

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Des Moines, WA
June 15, 2014**

Father's Day

Genesis 3:1-15; Colossians 3:1-17

Be the (New) Man!

- 1. What was the first sin?**
- 2. A New Command to Lead**
- 3. How is this possible? Our connection to Christ**

**Hymns: 195 – A Father's Prayer – 501 – 313
Closing: *Glorify Thy Name***

All Scripture quotations from NIV 1984

What was the first sin? That's probably a question that you haven't given a lot of thought to in your life, because the answer is so simple and obvious, right? One of the first Bible stories we ever learned is about the Fall into sin, and we could all recall from memory that fateful exchange between the Serpent and Eve that centers on a piece of fruit. What was the first sin? That's easy, I've known the answer since I was a child. Eve doubted God's Word and ate the fruit, and everything fell apart. As that scene now plays in your imaginations, I'd like you to take out that pew Bible in front of you and turn to Genesis chapter 2, and as you do so, I'd like to challenge your answer to that question today. So Genesis 2 is basically a recap of Genesis 1 with a different focus. One focuses on the creation of the world, two focuses on the creation of mankind. So as we look there in verse 4 and following, five and a half days of creation have already taken place, and verse 7 tells us that it was time to put man in that perfect world. God forms Adam out of the dust, breathes life into him, and then in the following verses, he introduces Adam to the world.

In verses 8-14, God says, "Here is your home." In verse 15, God says, "Here is your job." Then in verses 16 and 17, God says, "Here is your way to worship and honor me." So God lays it all out, he gives him his responsibilities, gives him his instructions, and then after that, what does God do? After he lays it all out, he brings woman into the world, and says to Adam, "Here is your wife, a helper suitable for you – a woman who will be a companion, a complement, a blessing." But she would also be a

responsibility, and I say that in the best way possible. Remember God had already laid everything out for Adam, so Adam would be responsible for showing his wife their home; he would be responsible for training his wife in their work; he would be responsible for telling his wife about God and how they would worship him and how they would honor and obey him. Most of all, Adam would need to tell his wife all about that tree in the middle of the Garden, the one that God had been so direct about, the one that could lead to death.

Adam understood that responsibility. Just look at Adam's response when God brought this woman into his life; it's there in verse 23, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of the man." Adam felt responsible for this great blessing that God had brought into his life because she was intimately connected to Adam; she was a part of him. In the same way that a mother is filled with responsibility for her child because it came from her, that is how Adam felt about Eve. Adam was called to be a leader, Adam was called to be responsible.

And then Genesis 3 happened. "**Now the serpent 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 serpent, '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 surely die,"** the serpent said to the woman.⁵ **"For God knows that when you eat of 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.**"⁸ **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.**⁹ **But the LORD God called to the man, 'Where are you?'**"¹⁰ **He answered, 'I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.'**"¹¹ **And he said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?'**"¹² **The man said, 'The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.'**"

Now after looking at Genesis 2 and then reading through that account of the fall once again, I'll ask again, "Who really failed there? Was the first rebellion against God's commands really Eve doubting and eating that fruit? Now, I haven't really gone through those two chapters with you so that we

could figure out whom to assign blame to, that doesn't benefit anyone. But it is important that we understand all that went wrong here in the Fall, and it wasn't just Eve taking a bite of an apple, because there is a message here for all men as we gather on this Father's Day: The responsibility that God gives to each one of us as leaders is vitally important.

See, Adam was there, standing with his wife and he failed to be the leader God had called him to be. Adam's spiritual responsibility to his wife was to instruct her in God's commands, but when pressed by Satan, Eve showed she wasn't sure of God's decrees. That doesn't reflect well on the instructor. Adam's physical responsibility to his wife was to protect her from harm, but Adam sat idly by as his wife was assaulted by Satan's attacks. Adam's emotional responsibility to his wife was to love and comfort her as his own, even if she faltered, but when she messed up and God came calling, Adam sheepishly pointed the finger of blame.

Adam was there, but he didn't speak. Adam was there, but he didn't lead. Adam was there, but he wasn't responsible. And that is what God had called and commanded him to do. Called to lead, Adam said it in so many ways, "I don't want to lead, I don't want that responsibility on me." Adam laid down in fulfilling his role, and the results were very ugly.

Here is the problem for us men who sit here today, men who are called in the same way by God to be leaders; spiritual, physical, emotional. The problem for us is that we have this Old Adam living in us, this Adam that shunned his duties, this Adam that sat idly by, this Adam that passed the responsibility, he is a part of us. We are born with him in our hearts; he influences our actions. And how often doesn't he have us lay down as the leaders that God wants, and which the people in our lives need!

Our old Adam will make excuses that it's not our fault; and gives us false assurances that we are doing what we can. But the truth can't be hidden, because when we fail as leaders, the results are seen. They are seen in our homes. They are seen in our church. And so, I look and I see results that tell me I am failing as a leader. I see the ways that we, as the men in this congregation, are failing as leaders. And just like it did with Eve, it puts the people we are called to lead in bad and dangerous positions. And that isn't the most fun to personally admit or publically accuse, especially on a Father's Day.

So, is there good news? Yes, yes there is. And the good news is that God keeps coming to us failures and asking, no, declaring us to be leaders. And he empowers us to be the men that he wants us to be.

He empowers us through his Word, through messages like the one that we heard in our first lesson from Colossians 3. As he calls us to be leaders, he reminds us that his Son died on the cross and rose to new life, and that is a beautiful message to men who

are burdened by their failures. To those connected to Christ, look at what Paul says, "**You died, your old Adam died. Therefore** (verse 5) **put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature, that Old Adam.** (Verse 8) **Rid yourselves of all such things that come from that Old Adam.** Don't behave that way any longer, because (verse 9) **you have taken off your old self with its practices.** Our connection to Christ and his death means that our Old Adam was put to death on that cross, and through daily repentance, we can daily put to death that Old Adam that causes so many problems in our lives.

Our connection to Christ's resurrection gives us new life; it allows us to set our hearts on things above and to put on the new self, it allows us to be the new man that God wants us to be. Paul tells us in verse 10 that through Christ, we have been renewed in knowledge in the image of our Creator. What Paul is saying is that what God wanted Adam to be, he has actually enabled us to be. We are renewed in the image of what godly men are supposed to be.

So, on this Father's Day, restored and renewed by your Savior Jesus, and challenged by God your Creator, be the man. Be the new man that God wants and makes it possible for you to be. Be the new man for yourselves, for your wives, for your children, for your church. Be the new man as described in the Word. Be the new man that is in the Word. Be the new man that leads by the Word. Amen.