

Where Are You? Genesis 3

Introduction

- It all sounds so simple. “You can eat from any tree in the garden, just not this one. For if you eat of it, you will surely die.” (Genesis 3:16-17; paraphrased)
 - Yet, all it took was a little curiosity, and an appetite for more to dismiss the rest of the forest for one tree.
 - If only Eve would have had a granola bar with her to appease her hunger crave, maybe she would have been able to resist the temptation to eat from the forbidden tree.
 - Where was Adam? If he had just been there when the crafty serpent began to tempt Eve, maybe he could have stepped in as the Knight and Shining Armor to deflect the arrows of temptation.
 - But no, neither Adam nor Eve could resist the prospect of having more than what God had provided.
 - It all sounds so simple, until you and I are placed in the garden with the same decision to live in God’s abundance or taste test the forbidden fruit.
- New Sermon Series: “Bloom Where You Are Planted”
 - Adam and Eve found themselves planted in the Garden of Eden.
 - All they had to do in order to bloom was to take care of the Garden, maintain their relationship with one another and God, and stay away from one tree.
 - God had made Adam and Eve in his image. He blessed them with abundance. The picture of God’s creation was complete with Adam and Eve planted in the Garden.
 - And as the Master Gardener, God stepped back from his creation and said, “This is very good!” (Genesis 1:31, paraphrase)
 - Shortly after Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, God came walking through the garden.
 - Knowing that they had disobeyed God, Adam and Eve hid.
 - God called out to them, “Where Are You?” (Genesis 3:9)
 - It is this question that God asked Adam and Eve, that I would like for us to focus on today.
 - Where Are You?
 - Just like Adam and Eve, God has planted you in a place that God desires for you to bloom.
 - Unfortunately, the place where you are planted is not the Garden of Eden; however it does provide the opportunity for you to bloom.
 - The parameters are the same for you as they were for Adam and Eve
 - Take care of what God has given you
 - Maintain a loving relationship with God and others
 - Do what God tells you to do

- But like Adam and Eve, we are tempted to allow the seed where we have been planted to be carried away by the winds of temptation.
 - Before long, you may find yourself hiding from God, and trying to figure out how to live in a foreign land with the consequences of your choices.
 - If God were to walk through your garden today, where would God find you?
 - Would you hide out of fear?
 - Would you be busy from doing the work God has called you to do?
 - Are you blooming where God has planted you?

Where is the *snake* in your garden?

- This story can be somewhat troubling to us.
 - Why is there a snake in the garden? How did the snake get there?
 - **Revelation 12:9 and 20:2** describe Satan as an ancient serpent who deceives the whole world.
 - We have a vantage point that Adam and Eve did not have.
 - The Bible describes for us all the destructive works of Satan.
 - The Bible describes for us that Adam and Eve were only the first of many people who would fall at the hands of Satan's deception.
 - Sin, at it's very core, is rebellion against God. It is the desire to be the god of our own life, instead of allowing God's image to bloom through our lives.
 - It can be easy for us to blame God for allowing the snake to be in the garden.
 - Adam blamed Eve
 - Eve blamed the snake
 - Neither of them wanted to take responsibility for eating the forbidden fruit
 - However, when God blessed Adam and Eve in **Genesis 1:28, ESV he said, "have dominion over every living thing that moves on the earth."**
 - The snake was not outside of Adam's and Eve's control, instead they allowed the snake to have dominion over them.
 - Beware of the snake in your garden
 - The snake is the temptation that you struggle to let go of
 - The snake appears to meet a need, but leaves you naked in the end
 - The snake appears to be a delight, but it is only short lived
 - What wisdom did Adam and Eve gain when then ate the forbidden fruit?
 - **Genesis 3:7, ESV "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked."**
 - The "wisdom" Adam and Eve gained was *shame*.
 - Beware of the snake in your garden. It will twist God's truth, cause you to question what God says, and make promises that lead to destruction.

Maintain Your Walk with God

- A key phrase that will be repeated over three 3 chapters
 - The first appearance is **Genesis 3:8**
 - God is walking in the garden
 - But Adam and Eve hide from the presence of God
 - This signals a break in the relationship that Adam and Eve had with God
 - They were ashamed of their sin
 - They did what God told them not to do
 - They were cursed and sent out of the Garden
 - Thankfully, this is not the end of the story!
 - The second appearance of “walking with God” is **Genesis 5:22**
 - The third appearance is **Genesis 6:9**
 - Although the Garden of Eden was closed, Enoch and Noah are just two examples of people who “Bloomed Where They Were Planted”
 - They walked with God, despite the circumstances going on around them
 - Even when the circumstances are less than ideal it’s still possible to walk with God
- Maintain your walk with God
 - Every step you take with God is an opportunity to remain in his presence. In God’s presence we can find strength and the refuge no matter what circumstances surround us.
God honored the faithfulness of Enoch and Noah
 - Enoch never experienced an earthly death
 - Noah survived the Flood
 - When God asks, “Where are you”, don’t hide. Take responsibility to respond in faith.
 - If you maintain your walk with God, you won’t be consumed by temptation. Instead, you will find the strength and refuge to trust and obey God’s will.

Because God chooses to walk with us, we need to walk with others

- Two of the most important verses in the entire Bible
 - **Mark 12:30-31, ESV “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”**
 - **John 3:16, ESV “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”**
 - The key word in both of these verses is *love*
- The true test of any relationship is love
 - Love is more than an emotion
 - Love is a commitment that we choose to make
 - If the true test of a relationship is love; then the true test of love is choosing to love for better or for worse in any relationship

- Examples of God's love despite sin
 - Despite the sin of Adam and Eve, God still chose to provide for Adam and Eve
 - He provided garments for them to clothe themselves (Genesis 3:21)
 - This quite possibly was the first example of sacrifice found in the Bible considering that their clothes were made from animal skins
 - God put a hedge of protection around Cain, despite Cain murdering his brother Abel. (Genesis 4:15)
 - God provided for Adam and Eve another son named Seth (Genesis 4:25)
 - Despite regretting that God created man, Noah found favor in the eyes of God. (Genesis 6:6-8)
 - All of these examples are acts of mercy on God's part.
- Just like God went looking for Adam and Eve in the Garden, God will come looking for you wherever you are!
 - There are consequences for not maintaining your walk with God, but God also wishes to extend mercy to you.
 - God did not give up on Adam and Eve. They were still able to bloom outside of the Garden
 - They took care of God's creation
 - They were fruitful and multiplied
- The opportunity of the Garden of Eden was destroyed, but the fact that God did not give up on humanity should give us hope!
 - **Romans 3:23-24, ESV "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."**
 - All of us at some point in our lives have run from God when we have heard him say, "Where are you?"
 - But I know that many of you have also run toward that voice when God has asked, "Where are you?"
 - God calls out to us when we are living in his will and even when we choose to live outside of his will.
 - The fact remains, God chooses to walk to us wherever we are.
- BUT, Is it possible that we can forget where God has walked to find us?
 - God's mercy is not only found in the question that he asks, "Where are you?" But God shows his mercy because he chooses to go where we are at
 - I wonder if we as Christians are tempted to ask the same question, "Where is everyone?" without walking where others are at?
- Example of Running Marathons
 - It would be like me asking you to buy some running shoes, and then run a marathon with me.
 - I'm not able to run a marathon because I am better than you. The difference is that I've trained you haven't.
 - Some of you have been running the Christian Marathon for some time, but there are others who are just entering the race, but yet I wonder if those of us who are experienced runners expect everyone else to be in the same condition as we are.

- From my running experience, training not only helps me build up endurance, but it also speeds up my pace.
- It would be unrealistic for me to anticipate someone who has never run before to run 26 miles, or keep the pace that I can run.
- Yet my fear is that those of us who consider ourselves seasoned runners in the Christian Marathon, expect others to keep pace with us.
- The thing I love about running is that most people don't care who wins, all they care about is finishing the race.
- Some of my most memorable experiences from running are the times I've stopped worrying about my pace and just enjoyed running alongside someone else.
- It offered me the opportunity to encourage someone else as they ran the race, and it added great joy to my running experience.
- If God has chosen to not only call out to us wherever we are at, but has also chosen to walk to us and has continued to walk with us through better and worse, we need to find someone else we can run alongside with and encourage.
 - Everyone runs at a different pace in their relationship with God, because everyone is at a different place in the race.
 - Let's not discredit the work that God might be doing in our church just because others may not be running at our pace
 - There are stories and decisions that people make that can't be added up on the back of the bulletin
 - For those of you who are seasoned Christians, those decisions may seem very basic, but are life-changing for others who are new to the race.
 - Don't try to outrun everyone else. Find someone you can come alongside of and encourage as you both run toward the same finish line!
 - This is what it means to bloom where you are planted.
 - Be faithful to God
 - But, encourage someone else along the way
 - Before long, you won't be the only flower blooming in the garden!

Conclusion

- Where are you this morning?
 - Are you living out the purpose God created you for, or are you living outside of God's will for your life?
 - You can't always choose your circumstances, but God offers you the opportunity to Bloom Where You Are Planted
 - Beware of the Snake in your garden
 - Maintain your walk with God
 - Remember that the goal is not to outrun the other runners in the race. Run alongside someone that you can encourage.