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**Dear heavenly Father, we worship You this morning with our tithe and offerings. We pray for the courage to put You first in our lives. In the name of Jesus, amen.**

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**APRIL 10, 2021**

## **When Adam & Eve refused to put God First**

When Adam and Eve refused to put God First Putting God first can be difficult. What can we learn from Adam and Eve, who refused to put God first in the most decisive moment of their lives?

Adam and Eve had everything. Their home was beautiful. Their work was profoundly meaningful. They loved each other and they had the best food in the world. Literally. They experienced peace from sunrise to sunset. Not only our kind of peace—the absence of trouble—but God’s peace—Shalom, the absolute harmony of everything.

They understood the ultimate hierarchy of our planet. God is above all. Humans—male and female—stand side by side ordering and subduing the earth, which is beneath them in this hierarchy. As long as they lived under this reality, everything was perfect.

But one day Eve and Adam decided to rebel against this hierarchy and eat the fruit with the hope that it would turn them into gods. This destruction of the hierarchy represented the disruption of Shalom and it brought death. The Bible uses the word sin to describe any disruption of Shalom.

When someone takes a substance and elevates it to an existential level by saying, “I can’t live without this ‘thing’”, they are disrupting Shalom and the consequences are selfishness, greed and, eventu-

ally, death. All drugs and materialism fall into this category. When we take another human being and elevate them to become icons similar to gods, we disrupt Shalom and this brings depression, anxiety, and, eventually, death.

The lesson from Adam and Eve’s experience is that God is God and we are not. This is a fundamental truth in our universe. When we read in scripture “God says”, we are constantly tempted, like Adam and Eve, to rationalize and find our “own truth.” This is sin and it leads to death.

God commanded us to bring our tithe and offerings. God is God and we are not. However, like Adam and Eve, we are also tempted to be our own gods and act differently. God grants us that freedom, but He doesn’t remove all consequences. Adam and Eve left the garden that day but hoped for the salvation God promised to bring.

Today we have the assurance of our salvation through Jesus. However, like Adam and Eve, we are tempted avoid putting God first when there is a cost. Adam and Eve refused to put God first. The consequences were terrible for them and the people around them. God’s love compels us to put His Kingdom first, while Adam and Eve’s example is a warning for us today. As the deacons collect the tithe and offerings, we are challenged to put God first.