

The Life

I learned about a mother who texted some friends about the death of a friend. She ended it with “LOL”. Her teenage daughter was shocked at what she said. The mother who was new to texting responded,

“I thought it would be appropriate to end my text with ‘Lots of Love!’”

The most common asked question today is,

“If there is a God why does He allow so many bad things happen?”

Often built into that question is an attack on God’s goodness, or even existence. At best the answer is difficult to answer, but also difficult to hear.

In another way it is an odd question since things didn’t start that way.

When God created our first parents, He placed them in the garden of Eden.

Adam’s first job was to tend and care for the garden. Both Adam and Eve were brought into a setting that was pristine, beautiful, fulfilling, without death, aging, or any of the problems we have today.

...until the fall... that’s when everything changed – when evil replaced good.

How did the fall of man come about? The answer is simply: “Lies”.

In the anatomy of the fall the first step is to believe a lie and then act on that belief.

God gave Adam, the first man, a limitation:

“Don’t eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,
for on that day you will die.”

The Fall of man came when they disobeyed God and ate from the tree.

I. The Lie

Satan planted seeds of doubt on the character and goodness of God.

From there he twisted what God had said. He questioned, “Has God said?”

Then Satan challenged God’s warning with “The Lie”: “You shall not die.”

His strategy of manipulation laid the landmines of destructive temptation.

By focusing on the benefits and ignoring consequences,

the devil persuaded them to disobey God’s forewarnings.

Temptation resulted in disobedience, death and corruption.

It’s the same today: “God deeper into sin... you won’t die.”

The atheist believes that he came from nothing and will simply return to nothing when he dies. So in the meantime how he lives doesn't matter. Buddhists, Hindus, and many New Age religions anticipate repeated reincarnations into other life forms – the spiritual equivalent of spinning your wheels.

Taoists view death with indifference. To them it's ultimate oblivion, a state of nondoing. (Boring)

Some Muslims believe in a paradise of seventy virgins satisfying them with the carnal pleasures of men. (Las Vegas lifestyle)

Mormons believe you'll eventually become gods and goddesses of your own world, populating it with spirit babies. (Work)

A fish first takes the bait; then a hook takes the fish.

The Lie...

II. The Legacy:

Consequences of the Fall that have been with us since that time.

The the results of the fall ushered in an era of corruption on everything God made.

– a Legacy of death for all who came after Adam.

In Roman's chapter 5 Paul refers to the problems that arose from Adam's sin:

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, be cause all sinned...” (Rom 5:12)

vs. 14

“...death reigned from Adam until Moses...”

vs. 15

“...by the transgression of the one the many died...”

vs. 16

“...judgment arose form one transgression resulting in condemnation...”

vs. 17

“...by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one...”

vs. 18

“...through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men...”

vs. 19

“...as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners...”
vs. 20

“...sin increased [by the Law]”
vs. 21

“...sin reigned in death...”

In Romans 5:10 and every verse that accompanies the preceding list Paul states that through Jesus Christ God has turned everything around.

For if while we were enemies
we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,
much more having been reconciled, we shall be **saved by His life**.

The Lie – the temptation that led to the fall.

The Legacy – the results of sin and death that followed the fall

III. The Life

The Life: speaks of God’s Plan from the beginning that He brought about in Christ for us who believe Him.

1. The Tree of Life

From the beginning there were two trees,

“Out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”
(Gen. 2:9)

Adam was commanded,

“...from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat from it you will surely die.” (Gen. 2:17)

After the man and woman ate from this tree they were driven out of the garden,

“Then the Lord God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’
- therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden...

So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.” (Gen. 3:22-24).

Law Two of “The Four Spiritual Laws”:

“Sin has separated us from God and His wonderful plan for our lives.”
If we picture man on one side of a great chasm of sin, and God on the other. Then put a cross in the middle with both arms bridging the gap so man may cross over to God.

Inscription:

“When Jesus comes, the shadows depart.”
“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”
(Acts 4:12)

What happened to the tree of life?

It was transplanted to heaven.

The tree of life is beautifully pictured in Revelation 22.

“Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear a crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 22:1-5).

2. The Tree of Suffering

Being driven out of the garden represented that Adam and Eve were separated from fellowship with God. When God clothed them with skins He replaced leaves with skins from a sacrificed lamb.

Our sins can never be covered with our own good works; they can only be atoned for by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

When John saw Jesus he said,

“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

(John 1:29).

No matter how tragic the results of sin, Jesus Christ became the cure.

The tree of life spoke of Jesus Christ who would be lifted up on a tree to bear our curse.

Jesus offered Himself to die the death we deserved.

Then He rose giving us His life for eternity.

In Peter’s first sermon he said,

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know – this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in his power.” (Acts 2:22-24)

Jesus’ death was God’s plan.

His Resurrection was accomplished by God’s Power. Jesus ended death.

Jesus said to John, “I am the first and the last, and the living One;

and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore...”

(Rev. 1:17-18)

3. The Fruit of the Tree of Life

God stated what the tree of Life’s fruit would do:

[Adam and Eve might] ...take from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’

Disobedience brought death. What would obedience do?

Jesus said, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life,

no one comes to the Father but by Me’ (John 14:6).

What is the fruit of knowing Christ? Eternal life!

- **Eternal life is equated with believing in Jesus:**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:11-13).

Puritan writer Thomas Watson said,

“Eternity to the godly is a day that has no sunset;
eternity to the wicked is a night that has no sunrise.”

George Sweeting added,

“Eternity is the grand climax of all history.
It is the age to come when every person will acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Eternity will bring to this world all God intended for us. Sin will have been judged and banished. Rewards will have been presented. Life will continue with new vitality, meaning and perfection. What an age that will be!”