

4 Advent B SML 2017
LK 1:26-38

There was a fallen angel: Lucifer, a woman: Eve, a man: Adam, and a tree: in Eden . . .

But before discussing original sin and man, it is necessary to discuss yet another, earlier “original sin,” namely, original sin and angels, because angels were created by God first, and some angels sinned first.

Angels were created as pure minds and bodiless spirits. Despite all the pictures you see of angels, they are without bodies and they are without wings. Their intellects are brilliant, far more brilliant than human intellect, yet they were created, as were humans, with the gift of freedom – the gift of free will – the choice to do it God’s way or their way, to put their will above God’s will. They abused their freedom and chose to do it their way and not God’s way. They put their will above God’s will. Lucifer made the decision and the decision was completely free. “I will not serve. I am going to be independent of God and I am going to be a god myself.” The prophet Isaiah spoke of the fallen angels:

What fell from heaven was Lucifer who once heralded the dawn. I will scale the heavens, such was your thought, I

will set my throne higher than God's stars, the rival, the most high. (IS 14:13)

Anyone who gives freedom to another takes a risk. A parent who gives freedom to a child takes a risk. When God made the angels free, He took a risk because some of them declared themselves as God.

God took another risk. He created man and God created him with the same gift of freedom he gave to the angels – the gift of free will – the choice to do it God's way or man's way, to put his will above God's will. And man, too, abused his freedom and did it his way and not God's way.

Scripture in effect reduced original sin to a choice of trees: the tree of life vs. the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. Scripture in effect reduced original sin to the bite of an apple. People of faith on both sides of the debate go back and forth over the apple, as if biting the apple was the original sin. Whether or not there were trees, whether or not there was an apple is completely missing the point. The writers of Genesis were inspired to write about the original sin of man using a story about trees and an apple. The educated reader of the Bible knows there is always the story on the surface (what you read – a story about trees and an apple, the story about the

healing of a blind man) but there is always a deeper, spiritual meaning to the story that delves below the surface (about putting man's will above God's will, about being healed from the spiritual blindness of sin).

But because the original sin is often times reduced in the minds of many to a lousy bite of an apple, the minds of many consider themselves gypped and think God is unfair. "I can't believe there is so much suffering in this world all because of a lousy bite of the apple." The minds of many are completely missing the point. Whether or not there was a bite of the apple is not the point. The point of original sin is freedom was abused. Adam put his will above God's will.

And what was worse, Adam did not admit the sin, he did not admit he was wrong, he passed the buck. He blamed the sin on the woman and on God. "The woman! The woman whom YOU put here with me – she gave me the fruit from the tree and so I ate it!" Adam passed the buck. "Lord, I was happy here with my golden retriever, and YOU sent HER!"

Had Adam only admitted to the sin. Had Adam only said, "Yes Lord. I did eat the apple. I was wrong. I am sorry," God would have wiped the apple juice from his chin and said, "Let's try this again."

That's the sin called original – putting your will above God's, and then somehow passing the blame, and you and I do it all the time. Trust me when I say every single one of us would have done exactly as Adam did because every single one of us has sinned. Sin is sin – putting our will above God's will.

When teaching about sin, Genesis (3) provides an excellent script, regardless of the sin because Genesis 3 gives the steps of sin, and I'll use as an example the mostly commonly confessed sin. The number one most commonly confessed sin is impatience. Name your sin and apply it to the steps in Genesis (3):

1. Temptation: In Genesis, there was an angel in the form of a serpent who said, "Did God really tell you not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?" (3:1) Name the particular concrete sin – in my example – impatience. And for the 10th time, they come in and ask you once again if they can . . . whatever it is.
2. Rejection of temptation: In Genesis, there was a tree. "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, lest you die.'" (3:2) You know the difference between good and evil – an informed conscience. In my example, your conscience tells you to be patient yet one more time, and you offer the same answer yet an 11th time.

3. Dally with temptation: In Genesis, there was a woman. “The woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom.” You know it’s a sin. You know it’s wrong, but you play with fire anyway. In my example, I have a mind to let them have it right between the eyes.
4. The fall: In Genesis, there was a man. “So she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it.” You sin. In my example, “Are you really that dumb that you need to hear it a dozen times? I’ve already told you 11 times, ‘Whatever.’”
5. Shame: In Genesis, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized they were naked.” In my example, “I should have been patient a twelfth time.”

There was a fallen angel: Lucifer, a woman: Eve, a man: Adam and a tree: in Eden.

Between the time of Adam and Eve and the original sin and now, there was another event that involved an angel, a woman, a man, and a tree, that completely wiped out original sin.

There was an angel who came to a sinless woman. And the angel asked the sinless woman, “Will you give to God a man? Will you give to God a sinless man who will right the

wrong of Adam?” The sinless woman answered, “Be it done unto me according to Thy word.” Nine months later, the sinless woman gave birth to a sinless God – man. The sinless God – man took upon himself sin, guilt and blasphemies as if He Himself was guilty, and he washed away original sin from a tree.

A bite of the apple or the most commonly confessed sin of impatience; sin is sin – putting our will above God’s will. Trust me when I say every single one of us would have done exactly as Adam did because every single one of us has sinned, despite the fact, that greater than an angel: Lucifer, a woman: Eve, a man: Adam, and a tree: in Eden . . .

there was yet another archangel: Gabriel, a sinless woman: Mary, a sinless man: Jesus, and a tree: on Calvary.