

“Exceeding Boundaries”

Genesis 3: 1-13

Sunday July 22, 2018

Video Clip

There once was a pastor who lived in a small community in a time when the pastor went to visit the members of his church without calling ahead. It was normal. One day the pastor knocked on the door. No one came to the door, yet he could hear noise from inside.

So, the pastor took out his calling card and wrote the Bible reference of Revelation 3: 20...Behold I stand at the door and knock. He stuck in the door and left.

On Sunday in the offering plate came the pastors calling card. On the other side of the card was Genesis 3: 12. “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.”

Let us pray?

Imagine a beautiful lush garden. My neighbor across the street has the most serene peaceful garden in back yard. It is green full of beautiful plants both the flowering type

of the fruit and vegetable type. You would never guess that their back yard is in a desertous place. I could stay there for hours.

Have you been in a lush garden? Adam and Eve where in the lushest place there was. The ground was carpeted with soft green grass. There were fruits and vegetables to eat. Water to bath in. God would walk in the cool of the night with them.

There was only one boundary that God set up for Adam and Eve. It was the boundary of a particular tree. For years it to be that everyone thought that this was an apple tree. There is no evidence that it was. Some fruit of the tree that seemed to get their attention.

There are things that get our attention. It is like looking at a new car. Everyone once in a while I think I want to get a new car. Trade in my pick up a get a new more town like car. If I were to go to dealership and look around I might even get car fever. I might find something I really want. Even though the small truck I have works just fine, even though I would have to save to afford the car, and even I still like having a small truck for all the practical ways I can haul things around.

Was it like that with Adam and Eve? For a long time, they just enjoyed what they had to eat and drink. Maybe they thought they wanted some more variety in their fruit intake. They would walk around the tree and even admire the tree. The feeling was getting stronger.

Then temptation came. Eve knew that they weren't supposed to eat the fruit. She repeated it to the snake. She even said that they would die. The tempter came out and question what God said. You are not going to die. God knows that your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.

In the original language it literally says you will be like gods. At times people in our country want to be like the gods. They want absolute power. They want to make decisions that they want instead of asking God what He wants.

The serpent went on to tell Eve and Adam that they will know good from evil. They already knew right from wrong. But they would have advanced know like a God. Eve was all about gaining knowledge. So, she ate of the forbidden fruit. She turned to Adam and gave him the fruit. And he ate it too.

Their eyes were opened to a new reality. They were without clothing and they were ashamed. They got some fig leaves and sowed them together. Before long in the cool of the evening, God walked in the garden. He called out for Adam.

It was time to calmly confront the situation of exceeding boundaries. God called for Adam asking, where was he? Adam and Eve are hiding their nakedness. More than they are hiding from God.

“We are over here, hiding because you are naked.” There is also fear of being discovered. God knows that answers already, but He takes the logical route with Adam.

He calmly asks Adam who told him he was naked, and did he eat of the tree he was told not to?

We humans are so much like these two first people. It's called the blame game. It's not my fault that I ate the apple. Its really Your fault God. The woman that You came me, she gave it me.

So, God now talks to Eve asking about her eating the fruit. It is that serpent's fault. He deceived me. He confused me.

The consequences were significant. The serpent would crawl on the ground. The women would have pain in childbearing and they will desire to have their husband to rule over them.

Adam would now have to till the earth. It will be demanding work, he would have to do this demanding work until he dies.

Talking about the consequences for exceeding the boundaries. A consequence that effected all mankind. All people would be affected by this as well as creation itself.

Romans 8: 21 says that creation is in bondage to decay and will be set free.

Everyone and everything becomes in bondage to decay. Many of us know that decay process. We may be living because of medicine and therapies, but we are decaying.

What is the difference between sin and sins? Sin is that which separates from God. Sins are those action or actions; thoughts or feelings or the lack there of to self, others, and God.

It seems that when this decaying process came into the world in what we call the fall of mankind, so did illness.

That includes people becoming ill unto death who are young, that includes people coming into this world already with difficulties, that includes accidents that happen. We are learning everyday more about the process of how things work in this broken world.

I am now taking medicine that use to be given to people who had a heart attack because I had a minor TIA. I am and have been taking medicine to keep my cholesterol much lower than ever before. Earlier intervention and prevention is the name of the game. We are all aiming for wellness even as our bodies decay. They decay slower these days.

The other issue in the brokenness departments has to do with the dreadful things that happen. Why do people rape and murder others? Why do bad people get to have babies only to abuse them to death? Why do good people who would be good parents, not have children?

Some of you may be following the case in Albuquerque of the little girl who was sexually assaulted, killed, and then dismembered. Although some of the charges have been dropped because of additional information, the charges for these gruesome things are still present.

God does not decide who gets a child and who doesn't. The brokenness of this world includes our chromosomes, certain functions of our bodies, certain chemicals in our bodies that make pregnancy possible.

That is not the end of story. Romans 5 tells us that just as with one-man sin came into the world, so with one man that was obedient even unto death, many will be made righteous.

God made a plan. He would have to go to earth itself as a human named Jesus. He would to die for us out of His great love for us and our sacred worth to Him. He did this that we might be in relationship with Him again.

We all have participated in things that separate us from God. A woman name Lenora had been reading materials about Jesus. She like this Jesus and prayed for Him to be the center of her life. Some how she had the mistaken notion that once she did that, life would be smooth sailing.

She got really down. Why did she still feel guilty about things she had done wrong? She didn't feel particularly close to God either. She started to church. One day after the service was over, she went to a prayer room to talk

with a pastor. As he listened it began to dawn on him. He asked if she had ever repented of her sins. She wasn't even sure what that word meant. The pastor explained to her that repentance involved admitting to one's sins, and then asking forgiveness.

That changed her world. She felt that guilt slipping away and communication with God became very clear. She also learned that life was not going to suddenly get easier. Quite to the contrary, it sometimes got quite challenging. She also learned that walking with God was more desirable than all the challenges that would come.

This understanding of a broken world conflicts with something many of us heard growing up. That illness, death, evil that one-person experiences at the hands of another is God's will or that somehow God permits that to happen.

I have worked with women who have been repeatedly raped or molested. They told no one for a long time. These women had the notion that it was God's will that these things happened. These women and many others, both men and women, have a challenging time believing in God. I don't blame them.

That is not the God I worship. The God I worship put the world together, gave us the gift of choice, and we humans messed it up. We live with the consequences of those actions and in actions.

There is a group of Methodists in El Paso who are using a church that has a lot of space to house people who coming to reunited with their children who had been removed.

Whether you blame the parents for ill-legally coming to the United States or not, for the separation from their children, we as a church can be a place where love is shared with the children in reunification. The Methodist in the El Paso District are setting up a shelter for this reunion. If anything, I am concerned about the children. Will they quit believing in God because they were separated from their parents?

All the things that happen in this world are not the will of God.