



THE MESSENGER

OCTOBER 22, 2023

NEWS AND NOTES

Congregational Meeting

November 12

Our Next Gospel Meeting

March 3-8, 2024

Weekly Bible Studies

Thursday at 2 on Zoom

Times of Service

Sunday

Bible study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6 PM

Wednesday

Bible study: 7:30 PM

(Immediately followed by a short worship service)

First Friday of Month

Singing

November 3, 7:30

Address and Contact

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GOD: ABUNDANT IN MERCY

Adam's sin was not one of ignorance (he knew what God had commanded, Genesis 2:16-17a) nor was it forced upon him (he apparently offered no resistance to Eve's prompting, Genesis 3:6). If anything, his sin was a giant slap to God's face.

Genesis 2:8-9 tells us that God had placed him in a garden paradise. This was before the fall and curse. As magnificent as this earth is now it must have been even more so while pure and untarnished. God could have placed Adam anywhere. He chose a place of beauty and peace in which he would walk and talk with Adam. (3:8) Even more, he gave Adam the perfect companion in Eve. (2:18-25) Adam responded with rebellion.

It wasn't as though he didn't know there would be consequences. God had been clear with him in Genesis 2:16-17. "*You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*" Indeed, the stated consequence for this act of defiance was as severe as it could get: death. Yet, when God pronounced judgment after the rebellion, he did *not* kill Adam. "*Cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*" (Genesis 3:17-19)

Some have suggested God meant "spiritual death" in Genesis 2:17. Sin *does* make a separation between man and God. (Isaiah 59:2) Even so, it is difficult to imagine Adam hearing "spiritual death" in God's warning. Further, God's barring them from the tree of life in Genesis 3:22-24 seems to indicate a more literal meaning. Others have pointed out the *process* of physical death began at the point. That is true. Yet God did not say that the "process" of dying would begin on the day Adam ate of the forbidden tree, but that his death would occur *on that*

Members Needing Our Prayers

Jill Harrison, Joyce Bolton, Rick Small, Benny and Arlena Poynter, Janett Brundige, Rhonda Boyd, Cindy Bradbury, Paul Atkisson

Others Needing Prayer

Maurice Baker, Jeff Padgett, John Thompson, Veronica Bowman, Cheryl Samons, Georgia Patton, Glenda Miller, Michael Edwards, Alyse Nash, Mary Bishop, Helen Thomas, Patty Hill, Eli Kempton, Sophie Brown, Family of Valari Butler-Jones, Charlie Hoy, Janice Parsons, Allison Walker, Mark Nickles, Dwayne Harrod, William Roberts, Paul and Marrian Lyda, Dana and her children, Shane (a relative of Cindi), Ron Harmon, Patty Hill

To Our Guests

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day. I am not merely casting these views aside as much as trying to show that they do have their own questions to contend with.

Instead, I'd like to introduce another element for your consideration: God's mercy, which is always His prerogative. Adam did not have any inherent right to the tree of life nor to the garden in which it grew. It was a blessing of God's provision and ought to have been received with reverence and humility. Had God chosen to strike him down that instant God would have been justified in his words and blameless in his judgment. (Psalm 51:4) Instead, Adam was granted 930 years, the majority of which seem to have occurred *after* his sin.

There *was* punishment, of course. Yet I find something wonderful in that God brought as much mercy and compassion to bear as His holiness would allow. He didn't *have* to grant Adam another minute. Yet He granted him much more than that. Praise God for his wonderful mercy! Adam Litmer

Elders	Deacons	Evangelist
Troy Antle	Richard Brundige	Adam Litmer
David Collins	Adam Daniels	
Adam Litmer	Marcus Lake	
	Frank Patton	
	Jamie Powell	
	Pat Seabolt	
	James Weatherholt	

