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Genesis 2:4 - 3:7

"Did God really say?"

We have heard people say that when they get to heaven the first thing they will do is ask Eve what kind of fruit was so enticing that it would get all of us in trouble for the rest of our lives! When thinking about Eve and the perfect sinless condition she and Adam were in prior to their fall, it's hard to imagine anything could come in the way of remaining in perfect harmony with God. Even in Eden, however, the temptation to sin, and especially thinking we can be God or be like Him, was present.

It's amazing how smart and cunning Satan is. Many might think he comes in a red suit with a long tail, has blazing eyes, is visible for miles, and his ways are immediately recognizable as being satanic. Not so! The account of Adam and Eve, and many others throughout the Bible, bear that out. Eve, whom God created holy and sinless, perfect in every way, would verify that. It was she who was tricked into sinning and bringing Adam into the same condition.

All of us know the story of God's creation – how He carefully and with great wisdom created the earth and everything in it. We know God is a God of order, going about His plan methodically, preparing the earth and the seas before He made the animals, fish and birds. But when he was finished, the earth and its inhabitants still seemed incomplete to Him. The Bible says, *Then, God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground."* Genesis 1:26 NIV And so God made Adam in His image, holy and sinless and giving him the breath of life. Adam was the crown of God's creation, the one God intended to rule over the rest of His wonderful works.

God gave Adam work to do. He was to name the animals and birds and care for the garden. He was to spend his time wisely. But Adam was alone. The Bible tells us, *But for Adam no suitable helper was found.* Genesis 2:20b NIV Among all of the things God had created, there was no one who could be a companion for the crown of God's creation. And so God created Eve, also in His image – sinless and in perfect harmony with God. Together, Adam and Eve had a marvelous relationship with their Creator in a beautiful garden. So what went wrong?

Satan had a way of bringing both doubt and pride into Eve's thinking. His words, "Did God really say..." brought things into her mind she never thought before. She never doubted that God loved them and would care for them. She knew Him as her caring and concerned Creator. She had every reason to think the forbidden fruit would lead them to misery and death, just as God had clearly told them. However, Satan followed his initial question by appealing to her pride. Eating the fruit would make her wise and like God, he said. The Bible says, *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.* Genesis 3:6 NIV

Satan has a way of luring even the staunchest Christian into doubt. How many times and for how long has he used the so-called learned scientists to renounce God's creation as a fairy tale? How often have geneticists and anthropologists insisted that we evolved from a single cell even though there are countless missing links? How many of our children have had to deal with

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for the transparency and accountability of the organization. The text outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data, ensuring that the information is reliable and up-to-date. It also mentions the role of technology in streamlining these processes and reducing the risk of errors.

The second part of the document focuses on the financial aspects of the organization. It provides a detailed overview of the budget, including the projected income and expenses for the upcoming year. The text highlights the need for careful financial management to ensure that the organization remains solvent and able to meet its obligations. It also discusses the importance of regular financial audits to identify any potential issues or discrepancies.

The third part of the document addresses the operational challenges faced by the organization. It describes the current state of the various departments and the steps being taken to improve efficiency and productivity. The text mentions the implementation of new systems and procedures, as well as the ongoing training and development of the staff. It also discusses the importance of maintaining good communication and collaboration between all levels of the organization.

The final part of the document provides a summary of the key findings and recommendations. It reiterates the importance of maintaining accurate records, managing finances effectively, and improving operational efficiency. The text concludes by expressing confidence in the organization's ability to overcome its challenges and achieve its goals in the future.

anti-God theories proclaimed by those agents of Satan who once said God was dead? Satan uses people whom we love and trust to proclaim his propaganda. And he does it well; he does it convincingly; and he does it relentlessly.

Pride, too, often leads people away from God. Many people think that if they cannot understand something, they can't believe it. Understanding God and His love for mankind in sending a Saviour is only possible through the eyes of faith. Also, understanding the justice of God is only possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. Pride has no place in the faith life of any Christian – only the grace and mercy of God does.

It shouldn't be hard for any of us to realize that doubt and pride are hindrances to our faith life. If Eve, God's perfect creation, was tempted by these two tricks of Satan, we surely will also know his attacks.

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Prayer: Heavenly Father, we are so weak in so many ways. We ask You to keep us free from the power of Satan, who uses every possible means to tempt us to fall away from You. Keep us strong in the Word and the Sacraments, so that we can remain faithful. In Jesus' Name we pray- Amen.

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