

# Explore: Humanity's fall

September 3, 2015

- *The Explore the Bible lesson for Sept. 20 focuses on Genesis 3:1-7, 14-19.*

## **Christocentric**

When I was a child, I liked to sit right in the center of the merry-go-round as my friends ran with all their might. I could always tell if I was perfectly in the middle or not by observing how far off the center I ended up when it finally stopped. I have pretty massive motion sickness to this day. I'm convinced it's traced back to the complete lunacy of my childhood, sitting on that merry-go-round every single play break. The quest to be perfectly central was, evidently, a driving force in my life.

Jesus Christ "sits" perfectly central in the Bible. He is the centerpiece of every narrative, every character, every chapter and every book.

The Bible is Christocentric. This term means what it sounds like—the Bible is centered on Christ. We find foreshadowing of Christ sprinkled throughout the Old Testament, sometimes in large ways and sometimes in small ways. Jesus is the centerpiece of the New Testament. He is around every blessed corner of Scripture. Each page turn is another opportunity to find some character, some law or even some "scallywag" who points us to the need for a Savior, only found in the second person of the Trinity, Jesus the Christ. The entire Bible is Christocentric.

## **Jesus found in the fall**

Even in humanity's lowest point, the devastating fall of humankind, we find not one, but two illusions to the coming crucified one, Jesus the Christ. Our lesson points to God's curse upon the serpent in Genesis 3:15 and rightly calls it "the first prophetic glimpse of the good news that would come in

Jesus Christ.” In other words, we find a very strong Christocentric overtone right in the middle of the fall of man narrative.

Let me draw one extra conclusion for you. The word order of Genesis 3:15 is interesting: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” The verse indicates the serpent’s head— Satan’s head—will be crushed by “him,” a clear reference to Jesus.

Last week, I accidentally ran over a snake. I backed up to see it, only to realize I ran over its head. And wouldn’t you know it, the snake was dead. It had no ability to strike me because it already was dead, defeated, finished. Genesis 3:15 teaches this amazing truth: Jesus is victorious over Satan and sin from the very beginning.

And notice Satan merely will strike the heel, a non-lethal blow to a non-vital organ. Yes, Satan was defeated before he even began. Glory to God.

There is another easily overlooked Christocentric event in Genesis 3. When Adam and Eve sinned, they felt shame and sewed fig leaves together as a covering. So typical of we humans. They had a relationship with God. One in which he walked with them in the cool of the day. They could have exposed their sinfulness to him, begging for his mercy and kindness. But instead, they tried to cover their shame, an inevitably impossible proposition. They could have run to God, but they tried to hide instead. Their relationship had changed, but God had not changed. He went about his normal routine, seeking tender fellowship amongst his creation, a simple walk together. And man, even those in Christ Jesus, keep trying to cover, trying to run, trying to hide.

God knew fig leaves would never do. Fig leaves wither and dry up. They wouldn’t be sufficient. And most certainly, fig leaves would never truly cover the shame they felt. “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam

and his wife and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21). Think of the horror Adam and Eve experienced as the first animal is sacrificed. Blood flowed from the first innocent animal, shed for the sake of two humans. Two people, unable to cover themselves, covered by the act of an almighty God. A robe crafted by God to cover over the shame of sinful humanity. Yes, every story casts his shadow. The whole Bible is Christocentric.

### **We all fall down, but God redeems**

Ring around the rosies.

Pocket full of posies.

Ashes. Ashes.

We all fall down!

Yes, in Adam we all fall. We are so quick to notice the sins of fallen pastors, politicians, Hollywood stars. It’s easy to “cast stones” at the sins of friends, neighbors, brothers, sisters and strangers. We are even quick to point out the fall of other nations. But Jesus taught there is no redemption without brokenness over sin. Acknowledgment of our *own* sin, tears over our *own* sin, this begins the pathway to eternal life.

In Christ Jesus, God offers us the chance to run to him, not from him. God offers us a relational change, from guilty to justified as sinless. But it gets even better: He offers us “Abba.” He offers not only our Heavenly Father, he offers something much more intimate, “Daddy.” No more running. No more hiding. Instead, full acceptance, forgiveness, as dear children.

### **Application idea for your Bible study group:**

1. Societal sins are evident everywhere. The fall still is nearby. Depravity is evident. Call for volunteers to suggest the Top 10 Signs of Societal Sins and write them on a white board. These are easy to develop. For shock value, then ask for the Top 10 Signs of Personal Sins. You will likely receive blank stares or even cold stares. Hand out notecards instead and ask the people

to complete the exercise in private.

Ask: Why is it so easy to point out the sins of others, but so hard to talk about our own sins?

2. Consider the nursery rhyme “Ring Around the Rosies” above from a spiritual perspective. Lead the class in this discussion.