



Advent Day 3 (written by Deb Bakken)

An Apple and A Snake

Genesis 3:1-7a, 14-15

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'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 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.'" "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 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. Then the eyes of both of them were opened...So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 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." (NIV 1984)

Where do guilty feelings come from? Would guilt go away if there were never any rules to break? If there were no laws and no policemen and no judges, would people stop feeling guilty? If parents never asked kids to do anything, would kids never feel guilty again? If everybody were free to do whatever they want, would people forget what guilt feels like?

People don't feel guilty because of the rules they break. People feel guilty because God is holy, and people are not. The details of Adam and Eve's fall into sin show us why every person alive feels guilty about sin. God is holy, and he doesn't put up with anything less than holiness.

But listen to Genesis 3:15 again. God didn't announce to Adam and Eve what they would have to do to take away their own guilty feelings. Instead he promised a descendant, a Savior who would take away their guilt forever. That coming Savior would make them just as holy as they had

been before they disobeyed God's command. That Savior would make everyone holy before God. We thank God for taking all our guilt away.

Prayer: Dear God, though we are sinful, you have forgiven us in Jesus. He took away our guilt and made us holy before you. We thank you for your goodness! Amen.