

Sermon Genesis 3 8 15 2nd Sunday after Pentecost Series B

Sermon: 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

Text: Genesis 3:8-15 (v.9)

Theme: Relationship broken – Relationship restored

Goal: God comes and searches for s the sinner to restore the good relationship with him. This is the reason why Jesus came from heaven to earth.

Dear Friends,

Introduction: Temptation is nearly always related to something good and pleasurable (or that seems be good) that leads to evil. If sweets were not good, I would stop eating sweets to reduce my belly. If sex was not pleasurable, teenagers wouldn't become pregnant. We tend to relate temptation with something bad; and this is a temptation by itself, because we are not aware of the good things that can lead us to sin too. Bad is the origin of temptation: Satan himself! The fruit that the woman ate “was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom...”

I – Temptation

Temptation plays such a bad role in the broken relationship between man and God that Jesus included two petitions in the short Lord's Prayer to prevent us from a bigger damage, the eternal condemnation. The 6th and 7th petitions say: “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Luther explains: *“God tempts no one. We pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory. – And also: We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and*

graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to himself in heaven. (Small Catechism).

The first temptation began with a question: “Did God really say?” Since then, people have been trying to change God’s Word and not to accept it as it is. God’s Word has to be accepted and believed. Of course, we have doubts and when we don’t understand some passages, we have questions, trying to understand the will of God better. This is not wrong. But we cannot contradict God’s Word, as Satan did.

II – Relationship broken

The woman listened to Satan’s argument and believed in his words more than she believed the Word of God. And she and her husband fell into temptation. This broke their good relationship with God, and linked them to an evil relationship with Satan. The consequences came immediately: They were ashamed to be naked; they made some coverings from leaves for themselves; they hid from God; and they became mortal creatures. Their conscience was accusing them because they had disobeyed God’s Word.

This story repeats itself daily in our lives. When we do something wrong, we try to dissimulate it, we try to solve it by ourselves, and many run away from the presence of God... trying to hide themselves from God... instead of seeking His mercy and forgiveness.

The Apostle Paul wrote: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12). Like an infectious disease, sin and death infected the whole humankind. We are suffering this consequence. – This is called in theology “The Original Sin”. The Augsburg Confession says: *Also they (the Lutherans) teach that since the fall of Adam all*

men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost. (Augsburg Confession, artc. II).

This excludes any good in men, any participation of men in his salvation, any condition to do something to please God – as some churches teach that we have to take a decision, that we have to do this and that to be saved. “We are dead in our transgressions and sins” says Paul to the Ephesians (2:1); and a dead person can do nothing!

*The doctrine of Original Sin, properly understood, brings great **comfort** to the believer; has the great virtue of honesty; and allows Christ to be the Saviour in **all** respects; and keeps me from taking any of that to myself.* (Phil Brand, p.3). Sin does not only mean to commit an infraction. It is a condition. I am sick. I am a sinner. I need help!

III – Relationship Restored

This comfort comes from God’s attitude toward men. He was aware of what had happened. But even so, He didn’t come angry and thundering, but He came with a soft question: “Where are you?” God looks after the lost sheep, as Jesus told in the parable. He is waiting for humbleness and contrition. He asks again: “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” *God pursues the sinners, he is not really interested in the excuses, and he is much more interested in them, (the sinners)* (Phil Brand p. 37). But Adam and Eve began to blame each other and to search for a guilty one. Then God became angry. He cursed the

snake; and He gave pain and hardship to the man and to the woman. And He expelled the couple from the Garden.

But even in the serpent's curse, there is a Word of hope for men and women. God said that an offspring of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. This is the first promise of the Saviour we have in the Bible. Satan is called in Revelation (12:9:20:2) as "the old serpent" whose head was crushed by Christ. On the cross, the offspring of the woman was stroked on his heel; but on Easter Sunday the old serpent was defeated.

The good relationship with God was restored by the Son of God and the son of Mary, Jesus. As God came to the garden to search for Adam and Eve, so the Son of God came from heaven to earth to search for the lost, to fight against the devil and all his angels, and to conquer victory for humankind. Whoever believe in this Son of God, is taken by Him to the very presence of God as a beloved child, forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness. The good relationship with the Creator and Father is restored by faith in Jesus.

Conclusion: Are we free from temptation? No; we experience it daily. But Jesus' victory over Satan gives us strength and condition to resist; and even if we fall, God comes to our aid and forgives us. The point is that we must not hide from God, but be honest with ourselves and confess our sins, looking for mercy. We cannot pay for the wrongdoing we do. Jesus already paid for all of them, nailing them on the cross and burying them on His tomb. The new life He brought on Easter is our new life by faith. He comes today again in the bread and the wine to give us forgiveness; to give us strength to persevere in godly life; and to dismiss us in peace. Amen.