



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

June 9, 2024

Pastor James Enderle

3rd Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson/Sermon Text: [Genesis 3:8-15](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 51a CW

Second Lesson: [Revelation 20:1-6](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Mark 3:20-35](#)

A Top-Down Faith The Devil Does His Worst, Yet Jesus Always Wins PUTTING ENMITY IN ITS PLACE

1. The devil desires _____
2. People _____ and _____
 - People try to _____ themselves...
 - ... By putting _____ to it
3. God _____ and _____
4. God _____ and _____

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

It was only about 12 seconds that I was in the back, but as I was back there, what were you thinking? What was the question? "Where are you?" "Where is he?" Isn't that what happens when something is not in its place, but especially when someone isn't in the right place? Maybe as parents, if you hear your kids making a lot of noise and then all of a sudden it's quiet, you think "What's going on" and then all of a sudden they all scurry and hide. We know that when something isn't in its proper place, when someone isn't where they are supposed to be, we wonder and we say "What is going on? Where are they? What has happened?" This is the situation that we find God in with Adam and Eve as they are hiding, as they know they have done something wrong and God goes out to find them.

As we look at this lesson and we look at the work of the devil of trying to deceive us and Adam and Eve, most of all we are going to see the work of God in this section. We are going to see how He is going to **put enmity in its place**. The devil has its purpose and

its desires of what he wants to do, but we're going to see that God is victorious even though it seems like the devil is winning at times.

In our lesson for today, we see and have now found Adam and Eve hiding. What has led to this? We know that Adam and Eve were perfect and they were created by God perfectly, so think about it this way. If they were on their own, would they have sinned? It's a hard thing for us to think about because when we are on our own, can we sin? Yes, because we have a sinful nature. God says that from the heart comes sinful thoughts, but Adam and Eve were perfect, so what did they actually need in order for them to sin? It was a tempter. They needed a devil that would tempt them to disobey God. *The devil desires enmity.* Why does he desire this? There is enmity between him and God but when God created man, what were they? They were at one with God. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and we talk about yes, we are still created in the image of God but we have lost something. When Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, they knew His will. They knew His Words. They knew everything. They were together with Him in a special way that we no longer have. So what the devil seeks is because he has enmity between him and God, and he wants enmity between all sorts of other things. He wants enmity between God and His creation, between man, and he wants enmity between people—that you and other people have this enmity and hatred and division. I think we can see that in our lives over and over again.

How did this happen? What was the goal of the devil? What is temptation really about? When the devil talks to Eve, his real goal isn't just to get her to eat this fruit, but a good way to ask it is what is the first sin? A lot of people say that she ate the fruit but did she do something first that was maybe a sin? The real goal in temptation is for you to distrust God, to distrust His Word. Often we think temptation is only about doing something wrong, but temptation is also about putting other things above God and His Word; to be tempted to think God doesn't love you; to think that your ways, your ideas are so much better than God's.

We think about that in life, where we are tempted to listen to anything else but God and His Word; to listen to our own hearts. The world tells us this over and over again; "Just follow your heart." Or to listen to someone else who is telling you "That God's Word is old fashioned. You don't need to listen to that." Or just the world that is telling you "That can't be true." What the devil was really doing is trying to convince Adam and Eve that God was withholding something from them and that God really didn't love them. If God really loved them, He would have given these things to them and God would have let them have all these things, but in fact, He loved them. So He didn't want them to have this evil in their lives. That's what the devil does over and over again. He gets us to doubt God's love and think that He is withholding something from us. That's what he did to Adam and Eve.

Notice as he talked to them, we know that it wasn't just Eve that was there. It says that Adam was there with her. We are going to see that God is going to approach Adam. But as He does this, where are they? What is the solution to sin that Adam and Eve had? As they eat the fruit, then are filled with shame. Before they were naked and had no shame. They were at peace with each other, at peace with God, at peace with themselves and now they are filled with shame, so what is their solution? When we sin, what do we do? *People cover and hide.*

Do you ever do that? When you sin and you try to cover up that sin as much as possible, you hide it, and you hide yourself. You don't want others to know what you've done and you are ashamed. So we try to cover up that sin. We try to cover up our shame and our guilt, and we hide. We think we can hide from God. This is what Adam and Eve did. ***Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*** It's interesting that they knew God and they knew He was there, but they thought "We can hide! That will work." We might laugh and say that's foolish, but how often do we do the same thing?

As God approaches them, He says ***"Where are you?"*** We'll talk about that in a little bit. But then listen to the answer that Adam gives. ***He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*** What are they doing? It's the same thing that we do over and over again. *People try to justify themselves.* As we sin, we try to make up every excuse and every reason of why we did it. And even just hiding—"Why are you hiding?" "I was naked and I heard you, so I hid." Justifying why he hid just makes sense, doesn't it. Think about what they do as they begin to put this enmity in place.

Just a little bit ago as God created Adam and Eve and God brings Eve to Adam, he sings this great song of thanksgiving, how thankful he is for Eve, and now he blames God and he blames this woman. "It's their fault." The woman does the same. "The serpent did it. It's not my fault." What is it that they are doing that we so often do? They are putting words to it. We try to justify ourselves *by putting words to it.* "If I can just explain it away, if I can justify myself and make it make sense, then it's not really that big of a deal." Do you ever do that? The simplest thing, even if you are speeding and a cop pulls you over—"I'm in a hurry." Or whatever it is that you know you've done wrong, but we can't just say "I'm sorry." We have to explain it away. We have to put words to it and try to defend ourselves. But what was God seeking?

As God goes out, He calls them and, it says *...in the cool of the day...* He says, ***"Where are you?"*** In Hebrew, it's just one little word, but it's interesting. He just says ***"Where are you?"*** He knew where they were. He knew what had happened, but He continued as Adam responds. Then He says, ***"Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*** What is God doing here? We say that God is seeking. He is going out to seek them. The truth is, *God seeks and saves*. He goes out to them even though He knew where they were. But how does He approach? He just says, ***"Where are you?"*** Even though He knew what they had done, He asks and is trying to see if they will say anything. What is He seeking from them?

The LEGO Batman Movie, if you've seen that, some say it is the best Batman movie around. Batman is not being a good team player and he finally figures it out. After he finally figures out he needs the help of others, he is standing there and he goes, "I'm so... I'm so..." and it takes him about five minutes to say "I'm sorry." What is God seeking as He goes to Adam and Eve? He is seeking repentance. He is seeking for them to say "I have sinned. I made a mistake." But they couldn't do it. Yet God goes out and seeks them to show them His love. Notice how He approaches them.

When you know your kids, instead of it being quiet, you hear a crash and then yelling at each other, maybe you've experienced that before. If you go in there do you say "How is it going? How are you doing?" How do you approach when you know that your kids have done something wrong? I think we approach with anger and frustration and we are wondering "What are you doing?!" Isn't this the view that the world has of God? As this angry God who is going out there to punish. So when Adam and Eve sinned, what do we expect? We expect Him to go there with fire and brimstone and say "What is this you have done?!" But instead He goes out searching for them, knowing where they are but asking "What have you done?" He is seeking their repentance and going out to them in love.

Then we are going to see what He does as He goes to seek and to save. How does He save? We see Him ask Adam and then Eve what has happened, but notice that He doesn't ask the serpent what he did. In fact, when He talks to the serpent in Verse 14, he says this: ***"Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!"*** He curses the serpent, curses the devil for what he has done. But then He talks in Verse 15: ***"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*** This enmity that is now between God and man, God says "I'm going to move it. I'm going to move it because I'm going to send a Seed. I'm going to send a Savior and forgive them. He is going to crush the head of the devil." Notice He doesn't wait years and years to give them this promise. They sin and God goes out to seek and to save them, to tell them "You are loved and you are forgiven." What a beautiful message that is for us! To know that our Lord doesn't wait for us, He is not seeking for us to suffer

and to be in harm and to wallow in our sins, but He goes out to seek and to save us! Not only does He do that, we see he does more.

Then we see what He does a few verses later. In [Verse 21](#) it says, ***The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*** Adam and Eve tried to cover up their sin, but instead God knew there was something better. God covered their bodies with a sacrifice. He killed an animal to cover them up. Not only does He cover them up, but He also justifies them. Your *God covers you and justifies you.* We try to cover up our sin and justify ourselves, and how does that work out? When I try to hide, when I try to pretend it's not a big deal or I make excuses, it doesn't go very well. But when God covers us up, we need someone else to cover us up, someone who is divine, and the fact is that He justifies us just as if we had not sinned. We know we have fallen short. We know we love to hide from God and we love to hide our sins from Him and from others, but because of the work of Christ, we know we are forgiven and justified. So we don't have to fear the retribution or judgment of God. We have a God who loves us and seeks after us.

When we look at this chapter, we know this chapter is very famous and we often talk about it as the fall of man, the fall into sin, but we could consider it something else. In this chapter, the name for God, "Lord God," that "covenant God," the one who "keeps His promise" is used 19 times. In the rest of the Old Testament it is used only a few times. Why is that name, "the Lord God," used so often? It's because it is emphasizing what God is going to do; that yes, this is the fall into sin, but what this chapter is really showing is God's love for you and for me. That God keeps His promise and that God is victorious.

Notice that He curses the devil, but when He talks to Adam and Eve, for Eve, He says that childbirth is going to be difficult, that relationships are going to be more difficult. And then to Adam, He says that the ground is going to be cursed. But does He curse Adam and Eve? "Cursed are you because you've done this"? No, He doesn't. What could God have done at that time? There were only two people in creation. He could have come and wiped them out and started over. But where would Adam and Eve have been? They would have been in hell. So from the first time that people sinned, God provided salvation. We know His love is so great for us that He doesn't want anyone to perish.

This is the message we have to share. The devil desires enmity. He wants to put enmity between you and others, that sin causes this pain and suffering, and he wants that pain and suffering between you and God. But Jesus has come. Jesus is that true sacrifice that covers our sins and shows that He loves us. How does He do that? He does it by crushing the head of the serpent, knowing that sacrifice happens because the serpent will strike His heel; that He will die on the cross. But in that, knowing through death, through the death of Christ, God brings life. God brings life and salvation to you and to

me and to everyone who believes, knowing that His promises last; not just for this life but into eternity. So know your God loves you and comes to seek and to save you. He covers you and He justifies you. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.