

**Gen 3:1-4:10**  
**The Fall**  
**August 21, 2011**  
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**EXHORDIUM**

We are making our way through God's dealing with His people. We first looked at the nature of God, that He is Triune, three persons but One God, completely unified. We have diversity, multiple persons, but absolute unity, no division, no strife within that unity.

When God creates the world, we see that it is all good. He creates the universe and then He puts man on the Earth to bear the image of God.

This entire creative process reveals the character of God. There is immense diversity along with incredible unity. The creation works with man and not against him. The animals, plants and even weather all conspire to bless mankind in revealing God's goodness in creation.

That is the condition before the Fall of mankind into sin. And we need to realize that Jesus Christ is remaking the world in such a way as to restore the unity of creation on the Earth.

As Bart mentioned in last week's sermon, what Jesus is doing is more than simply fixing the relationship of man to God so that man can go to heaven when he dies. Our very ideas of heaven are all askew when we speak this way. We act as if this world was not good and that our greatest desire and need to escape this world. But that does not really answer the problem of what has happened to the Earth and man in it and what God's answer to this problem is.

Today, we want to consider the Fall of mankind but we need to keep as a backdrop the ideas of the first few sermons in this series.

God is good. There is unity of relationship within the Godhead. God created the Heavens and the Earth to reveal His glory, His goodness, to mankind. All of His creation, as long as it is in submission to Him, reveals the glory of God. It is true that even the fallen creation reveals the glory of God. What I mean to say is that submissive creation reveals the true nature of God, it bears His image well. Rebellious creation will still reveal God's

glory but it may do so by being subject to futility because of sin. This is not a positive good but a negative good.

Secondly, Adam and Eve were created as unfallen moral beings. In this unfallen state, they were to marry and produce godly offspring. They were to work hard enough to make themselves weary so that they would need the rest of God on the Sabbath. So, in the pre-fallen world, in the creation mandate, we have marriage, child-bearing, work of all sorts, including building houses, cities, technology, churches, various regulations governing communal relationships and much more. With a little effort, we can imagine our world, much like it is today, only much better without sin and death.

So, the Fall had huge ramifications but making the Earth bad was not one of them. The Earth is still a good place and God loves the Earth so much that He sent His Son to die for it, to release it from its bonds of futility. This is not the same as Jesus coming to Earth to take us to heaven. That is true but it is only one part of the great redemptive story.

Jesus is setting right and is going to completely set right all that went amiss at the Fall.

## **EXEGESIS**

**3 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?**

We should keep in mind that the devil had already rebelled against God. We cannot fully comprehend how God can make creatures good and then have them fall from that state of perfection. Obviously, the angels were free moral agents. They could choose to submit to and serve God or not. Satan chose to rebel.

We should keep in mind that creation had not yet fallen simply because Satan had fallen. This statement also holds true when Eve sins. Creation does not fall when Eve sins. Creation falls when Adam sins. So, we see from this that Satan was never the ruler of this world. He was cast down to Earth as his abode but he was not in control of the Earth other than as a rebellious insurrectionist.

Adam was the true ruler of Earth, a vice-regent under the direct authority of God, Himself. So, when the King of the Earth rebelled, the Earth then fell into a state of corruption. We need to get this early theology correct if we are going to understand what Jesus came to the Earth to do.

It is also helpful if we realize that although the Earth was subject to futility through the fall, and thus subject to the advances of Satan, the Earth never belonged to Satan. It has always belonged to man but man was unable to hold it together. Because of man's rebellion in Adam, his rule was inadequate. God helped man by the power of His Spirit but man was unable to resist the wiles of the devil, at least until the Lord Jesus made an open show of the devil on the cross and despoiled him of all of the land that he had claimed.

This is one reason why in the temptations of Jesus, Jesus was not impressed with the devil offering Him all the kingdoms of the Earth. They were not the devils kingdoms to give. God was the ruler of all of those kingdoms and God had set man on the Earth to rule them. Adam failed in that rule but Jesus was the Second Adam, come to fulfill what the first Adam failed to do.

Adam was to extend his rule to the corners of the Earth by being fruitful and multiplying and filling all the Earth with his children. However, his children were not fruitful. His first son becomes a murderer. And so in Jesus, the rule of the Earth is reclaimed by man and Jesus is fruitful and multiplies and fills all the Earth with God's children.

The devil is always subtle, causing us to question what God has said.

**2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.**

The woman clarifies what God has said but is not strong enough to resist the devil.

**4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**

The devil directly contradicts the Lord, saying, “You shall not surely die.” He then insinuates that God is deceitful, holding back some good thing from Eve. He suggests that the opening of Eve’s eyes is a good thing.

**6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.**

Eve begins to see the devil’s point of view. The tree was good for food, pleasant to the eyes and desired to make one wise. This seems to correspond to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

Eve stumbled first and then she brought her husband into the sin, giving him to eat. He also listened to the voice of the devil and had it amplified by the behavior of his wife. The devil seemed to have told the truth. They did not immediately die and their eyes were opened. They knew that they were naked. They had no reason to be ashamed in their nakedness before one another as they were husband and wife. But they were ashamed to be in God’s presence.

**8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.**

They used to rejoice at God’s presence. Now, they were ashamed and hid themselves. This is the first breaking of fellowship and sets the stage for all subsequent breakings. If we are not in communion with God we cannot be in right relationship with one another.

**9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.**

Sin brings fear of God. God is gracious and willing to forgive. However, one who sins and hides his sin from God is in no position to receive forgiveness. We will only receive forgiveness when we bring our

sins to Him, confess them and repent of them. We see this in the sacrifice that Abel brought to the Lord.

**11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.**

God asks a direction question and Adam starts the blame game. What Adam says here is true. The woman did give to him and he did eat. But he starts his answer with an excuse. Instead of simply answering God and even taking on the responsibility himself in order to protect his wife, he instead tries to blame her in order to get out of his own sin. Perhaps this sin is as much the occasion for the Fall as the sin of eating the forbidden fruit.

**13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.**

Eve is a fast learner and she follows Adam's lead. God did not immediately pronounce judgment on Adam so Eve takes a crack at the blame game. The devil made me do it. Again, there is a semblance of truth in Eve's reply but she also shifts the blame.

**14 And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**

The Lord does not ask the devil a question. He simply proclaims judgment on him. It is interesting that in the words to the devil we have the first echo of promise to mankind after the Fall.

Gen. 3:15 is often called the Proto-Evangel. That is the first good news. It is the gospel in initial form. God has promised that the seed of the woman will crush the seed of the serpent. God is promising that Eve's offspring will be dragon slayers. But note also that the seed of the serpent will harass the seed of the woman.

**16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.**

**The Judgment on Eve- 1.** Pain in childbirth and in pregnancy is promised to Eve. Child bearing was initially meant to be a joyous occasion but the Fall has made it fraught with perils, dangers and worries. What is more, Eve had no promise that her children would be faithful in the covenant. There were two seeds inside of her. In a figurative sense, she had played the harlot with the devil and had procured the devil's seed. Abel represents the seed of the woman and Cain the seed of the serpent. But the seed of the woman does not crush the seed of the serpent. In fact, just the opposite happens. The seed of the serpent crushed the seed of the woman.

We have a better covenant with greater promises. The seed has been restored and thus we have every reason to believe that God's promises flow to our children. But it is still not a one to one automatic blessing. The promises are for those who know and love the Lord.

**Judgment 2-** Eve has a desire for her husband but the desire is unrealized. She desires to lead as she did in the beginning with the forbidden fruit. But since her discernment was poor, her authority is taken away. She no longer can stand as an equal with her husband. This principle is not taken away in the New Covenant.

**1 Tim 2:11-15 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. 15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.**

We see a partial restoration. She shall be saved in childbearing but we still see her authority subject to her husband.

**17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in**

**sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**

**Judgment on Adam-** He is judged because he listened to his wife above the command of the Lord. Listening to your wife is a good thing unless she speaks like the devil.

**Cursed is the ground-** Adam's fruitfulness immediately decreases. A great deal of his labor will now be spent on fighting thorns and thistles. The joy of work has taken a great hit. Now Adam must hustle to stay ahead of the encroaching weeds. This is not just labor but hard labor.

If we think about the productivity of the Earth, even in pre-Christian days, we ought to be really amazed. The Earth is enormously productive. Man's ingenuity is striking. The multitude of ingenious ways he has adapted to irrigate a dry environment, to cultivate countless crops, to build the most amazing buildings, bridges, water works, system of dikes to protect from the sea and a million other marvels is truly astounding. Imagine a world in which man did all of this without sin, removed from the curse of the futility of the Earth. Those days are here in part but they are coming complete in the new creation.

Adam is dust and to dust he shall return. This is God speaking to him about the fact that he is created. The devil lied to Adam and Eve and said they would become like gods, knowing good and evil. They did learn of evil in their disobedience but it did not change their condition. They were still but dust.

**20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them. 22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:**

God covers the shame of Adam and Eve by making a sacrifice. Also, we may think that God was judging them in refusing to let them eat of the

Tree of Life but perhaps not? Perhaps it is a curse to live in this life forever with the taint of sin and death upon us. It is true that the Ancients lived a very long time, 800 or 900 years. We also know that they had their vigor with them for many hundreds of years. Noah fathered children when he was 500 years old. But they eventually waxed old and began to decay. What if the Tree of Life caused them to live forever but did not stop the march of time. Perhaps this would be a curse to not be able to die?

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a literal tree with fruit growing on it. We are given every indication that the Tree of Life is also a real tree with fruit growing on it. **Rev 22:1-4 22 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.** Already not yet.

**23 Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.**

This tree survived the flood. Or, God made it to grow again. We see it in the New Testament. The rivers of life flow from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Clearly, this is the Holy Spirit, poured out at Pentecost. The Tree of Life is that food of God which is taken and eaten in faith. Communion? Yes, already but not yet, so even more than that.

**The Result of the Fall- Broken and Twisted Man-**Disunity is at the heart of the brokenness of the Fall, man against man, brother against brother. Whenever you see brothers in discord, you are seeing sin and death. Whenever you see brothers reconciled and unified you are seeing the Rivers of the Water of Life, the healing of the nations.

We have a long ways to go. There are still wars and rumors of wars. And they are not yet solved by the power of the gospel of Jesus and reconciliation. Our country is doing their level best to make sure wars are not stopped in the name of Jesus. Perhaps that is because we do not desire to stop wars but rather to wage them?

The power of the sword should be used in the name of Jesus to intervene for peace. But this can only be done by God Christian men. This is why being faithful believer in Jesus should be a pre-requisite for civil office.

**4 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.**

Abel brought a sacrifice, a lamb offered as a sin offering. God accepted this. Cain's offering was not accepted by God. To obey is better than sacrifice. Perhaps Cain thought if he got rid of his righteous brother, then God would receive his wicked self? He was self-deceived as well as envious. Abel's righteousness only amplified the wickedness of Cain.

Some men cannot tolerate the blessing of others. It makes them angry and they are not satisfied until the righteous suffer for being blessed. Envy always reveals the will of the devil.

**6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.**

God points out to Cain that it was not Abel that caused the problem but that the problem was in Cain. This was an opportunity for Cain to repent and receive God's blessing. He does not do so.

**8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.**

Cain cannot find a place of repentance and so he kills his brother.

**9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?**

The evasive answer once again. Where is your brother? How should I know? But we are our brother's keeper. And Cain knew the answer but evaded telling God the truth.

**10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**

The blood of the brother cries out from the ground. All Cain's will be dealt with. Abel was the first martyr and Jesus's righteous blood was the price for the ground. Thus, the Earth is restored.

## **EXHORTATION**

- 1. Evasive answers** are proof of shame and guilt. A direct answer is willing to speak the truth, take responsibility and be held accountable.
- 2. Envy is devilish.** But a man who rejoices in the rewards and blessings of his brothers and sisters in Christ is one who reveals God's goodness.
- 3. Disunity is a great sin.** Husbands take note. Fathers take note. Elders take note. You may not be strictly speaking at fault. Eve sinned first. But you can take responsibility and fix the problem. Do not abdicate your responsibility. Protect those in your charge, own up to the reality of the disunity and ask God to restore unity, the healing waters of the river of life.

### **Cain and Abel Exhortation**

The rift of brother against brother is a great problem. Even in the body of Christ, the result of the Fall is present and problematic. The New Testament warns of such continuing enmity between brothers.

**Gal. 5:13-6:2-** Called to freedom from sinful desires. Works of the flesh are opposed to the works of the spirit. 5:17. The list of the works of the flesh includes a great deal of schism within the body of Christ.

**James 3:14-18** 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 4:1-12- Wars, fighting, murder are the fruit of a sour tongue, jealousy and envy.

Walk in the Spirit, produce the works of the Spirit, Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

This fruit of the Spirit is opposed to the fruit of Cain. It looks for good upon another instead of for ill. It humbles itself to leave room for the exaltation from God. It does not boast. It does not promote. It does not find room for grievances. In short, the work of the Spirit of God in us is to submit to the Providence of God without demanding that God exalt us, recognize us, or advance us. This seems contrary because we are expressly told in the Scriptures that the Lord exalts the humble. There is the point. Those who humble themselves, the Lord will exalt. Those who exalt themselves over others, the Lord will humble.

So, let us be spiritual. Let us walk by the Spirit in true humility of mind and action and in the Lord's time, He will exalt us.