

STUDIES IN GENESIS #14

Written by Calvin Fox
Monday, 01 June 2015 17:53 -

2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it. It is described as very beautiful and fertile (2:10-14)- a good place to be. God expects everyone who is able to work "in the Garden".

Everyone has the vocation of work

John 5:17 Jesus said, "My Father is working..., and I am working."

2 Thes. 3:6-10 Paul wrote, Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. 9 It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. 10 For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.

Like Paul, God gives commands and expects obedience or there shall be dire consequences

16 [In the very beginning] the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,
God gave Adam freedom to eat and enjoy many things in the Garden. At the same time there was one thing he was not to eat. It was Adam's choice to obey or not to obey. He could enjoy the good life in the Garden forever or be expelled from it and die. [Reformed Theology calls this the Covenant of Works]

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."

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If Adam chose to disobey God's command, there would be dire consequences: death, something Adam had never experienced. He had only God's word to go on in making his decision. Would he believe what God told him? To obey God or not to obey God. This is the sole issue here for Adam. As Adam represents Humanity, this is the sole issue for every person. If Adam had asked "why?", God could have said [like a good parent] "Just trust Me. I have my reasons. I know what is best for you. Just trust me and do what I say." God did have His reason. He did not want Adam to gain knowledge of good and evil by eating the fruit of the tree. Nor did He want Adam to die!

Adam, like all human beings, created in God's image, had a sense of morality, ie- he had an innate sense that some things are good and others are evil. But what things? How can we know what really is good or evil? That has been debated from the beginning. Who decides? The President? Congress? The Supreme Court? Society or Culture? Some Dictator or Tyrant? Tradition? Circumstances? Some fruit on a tree? Or----- God?

Prov 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge...

2 For gaining wisdom and being instructed; for understanding insightful sayings;

3 for receiving wise instruction [in] righteousness, justice, and integrity;

4 for teaching shrewdness to the inexperienced, knowledge and discretion to a young man-

5 a wise man will listen [to the Lord] and increase his learning, and a discerning man will obtain guidance-

The Wisdom of God comes from Scripture, especially the Law of God. See Psalm 19:7-8.11, Deut.4:6, 2 Sam 14:20, 1 Kings 3:28, 4:29 et al

The concern God had was that Adam would think he was self-sufficient. He did not need God to have wisdom. He would think he could do anything. He himself is god. And truly, multitudes believe that. We hear frequently that the key to achieving the American Dream, to enjoy the Good Life, is education. No question, education is valuable, essential to having "success" in this world. But secular education apart from God is not truly wise. The best commentary on what happens to people who seek wisdom (knowledge and skills) apart from God is found in Ezekiel 28- the description of the King of Tyre.