

THE EXCHANGE
"Never End for Dead End"
April 6, 2025

INTRO.: Welcome to the beginning of our Easter series entitled **THE EXCHANGE**. In this series we want to highlight what was exchanged beginning with creation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Why is the resurrection so crucial and how does that change eternity? This morning, we will be looking at the exchange, *Never End to Dead End*." With this in mind, I'm reminded of the years I spent in the Poconos serving as the Youth Pastor at, interestingly enough, First Baptist Church. I had the privilege of leading or co-leading several mission trips to Louisiana following the devastation left by Hurricane Katrina. Almost 1,400 people died and they estimated the damage to be at \$125 billion dollars. Some scenes in the first trips will never leave my mind, such as the numbers on the houses showing the numbers of victims found. Many homes had been completely covered with water and most houses had to be completely gutted to attempt to mediate the mold. This August will be the twentieth anniversary of Katrina. It wasn't until subsequent trips that we were able to begin the repair of the homes. I was really good at the destruction and cleaning out of the debris, but I have never been really handy when it comes to putting up sheet rock and doing the mudding on the seams. There were also structural things that had to be repaired. So, they gave me the job of being the gopher. I would get word about needed supplies and where to take them since we were working on various homes. Now remember, this was 2005 and GPS technology had not been out long. It wasn't like today where you can just plug your phone into the car and punch in your destination. The GPS system wasn't as quick at updating for closed or no longer existing roads. Add to this the fact that I don't have a very good sense of direction. I would be driving along the road where the GPS told me to go and all of a sudden the road would disappear because it had been destroyed by the hurricane. Previously, it had been a perfectly good road and now it was a dead end. There is a parallel to this concerning humanity as Adam and Eve went from Never End to Dead End and it has affected all of humanity since. There are 4 points we will examine, beginning in Genesis 1 and then heading to Romans 5. As we read through Genesis 1 we see:

IT WAS VERY GOOD

We began the book of Genesis at the start of last year in our series, "Trusting God's Plan, Purpose, and Design." The first words in this book, written by Moses are: "In the beginning, God...." When the beginning of time, as we know it, came around God was already there. Any world view that doesn't begin with God will result in a dead end. Where else are you going to start? If you begin with man you will run into immediate problems as we will see in this message.

Genesis 1 records the six days of creation, and the seventh day as a day of rest. I believe these are literal days and they display God's creative power. Notice how God's creation is described.

Genesis 1:10 God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:16–18 God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. **17** God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, **18** to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:20–21 And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." **21** So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:25 God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

This all leads up to the creation of mankind as recorded in Genesis 1:26-31. This was the capstone of God's creation. Look at the distinction made between all that God created up to this point and man and woman.

Genesis 1:26–27 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” **27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Man and woman were created in “the image of God.” No other living being was described in this way. Up to this point God had described His creation as good and now, after creating mankind we read the following.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

What is missing? There is no sin and no sin nature. Yet, man was given the ability to choose whether or not to love and obey God. There was also no death and Adam and Eve enjoyed ongoing fellowship and communication with God. This was a never-ending relationship, and life was meant to be ongoing. It is difficult for any one of us to imagine what this was like because we have never experienced it. No death and no sin, which can be your future if you come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. It is in this state that we read about:

THE COMMAND

In Genesis 2 God places Adam in the Garden and God gives Adam a command with some consequences if disobeyed. This is the first time an actual command is mentioned.

Genesis 2:16–17 And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

Why would God present this option to mankind? The question remained, “Would Adam obey and submit to the command and will of God?” All the angels were created with the ability to choose during what some refer to as a “probationary period.” One third of the angels fell, including Satan or Lucifer (“son of the morning star”).

God gave Adam and Eve permission to eat from ANY tree in the Garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The consequences for disobedience to this command are: “*for when you eat of it you shall surely die.*” This phrase actually has the same Hebrew root together providing special emphasis and would literally mean, “dying you will die.” (Arnold Fruchtenbaum)

Death would come to them immediately upon eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Obviously, Adam and Eve did not experience physical death right at the moment of their disobedience, but they would eventually. What they would experience was spiritual death, a separation from God.

THE DISOBEDIENCE

In Genesis 3 there is the appearance of the serpent (Satan) who attempts to discredit God. He asks Eve, “Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?” By the way, God did not say that! God's prohibition was confined to one tree. We should not be surprised that Satan misquotes God's words.

Where else do we see him doing that in Scripture? He misuses Scripture in attempting to tempt Jesus in Luke 4 as he quotes Psalm 91 totally out of context. BEWARE: just because somebody is quoting the Bible doesn't mean they are using it correctly. We need to understand the context if we are to interpret God's Word correctly.

Then the serpent contradicts what God said and reveals what caused him to fall from heaven.

Genesis 3:4–5 “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.”

Isaiah 14:12–14 How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! **13** You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. **14** I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”

Eve saw the fruit was good for food and looked good so she ate it and gave some to Adam who ate some. This disobedience led to:

THE DEVASTATION

What God had promised happened immediately for they experienced separation from God: spiritual death. You can read about it in Genesis 3.

*They realized they were naked and sewed fig leaves to cover up. Mankind has continued to attempt to cover up his sin.

*Then they hid from God which was an impossible thing to do.

*They shifted the blame, not willing to admit and take responsibility for their sin. That hasn't changed either. When convicted of our sin do we take responsibility, confess it, and seek forgiveness from God and those we have sinned against, or do we blame the person we sinned against?

ILLUS.: If I have a disagreement with my wife and say some unkind words to her and I apologize, but at the end of my apology say something like, “but if you hadn't...; what does that do to my apology?

Adam and Eve experienced spiritual death, separation from God and would ultimately experience physical death. To get a clearer picture of the devastation I want us to read together Romans 5:12-21.

Romans 5:12–21 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As I have been reading and studying this passage this week, I have been overwhelmed by the devastation that sin brought on the entire human race and the amazing grace of God shown through Jesus Christ.

In verse 12: Therefore, just as sin entered the world through **one man**, and **death through sin**, and in this way **death** came to **all men**. Since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden the sin nature has passed down to every single person since and the penalty for sin: death. We are sinners by birth and sinners by choice.

In verse 15: But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the **many died** by the **trespass of the one man**, how much more did **God's grace** and the **gift** that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, **overflow** to the many!

In verse 16: Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the **one man's sin**: The **judgment** followed one sin and brought **condemnation**, but **the gift** followed many trespasses and brought **justification** (acquittal).

In verse 17: For if, by the **trespass of the one man**, **death reigned** through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's **abundant provision of grace** and of the **gift of righteousness reign** in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

In verse 18: Consequently, just as the result of **one trespass** was **condemnation for all men**, so also the result of **one act of righteousness** was **justification** that **brings life** for all men.

In verse 19: For just as through the **disobedience of the one man** the many **were made sinners**, so also through the obedience of the one man the **many will be made righteous**.

The devastation of Adam's sin is massive. It brought death (spiritual and physical), separation from God, condemnation. Who is under this judgment and condemnation? All mankind!! Adam's sin brought them and us from Never End to Dead End!! There is nothing in and of ourselves that we can do to correct the situation. It's not like we just turn the car around and find an alternative route.(signs for bridge out and dead end). Every person needs to be rescued, and God has provided the only rescue through Jesus Christ His Son. These are eternal consequences. Every person is going to face God when they die and the only payment for our sins that will be satisfactory will be Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross and His resurrection from the dead. Romans 5 clearly shows that Jesus Christ is the only answer for the condemnation we are under.

Isaiah 64:6 All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

We need to remember that life is short and eternity is long. It's why the message of Easter is so important. Genesis 3:15 is a prediction of a deliverer. Jesus conquered sin and death through His death and resurrection.

SO WHAT??

*Am I on a dead-end road when it comes to my relationship with God?

*If I know Christ as Savior and Lord, am I praising and thanking God?

*When was the last time somebody not knowing Christ had a profound effect on me so that I poured my heart out to God for them and shared the good news of the gospel with them?

*Who am I enlisting to pray along with me for people who have yet to come to faith in Christ??