

Sermon Notes by David Lien, 17 December 2017

A Tale of Two Trees

Gen. 2:24-3:24

Rev. 2:7 To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Overview

Three questions to answer

1. How good was Paradise?
2. How did we lose it?
3. How does God restore it?

How good was Paradise?

To taste this, we must understand

1. The Creator of Paradise
2. The Companionship of Paradise
3. The Contentment of Paradise
4. The Condition of Paradise

The Condition: worship

Paradise will last as long as God and man relate to each other rightly.

The Symbols: The Trees

- Tree of Knowledge - honoring God's Law
- Tree of Life - receiving God's love

Rom. 7:7-12 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.

I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.

For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

So, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

How was Paradise lost? Through self-worship

Self-worship is

1. Treason—forbidden action, knowledge and love (for created things over God)
2. Contagious—3:1, 6
3. Shame—3:7-10
4. Foolish—deceived (3:13)
5. Explosive—accusing others and God (3:12)
6. Pain—physical, emotional, spiritual (3:14-19)
7. Exile—driven out, kept out (3:24)

How does God restore Paradise?

- A. In the future
- B. In Jesus
- C. In renewed believers

Rev. 22:1-5 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Paradise restored in Jesus

In Gen. 3 we see Jesus as the

1. Friend—3:8
2. Judge—levels the curses of the law
3. Seed—“first gospel” (Rom. 16:20)
4. Curse—hanged on the tree
5. Way—passed under the sword for us (3:24)
6. Tree of Life
7. The covering—put on Christ!

Christ became the Curse

Gal. 3:13-14 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith

2 Cor. 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Jesus is the Tree of Life

Matt. 26:26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."

Jn. 6:51: I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

Paradise is restored in us

Titus 3:3-7 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Matt. 19:28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

We are no longer

- people of the curse
- naked
- dead to God
- in dread of God
- cast out
- deceived

We are now, in the Spirit

- people of the redemption
- clothed with Christ's purity and power
- alive from the dead
- Life-givers ("Eves") to others
- free from satanic power and lies
- in love with Jesus in the cool of the day