

Bible chat week starting 26 2 23

Genesis 2: 15-17; 3: 1-7

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.'

3:1 Now the snake was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?''

2 The woman said to the snake, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4 'You will not certainly die,' the snake said to the woman. 5 'For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

1. The story of the Fall is often seen in cartoons, novels, jokes and the like. Share some popular ideas about the meaning of this story.
2. Does the story as it is actually written say anything about the devil? Does it say anything about sex? Does it say anything about women being more evil than men?
3. David in his sermon suggested that the part in chapter 2:15-17 offers us three things: a **call to work**; a **freedom to enjoy**; and a **limit on that freedom**. Can you see those three things in the text?
4. Discuss the meaning of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. David suggested it was expressing the limit between life as **harmonious trust** or life as **selfish strife**. Do you find this helpful? If not, what else might this tree represent?
5. Looking at 3: 1 - 7 now, David offered a psychological reading of this section. How does the text illustrate the way we persuade ourselves that God's way of harmonious trust should not be followed?
6. In Romans 5:12-18, writing many centuries later, the apostle Paul builds on this story. He sees sin as something that infected the whole human race through the disobedience of the one man Adam. This says that people are innately bad and therefore incapable of real reform without the saving work of Christ on the cross. To what extent do you find this helpful?
7. By contrast, most of the Hebrew scriptures (the Old Testament) suggest that people have a choice as to living a righteous life or a wicked life. To what extent do you find this helpful