

29th January 2023

Genesis 3:1-24

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5** "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 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. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all livestock

and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

¹⁵ 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."

¹⁶ To the woman he said,

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;

with painful labor you will give birth to children.

Your desire will be for your husband,

and he will rule over you."

¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;

through painful toil you will eat food from it

all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,

and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ 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.”

²⁰ Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. ²² 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.” ²³ So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. ²⁴ 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.

Acts 2:42-47

The Fellowship of the Believers

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

G'Day Church Family

Please have your Bibles in front of you – we'll be looking at both Bible passages – from **Genesis 3:1-24** and **Acts 2:42-47**.

There's the usual *outline* for you to *take notes* – if that helps you *concentrate*.

Let me ask **God** for His *help* and *guidance* first – let's *pray*...

Intro

This is the final part of **5-part series** on The **Church** –

The Church

In Greek it is ἐκκλησία

[Slide 1-Called out ones]



In essence the **Ekklesia** – the **church** – are the “*called out ones*” – called out - to worship God and follow Jesus.

[Slide 1a-5 e's]



In our 5-part series we're looking at how the Church - exalts, edifies, encourages, equips and evangelizes.

In **Part 1** – we saw that - The Church – **EXALTS God** –

In other words, we as the Church – should be **putting God on the highest pedestal** – and **speaking as highly as we can about God**

In **Part 2** – we saw how - The Church –the Ekklesia - **EDIFIES – the family of God – the Church Family – Through God's Holy Word** – and we said that our church has many different Growth Group/Study Groups that we can take part in

In **Part 3** - we looked at how the church **encourages** people – which basically amounted to **joining together in worship and in fellowship** – not just on Sunday – but in the many ways we meet together – morning tea, lunches and events here at St. David's

In **Part 4** – last week – we looked at how the **Church** – the **Ekklesia** – **EQUIPS – the family of God – the Church Family** – and we said that the church equips people physically, spiritually and emotionally – **by showing the love of Jesus to people inside and outside the church.**

Which brings us to **Part 5** – the **Church** – the **Ekklesia** – **EVANGELIZES**

WHAT?

So, we'd better be clear – and define **what EVANGELIZE** means

[Slide 2-Definition]

Evangelize – Definition

Dictionary - To tell people how to become a Christian OR to share our Christian faith with others.

Bible – From Greek Word - **εὐαγγέλιον**

εὐ = Good

Αγγέλιον = Message

Literally means = **Good News** = **GOSPEL**

According to the dictionary – evangelize means – to tell people how to become a Christian or to share our Christian faith with others.

In the Bible the **Greek Word** used is - **εὐ - αγγέλιον**

It's made up of **two words**:

εὐ = Good

Αγγέλιον = Message

So, **evangelize** literally means **spreading the Good Message** OR **Good News** – and another word for Good News is the word **Gospel**

So **evangelizing** is **spreading the Gospel** or **Good News**...

If there is Good News – then this **implies** there is **Bad News**

Bad News/Good News (Genesis 3:1-24)

The **bad news** comes from our **Old Testament** passage from **Genesis 3:1-24**

[\[Please turn there now\]](#)

We pick up the story where in chapter 2 – God had given the first two humans – Adam and Eve - a fairly **straightforward rule**

“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)

But as we hit chapter 3 – it’s an **epic fail**.

[Slide 3-Bad News]

The **crafty serpent** enters the garden

First the serpent **sows a seed of doubt** – in the woman’s mind – see v1

“Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

See the doubt the serpent is sowing – God didn’t say any tree - but only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

The woman – Eve – corrects the serpent – in v3 – saying it’s only the tree in the middle of the garden – and if they touch it, they’ll die.

So, second – the serpent resorts to **lying** – see v4

You will not certainly die – the serpent says.

Then third – the serpent resorts to **deception** – v5

For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

See how the serpent is suggesting that God is **keeping something from Adam and Eve** – and suggesting that God is deceiving them rather than protecting them. A cunning deception!

Then comes the bad news – the **woman gives into the temptation** (v6) and **eats from the forbidden tree** and shares it with her husband.

There it is **the rule broken**

When God confronts Adam and Eve

Adam blames Eve for giving him the fruit and he **blames God for putting Eve in the garden** with him (v12)

The **woman blames the serpent** for deceiving her (v13)

We're good at blaming others for our wrong choices – aren't we?

Then – comes the consequences –

The **serpent is cursed** above all livestock and destined to crawl on its belly and eat dust (v14)

And from elsewhere in the Bible [John 8:44; Romans 16:20; 2 Cor 11:3;

Revelation 12:9-14; 20:2]– we know the **serpent represents Satan** – and v15 tells us that there will be enmity [hostility] between Satan's offspring and the woman's offspring – this amounts to a **spiritual warfare** between humankind and Satan and his demons.

And the consequences for the **woman** – v16 – she will **suffer in childbirth** – and she will want to please her husband but her husband will lord it over her – suggesting **relationships in marriage will be difficult.**

And the consequences for the **man** – v17-19 – because he listened to his wife and ate the forbidden fruit – the **ground will be cursed** and **getting food from the ground will be painful and difficult.** In fact, any work will be fraught with difficulties.

In a nutshell both **God's creation** and **God's creatures** are **broken.**

And to make matters worse – **Adam and Eve** – v23 – are **kicked out of the Garden** and away from the presence of God – and they **will not live forever as intended** – but will one day die!

Bad news for Adam and Eve

And unfortunately – it's **bad news for all humans** –

We all **inherit Adam and Eve's sinful nature** when we're born [see Psalm 51: 5; Romans 5:12-21] – and so we have **all sorts of problems in this world** – murder, rape, hate, crime, wars and so on.

And we live in a **broken world** – natural disasters [floods, fires, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis] and a difficult climate

And we live as **broken human beings** – with a finite life span – and may experience all sorts of illnesses.

And we live as **broken human beings** – where we have messy relationships – some relationships broken badly –

And worse than that – just like Adam and Eve – our sinful nature – means **our relationship with God** – is **broken and not as it should be** – and we can't fix it ourselves

Our sin means we are **spiritually dead** and we will **physically die** one day.

What **bad news!**

(pause)

But in **God's grace** – in amongst that bad news of Genesis 3 – there's a **hint of Good News** – it's easy to miss

[Slide 4-Good News]

The Good News (Genesis 3:15)

God says: "I will put enmity between you [*Satan*] and the woman [*Eve*] and between your [*Satan's*] offspring and hers [*Eve's offspring*]; he [*Eve's offspring*] will crush your [*Satan's*] head, and you [*Satan*] will strike his heel."

Look again at **verse 15** – when God talks to the serpent (aka Satan)

15 And I will put enmity

between you [Satan] and the woman [Eve],

and between your offspring [Satan] and hers [Eve's offspring];

he [Eve's offspring] will crush your head [Satan],

and you [Satan] will strike his [Eve's offspring's] heel."

That offspring of Eve's is **Jesus** – He's the Good News in amongst the Bad News.

[Slide 5-Good News]

Satan will clip at Jesus' heals – but Jesus will crush Satan's head.



Good News

Satan will clip at Jesus heals – but Jesus will crush Satan's head.

Jesus deals with the two problems that came into being in the Garden of Eden

SIN and DEATH

You see – God loves us so much – and wants to be friends with us – in a loving faithful relationship – that God was prepared to send Jesus to deal with the two problems that came into being – in the Garden – **namely SIN and DEATH.**

So, God sent His perfect Son – to **die on a cruel cross** - and take the punishment of Sin from us – and even though Satan thought he'd won – He hadn't – **the punishment for our sin was paid for** – and then God raised Jesus to life 3 days later – so the other problem of dying is resolved too – **because Jesus offers eternal life for all who believe in His death and resurrection.** So, Satan clips at Jesus' heels but he is crushed and defeated by Jesus's death & resurrection.

This is **Good News**

And this is the Good News that God wants us to tell people about. This is the Good News we need to evangelize!

Which brings us to **WHY** we need to evangelize

WHY?

[Slide 6-Why?]

First, we need to evangelize – because if people don't hear the Good News and believe in it – **they will go to Hell** – and God doesn't want that

As 2 Peter 3:9 says – *God does not want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

And **WE don't want people to go to Hell either** – so we need to evangelize – and there's still many people that are not Christians!

Second – we need to evangelize – because Jesus built His church – as the means for telling people the Good News that Jesus is the Saviour – **who saves people from sin and death**

And third – we need to evangelize – because Jesus commanded His disciples to evangelize

In Matthew 28:18-20 – Jesus gave the **Great Commission**

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

WHO? (Acts 2:42-27)

Which brings us to **WHO** should evangelize

[Slide 7-Who?]

The Great Commission was given to **Jesus disciples**

A **disciple** is someone who does exactly what the master teaches –

The first disciples – were told to go and make disciples just like Jesus did

The new disciples they made – are to then go and make more disciples – and that **includes us!**

It's a multiplication process

So, 12 Christian disciples that Jesus had – have now **grown to 2.4 billion**

Christians in a world population of 7.8 billion – that's amazing isn't it.

In our **NT reading** from Acts 2:42-47 [Please turn there now – same passage]

As the church exalted God – and edified, encouraged and equipped the people – they were able to evangelize – and the **result of all this activity** – in v47 - *the*

Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. In other words –

the Church does its job and **God does the rest!**

Jesus expects all His disciples - to go and make more disciples

Does anyone know what our **Mission Statement** is – here at St. David's?

***Our Mission:** Enabling and equipping people by God's grace to become, and grow into, complete followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

So, it's **our mission** – as Jesus' disciples to enable and equip people to become and grow into complete followers of Jesus

Now – before we get worried – that we all have to go out on the streets – evangelizing – and before we think – we all have to stand up here or somewhere else - and give our testimony on how and why we believe in Jesus - that's **not the case**.

There are **many many ways we can evangelize** and we are only limited by our imagination – and we need only do it in ways that we are comfortable with and equipped to do.

Which brings us to **HOW** we evangelize

HOW?

So, I'd like to spend a little time giving **some ways we can evangelize**:

And it might be good if we break this up into:

- What we can do personally
- And what we can do corporately in church

Personally

[Slide 8-Personally]

First then here's ways we can evangelize personally

- In our **conversations** with a friends, family and work colleagues they begin to find out we are Christians – and gradually we may get an opportunity to tell them - why we believe in Jesus – or why we go to church – or what Jesus means to us. For some of us – it may take a long time before we're comfortable to say anything about our faith – because it's personal. And for some of us – we may not have the words to say
- Instead, we can let our faith in Jesus, shine through – **in our actions and behaviour**. We can **show the love of Jesus** – in the way we conduct ourselves – and **people notice we are different**.

I came across a **true story of a minister and his wife living next-door to a non-Christian family**. The minister would sometimes share the Gospel with his neighbours without much success. Eventually though the next-door neighbours came to church and followed Jesus. The mother in the family said – the reason she came to church and followed Jesus – was because of the lifestyle that the minister's wife modelled – and the neighbour wanted to be like her. **Our actions are just as important in evangelism**

- Another form of personal evangelism is when we **make a stand on God's Word** – and when topics come up which contradict God's Word – **we can defend our position** – and **say I can't agree with that because it contradicts the Bible**. This may lead to others changing their viewpoint and coming to follow Jesus. [example Heather sharing her faith with me]
- For some like our David – we can **evangelize to strangers** – David does this whilst he's **fishing!**

- Another form of personal evangelism is the **conversations we have around the family dinner table** – when we can talk about stories in the Bible and answer the family’s questions
- Then there’s **our children and grandchildren** – when I was growing up – **not one person** - told me the Bible verse **John 3:16** – and it’s meaning. So perhaps **having a list of a few Bible verses that we can pass on to the next generation would be very helpful.**
- Here’s **seven verses** to get us started:
 - **Joshua 1:9** - *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*
 - **Proverbs 3:5-6** - ⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;*
⁶ *in all your ways submit to him,*
and he will make your paths straight.
 - **John 3:16** - *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*
 - **John 13:33-34** - ³⁴ *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*
 - **John 14:6** - Jesus answered, *“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me.*

- **Romans 10:9** - *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- **Romans 10:13** - *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*
- **Hebrews 13:8** - *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Corporately

[Slide 9-Corporately]

Second – here’s some ways we can evangelize corporately at church:

- We can simply **invite people to church** – and **let God speak to them through our worship service** – through hymns, prayers, Bible reading, Bible message – and through fellowship at morning tea
- We can **invite people to the various events here at St. David’s** – give them time to **build friendships** and **gradually come to know Jesus**
- We **evangelize through our P.A.T. ministry** – when we **show the love of Jesus to people** who need help with food and clothes
- We evangelize **through our Christianity Explained** workshops
- We evangelize **through people giving their testimony** – something David’s been doing throughout January in our worship service – this can help others to think about how they would share their testimony.

This morning we have a **short evangelism survey** inside the bulletin. We realize some people will be comfortable sharing their faith and others might need some help. **The survey will help us work out how we can**

equip people to share their faith in a safe and non-threatening way – either in words or actions. Please consider doing the survey. And thank you to David for putting together the survey.

The Apostle Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 3:15 - *Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

- We can also **evangelize through our children’s ministries – Friday and Sunday Jaffa** – and **Scripture teaching** in our local schools – and training is available
- Another way we evangelize here at St. David’s is **through the funeral and thanksgiving services** we conduct here. As people grieve – they **hear the message from the Bible and think about their own eternal destination** and may come to believe in Jesus. For others attending, they may be **moved by the love shown through our hospitality** in providing morning or afternoon tea.
- Also, the **Wednesday Craft Group** – is open to people outside the church too – and it’s a **safe loving caring environment** that has led to some to join us here at Church on Sundays
- Our **Mission Partners** that we support - **evangelize in a number of ways** – some in remote parts of Australia - and others overseas – some whilst they do maintenance of buildings – some whilst running a medical centre in PNG – some distributing Bibles worldwide

- **Some Mission Partners even go into Prisons** and to talk to inmates.

Many inmates reflect on their life in prison, pick up a Bible and come to follow Jesus

- Here at St. David's, **we also evangelize in the Village Green at Toukley** – handing out Christian tracts, Bibles, invites to church events – and so on. Not everyone is comfortable doing this – but everything else I've mentioned shows **there's no limit to how we can share our faith.**

So, there we have it.

We've seen **what** evangelism is; **why** we must evangelize, **who** should evangelize and **how** we can evangelize.

Conclusion

To **finish up** then

Let me leave us with **two promises we can hang on to as we evangelize**

[Slide 10a-Isaiah 55:11]

First from Isaiah 55:11 – God promises:

My word that goes out from my mouth:

It will not return to me empty,

but will accomplish what I desire

and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

As we speak God's Word to people – **His Word will do the rest** – we don't have to argue and convince – **we're the messenger** – **God's Word is the message** – and **through His Spirit** it will accomplish what He wants!

Second – When Jesus established His Church – here’s what He said to the Apostle Peter in Matthew 16:18

[Slide 10b-Matthew 16:18]

18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

What Jesus is saying is **the forces of death and darkness cannot prevail against or conquer His Church.** This is a valuable promise in the dark and discouraging times we live. What this says to us - as Jesus’ Church – is that **we have the light of Jesus which overcomes the darkness around us.**

So, **let’s be encouraged to evangelize** – in whatever form that takes – knowing we have **two forces that cannot be stopped – God’s Word and Jesus’ Church.**

Let’s pray...

Heavenly Father thank you for the Good News of Jesus – that He is willing and able to take away the punishment for sin – and to remove the fear of death by offering eternal life to all who believe.

Help us and equip us - through Your Word and Your Spirit – to share that Good News with all that we come across.

In Jesus name, we pray. AMEN.