

# The desire to be God

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[ 0 : 00 ] Genesis chapter 3. But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of it its fruit and ate.

And she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. Amen. Nice to have the key stop by Jan.

I think many of us would be like Sarah. We think Sarah can be a wizard or a witch at times. They can cast spells and change things in the world or change things in our life.

[ 1 : 34 ] And I think that is a good start for the sermon. This is the picture of Paul with his big hammer.

Before we start, shall we pray? Almighty God, we thank you for creating us and also making us the people who have desire.

May you help us this morning as we consider your word and your world. May you sanctify our desires that we might seek first your kingdom and your righteousness in all that we do.

Thank you, Lord. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. I'll read to you a quote. God is dead.

God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves? The murderers of all murderers. What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet on has bled to death under our lives?

[ 2 : 48 ] Who will wipe this blood of us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement? What sacred games shall we have to invent?

Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become God simply to appear worthy of it? A famous writing by Friedrich Leacher around 1880.

Friedrich Leacher was born in Germany. Some people consider him to be one of the greatest thinkers in the history of mankind. Could be not sure.

But he only had a very short life. He died at 56. From 1844 to 1900. And the last 11 years of his life, he lived in a mental asylum.

So he had a mental breakdown. So he lived only, basically he was productive until 45. But over all these years, he written many, many books.

[ 4 : 03 ] And they're all very high quality books. And he already was a great thinker. He knew Greek, Hebrew, not Latin, besides German.

So you can imagine how intelligent he was. He became a professor at 24 years of age. But he only worked in the uni for about 10 years and he resigned.

He couldn't work with all his colleagues. I think because his mind is so different to other people, he basically resigned. And also he didn't enjoy good health.

And he moved to a quite faraway place. And they started writing books for about 10 years. He wrote all those books under the care of his mother and also his sister.

He hated his mother and his sister, by the way. I suppose he just couldn't tolerate anyone who could not share his thoughts and his mind. He had four major principles for people to know.

[ 5 : 11 ] Okay. One, envy is good. Two, Christianity is bad. Three, alcohol is bad. And four, God is dead.

So, I suppose it's unfair to summarize this for this. But if you want to know just briefly about this man. He considered Christianity and alcohol to be equally bad, in a sense.

Because he drank, he drank alcohol. And his father was a priest. So he knew the Bible better than us, actually. He could use the Bible in the original language. And he also drank alcohol. And he got drunk. And after that, he realized that both Christianity and alcohol were equally bad. He thought that they both make people stupid and unproductive.

And what Lucha hated the most about Christianity was the suppression of envy. So, envy is defined as the desire to get what someone else has. Well, I don't have.

[ 6 : 14 ] Somebody has. Christianity told people not to envy. And Lucha said, envy is good. So, if you envy your classmates' good exam results, you will work hard, wouldn't you, to get a better result next time.

If you envy your friend's nice car, then you will work hard to get a better car. So, envy gives you the motive to work harder and to improve yourself.

Envy also improves the economy. When everybody starts to spend more money to get what they envy, that will create more jobs and more tax for the government and more development.

And that's true in one sense. And in writing God is dead. And in writing God is dead, Lucha was not mourning for the fact that nobody believed in God anymore.

I mean, he's a thorough atheist. He was simply stating the fact that God was no longer relevant to the modern society. He wanted people to admit this fact that God was dead and to go on from there.

[ 7 : 23 ] He said, we do not want people to live illogically. I mean, at this time or even now, many people believe in God, but we don't live as if God matters anyway.

So, for Lucha, why? I mean, why believe in God if you don't even actually live in God's ways? It's illogical. And he said, you just think that God is dead and go on from there and you'll be free.

And you can rise up to decide what is good and what is evil yourself. And in his later years, Lucha realized that people do not necessarily follow the rules to get what they envy.

So, if I envy your exam results, I do not necessarily need to work hard to get the result. I can cheat. Or I can do something to pull you down so that you don't get such a good result.

So, if I envy your car, I don't necessarily need to work hard to get one myself. I can steal yours. Or I can cheat on my tax, return tax.

[ 8 : 35 ] So, I can't. So, he realized that people don't follow the rules necessary to get what they want. And we can also see that we have so many new laws, rules in the society because people are very smart.

We always think of some way and some loopholes to get what we want. We don't usually necessarily to follow the rules of the government. We don't usually do the rules of the government. And then, who has the right to decide the rules anyway, to start with? And then, why should we all be the rules that are decided by people? So, that was what made Lucha thought the world needing some people or evolve into a better people.

So, he called these people Superman. So, that's why he said, must we also not become God simply to appear worthy of it?

So, he knew that if we get rid of the idea of God, we need something to replace that. You can't just without someone who is in charge. And so, he think about this idea of Superman.

[ 9 : 52 ] And so, these people would guard the world from the destructive behaviors of envy. So, our generation has the same longing, don't we? We see all these movies and games.

We long for heroes or heroines who would maintain order and justice in the world. And all expressing all the movies and stories.

So, we see in ourselves and the world around us the desire to be God or desire to be in charge. If there is a God, if there actually is a God, why would he create creatures who want to replace him in the first place?

So, from Genesis, we knew that God created man in his own image. Humans can think, feel, and make decisions. Humans can love.

And such a creature needs to have a will. Such a creature needs to have a sense of self. So, for me to be able to love, I need to have a sense of me as a person.

[ 11 : 05 ] Once I have a sense of me being a person, I can choose to love myself or love God or love others more. And we can see this in children as they grow up.

When they are young, their sense of self is developing. And you can see that they could sing and dance before other people without feeling embarrassed. But as they get older, they start to feel

embarrassed because they are self-conscious.

And also, when they are young, they adore their parents. And as they become teenagers, they would feel that their parents are no longer relevant to their lives.

So, the smarter the child, the sooner he will disobey his chief parents. A smart mind wants to be in charge. A smart mind wants to decide what is good and evil.

It is easy to love God and obey God if loving God and obeying God makes us more successful in getting what we want. So, if I said, believe in Jesus and you will enjoy a good life, you have good health, and you will be wealthy.

[12:18] I suppose the church will be full of people. But such a love is not real love. And such an obedience is not real obedience. But if our being God leads us to lose, or leads to us losing an opportunity to be wealthier or happier, and if loving God leads to suffering, our love is then being tested.

And will we still love ourselves more or love God more in that circumstances? So, God has created two smartest persons in the whole universe. Adam and Eve would be conscious of themselves as persons.

They were the king and queen of the ancient world. They decided on the names of other creatures. They decided on the way to manage their environment. And there was one thing they were not to decide, at least not while they were still immature.

The thing was, what was good and what was evil. God remained the one who decided on what was good and what was evil. Smart people do not like to be told what to do, as James said.

They want to tell others what to do. And there was a chance that Adam and Eve would want to decide what was good and what was evil themselves. In Genesis 3.5, the servant said to Eve, Up to that point, Adam and Eve had only known God's goodness.

[14:00] They loved each other. They had purpose in life. They enjoyed their world. They had great relationship with God. I suppose they could still injure themselves while doing gardening.

However, they had access to fruits which can restore their health. The only possible evil was eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They might not know why God would play such a trade amid the garden and forbade them from eating its fruit.

But why would they want to eat that fruit anyway? There are plenty of other good fruits to choose from. God left one chance in the garden for Adam and Eve to disobey him.

It did not cost Adam and Eve anything to obey God. In fact, God wanted them to eat from the trees whose fruits would keep them alive forever. There was one tree whose fruit would kill them.

Does it take any intelligence to make the right choice? The fact is that it does not take much intelligence to obey, but it takes a lot of intelligence to disobey.

[15:13] The smarter a person is, the more likely he or she is going to disregard others. If you tell a child not to play with power outlets to avoid getting electrocuted, the chance is that this will stir a smart child to explore the power outlet.

The child has not experienced a pain of electrocution before, neither has he seen someone getting electrocuted. He will downplay the warning. He also thinks he's smart enough to do what he likes.

We all still do that. We downplay the adverse consequence of unhealthy lifestyles and unwise choices and think that we are smart enough to do whatever we like.

For example, there are lots of information about the harmful effect of tobacco, but there are still young people wanting to try smoking cigarettes.

And why don't our government ban the sale of tobacco? The government considers not only health issues, but they also need to take economy into account, human nature into account.

[16:19] And so, just like power outlets, even though it's dangerous, but we don't build a house without power outlets, because they have other purpose.

So God's aim is more than simply avoiding sin and death. His aim is to have a people of his own, a people who will share his joy, a people who will love and obey him willingly.

We may not understand what role the tree of knowledge of good and evil play in the bigger scheme of things, but we cannot say that because it was dangerous, God should not have put it in the garden.

So the servant found a weak point in God's creation. Creating human in God's image, that is, human who are capable of love, is both the glory of God's creation, the pinnacle of God's creation, and the weakest aspect of his creation.

We know that love can bring us great joy or great sorrow. Some of us have been hurt because we try to love someone, and we will not dare to love again.

[ 17 : 28 ] Love is God's love. And he created us in his image. The fact that we can love also means that we can choose to love ourselves more than loving God.

The servant proceeded to redirect Eve's love towards herself. Look at the fruit. Doesn't it please your eyes? Go ahead and eat it. You will enjoy it, and you will become like God, knowing what is good and evil.

Don't worry about death. I have not listened to God's orders. I am still alive. Just enjoy your life now. In the best way you can. Don't worry so much about the future.

You will be right, mate. Eve started to think about herself. She wanted to improve herself, to make herself a superwoman.

She disregarded God's order and added the fruit. Adam listened to his wife and added the fruit as well. After their acts of disobedience, they started to have guilt and shame.

[ 18 : 40 ] Before this, they knew what was good, but not what was evil. Their disobedience revealed to them what was evil. The seduction for them to disobey God was evil.

Their action of disobedience to God was evil. Their thought of being independent of God and being in charge of evil. Did Adam and Eve really want to be God?

Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that they wanted to take charge of their life. They wanted to decide what was good and what was evil for themselves. No, in the sense that they did not even know who God is, in the sense that they knew about God, but not fully what God was.

They did not know God well enough to be God, in that sense. So you cannot become what you do not know. When we say we want to be God, what we mean is usually we want to be in charge.

We want to decide for ourselves how we should live for our life. Richard's idea of having a group of supermen replacing the role of God was adopted by Adolf Hitler.

[ 19 : 54 ] Hitler thought he was one of those supermen. He decided what was good and evil not only for himself. For himself, he wanted to decide that for the world. He proceeded to modify the world.

So his attempt, his failed attempt, he failed attempt to nurture a superior race and to eliminate inferior races. And his attempt led to untold suffering for the whole world.

Despite failed attempts of emperors, presidents and individuals in the history of mankind, generation after generation still wants to be God. We can look at our own choices.

How do we decide what is good or bad for ourselves? Does God have any say in our choices of spouses, our marriage, our careers, our purchases, our entertainments?

Like Adam and Eve, we all want to decide what is good and evil for ourselves. We are quite stuck then. The Bible and the history tell us that people who choose to live who need to satisfy their own desires, people who choose to ignore God, will end in destruction.

[ 21 : 12 ] However, we can hardly help ourselves but to do things our own ways. For some of us, the destructive end may not be the worst thing.

The worst thing is that we do not even enjoy being our own God. Do you think Adam and Eve enjoy eating the forbidden fruit? After eating the fruit, they were not filled with joy, but they were burdened with shame and guilt.

I think that is the effect the servant would like to see. The devil delights in God's people being filled with shame and guilt. If we want to be God ourselves, we must kill God first.

Otherwise, we will not have any enjoyment in life. If we say that we know God but live a life that have nothing much to do with God, then there will not be much joy and peace in our life.

So do we have any hope of getting out of this? Yes, if we know what God is like. If God is like us, then we will have no hope.

[ 22 : 20 ] But God is not like us. So what did God do in response to our desire to kill Him? God became a man and lived among us? God did not become a superman.

He became a lowly man. And it was a difficult life. Jesus did not have attractive appearance. He did not have wealth. He did not have position. He told people to repent.

He told people to give up their own kingship because the kingdom of God was at hand. Most people ignore Him except those who came near Him for healing.

Those in authority hated Him because Jesus did not follow their rules. Eventually, the rulers of the world killed Him with the support of most people.

To the first Adam, sorry, for the first man Adam, obedience to God meant rest and life. Adam chose to disobey.

[ 23 : 21 ] To the second man, Jesus, obedience to God meant suffering and death. Jesus chose to obey. Adam chose to decide what was good and evil and resulted in death for himself and the world.

Jesus chose to let God decide what was good and evil and resulted in resurrection for himself and those who trust Him. The servant wants to tend people to love themselves more than they love God.

God lets it happen. As people love themselves more and more, they want to kill God and God lets it happen. But as Jesus died on the cross, God also provided a way for people to love Him again.

We have betrayed God's love towards us when we listened to another voice and decided to be God ourselves. We can hear the servant laugh and say, and you have killed Him.

How shall you comfort yourself, the murderers of all murderers? What was the holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet on has bled to death under your life?

[ 24 : 32 ] Who will wipe this blood of you? What water is there for you to clean yourself? The servant was right. The best way for us to go forward is to forget what we have lost and enjoy what we still have.

The servant is wrong as well. On the cross, Jesus provided the water that cleanses. God has shown His love to us in that while we want to kill Him, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us. Smart people think they have managed to kill God. If you tell them that God redeemed us through this death, they will laugh at God's foolishness and weakness. But for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, they will bow before the glory of God's grace.

Knowing that our attempts to be God lead to miseries and destruction, knowing that God has come to redeem us from our folly, should we stop desiring to be God?

We should stop our desire to be in charge, but we should indeed desire to be like God. God has done everything so that we can become conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.

[ 25 : 46 ] God wants us to be like Him, to be holy and kind. The more we are like Jesus, the more freedom we have. The more we are like Jesus, the less the things of the world trouble us.

Even though Jesus was in the form of God, He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of man. Jesus' joy was in God the Father. He lived in joyful obedience to God. Jesus did not come primarily to solve any problem.

He came in obedience to God the Father. Jesus did not come as a superman. He came to fulfill God's will. God the Father. Jesus lived in perfect rest regardless of His circumstances because He did not live for Himself.

He did not need to be in charge. He did not need to heal all the sick people in the world. He did not need to solve all the problems in the world. His earthly life was not easy, but He remained restful because He knew that God was in charge.

[ 26 : 57 ] Do you know why the child went mad? I suspect that He was trying too hard trying to solve the problem of the world. Richard tried to be God himself.

He tried to save the world. He told people what was good and what was evil. He had a mental broke down at 45 when He was trying to save a horse from being frogged by His owner.

He could not figure out why people would not listen to Him. People were still drinking alcohol and people were still following religion. What more can He do to end the stupidity around Him?

He just could not. When He ignored God and tried to be God Himself, He had to go mad because He just didn't have anything in Him that even resembles God for Him to solve any problem.

He had to be to desire to be in charge all the time. When things do not go as you expect, you will feel frustrated and anxious.

[ 28 : 11 ] Even as things do go as you expect, you will still worry about what else will go wrong. We can go through life worrying about many things.

We worry about our families, we worry about our work, we worry about our health. if we can humble ourselves and go before Him, and if Richard would have done that, Richard's problem was God because he ignored Him and his thought also was also God, but he couldn't humble himself to accept that.

But if we can humble ourselves and go to Him, we will have a new life because our old life will be dead in Christ. God will be free.

And when we can give out our right to decide what is good and what is evil, then we will be free, and then we will share the joy of Jesus Christ.

You may have disobeyed God too many times and think that there is no hope for you to change.

Still come to Jesus. His mercy is more than all our sins.

[ 29 : 23 ] let us pray. Father, we thank you for giving us a great Savior.

And we have hope because of who you are. And we want to adore you and honor you. Thank you, Lord.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.