

Lent 1 3/5/17  
Genesis 3:1-21 A

The words of the LORD God in the Garden, “WHAT IS THIS THAT YOU HAVE DONE?”

One day, the LORD God was out walking in the Garden in the cool of the day and, much to His shock and surprise, He couldn't find the man He had created in His own image. That was because the man and his wife were hiding from God. So, God had to cry out for them, “Where are you”? Turns out, Adam not only hid from God, but he and his wife were now clothed, wearing those loincloths they had fashioned for themselves.

That just wasn't right. Prior to that, Adam and Eve had lived in the Garden and they were naked, and they were innocent in their nakedness, perfectly knowing God and perfectly able to do His will. But now, Adam and his wife are hiding, afraid, and ashamed.

And that is enough to make the Creator ask, “Adam, Buddy, what is this that you have done? ... Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

Adam replies, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” Adam, does what you do when confronted with your sin, he excuses his sin and refuses to take responsibility for it. But, what is truly interesting is the excuse that He offers God – He blames God. No, no, no, the man does not blame the woman, He blames God! Make no mistake about what Adam is saying here, He is saying to God, “This is all your fault, God. You're the one who gave her to me. If you had not given me that woman, I would not have sinned.” Caught in the embarrassment and shame of his own sin, the first man blames God rather than acknowledge his sin.

God looks at the woman and says, "What is this you have done?" She replies, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." Rather than take responsibility for her sin, she blames the serpent.

Those are fascinating answers to God's question. Look at their answers, "Things are a mess, but you can't blame me. Not my fault." That is called passing the buck.

But, that shouldn't surprise you, it shouldn't shock you, because that's exactly the same thing you do when God asks you, "What is this that you have done?" The Bible says, "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through the one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned" (Ro 5:12). Adam is that one man. His sin is eating the forbidden fruit. Because he did that, his sin is the reason you are born sinful and unclean. You know that saying, "Like Father, like son." It's true -- you are just like your father Adam.

Take a look at your life – your thoughts, your words, your deeds. The LORD your God says to you, love me with all your heart, with all your soul, and all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself. But, you don't. You worship the IDOL of yourself. What you want is more important than what God wants for you. Your popularity with your neighbor is more important to you than popularity with God. And besides, you fear your neighbor, at least what they think of you, more than you fear God. You fear, love, and trust in your accomplishments, your achievements, your money, your leisure activities more than you love God. Rather than loving your neighbor, you are so often angry, resentful, filled with hate, refusing to be reconciled. You lust after your neighbor's wife and covet his stuff.

When God asks you, "What is this you have done?", your reply is simple, "It's not my fault! God, that's the way you made me. If you had

done things MY way, if you have given me what I want, if you had not given me cancer, if my spouse had not abandoned me, if you had given me the money I wanted, I wouldn't have to lust after my neighbor, I wouldn't have to covet my neighbor's stuff, curse you and curse my neighbor. Come on, God, do things my way, give me what I want, and I won't have to do these things."

What's that saying? "Like Father, like son." Pass the buck. Put the blame on someone else, so you may as well blame the LORD your God.

Do you know the funny thing about all that? God doesn't buy it. When we try to pass the buck, God tells us what He told Adam and Eve,

"Because you have done this,  
 "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;  
     in pain you shall bring forth children.  
 Your desire shall be for your husband,  
     and he shall rule over you...  
 Cursed is the ground because of you;  
     in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
     and you shall eat the plants of the field.  
 By the sweat of your face  
     you shall eat bread,  
 till you return to the ground,  
     for out of it you were taken;  
 for you are dust,  
     and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3).

Pain. Curse. Sweat of your face. To the dust you shall return. That's what you get for your sin and trying to excuse your sin and blame someone else for your sin – even when that someone is God. God doesn't buy it. God doesn't like it at all.

But, here's what He does like – "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". Do you

understand what God is saying to us in those words? He is not saying that you confessing your sin is the reason you are forgiven. The reason you have the forgiveness of your sins is because God is faithful to His promise, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel”. That offspring, that seed, of woman is the Lord Jesus Christ and He has come to this earth to undo all that Adam and all that you have done by your sin.

He came in flesh and blood as a human being for you, to stand in your place, as your substitute, to do for you what you could not do for yourself – love the LORD His God with all His heart, with all His soul, with all His mind and love His neighbor as Himself. All this He did perfectly for you.

He even went out and faced the lies and temptations of the devil for you. But where Adam and Eve, and you, fell, He was faithful to God for you, in your place.

When it comes to passing the buck, He doesn't do that. The buck stops with Jesus. All your sins and all your excuses are placed upon Him and carries them to the cross. He suffers all your punishment, the punishment that comes in the form of betrayal and abandonment by His friends, trumped up charges in the mockery of a trial, flogging and a crown of thorns, being nailed to the tree of the cross, and, finally, returning to the dust.

And, in His last dying breath, He said something quite interesting. He said, “It is finished”. All that you've done is undone by what He has done, such that your pain, your curse, your death is finished. All of it has been undone because Jesus lived, and died, and rose again for you.

What is this that you have done? We've all done lotza things. We can offer no excuses. No passing of the buck. But, we are forgiven because Jesus said, "Blame Me!". We can rejoice and be glad, Dear Christian Friends, because all that we have done is undone by the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.