

Knowing God: God Had Made You. Why?

Part 9: "Choice"



Genesis 2:7-9 and Revelation 22:14

There were two special trees in the Garden of Eden—a tree that would experientially bring sin and evil into the lives of Adam and Eve, and a tree that would give them eternal life. Once they chose the evil option, sin infected their very nature. It would haunt them—and thereby haunt each of their descendants, including you and me—at every turn. To prevent them from experiencing an everlasting life in the condition of sin's power over their lives, God banished them from the Garden so they wouldn't eat that second tree and be stuck eternally in hardship and pain. But this tree of life was not lost to us forever. It reappears in the spiritual realms where we enjoy an eternity of freedom from sin, pain, suffering, and hardship. To live there, we must make a choice to put our faith in Jesus and live a daily life washed by his blood and reshaped by his Word. This will give us power for every spiritual battle.

So What? What am I supposed to DO with this?

- **Two trees** in the Garden provided a **choice**.
- **Spiritual encounter**—spiritual warfare—still goes on today.
- I should choose **"Tree of Life Living"** every day.

12 Minutes to Knowing God: Each day this week, Monday through Friday, give six minutes to the scriptures below, and six minutes to pray and listen to God. Join our **Daily Six** video series each morning as we read from these verses: <https://www.youtube.com/@mounthopechurch1651>

Monday, June 30 – "The Family Tree Forks"

Read slowly and carefully **Genesis 4:1-2** and **Genesis 4:17-22**

Do you know why you were born? Beyond the basic "birds and the bees" physics, why was your life created? For what purpose? Are you living that purpose?

God instructed the newly created Adam and Eve to increase and multiply. They were to create an ever-widening family tree and thus live in the relational image of God (**Genesis 1:28**). As Adam and Eve did so, their family rapidly expanded. With each fork of the family tree, God added to humanity a variety of gifts, skills, talents, and interests that were necessary for the broadening community to thrive (see **Genesis 4:20-22**). This outpouring of spiritual gifts has carried on throughout humanity, today best expressed in spiritual gifts that God bestows upon His people (see **1 Corinthians 12:1-31**). We should discover how God has gifted us and steward this well to fulfill God's image within each of us.

Leverage the text of **1 Corinthians 12:12-20** to form a prayer in your own words as a commitment to live out your God-given purpose in the Body of Christ. Try praying it something like this: *"God, you have made me to be an integral part of the Body of Christ. I have not been created by accident, and you have given me a role to serve others. If I do not fulfill this role, the entire body suffers. Please reveal to me that purpose, and I commit to serve your Body. In Jesus' name!"*

The Power of Praying Scripture

God's Word is not just a static, historical account. **Hebrews 4:12** tells us that it is *"living and active"* and that it is the very breath of God communicating to us (see **2 Timothy 3:16**). In other words, the Bible is a collection of words that come from God and are intended to having living, breathing application to our personal relationship with Him. When we pray from the scripture—*modeling our words after the specific words and ideas in a passage*—we are connecting our thoughts and prayers to the exact thoughts and ideas God wants us to live from. Each day, would you give God **six more minutes** and pray through these passages suggested to you?

Tuesday, July 1 – "Favor with the Creator"

Read slowly and carefully **Genesis 4:2-7** and **Hebrews 11:4**

Where are you susceptible to not doing what is right before the Lord? Is what you give to God your absolute best, or does God get your "leftovers"?

Any parent would say that their children are a tremendous treasure and blessing from the Lord. But the pain for a parent whose kid turns towards darkness is immeasurable. Adam and Eve's first two children suffered this great tragedy. Abel offered a sacrifice to God that found favor because it was offered by faith, and it was his best and first. Cain also offered something to the Lord, but it was just "some" and not his best. Cain became enraged when God did not favor his offering, and he spun into terrible sin, murdering his brother in envy. God desires our first and best, surrendering to Him right off the top of our earnings, time, energy, focus, and interest. We should offer all of our lives to God in faith.

Put 2 Samuel 24:24 and **Psalms 96:8-9** in your own words as a prayer to God and a commitment to offer all of you to Him. Try praying it something like this: *"God, your identity (glory) is worthy of praise. You are so holy (unique, separate, different) that I worship you and joyfully tremble at your goodness. I will bring an offering of my life, my best, my first of all that you have given to me, being sure to not withhold any cost in giving you all that I am. In Jesus' name!"*

Wednesday, July 2 – “Sin is Crouching at the Door”

Read slowly and carefully [Genesis 4:6-7](#) and [Luke 22:31-32](#)

How well do you “master sin”? I don’t mean how good at sinning are you? We’re all pretty talented at messing things up. God told Cain he needed to “master sin”, meaning to have self-control and overcome its temptation. How good are you at that spiritual discipline? How seriously do you seek God for His help to overcome?

Cain was overwhelmed with disappointment and envy over the favor God showed his brother. Abel gave an offering to God by faith, while Cain’s half-hearted gift did not garner God’s approval. Seeing the murderous thoughts brooding in his heart, God warned Cain that sin was crouching right by his door. This warning was an opportunity for Cain to choose faith and master his own destiny. His admonition to Cain was similar to the warning Jesus gave to Peter shortly before Peter betrayed him. The source of failure is most often a failure of faith. Mastering sin is not about muscling up a modification to our behavior. It is about turning to God in faith for His leadership and help in our life.

Put Psalm 36 in your own words as a prayer to God and a surrender to His help in overcoming sin. Try praying it something like this: *“God, I know that I am blessed in receiving forgiveness from you. You have covered over all my transgressions. I acknowledge the power of sin in my life, and I ask for your help. As the pressures and temptations rise around me like floodwaters, I will make you my hiding place. Protect me from trouble; surround me with your deliverance. I will rejoice and be glad for your presence. In Jesus’ name!”*

Thursday, July 3 – “Mercy for a Murderer”

Read slowly and carefully [Genesis 4:10-14](#) and [Psalm 51:9-12](#)

What is the reaction to your own sin problems? When you know that you have failed the Lord in something, what consequence do you fear the most?

As Cain committed the first murder in human history, a tremendous guilt and terror must have filled his heart. Like most of us, he tried at first to dodge the consequence and pretend he was not guilty. But God confronted him with the evidence and then explained the natural outcomes that would follow. He told Cain that his work would become toilsome and fruitless—very similar to the general curse declare for all mankind when Cain’s father had first sinned (see [Genesis 3:17](#)). More than that, Cain would become restless in heart and wander aimlessly and alone. He was overwhelmed by this reality. But the greatest heartbreak Cain expressed was not the toil and pain; it was the fact that we would be separated from the presence of God. Sin creates a barrier in intimacy with the Lord, and this was more than Cain could bear. In spite of this barrier, God promised him protection from others seeking his death—a mercy demonstrating that He would still be watching over him.

Put Psalm 51 in your own words as a prayer to God and a repentance over sin. Try praying it something like this: *“Have mercy on me, O God, for all the places I transgress your ways. I know you are unfailing in your love and filled with compassion. I ask you to cleanse me and blot out all my wrongdoing. Create in me a new and clean heart. Let me dwell constantly in your presence, and do not pull your Holy Spirit away from me. I need your presence! In Jesus’ name!”*

Friday, July 4 – “Calling Upon the Lord”

Read slowly and carefully [Genesis 4:25-26](#) and [Genesis 5:1-24](#)

What are the circumstances that trigger you to walk more intently with the Lord? What are the circumstances that tend to pull you away from the Lord?

When Cain murdered Abel, this undoubtedly threw the first and fledgling human family into great turmoil. Not only did they have to mourn the loss of their son and brother Abel, but they were also thrust into a chaos and pain of realizing the profound evil that had gripped Cain’s heart. God had revealed to Cain that he would suffer a life wandering in isolation, certainly cut off from the fellowship and closeness of his family. But as the family began to recover from this terrible tragedy—as best as recovery is possible—[Genesis 4:26](#) records that *“men began to call on the name of the Lord.”* Others in the family tree, such as Enoch, were said to have “walked with God” ([Genesis 5:22](#)). Adam and Eve had known such intimacy while in the Garden of Eden. Outside that close environment with the Lord, it is far more significant that this broken family was able to develop such a connection with God. In the Garden, God was right there in plain sight. Outside the Garden, it would take faith to know and relate with God. Faith is precisely the attribute that drove Enoch to walk so closely with God that the Lord took him straight to heaven without the sting of death (see [Hebrews 11:5](#)).

Put Isaiah 50:10-11 in your own words as a prayer to God and a declaration of trust in His name (His character and identity). Try praying it something like this: *“O Lord, I do indeed fear you and walk in obedience to your Word. But even with that faith, I confess that often I feel like my way is hidden in darkness. My faith will engage to put my trust in your name, to call upon you, and to rely upon you. I will not control my life on my own or make my own light to guide me. I will seek you for your wisdom and guidance in everything I do. In Jesus’ name!”*

Notes: *What is God showing me today?*
