

# A Mighty Redwood/ The Silent Killer (Eve)

## THE NECESSITY OF A GRATEFUL HEART

If a healthy redwood tree says to its roots, “Ignore the ‘streams of water’ (Ps. 1:3), we can sustain our life without that source”, what will happen to its trunk and branches?

If a healthy Christian says to God (the Source), “You really haven’t helped me; I can do better on my own”, and refuses to be thankful for what God has provided, what may happen to his/her spiritual life? (See Ps. 100:4)

**Principle:** “Life lacks significance if we fail to maintain a heart that is grateful toward God. When we are ungrateful to God, we are vulnerable to Satan.” – Fran Sciacca

“The beginning of man’s rebellion against God was, and is, the lack of a thankful heart.” – Francis Schaeffer

### **Bible Character: EVE**

**Scripture:** Genesis 3 (NIV)

- 1 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 surely die," the serpent said to the woman.
- 5 "For God knows that when you eat of 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.

**Insight:** **Our choices come with consequences.** In Eve’s case, they were enormous, eternal consequences. Fran Sciacca writes that what may not be understood about Eve is “*the actual starting place of her disastrous choice to disobey God, and the sobering implications for those of us living this side of Eden. Often Satan’s most effective work is done before we actually choose to sin, when our gaze is led away from what we have to what we don’t have.*” (Taken from *To Stand and Not Be Moved* by Fran Sciacca.)

“<sup>2</sup> Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” (Col. 3:2-3 NASB)

“<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.” (1 John 2:15-17 NASB)

### **Fruit Trees**

How many “categories” of fruit trees did God say there were in the garden, and what were the “rules” associated with each? (Gen. 2:9, 16, 17)

Verse	Category	Rule (circle)	Notes
Gen. 2:9, 16	Every tree	EAT DON'T EAT	Complete freedom
	Tree of Life	EAT DON'T EAT	Necessary for daily food
	Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil	EAT DON'T EAT	Test of obedience
Gen. 2:9, 17	Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil	EAT DON'T EAT	Why?

## For Contemplation

Let's look at Esau, whose life ended in bitterness rather than blessing. Where did he go wrong?

### Bad Attitude

*"Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright."* (Gen. 25:34 NASB) What should he have done?

### Bad Example: Consequence

*"<sup>16</sup> that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. <sup>17</sup> For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears."* (Heb. 12:16-18 NASB)

### God's Position

*<sup>2</sup> "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob; <sup>3</sup> but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness."* (Malachi 1:2-3 NASB)

## Sliding Away

In Romans 1:21-32, Paul gives a very graphic description of mankind sliding away from God down a slope of depravity. The first steps in that process are mentioned in verse 21. Fill in the table:

<b>Romans 1:21 Phrase</b>	<b>What is involved?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For even though they <b>knew God</b>, they</li></ul>	<i>Knowledge of God</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>did not honor Him</b> as God or</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>give thanks</b>, but they</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>became futile in their speculations</b>, and their</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>foolish heart was darkened.</b></li></ul>	

► *Gratefulness* to God is like streams of water to the redwood tree. When set aside, spiritual fiber dries and weakens, and life in Christ is sapped. Ungratefulness is the "silent killer".

## For Discussion

1. How many "categories" did Satan imply there were by the way he posed his question to Eve? How was his craftiness demonstrated in this question? (Gen. 3:1)
2. What did Eve shift her focus *from* and what does she shift her focus *to* in her response? (see Gen. 3:2-3)
3. Referring back to your answer in question 1, what had Satan successfully achieved in Eve's mind through this one crafty question?

**Reflection:**

1. What is ingratitude? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What major effect can ingratitude have on your life? \_\_\_\_\_
3. In what sense did ingratitude factor into the sinful decision Eve made in response to Satan's temptation? \_\_\_\_\_

**Remedy:** **GIVE THANKS!** Speaking words of thanksgiving can have a healing, positive effect on our focus.

Phil. 4:4-8 provides a "prescription for gratitude". Underline the most meaningful step for you.

- Rejoice in the Lord. (v. 4)
- Have a gentle spirit. (v. 5)
- Be thankful, not anxious; begin with prayer. (v. 6)
- Allow God's peace to guard you. (v. 7)
- Focus on positive things. (v. 8)

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**Next Time:** Ezra the Tree Man / *Knowing God Means Knowing His Book*