

IN THE BEGINNING

A Study of Genesis 1-4

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Minot, ND



Two Trees

In the garden, Adam was told that they could eat from any tree except the tree-of-knowledge-of-Good-and-Evil. In other words, besides all the plants and trees in the garden, there were two significant trees in the middle of the garden. Like the sacrament of Communion, God gave power and significance to these trees so that their fruit could produce mental, spiritual, and physical effects upon Adam and Eve. On the one hand, the tree of life continually imparted the power unto eternal life; however, on the other hand, the tree of good and evil, well... this tree was not to be touched according to God. The reason is, eating from the tree of good and evil would introduce the germ of death into the body and soul of Adam and Eve. Indeed, disregarding God's Word and eating from the tree of good and evil would not bring forth life but the destruction of Adam and Eve - the poison of death. Eating the forbidden fruit from the forbidden tree unleashed evil into the body and soul of Adam and Eve so that they would fall victim to death. Death was the consequence of the tree of good and evil. The tree of good and evil brought forth not forgiveness, life, and salvation but shame, sin, decay, and death.

Study 4

Chapter 2

Two Trees

Dirt & Breath

Longing for Eden & a Perfect Utopia?

*Male & Female;
One-Flesh & Davak*

Dirt & Breath

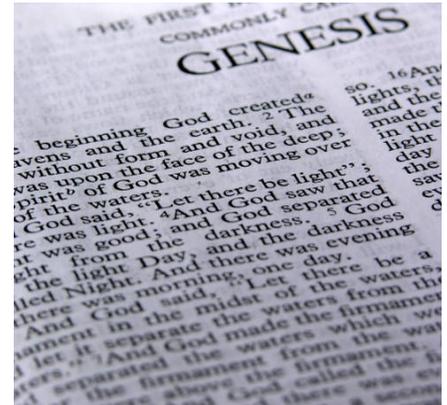
There is a strange mixture of dignity and lowliness to humans. We were formed from the dirt, yet, we have the breath of life breathed into our nostrils. Indeed, we remember that we came from dirt, and at the same time, we have the vital breath of God. With the breath of God, we are above other created things.

Longing for Eden & a Perfect Utopia?

In Genesis, we are given a glimpse of goodness, tranquility, peace, and comfort of Eden. Very briefly, while in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve did not have any suffering and were not in need. There was no war. No disease. No natural disasters. No fear. No guilt. No shame. No death. No inequality. No tyrants. No taxes. And certainly no shortage of food. Again, Adam and Eve had it good – it was perfect. It was paradise. To paraphrase an old band, “The grass was green, and Eve was pretty.”

Looking to the present, it is very obvious that much of mankind’s endeavors is to return to the Garden of Eden. For example, we pay big dollars to go on

vacations in Hawaii, Cancun, etc. for the purpose of getting a tiny glimpse of Eden. Even in our everyday lives, we naively imagine that there is a perfect political, economic, and social utopia on the other side of a revolution or a powerful reform. We have a powerful desire to get back to the Garden of Eden. But this is the problem – utopias do not exist. The word utopia actually means ‘no place.’ In other words, when imperfect human beings attempt to make perfect societies, we always fall. As we will learn more in Genesis 3, we are stuck with the curse as long as we shall live in this life under the sun. This is God’s judgment upon the sin of the world.



Note: in Christ’s second coming, the curse will be completely undone. Paradise will be resorted to the baptized. Jesus endured the burden of the curse and was raised on the third day to bring the baptized back to Paradise and Paradise back to the baptized.

Male & Female; One-Flesh & Davak

The reason why the Church holds to two genders, and not the culture’s 81 genders, is because of Genesis 2. In Genesis 2, God created male and female. Now, while men and women obviously have a range of masculine and feminine attributes, nonetheless, there still remains only two genders/sexes. But again, how can the church make such an assertion? It is because of the term ‘one flesh.’

The term ‘becoming one flesh’ refers to sexual intercourse. It is an outward act by which the one flesh union is permanently established. (Note: in God’s eyes, when you have sex, you are married – you are one flesh.) As a young child learning the differences between the sexes once said, “Look, the man’s parts fit in the women’s parts!” Furthermore, from this one flesh union, children are created. To the point; two men cannot create a one-flesh union because their genitals do not fit together. And because they do not fit together, they cannot create life. The same goes with two women. And so, there is no such thing as same-sex marriage. They do not exist Biblically speaking. They are a theoretical fiction. A church cannot uphold or endorse same sex marriage because it does not exist.

The term ‘becoming one flesh’ also means a bit more too. It must also be understood in the light of ‘clinging.’

The verb for ‘clinging’ is the Hebrew word, ‘davak.’ The word ‘davak’ not only means to hold on to one’s wife, as in sex, but it also connotes a deeper devotion. The context suggests that a man leaves off clinging to his parents, to cling to his wife. So a man – which is the result of his parents’ one-flesh-union – breaks davak from his parents to establish a new davak with his wife. The man shifts his whole heart, devotion, and clinging from his parents to his wife. In a unique way, just as Eve was made from the body of Adam, the man enters the woman’s body in the sexual act, so that the two of them create new life together. And so, it is from within the one-flesh union that children find their security as they grow – until they leave the one-flesh union of their parents to begin a new one-flesh union with their spouse.

Note: problems arise in our culture when: 1) a grown child never leaves the davak of his parents, 2) parents try to retain the davak of their children, when their children are married, 3) a spouse fails to uphold the davak of their spouse and runs to their parents for davak. This is the reason why it is so important for young couples to go through pre-marital counseling. It needs to be reinforced that with a new marriage, a new one-flesh unity exists that is separate and different from the one-flesh relationship they came from.