

READ

Genesis 3

REFLECT

Children, much to the ire of their parents, will often ask “why” about every little thing. It’s a normal part of development to be curious and people have been curious since the dawn of time. It’s that curiosity that’s central to Genesis 3. While our forefathers and foremothers in faith were coming to understand God’s creative prowess and power, they naturally had questions about all sorts of things – why did God create it *this* way? Genesis 3 provides some of those answers - Why do we wear clothing? Why do we have to farm for our food? Why do snakes have no legs? Why is childbirth so painful? Why do people do wrong? Along with answering the “whys” that plagued them, it also assured them that there was a reason for things being the way they were – between God’s design and humanity’s flaws, there was a reason for all the “whys” they asked.

Our faith encourages curiosity. When we don’t understand why things are the way they are, we don’t just have to accept it for what it is, we can ask, “why?” That natural curiosity is embedded in the earliest stories of our faith as other people asked why and discovered the reason. We often want to blame God for how things are, but the truth is sometimes (often?) we’re to blame, not God. Why does poverty exist? It’s not God’s doing, it’s our own. Why does warfare and famine destroy so many lives? Again, not God – us. Genesis 3 shows us that God only ever wanted goodness for us – food freely available, partnership between people, all needs covered, no reason to even know embarrassment – but we were the ones that messed up. Yet God has also not abandoned us in our failures. When Adam and Eve noticed they were naked, God made them leather clothes. God sees our failures and walks with us to make things whole once again – that is good news.

REACT

- What are some of the questions you have about the way things are?

- Where do you see God's involvement in your questions, and where do you see humanity's?
- How easy is it to shift cause and/or blame from God to people? Is it harder to shift the cause to people in general or to yourself?
- How have you seen God walk beside you when things have gone wrong?

RESPOND

Correct a wrong: Both Adam and Eve did wrong and then they tried to hide from God. When God caught them, they tried to shift the blame – Adam said Eve gave him the fruit, Eve said the snake tricked her. Like the first humans, sometimes we try to blame God or others for things we have been responsible for. It takes tremendous maturity and courage to accept the blame for things we've done wrong, and even more to seek to make things right. What is something you've been hesitant to accept blame for? How can you begin the journey to reconciliation and wholeness? In this sometimes painful and difficult process, lean on God's strength to guide you to completion.