

# REAL PEOPLE, REAL GOD:

## Adam and Eve

### Through-the-Bible Character Series

Thanks for taking part in our new audio study series. Lyndsey and I will systematically chat our way through Old Testament characters, telling the Bible's single story of God's desire to reveal Himself and relate to humankind. Today, we'll start in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve.

Each episode to come will look at a specific Bible character(s) and ask these two questions:

1. What is our REAL GOD doing in that story? AND
2. How are those REAL PEOPLE reacting/interacting with Him?

By discovering the way God revealed Himself and related to biblical characters, we'll learn more about how He reveals Himself and desires to be in relationship with us.

### God's Precious Gift, Lost

We have two beautiful daughters that are about 2 ½ years apart in age. To celebrate each of their thirteenth birthdays, sort of their passage into womanhood, we tried to make it very special. We bought each of them a diamond ring that they were to wear until their wedding day. Their daddy took each one to a nice restaurant for dinner to show them how a young man should treat them on a date. He opened doors for her, pulled out the chair for her, and treated her with respect in every way. Also, as a gift from us both, Roy made a beautiful hope chest for them. It looked like a treasure chest with its brass hardware and leather handles. Both girls (Emily pictured above) still treasure this special piece of furniture in their homes today.



But what if our daughters had scorned our gifts? Refused our attempts to love and teach them? What if they had destroyed the chest with a sledge hammer and sold the ring to the highest bidder? We would have been hurt. Angry. Heart-broken.

Have you ever worked really hard to create a special gift for someone—and he/she didn't appreciate it? Or maybe you planned a super special event, a date, or a party—and no one

showed up? When you put your heart and soul into showing your love for someone—and then that someone rejects it or takes it for granted—there’s a special kind of hurt that goes with that, isn’t there? God knows how it feels...

## What is God Doing?

In the beginning, God created: Genesis 1:1-24

Day 1 – light; day/night

Day 2 – separated waters; sky

Day 3 – land and sea; vegetation – seed-bearing plants and trees

Day 4 – lights in the sky to designate time; stars

Day 5 – water creatures; birds in the air

Day 6 – creatures move along the ground/livestock/wild animals; humankind

## Busy Day 6!

1:27 – created them in His own image (both male and female)

1:28 – gave them purpose: be fruitful and multiply, fill earth & subdue it, rule over creation

1:29-30 – God gave every seed-bearing plant for food (to humans and animals)

## God’s Perfect Gift:

God placed Adam in this perfect Garden that He had painstakingly prepared for him.

“Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” **Genesis 2:8-9**

Then God shows Adam two specific trees among all the various plants and trees in this perfect Garden:

“And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.’” **Genesis 2:16-17**

Finally, continuing to show His great concern, God knows Adam’s need for helper and wants Adam to realize it too. He brings animals to Adam to name.

What does Adam do? He names the animals.

“Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.” **Genesis 2:19**

God gives Adam a job, a purpose, and it looks strangely like God’s creative work. Adam is creating new names! Out of nothing but the creative spark in his brain, and spoken with words (just like God’s creating), Adam gets to create something that never existed before...names. We witness here a human’s first experience of living out the image-of-God-ness. Being like our Creator who made us like Him. How cool is that?

## **Day 7 & Beyond**

Now, before we get to the sad part of the story (the part where the REAL people REALly mess it up), let’s get back to one more thing of note that our REAL GOD did as a part of this creating process.

“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.” **Genesis 2:1-3**

I love that God BLESSED the seventh day, and then He rested *with* Adam & Eve. Later, we know He walked with them in the cool evenings. How many evening walks did they take before...well, you know...ugh?

We don’t know how much time passed when God was just walking in the garden with Adam and Eve. It could have been many days, weeks, months, years. Probably when we talk about the story of Adam and Eve, we don’t dwell on that fact very long. But as we’re asking how does the REAL GOD interact with the REAL PEOPLE in these stories, it is very good to note, and dwell here for just a moment.

He walked with them. Near. Close. With. Next to.

In the cool of the evenings.

Think: “Restful walk on a cool summer evening after a long day of good, hard work.”

This is a great image to begin piecing together how our REAL God wants to relate to us today. Wow.

Don’t you wish this could be a REAL and imminent reality in our everyday lives—a nice, relaxing stroll with the manifest presence of God Himself. But something happened to change humanity’s relationship with God...

## What did the REAL PEOPLE do?

They talked to that darn serpent, and they ate that fruit. Booooo! Sometimes I'm tempted to rant at my original ancestors: "You ate the fruit? You had ONE job! ONE rule to follow! So many trees/plants you could eat. So many things you were permitted to do. This ONE you were not. Why, Adam and Eve? Why???"

But aren't we the same way? How many "little" sins do we ignore because we think our way is better than God's way? And that's what Eve's choice came down to...

"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**

One of Lyndsey's favorite singing artists, Sara Groves, said it like this in one of her songs: "If I were honest with myself, had I been standing at that tree my mouth and my hands would be covered with fruit of things I shouldn't know and things I shouldn't see."

Perhaps that's why we can relate to these REAL people in the Bible.

### Immediate Response

When Adam and Eve sinned, it caused an unconscious, internal need to separate themselves from God's presence. Why? Because eating the fruit opened their eyes to good *and evil* in the world. Although God made a good world, by this point there was already some kind of evil in it (as evidenced by the serpent). Though we can't be sure how much Adam and Eve were aware of what their action would cause, we know that the moment they ate the fruit, they understood the difference between good and evil for the first time.

I think at that moment it dawned on them that they had been participants in evil, and, at the same time, realized God was completely good. Hence the need to hide. And don't we all know this need to hide on some level?

Let's take breaking the speed limit for example. Most of us see nothing wrong with setting our cruise control to 5mph over the posted limit—until we see a policeman! And then what's our response? Tap the break. Hide.

When we are reminded that there is a standard, a rule, a "good" that we have ignored, defied, exchanged for an "evil," we feel the need to hide or run away.

## What Does God...Feel?

Before we talk about what our REAL GOD does in response to Adam and Eve's sin, let's talk about how He might have *felt*? He created this beautiful, wonderful, amazing world, with so many various kinds of plants, trees, animals, etc, and He gives it all to them as an amazing gift. One thing they weren't supposed to partake of. ONE THING. A million things they can enjoy. ONE thing they cannot. The precious children He'd created to enjoy intimate fellowship with Him disobeyed the ONE prohibition He'd given. Now, they're hiding.

It's only when we consider this relational side of God that we begin to grasp the true meaning of the Bible.

We are relational beings created in the image of a relational God to seek and enjoy intimacy. All those feelings I imagined feeling if our daughters had rejected their thirteenth birthday gifts would be exponentially higher as the Creator watched his beloved Adam and Eve throw away eternal perfection for all mankind.

## What does God do?

God calls out to His people and forces them to confess their sin, but they find a way to squirm and blame instead of honorably confessing and repenting their wrong-doing. Not a good start. So God levies judgment—with promises and a plan.

1. Curses the SERPENT
2. Promises victory for the woman's offspring over serpent's offspring.

“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.” (Gen. 3:15—first prophecy of Jesus Christ!)

1. Promises pain for woman while moving toward that victorious offspring
2. Promises hardship for man while working for food/provisions
3. Curses the GROUND so that it will produce thorns and thistles
4. Promises an end to Adam's toil (death is a good thing...keep reading, you'll see)

“By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” **Genesis 3:19**

## God's Great Mercy:

Remember there were two trees in the Garden: 1) the Tree of Life, and 2) the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. We understand the Tree of Life's potency only after sin has entered the world:

“And the Lord God said, ‘The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.’” **Genesis 3:22**

If God had allowed Adam and Eve to remain in the Garden and eat from the Tree of Life, they would have remained sinful for all eternity, having no chance of redemption, no chance to repair this broken relationship with their Creator! So, to protect them—NOT to punish them—God banishes them from the Garden.

“After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”  
**Genesis 3:24**

## **Is This a Sad Story?**

In some ways, of course, the story of the Fall of humankind is a tragic story. But not totally! Adam named his wife (cool!), and he named her “Living”! That should signal for us the hope that he felt—and the hope we can feel! As we continue in this series, we’re going to see more and more evidences of REAL PEOPLE blowing it, and our REAL GOD extending more grace and mercy to them in their need.

The rest of the Bible stories build on each other, telling of God’s quest to restore that “Garden Fellowship” lost with the betrayal of His original perfect gift. Each continuing story reveals our REAL GOD’s nature to the subsequent REAL PEOPLE who appear in this story called the Bible, and we learn how He relates uniquely to each one.

In two weeks (May 13<sup>th</sup>), we’ll continue with the story of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve, and discover how these REAL PEOPLE related to their REAL GOD. We hope you’ll join us.

\*Originally posted by Mesu Andrews on Apr 29th, 2016\*