

**“The Truth of the Lord” A sermon by Lee Ireland  
Cathedral City Community Presbyterian Church  
March 1, 2020 Transfiguration Sunday  
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7,**

Prayer: Open our eyes to see your Spirit in our life. Open our hearts to receive the blessings you send each day. Guide us with your wisdom so that through us Christ may walk on the earth once again. Amen.

When I finished reading the scripture today, what did I say? I say it every Sunday after I read the scripture. Yes, the truth of the Lord. I am quoting John 17:17 where Jesus prays to God for the disciples and says: **Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.**

I draw your attention to this statement today because I believe that God’s truth is in this scripture. Whether or not you believe that the story of Adam and Eve actually happened, that is not the point. The point is what this story tells us about God and about ourselves – our desires, our behaviors – and where those desires and behaviors can lead us. What truths can we glean from this story?

Let me ask you three true/false questions. Just take a pencil or pen and note your answers on your bulletin.

1. Adam was off somewhere else when Eve was tempted? True or false?
2. Eve should have consulted Adam before she took the apple and ate? True or false?
3. Did God follow through with the command that Adam and Eve would die if they ate of the fruit of the tree of good and evil? True or false?

Let’s look at the answers to the questions.

1. Adam was off somewhere else when Eve was tempted? True or false? Did you notice that the scripture notes that Adam was with her? Verse 6: **So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.**
2. Eve should have consulted Adam before she took the apple and ate? True or false? The Bible is silent on this question. However, now that you know that Adam was next to Eve, maybe she did ask. Could it be that Adam told Eve to go ahead and eat the fruit?
3. Did God follow through with the command that they would die if Adam or Eve ate of the fruit of the tree of good and evil? True or false?

Here’s a story from a Sunday School Class where the story of Adam and Eve was being carefully explained to the children. Following the story, the children were asked to draw some picture that would illustrate the story. Little Bobby drew a picture of a car with three people in it. In the front seat was a man and in the back seat, a man and a woman. The teacher was at a loss to understand how this illustrated the lesson of Adam and Eve. Little Bobby was prompt with his explanation. "Why, this is God driving Adam and Eve out of the garden!" We know that Adam and Eve were not killed by God even though they were driven out of the garden. God allowed them to go on living, but not in the Garden. You may consider that they did ‘die’ to God when they ate the fruit. By the way, we have no idea if the fruit Eve ate was indeed an apple.

God created us to be in intimate relationship with God. That is illustrated in the first few chapters in book of Genesis. Eve and Adam walked and talked with God. They were not fearful of God. They had a one-on-one relationship with God. When sin entered the picture, this relationship was broken. That broken relationship is illustrated when Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together so God would not see them naked.

When the apple was eaten, Adam and Eve were separated from the intimate relationship they had shared with God. They were separated both physically and in relationship. This scripture lesson illustrates what many people explain as sin. Sin is separation from God.

Our true identity is to be in a free and open, intimate relationship with God. We often are not aware of that truth because sin separates us from our true identity as a child of God. When we do not understand that we are to be in a free, open and intimate relationship with God, we operate out of ego and self-protection separating us from God.

In spite of our sin, our separation from God, we are loved and cared for by God. Consider the creation story from Genesis. God created the earth and all that is in it for humanity's enjoyment. That would be you and me. God loves us and created the earth for us to enjoy. In many of the creation accounts from other cultures, the earth was created as an accident or created as a playground for their gods; humans were incidental. The Hebrew peoples' God, our God, created the earth specifically for people to enjoy. People were purposefully created, not accidentally.

Many of you are striving for a more intimate relationship with God and Jesus. We are torn in so many ways by our society that thinks freedom is doing what you want to do and forget about anyone else. Freedom doesn't mean that you can neglect God's creation – including the people God created. We are to care for all of God's creation. You know that and most of you try to live in that way.

As you know, because you are sitting here today, God did not carry out his threatened sentence of death. What is so amazing is that God responds to our disobedience, not with judgement, but with grace – unexpected mercy. That grace is exemplified in Christ and Christ's life, death and resurrection.

When the verses were read this morning about Jesus' temptation, did you see the contrast between Adam and Eve's reaction to the devil and Jesus'? Jesus did not give into the devil's offers of greatness. He stayed true to God and his relationship with God.

We are tempted daily by that apple, just as Eve and Adam were tempted – and just as Jesus was tempted. However, God's grace abounds, God's forgiveness abounds. And we know that forgiveness to be a fact and a truth to live by because of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

My challenge to you today is to consider how you can live your life as a child of God, being in an intimate relationship with God. Jesus provides a great example for us. During Lent, as we walk with Jesus to the cross, pay close attention to how Jesus lived his life in challenging times and model your life after his.

May God bless you as you do. The truth of the Lord.