the time. I-thou is knowledge through subjective encounter. It is one "I" encountering another "I" in the eternal present.

- Tony Campolo, *A Reasonable Faith* (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1983), p. 124-125

All actual life is encounter.

-Martin Buber

<sup>xvii</sup> Colossians 1:27

<sup>xviii</sup> Genesis 2:21, Ephesians 5:10