

It Began with a LIE!

Overview

Hallelujah. God be praised. God be praised. Thank you. Thank you. Amen. Amen.

Water baptismal service is coming up soon and we're hoping that those who would be considered possible candidates will consider it. No pressure, but if you don't get baptized, I'll never talk to you again. It's not about joining some club. It's a dramatic message. You're going down in the water. I'm dead to my old life. When you're coming up, I'm alive and fresh and new in Jesus. It's a message.

It's another way of sealing your commitment to Jesus. It's a seal and it's ever so important. And you might say, well, I was sprinkled with a child as a child. That's fine. But when Jesus said go baptizing, He didn't mean sprinkle. He meant immersion. Baptism is a word from the Greek baptizo. It means completely submerged.

Completely. So it's an important thing to be completely committed and completely submerged in His love and in His ways. Amen? So we're going to look this morning into the Word of God. And I'm entitling the message, It All Began With a Lie. It all began with a lie. So we hear about a blood sacrifice. And I want to delve into this this morning.

And I have no thoughts that I'm going to tell you something that you don't know. I'm endeavoring this morning to weave what we do know. Weave it together. So from Genesis to Revelation, God reveals that divine forgiveness and reconciliation come through the shedding of blood. It always comes through the shedding of blood. And that movement of the Holy Spirit and inducing your person with the power of the Word of God, it's called the atonement. That word atonement means at one. So what was divided is brought together in reconciliation through the atonement.

And the atonement is brought on to us by the payment of a price. So the word atonement is not an unknown word these days, although seldom used. But I have heard it on court proceedings and so on where the judge says, you have to atone for your misdemeanor. You have to atone. There's a price to be paid. So what's the appropriate cost that we have disappointed, more than disappointed, we've miserably failed in the appropriate lifestyle that we owe to the God our Creator? So gold today is the standard of worth. If something is as good as gold, that's just a saying.

It means it's good because gold is the standard of commerce in the world today. But the most precious thing to every one of us, take my gold, take my silver, take everything that I have, but if you take my blood, you've taken everything. My blood is essential to me. And that is what's incorporated in God's, in the theology, the loss of blood. That's the supreme payment, the death penalty as it were. So God says to Moses in Leviticus chapter 17, for the life of a creature is in the blood, and I've given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar. It is the blood that makes atonement for one's life. How serious is the failure?

How serious is the sin? It's desperately serious. We're divided from God. There's a great chasm between us and him, and there's no way across that chasm. Now back in the day, and I've never read up on to why this was done, but the Roman Catholic Church came up with a brilliant idea back in the days that led up to the Protestant Reformation, when it was stated by one of their own priests that the Bible says the just shall live by faith. One of the problems that Martin Luther watched, and it troubled him beyond measure, was that reconciliation was being offered to the to the Roman Catholic attendees to the church, and at that time the church was huge and powerful. If you weren't Catholic, you weren't worth much. You had to be there.

You had to be part of it, and you were browbeaten with the idea that you have sinned. The Word declares it. The Word declares it, but here's the best way to just take your sin taken away, and you could pay for it with money, and so you would confess your sin to the priest, and he would say that'll cost you five shekels or whatever, and so your redemption was made possible by turning over money. So the poorer you were, the less likely you were able to get atonement for your sin. This drove Martin Luther to distraction, and that's why he went up against the Roman Catholic religion, which he was very, very much invested into. And so if we think that we can buy our reconciliation, buy the atonement by the use of our monetary means, we've skipped past what the Word of God says. It's the blood that makes atonement for our sin. I'm coughing here, forgive me.

I gave up smoking, but I still love drinking. So the Word of God tells us about the blood sacrifice for our sin. The death of Christ was the supreme sacrifice on our behalf to bring us to atonement with God, atonement, atonement. First Peter 2, 24, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that he might die to sin, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. Again, there's the water baptismal, right? Dying to sin, living unto righteousness. By his stripes, by his wounds, you have been healed. He who knew no sin became sin for us.

As I meditated just upon this very verse this last week, it doesn't say he who knew no sin tasted sin, was touched by sin, was smeared by sin. This is a huge word. He who had nothing to do with sin, absolutely perfect, became sin. It doesn't just say he became sullied by sin. No, in totality he became sin, so that God was righteous and justified in being and pleased to take him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. He became sin for us. We all have sense of, you know, little gray lies, etc.

, etc. There's really no such thing. A lie is a lie, and we're going to come to terms with that in a few moments. We all have a sense of, is he a good person? Well, he's not the best person. He's got some bones in his closet. But then we hear of something else that happens, and somebody says, the Ayatollah, you're allowed to say anything that you want. You're really allowed to say.

Bad? That's not a heavy enough, a dark enough word to describe a fellow like that, who would order, just put the snipers out there and mow them down. We'll teach them something that's badder than bad. He who knew no sin became the ultimate, total disclosure, totally. You talk about being immersed in water? He was immersed in my sin, and your sin, and the sins of all mankind. He became sin for us, so that we might be justified in him. 2nd Corinthians 5:21.

For it pleased the Lord that in him should all the fullness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself. By him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Now we've got to go now and catapult back to the book of Genesis, where the need for the shedding of blood became apparent. So the Word of God says in Genesis that the Lord God formed the man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. God made this man perfect, and it was a theologian, a very deep, dedicated theologian, a scholar of scholars who brought this to my attention as I studied this week. That this soul that God created was absolutely perfect, where for someone to point at Adam and say, now there's a righteous man, that would be assuming an awful lot. There was a righteous man.

That would be assuming that there was failure somewhere, but not this man. This man, this man's a righteous man. In essence, he was so perfect that he was, are you ready? He was neutral. To say he's a good man would say, well he's done some good thing. Well he doesn't do anything bad. No, there was no bad near him, no good. He was in neutral, and he was placed in the garden by the Lord God.

It was a testing, it was a test tube, it was a testing time. And we already know from Scripture that before Adam was put into a testing pilot project, that the angels had been put into a testing project, and whole one-third of them failed. So without a doubt, the angels who continued to serve on with God must have been watching, like on tiptoes, watching what's going to happen to this one. Will he survive the challenge? When God made this man, this man from the moment he breathed was totally committed to God in every way. Totally obedient. A love-bond relationship between he and the Father. Obedient, filled with love, and totally dependent.

Totally dependent. But because of the fall, he declared his independence, he forsook his love, and he became disobedient. That's sin. And the Lord God threatened him and said, the day you eat that fruit is the day you die. And how's he going to recover from this chasm, this spiritual death that came upon him? The Lord God originally had taken the man. I never saw this before. I always saw, I always saw God in the Garden of Eden forming this man, and there continuing the process of breathing.

No, no, no. It says in 2:15, it says God took him and placed him in the garden. What was it like outside the garden? We don't know. Doesn't really matter. But God put him, and I looked up the original Hebrew word for put, because I was thinking, what did that look like? And the word that came up was rest. Rest.

So God gently put him in this garden, in a place of rest. You know, in the book of Hebrews it says that the children of Israel, as they were wandering in the wilderness, they didn't have to spend 40 years out there. God said, I couldn't take them into the rest. I couldn't put them in the promised land. They weren't ready. A whole generation had to pass along. They weren't ready to be put into a place where they would rest from their journeying. So interesting to me.

Maybe that doesn't strike, maybe that doesn't grab. I love little nuggets like that that I find. God put him in the garden, and it says so he would take care of it. And I can't describe that for you. I don't think there was a whole lot to do. And so the instructions to Adam were these, and you know it so well. Again, I'm not telling you something you don't know. But all the trees in the garden were good for food.

I want to pause there for a moment. This never occurred to me before. In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were vegetarians. Only the trees are mentioned. It doesn't even mention the beets or the potatoes, the things that grew under the ground. There are trees in the garden, and the trees, the fruitfulness of those trees, is good for food. Can I kill? I feel like a steak.

No, there was no death in the garden of Eden. There was no death. I thought about this, the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Lamb is not being served. The Lamb is being celebrated in heaven. And what will be the buffet on that particular day? At the marriage supper of the Lamb, there won't be any roast beef. There's no death in heaven.

You can partake of any tree here. But there's two trees I want to point out to you, Adam. Now think about this. Eve was not there. She had to learn this from him later on. She's not present. She's in God's mind. There's two trees.

One is good. If you partake of the tree of life, it will suddenly guarantee and seal your eternal blissfulness. Whatever state you're in, when you partake of that tree, you're in that state forever. It's an inoculation. There's another tree. It's not a good tree. That tree is ugly. That tree is bad.

And it will bring you death on the very day that you partake of it. Two trees, and the lie is coming. The God blessed them. God blessed them, and he said to them, be fruitful and multiply. So God was already thinking in the garden. If you choose to stay here by partaking of the tree of life, you will populate the world going forward. So God was already speaking to them of you will have children. So whatever you do with these two trees here, they're going to affect your posterity.

They're going to affect every generation going forward. And this was the ridiculous, sad, dark thing that happened to these two people, knowing you're to be fruitful and multiply. But that day that you taste of the wrong tree, you brought darkness and sadness and destruction. And remember, it will pass on to every generation thereafter. And they partook, because it looked pretty. It looked good. It was pleasant to look at. It was nice to touch.

It was delicious to eat. And that day, they were finished. Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. Subdue it. The earth is there for you to enjoy. I'm being kind to you. I've created the earth for you.

I built it for you. So enjoy it. Subdue it. Build yourself a sailboat and sail around the world. It's yours. You will have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air. You won't be afraid. You won't be afraid of any of these things.

You won't be afraid of the whale. The whale's not interested in you. You will have superiority over every living thing that moves on the earth. And it'll be wonderful, be fabulous. There won't be thistles. There won't be thorn. There won't be trouble. The Lord God made all kinds of trees to grow out of the ground, Genesis 2.

Trees that were pleasing to the eye, good for food. In the middle of the garden, there were two trees, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This occurred to me also, the knowledge of good and evil. They already knew significantly about good because God is good. Life is good. His love toward us is good. He's pleased with me, and I love Him, and I adore Him. He knew that much, but to know bad, to know evil.

So I looked up some root words there as well. The knowledge of good and the knowledge of evil. Let's focus on the knowledge of evil. That word knowledge. Do you know, David, about space travel? Not that much. What do you know about this topic? What do you know about that topic?

This word knowledge doesn't mean a little dabble, do you? Knowledge of evil literally means to experience. Knowledge which is experiential. You actually experience the knowledge of evil. So we hear about these people who are being horrendously ravaged by Muslim doctrine is what it is, and when we hear about some of the things that happened on October the 7th, I dare say I'm gonna say something now when you're gonna cringe. You're gonna say, I don't want to hear about that. They took living children and put them in a stove, and they baked them alive. You say, that's too much, Dave.

That's too much information. For a moment there, you were having an experience of this man and the woman dared to want to taste the knowledge of evil. How desperate, how dark, how ugly, how rotten to the core. How much do you want to know? And this is where the lie came in. When the serpent came and said, he doesn't want you to know. Do you know why? If you know experientially everything there is to know about good, and if you know by experience everything that is rotten and ugly, you'll be just like him.

He knows all, and he's jealous of you. He doesn't want you to be a god. Two trees. One, if you partake of it, it's life eternal. And the other one, this is the acacia tree, by the way. I was absolutely out of my mind with excitement to watch a giraffe eat the acacia. It's all thorns, and the giraffe just salivates when it sees the branches. I've watched them by the hour.

It just blows my mind. I'm not saying that the tree of the knowledge of evil is the acacia tree, but interesting. Trees that are pleasing to the eye and good for food. There's no mention of flesh in their diet. It ensures life in perfection, endless blissful utopia if you eat of the tree of life, the tree of knowledge and the good and of evil. So experiential knowledge, if it's good, it would be life, and it would be light, and it would be pure. But if you partook of the dark tree, it would destroy life, it would bring darkness, and it would end up with death. In essence, the knowledge gave them the power to decide for themselves what is in their best or their poorest interest, but did not give them the moral character or the power to choose the good.

Paul said in his writings in the book of Romans, I know what's good, and I know what I should do, but I fail all the time. That's knowledge of evil. I know it's bad for me. I know, I know, I know I've got to give this. I know I've got to give that up, but I can't. You know a little too much by then, don't you? That's independence, where they no longer were neutral in the garden. They were sullied, they were soiled, they had declared their independence of God that day.

What God said was very clear, don't eat of it. But Satan comes along with a question and clouds someone's mind. Her information had come from Adam. She did not hear, don't eat of the tree. So to me, I didn't read this elsewhere, this is my thought, the satanic one was testing her. Are you sure that's what God said to Adam? Are you sure you're not getting it wrong? A question can be as troublesome as an arrogant statement.

The question can throw you into a fog and put you into a sense of bewilderment. Well I thought I knew, but well think about it, think about it. Are you sure that that's what God said? What kind of a God, if he loves you, would do that to you? We hear that one all the time. You people say you believe in a loving God. Why would a loving God allow those Muslims to terrorize those people for 49 years and kill whoever they wanted to? Make the women live under a blackbed sheet.

What kind of a God would allow that to happen? It's a question you see, but the question is an allegation. It's a backwards lie. He's not saying, he didn't say that. He's saying, are you sure? But the devil continues his attack. He goes from a question to an outright challenge. He says, no, no, no, you will not die.

You're going to experience knowledge. That's not death. You've got this mixed up. That was the lie. John 8 44, it never came together for me till this week when Jesus pointed at these ultra-religious elites and said, you are of your father, the father of lies. I've always thought, well, he meant Satan. But the father of lies? Genesis?

The first lie that was spoken. He's the father of lies. Have you ever been guilty yourself of telling a lie? God forgive you and repent of that. It's so easy to lie. And you know, tell one lie, you have to tell another one to cover it up and to fortify it. Be careful, little mouth, what you say. Be careful, little mouth, what you say.

There's a father up above looking down with tender love. Dear God, be careful, little mouth, what you say. Father of lies. You are of your father, the devil, and the desires of your father, the father of lies. You want to do. You want to experience the lies of your father. You don't want the truth. You want to believe the lie.

You want to believe that you can buy your redemption. You want to believe that God, the father, is so stupid, he'll accept a five dollar bill instead of repentance. You want to believe that because you don't want to reduce yourself. You don't want to bend the knee to him. You don't want to repent and say, father, I have sinned. It's almost to a point of debauchery when Jesus brings to the attention of the disciples. See that guy over there? He's bragging to the Lord God.

I'm so glad. You must be proud of me, dear God. I'm not like that pathetic, poverty-stricken guy right over there. You got to be proud of me. That was a lie. He was believing the lie. Meanwhile, a fellow over here, poverty-stricken, broken in his spirit, may be guilty of stealing a piece of bread to give to his little girl, and yet feeling guilty about it and says, oh dear God, be merciful to me. I have failed you.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he's a liar and he's the father of it. This is why it is taking the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us, because the penalty, the penalty of sin is death. For all have come, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. All have sinned, come short of that failure. I'm never afraid to use that. People don't like to be called sinners. I don't call them sinners. I just say, you and I, we're in the same bucket.

I've sinned, you've sinned. What's sin? It's failure. It's failure. Not failure in your business, but failure toward God. He expects better, but he knows we can't live up to his expectations, because we are children of Adam. And what he and Eve did that day has been passed on to our, to ourselves. I read something this week that it comes out of Jewish scholars.

I like to read what Jewish, they've been thinking about this forever and ever and ever. I'm the first preacher in my family, but these Jewish people are more educated in the Bible than I could ever hope to be. And so I love to read into them. And so they sit and they play with it. They'll actually sit as a group and they'll debate about it. And they'll say, what if, what if, what if? And actually unique things come out of those discussions and those debates. This is how they learn their theology.

This is how they learn it. And so one brought this up, that when Adam and Eve realized of their nakedness, they sowed fig leaves to cover their pubic area. Not because their sin was intercourse. It was nothing of the kind. Be fruitful and multiply. But because of their lie, this scholar said, they now had knowledge and they realized. Be fruitful and multiply. We cannot produce children better than ourselves.

And in shame, they covered that part of their abdomen, that part of their being that would be necessary for them to be fruitful and multiply. There was already a sense of shame. We don't have to say to our children, you are sick with sin because of mom and dad. Is this too heavy this morning? I don't preach this kind of stuff all the time. He went from question, the devil's head, went from asking a question to telling a lie. And then he goes on to question God's integrity. He doesn't want you to know.

God is not the person that you think he is. For God knows that in the day that you eat of it, your eyes will be opened. You're living in blindness. You don't know what you're missing. It's party time and you don't even have an invitation to the party. You're missing out on everything. He knows you'll know the difference between good and evil. He doesn't want you to know that.

In essence, you'll be like God. He's selfish and he's jealous. It began with a lie. They believed the lie. Modern day, we'd say they drank the Kool-Aid. The original sin, on that day, Adam died, not physically. On that day that you eat of that, you'll die. He didn't die physically.

He died spiritually. And spiritual death is passed on to our sons and to our daughters and every generation thereafter. The psalmist cried out, in sin did my mother conceive me. Did he mean that my mother should not have had a relationship with a man? I'm not sure about that. I do know that David's mother was not the same mother to his brother. He had a different mother. And when the prophet Samuel came to Jesse and said, bring out your sons, and you had a horn of oil, and he's going to do something by way of anointing.

Jesse did not invite David. Why? Jesse did not believe that his son would qualify because Jesse knew, I'm putting this out there. You can take it. You can leave it. But Jesse did not bring David because Jesse was the result, perhaps, of an extramarital affair in sin. I was conceived. David believed that he was already 13 strokes behind everybody else because he said, in sin I was conceived.

That was a very dysfunctional family, and I'm way off my topic here, but they covered their loins because they knew they had knowledge. And that day, the man became mortal. He was immortal in the garden. Eat the tree of life, you'll never die. But that day when he ate the fruit, he became a mortal capable of death. Innocence died, and lust was birthed. He was a lost soul. He no longer depended upon God.

He'd forsaken his love, and he was now fighting with obedience as long as he lived. And where did this multi-generational thing show up? Cain and Abel. Who's surprised? Jealousy between them? Unbelievable. Look at all the stories about the patriarchs. Joseph, the favored.

Both sides were wrong. That daddy should have known not to treat his son, Joseph, above the rest. And the brothers may not have liked it, but they were ready to kill him. And if that caravan had not come along heading for Egypt, I dare say they would have killed him. But this was convenient. He's worth some money. Sell him off. These are sons of God's people, the chosen people.

The chosen people are not without sin. And there's a hell awaiting for all, Jew, Gentile, Islamic, whoever you are. There's a hell waiting for the disobedient, the independent, and those who have chosen not to love God. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife. He clothed them. And the production or the presentation of those skins required blood. First blood was spilt, the first sacrifice. An innocent animal.

Adam and Eve had never seen blood. And they certainly had never seen an animal that had done no wrong, was not going to be eaten, or just going to be killed because of your mistake. If you love animals, you don't like to see them suffer. We have a little dog in our house. We've said enough about her by times. I don't want anything bad to happen to her. She's a part of our family. Well, she's not part of the family.

She's the princess. She runs the whole place. You give her something to eat, she goes, I don't want that. You know what I want. She's incredible. April says, she has us trained. I love animals. I went hunting once for moose.

If I'd run into one, I would have left a salt lick for him. I wasn't good. I know, it's normal. Kill the moose and eat it. I know that. It's okay, Alfred. I'm your friend. I could never shoot a deer.

I couldn't. They're the most beautiful creature, like gentle and sweet. Some of you are salivating right now. I love innocent. I could never. April's idea of a chicken, something in Costco that's in this little thing here, cut its head off. She'd say, I can't eat that. I can't, I can't.

Her idea of fish, fish comes in a little can. It never had scales. Fish comes in a little can. Adam and Eve saw the life of an animal taken because of their failure. I got to quit. Okay. First John 1, 7. But if we walk in the light, as he's in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from our sin.

We were undone, but now we've been put back together. Hebrews 9, 12. He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of animals, as was the way of the Old Testament, but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. Why blood? Because it's the most valuable thing we have, and that's the price that God has demanded. It's his just and right decision. If Siegfried was here, I'd just say, come on up and play something, but I'm going to do it anyway. Linda, come and help me, and I don't know what we're going to sing, but.