

WEEK ONE

FEBRUARY 26 - MARCH 4

This week's reading: Genesis 1:24-27; 3:1-13

Sunday, February 26, 2023

Read: “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1, the serpent to Eve)

Reflect: When trying to tempt Eve, the serpent twists God’s commandment into a question. It is the first question in the Bible, and it is used to deceive and to drive a wedge between people and God. How have you seen people use questions to disrupt a relationship or to drive a wedge between people?

Pray: God, why do I find myself drawn to what you forbid when you have given me so much freedom?

Practice: Play! Play can be restful, rejuvenating, and a reminder of the good things God gives us. Take time to play today, alone or with others. Play kickball at the park or a game of tag in the yard. Play with your pet. Build with blocks, color a picture, or make a craft just for fun.

Monday, February 27, 2023

Read: “Where are you?”(Genesis 3:8, God to Adam)

Reflect: The serpent used a question to create division. God uses this question to draw closer to Adam and Eve. How do you hide from God? And what does God use to draw you back into relationship?

Pray: God, how many ways have you helped me today? Where can I look to notice what you have done?

Practice: Talk through your day with your household or take a moment to jot it down on your own. What happened? Whom did you meet? What joys and challenges did you experience? As you reflect, notice those moments that shimmer. Where do you think God was active?

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Read: “Who told you that you were naked?” (Genesis 3:11, God to Adam)

Reflect: God notices Adam and Eve’s fear and shame, but noticing isn’t enough for God. God also asks them *who* made them feel this way. What is a temptation you face, or something that makes you ashamed? Is there a person in your life who often makes you feel ashamed? What do *we* do to make others feel ashamed?

Pray: If you have shown me nothing but love, God, why do I feel ashamed?

Practice: Share an embarrassing story. Write it down, take turns swapping stories with your friends or family, or even consider sharing it on social media if it’s a situation you are totally past. Who showed you kindness or comforted you in that situation? Can you thank them?

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Read: “Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” (Genesis 3:11, God to Adam)

Reflect: It is easy for us to imagine God’s disappointment with Adam and Eve. What disappoints you about the behavior of others? In what ways do you think you disappoint others?

Pray: God, what should I have done differently today?

Practice: Take a different route. Find a new way to walk or drive to work or school. Walk your favorite trail backward.

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Read: “What is this that you have done?” (Genesis 3:13, God to Eve)

Reflect: When God asked Eve this question, her first instinct was to blame someone else for her behavior. In what situations are you likely to blame someone else—or to take on too much responsibility for something someone else has done?

Pray: Oh, Holy One, what harm have I caused when I pointed the finger?

Practice: Use your fingers for something good today—as a reminder to pray for others, rather than as pointing blame to someone else. Hold up your hand and put down one finger as your pray for each of the following:

- Thumb: those closest to you
- Pointer: those who point you in the right direction, like teachers, pastors, doctors, and mentors
- Middle: wisdom and guidance for those who lead us in our community, nation, and world
- Ring: those who are in trouble or don’t have what they need to get by
- Pinkie: yourself and your own needs

Have you followed up on last Thursday’s practice to serve someone outside your household? If you haven’t yet, take today to make a plan!

Friday, March 3, 2023

Read: “What is this that you have done?” (Genesis 3:13, God to Eve)

Reflect: It is easy to read God’s question to Eve as an accusation. (This might be how Eve understood it.) Is there a way that God could have been asking this question *without* accusing Eve?

Pray: Sometimes I am so terrified of judgment, God, that I do not listen for a way to make amends. Do I hide from your love because I am afraid of your judgment?

Practice: Practice apologizing. It’s hard to admit when you’ve done something wrong. What makes a good apology? Role-play it with others in your household or write it out on your own. Is there someone whose forgiveness you need to seek?

Saturday, March 4, 2023

Question jar: Take time as an individual or with others in your household to draw and explore at least one question from your question jar today. Refresh your jar with some new questions.

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