

Pastor Glenn U. Rosario  
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Heaven In The Home  
Week 5 - Here As In Heaven

Aloha everyone! Today we seek to create, cultivate and celebrate our homes as a hot spot for the presence of heaven on earth. We do this by ensuring the lordship of Jesus Christ in our homes. For some, this shift in our domestic culture may be new, for some it may be necessary as a complete renovation. Regardless of what we identify with, know that Christ is in the business of building the kingdom by strengthening families as the foundational building blocks. It stems from the family unit. Family strength determines community strength. That is why families are often oppressed by demonic forces in the enemy's effort to repress the glory of God. Many families live in the absence of light, the absence of righteousness and the absence of heaven. To be co-laborers with Christ is to bring light to dark places, bring righteousness to sinful places and to bring heaven to where hell endeavors to dominate. As believers, we have to the power to conquer and overcome.

***In the words of Jesus Christ, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock" (Matthew 7:24-25 ESV).***

Jesus spoke of biblical truths, that as we hear with spiritual ears and apply with humble and earnest hearts, we will begin to see the effectual change benefitting all believers. Jesus used a simile of building a home on rock to serve as instruction for building the kingdom.

Years ago as a young, excited believer, I began seeing my home as a place to exercise my God-ordained authority. Together with my wife, we endeavored to build a home life that honored God, hungered for His Word and hosted the Holy Spirit.

In Genesis, God revealed His intention of having children to enjoy creation with. We, as humans were meant to live eternally with God, enjoying all He provides and living in dominion over the earth. We were meant to live by a hierarchy in this paradise. God created man above the animals and angels. As such, we are meant to live in harmony with one another as God

instructed man to live in authority, governing His creation. By definition man was created to live holy lives, set apart for His purposes.

***“15 The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die” (Genesis 2:4-7 HCSB).***

God specifically highlighted two trees, one called the “Tree of Life” the other, “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.” Let’s take a look at the characteristics of both trees that we may better understand their significance.

The garden of Eden was the first home ever cultivated. In many ways it was the model home, the prototype home where all homes ought to be designed by. God was very specific. He said that Adam and Eve were allowed to eat from any and all the trees, including the Tree of Life, except from the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.

I ask, “Why would God place the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden?” Why would he do that? Why even have one? Why didn’t God just uproot it and throw it in the mulching machine?

Let’s start with the Tree of Life. It is symbolic of Jesus Christ. It supports physical life as well as spiritual life.

***“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5 NKJV).***

***“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24 ESV).***

***“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” (Galatians 3:13 ESV).***

***“Are your ears awake? Listen. Listen to the Wind Words, the Spirit blowing through the churches. I’m about to call each conqueror to dinner. I’m spreading a banquet of Tree-of-Life fruit, a supper plucked from God’s orchard” (Revelations 2:7 Message Bible).***

***“Blessed are those who wash their robes. They will be permitted to enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life” (Revelations 22:14 NLT).***

The tree of life is our source of eternal life. Christ bore our sins, paid for humanities wretchedness and completed the redeeming work by the cross. The book of revelations shows us of the future Kingdom where the tree of life, once again is our source of eternal life.

By contrast the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (TKGE) represented spiritual death that would occur to Adam and Eve for eating its fruit. So why did God put it there? The answer is out of His love. It’s difficult to see unless we understand God character.

God cultivated a paradise that included gates to roam in and out of. A paradise with no means of exiting and reentering, is a cage. He didn’t want a cell, solitary confinement or a prison to house His creation, especially His children. He communicated to them, “what’s mine is yours and what’s yours is mine.” God was very specific about avoiding the TKGE, but the tree does represent free will. To love your children is to offer them the opportunity to make wise decisions. To love your children is to help them understand the consequences of certain decisions made. To love your children is to prepare them to make wise choices. To love your children is to help them understand where they are taking their advice from. Many questions arose in my mind. How did God feel, as a parent, when He saw Adam and Eve disobey? Can we, as earthly parents reward a disobedient child or do we help them understand the consequences of their actions? How can we help our children understand that the serpent has no true power? Deception is the serpents perceived power. He is powerless.

***“22 The Lord God said, “Since man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” 23 So the Lord God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life (Genesis 3 HCSB).***

Guilt and shame came upon Adam and Eve as they were exiled from the garden. They had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain committed the first ever recorded murder because of the

bitter jealousy he harbored toward Abel. Cain did not revere God as he ought to, but Abel did. God asked Cain where Abel was, to which Cain replied, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Cain lied.

***“25 Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, for she said, “God has given me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” 26 A son was born to Seth also, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of Yahweh” (Genesis 4 HCSB).***

We see once again the redemption story. Abraham descended from Seth. Abraham, of course, led to David, which led to Jesus.

In summary, Adam and Eve were supposed to have been members of the model family living in their forever home with God. It was disrupted by disobedience ignited by the diabolical deception that humanity has to now endure. We see the guilt and shame that Adam and Eve bore, which in turn, effected the way they parented Cain and Abel. We see how one will always reproduce who they are. Parents that honor God, will raise children that honor God. Likewise, hurt people will only raise hurt children. Their imperfection led to inconsistencies in their parenting, evident in one child dishonoring God while another honoring God. The good news is, in our imperfection, we can all connect to the tree of life once again and abide in Him, with Him and for His glory! Although the TKGE figuratively may still abound where enticement and deception may come knocking on our doors, we will remain vigilant, obey God and not eat its forbidden fruits. In Jesus name!

Discussion Question for Group Study.

1. Is your home built on solid rock? How is the foundation of truth holding up your home? Do you feel there are facets of family life that needs to be strengthened?
2. How connected are you to the Tree of Life? Jesus said He is the vine, we are the branches? Do you feel you are living a part of the tree or apart from the tree?
3. Identify some forbidden fruits that may harm someone's life. Are there any unhealthy relationships, unhealthy occupations, unhealthy temptations that could lead to spiritual death.
4. What memories is Holy Spirit wanting to reveal in order for Jesus to heal in your life?