

Sunday, July 12, 2020 Genesis 3 Romans 3:22-25

The First Sin—Adam and Eve

We continue in our “At Your Request” summer series with today’s focus being “The First Sin- Adam and Eve”. Just what was the first sin and how did this act change God’s plan of creation? What resulted after this act by Adam and Eve? Where do we fit in and how might we respond to the question of good, evil and sin?

In order to answer these questions, we need to recall what happened in the Garden of Eden. According to Genesis, God created all that there is and it was good. The serpent was craftier than other creatures God made and in this story this creature could speak. Testing the woman he asked, “Did God say, “You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?” She replied that they could eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, except one. They were not to eat the fruit of the tree in the middle of that garden or touch it or they would die. The serpent countered this by saying, you will not die; God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil:” What happens next changes the plan in God’s creation.

Eve sees the fruit; it looks good to eat, and it could make her wise. So she takes it, gives some to Adam and he also eats and then ‘their eyes were opened’. This doesn’t mean that they could not see before, but they now had a new vision and realization of the world. They had become wise withnow having the knowledge of both good and evil. Both of them realized that in eating the fruit- the world as they had seen it was now changed. They were ashamed and fearful of their Creator. They tried to hide among the trees and when Adam answered God’s call, he told him that he was afraid and that he realized he was naked and so was Eve. God wanted to know how they knew they were naked= and they confessed—we ate the fruit. They disobeyed God and this was the first sin.

Because of this disobedient act, God changed the way of the natural world. He told the serpent that it would now slither on its belly and would eat of the earth’s dust. God promises to make enemies of Satan and the woman. In fact, their offspring—or “seed”—will remain enemies throughout all generations. Eve's offspring includes all of humanity born one generation after another up to now. Satan's offspring includes all of the fallen angels, demons, and those who will follow him. It definitely includes those humans who will come to believe and practice his lies, deceit and other evil acts. But then God states that the offspring of the woman will crush, or bruise, Satan's head, and Satan would strike or bruise his heel. To Biblical scholars this is in

reference to Christ, the Son of God, and also the ultimate member of Eve's offspring. Jesus would die, but He would have the ultimate victory on behalf of humanity in his resurrection. And those who believe, have faith in him and live his way for good will be his for all of eternity.

God doesn't stop there with the punishment for Adam and Eve and their disobedience, and act of eating the fruit. He tells the woman that you will bear children in pain. And because Eve gave the fruit to Adam, he tells them that Adam will be in charge. However, Adam would then now have to work for food, that is to cultivate the earth in order to bring about food for them to eat. Prior to this they lived like being on an all inclusive holiday- without work only to eat to survive and enjoy all the creatures God made. God then makes directives for their relationship which was to help them and future generations to understand what they need to do in order to live.

Then God says, "See the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil and now he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever. So he moves Adam and Eve out of the garden banning them from going in and then he puts a flaming sword and cherubim angels on guard.

The Garden of Eden was created as the ultimate place made by God's hand. In it were many kinds of trees and plants. But there were two particular trees created by God- one—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the second tree—the tree of life. He told the couple about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and not to eat it. But did not mention the tree of life where if that had eaten it they would live forever. Just what was God's plan for the people? To live forever? To not die? We do not know fully but if we read in Revelation we learn of the vision John has of the new heaven and new earth and what is there by the throne of God. The tree of life. What this statement also reveals is that God was testing Adam and Eve not with just the fruit of these trees but knowing that evil had entered the world through the Evil One, Satan.

When sin entered the world, it became agathokakological –(agath-good and kako –evil) and because of this people through the years had tendencies for both. We could probably name good people and evil people in human history. And we could also name people who made poor choices, sinned and overcame their circumstances by emerging as sinful yes but having received forgiveness. After all we are all sinners and capable of sinning but God loves us and wants us to be in relationship with him. He wants us to have the connection that Adam and Eve had before they disobeyed. Yet he knew that as sinners we could not be reconciled to him alone. So he sent Jesus His Son, the second person in the Trinity, to save us from sin and to be

reconciled with him. The catch—we need to believe in Jesus. We need to believe that what he preached and taught is important to us today- that yes Satan is responsible for evil in the world but so are we. Jesus said, “For from within, out of the hearts of people, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly” (Mark 7:21-22). Yet Jesus also taught I am the way the truth and life and no one comes to the Father but by me. (John 14:6) We must have faith and believe in the one who came to heal, to preach and who taught that we need to be born of water and Spirit He also taught that forgiveness of sin is possible through him and through him there is hope. This idea of salvation in Jesus Christ not as a new concept, but that since evil entered the world, and people sinned against God’s way, that a Christ/ Messiah was needed to bring reconciliation.

From the Adam and Eve story we learn of good evil, sin and forgiveness as the message of God’s love made possible through Jesus Christ. As we reflect on sin—we all have to admit that we do sin—whether we sin in our attitude, action, neglect, or intent we still sin. We need to be forgiven of these sins in order to be reconciled with God. We need to believe that what Jesus did was for us so that we might be forgiven. We need to believe that he died on the cross he died for each one of us, taking our sins upon himself. He took our place so that we would be forgiven. But we need to do something in order to receive this forgiveness. It is praying to God and confess those things which God would not and does not approve in our behaviour. We need to tell God that we sinned and that we believe that Jesus died for us. And through this prayer, we will be forgiven of all sin and free to begin life anew.

Satan has been the enemy of people since the beginning and still is—but we have Jesus who died and rose again for our sakes. You are I are sinners—we will sin again—it is part of being human. But there is hope and this is found Jesus for he is one the only one who could satisfy God. And it is through His death that we may live. If we believe in Jesus, we have also been promised that we will live eternally with him. But we must believe, have faith, confess our sins and know that we are forgiven in Jesus Christ. Yes sin entered the world with Adam and Eve. But it is in Jesus Christ that we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

Let us pray:

God of grace and love we praise you for your gift of Jesus Christ for it is through him that we receive the gift and hope and promise of forgiveness, of new life, and our eternal life with you. Bless us and our understanding of the first sin and how we might be reconciled with you. Hear our prayers in this moment as we come to you in hope, fear, joy and wonder. We are sinners seeking our Saviour. Forgive us we pray. Amen.