

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
June 9, 2024  
Lincoln Heights Lutheran Church  
Genesis 3:8-15

**Genesis 3:8-15 (EHV)**

*They heard the voice of the Lord God, who was walking around in the garden during the cooler part of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>The Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup>The man said, “I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself.” <sup>11</sup>God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I commanded you not to eat?” <sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman you gave to be with me—she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”*

*<sup>13</sup>The Lord God said to the woman, “What have you done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

*<sup>14</sup>The Lord God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the livestock, and more than every wild animal. You shall crawl on your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup>I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will crush your head, and you will crush his heel.*

Dear Friends in Christ,

Can you think of someone who had it all? They had a mind to compete with the best minds in the world. They had the athletic ability to jump out of the gym. They had musical talent that is only seen once in every generation. They had business acumen so that every deal and project they touched turned to gold. They had a wonderful spouse, great kids, and a wonderful life in almost every way imaginable. They had it all...and lost it all. An addiction ruins them. An affair rips apart their family. One bad business decision wrecks everything. One day, this person had it all and the next day, they had nothing.

No one since Adam and Eve have lost as much as Adam and Eve due to one foolish choice. No one has caused more harm and ruin to themselves and to the entire world than Adam and Eve. They had it all and lost it all.

Think of what they had. The Lord God had created them in his image, as truly holy and righteous. Their minds were perfect. Not only were their minds not clouded by sin, but their human reason was also perfectly aligned with God's will. Think of what they could have created with perfect minds in the realm of art and music. They had perfect bodies. No weakness. No pain. No growing old. Only bodies that worked exactly as the Lord God designed. How we long for such bodies and minds.

In addition, the Lord God gave them a beautiful garden in which to live. Everything they needed was there – abundant food and water that was easy to obtain. God gave them to each other in marriage to form the first family. Adam was given a wife perfectly suitable for him, made from his own side, to live forever with in perfect unity. And God was there too. He would walk with them in the cool of the day. He talked to them. They had it all – perfect minds, bodies, home, spouse, and a perfect relationship with their Creator.

They lost it all when they made the choice to believe the lies of the devil instead of their loving, heavenly Father who had given them everything. The serpent told Eve, and Adam who was there with her, that God's word was not to be trusted, that God was lying to them, and that God did not give them everything good he could have. When Eve stopped trusting in her Creator and ate the fruit and when Adam ate what she gave to him, all was lost. The devil succeeded in bringing ruin

upon the crown of God's creation, humans. Listen to the aftermath of the fall again:

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Their perfect minds were not working so well now. They thought they could hide from God. How foolish. Their perfect relationship with God was ruined now. Instead of running to meet God in the garden, they were scared and attempted to hide. This is no longer paradise. When the Lord God gives Adam a chance to repent, Adam attempts to blame his wife. So much for a happy and perfect marriage. Adam even blames God for "the woman you gave to be with me." Adam not only doesn't trust his God but blames God for what happened. Eve doesn't repent either. She passes the blame to the serpent. All is lost. Their perfect minds are corrupted. Their perfect bodies have begun the slow march to death already. Their perfect relationship with God is now one of fear and lies. Their marriage and family are going to face challenges and hardships. They will not be allowed to live in the perfect garden any longer. Everything is lost. The devil has won.

As Christians today, we can feel that way at times too. For we have been given so much from our Lord God. Christ redeemed us from sin and death by his holy, precious blood and his innocent suffering and death. The Holy Spirit called us to faith in Christ by God's grace alone. Our heavenly Father made sure we heard God's Word, were taught the truth, were restored into a right relationship with our Creator. But then the serpent deceived us. He put some evil fruit before us, and we gladly ate and all we can taste is guilt and shame. An affair, pornography, substance abuse, or something so shameful that we dare not let anyone know. Perhaps it, whatever it is, has already ruined relationships in life. It has certainly caused us to run from God, to try to hide our sin from God.

Maybe it is not one big sin, but a series of ongoing small rebellions against our Creator. We know what God says about honoring our parents and those in authority over us. We know what God says about marriage and about the use of possessions and the kind of language we are to use. But we are not going to change because we've decided that God's Word isn't to be trusted in that area. We know better than God what is good for our lives. We not only attempt to hide from God but sometimes tell the Lord God to mind his own business and stay out of my life.

And the ancient serpent loves to jump in and help us hide from God and push God away. He will tell us that we've gone too far this time. All is lost. There is no going back to God now. He'll never take you back anyway. You had it all and lost it all. Might as well accept it and forget about the Lord God. He's certainly not interested in a worthless sinner like you.

The devil acts like he has won. But he hasn't. Even though Adam and Eve lost it all and even though they did not immediately repent, the first words of the Lord God were an announcement of his plan to defeat the devil once and for all. Listen to the first promise of the Savior:

*<sup>14</sup>The Lord God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the livestock, and more than every wild animal. You shall crawl on your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup>I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will crush your head, and you will crush his heel.*

Yes, God does announce to the humans that there will be pain in childbearing, thorns and thistles in the fields and that they will return to the dust one day. But first the Lord God promises to defeat the serpent. Adam and Eve willingly took the side of the devil, and the Lord God promises to rescue them by crushing the head of the serpent. This is completely undeserved love, grace, from the Lord God. The male seed of the woman, born of Mary, will do this. The full punishment for siding with Satan will fall upon the Son of God upon the cross. He will suffer death and through his death, the power of the ancient serpent will be crushed. Christ won on Good Friday and showed it by overcoming death itself on Easter Sunday. The devil has lost and one day soon Christ will confine the ancient serpent to the lake of burning sulfur forever.

So do not listen to the lies of the devil who tells you all is lost. Do not be deceived by the defeated enemy of mankind who claims that God will not take you back. The Lord God is the God of free and faithful love. He is the God who rescues his people by defeating the true enemy. He is the God who sincerely desires your eternal salvation. Therefore, do not be scared to confess any and every sin to him. Through Christ, he has forgiven you and will restore you to himself again. Do not attempt to hide your sins or yourself from him. Instead, run to the Lord God when you feel defeated, and he will lift you up. Run to the Lord God when you are covered with the filth of sin, and he will cleanse you. Run to the Lord God when shame and guilt cover you and he will cloth you in the robes of Christ's perfect righteousness.

All is not lost. The seed of the woman has defeated our enemy and brought us into the kingdom of our Savior now and forever. Thanks be to Christ.

Amen.