

Two trees in a garden
A tree of life and a tree of death
Daily we choose one

The picture is imprinted in our minds. A naked woman reaches up to take a piece of fruit from a tree with a snake wrapped around it, while her husband eagerly waits to share it. We know it's a mistake. They have been given all the fruit they desire from another tree, the Tree of Life, but they are not to taste the fruit of this tree, the Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil. The temptation is too great. They choose and the world will never be the same.

There are many theories as to why they were to stay away from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, but the answer could be simple. It gave them power they couldn't handle. It gave them the power of God without the love, justice, righteousness and grace of God. They ate and thought that they could tell the difference between good and evil. They couldn't, but they tried anyway.

They abused their knowledge. God had declared everything God created as good. Adam blamed Eve; he judged her no longer good. Eve blamed the snake; and the snake was no longer good. They made judgments about each other that negated God's image within them.

It continues today. Called to see all races as God's good creation, we judge one race to be good and others to be bad. When we do this, it becomes okay to turn our backs on those in need of help. In the past, we even enslave them. Called to see all of God's creatures as good, we judge some to be good and some bad. It becomes okay to hunt them to extinction. Called to see God's entire world as good, we judge it okay to pollute our waters for the sake of profit. We still think that we can determine what is good and what is evil. We still want to play God.

No one knows where the two trees are today, but they still influence the way we live. We can still choose the Tree of Life or the Tree of Knowledge. Brian McClaren used a simple illustration of our hands. With our hands, we can make a fist or offer a helping hand. We can choose to knock someone down or pick them up. We can choose to take or to give. Daily, we are offered the same choice that Adam and Eve were offered. Will we eat from the Tree of Life and live, or will we eat from the Tree of Knowledge and die? The choice is ours.

Pastor Parnell

Things to Ponder:

Think of a time when someone has judged you. Think of a time when you judged someone else.

Who is a person in your life whose life was an example for you? How did their faith influence yours.

(Thoughts on Brian McClaren's weekly devotion from We Make The Way By Walking.)