

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Pause Group 2019-2020
Session 7 Discussion Questions
Goldingay pp. 43-50

Highs and Lows

Genesis 3: 1-3

1. God created the snake to be “more crafty” or “more shrewd” than any other creature. So, is God at fault for Adam & Eve’s sin because God made the snake that way? Or, do you see this as an instance of God being, as Goldingay puts it, “willing to harness wayward acts to the fulfillment of a good purpose”?

2. In Genesis (and indeed throughout the Old Testament) there is no real concept of “Satan” but rather, those creatures who act against God are referred to as wild and dangerous creatures, like a sea serpent, a monster, a dragon, or—a snake. What images come to mind when you think of a creature who works against God? Why do you think those images come to mind?

3. Despite God’s generous provision, the snake focuses Adam & Eve’s attention exclusively on the *one* constraint that God has given them. Because of the snake’s craftiness, Adam & Eve forget to count their blessings and instead focus on the one thing they don’t have—a very human reaction! How does neglecting to count our blessings affect our perspective and outlook?

Genesis 3: 4-13

1. The snake tempts Adam & Eve by telling them that if they eat the fruit of the forbidden tree they will be “like God”. We know from Genesis 1 & 2 that we are already “like God” because God created us in His image, so what does the snake mean here? Why is this a tempting idea for most of us, even today?
2. Based on your answers to Question 1, do you think human beings are meant to be “like God”? Why or why not?
3. When God questions Adam & Eve about what they have done, Adam blames Eve and Eve blames the Snake for their wrongdoing. Discuss the implications of this story on history (for example, on relationship between males and females, and on our relationship with the natural world). How might you reimagine this story to result in less harmful implications going forward?

Closing Prayer

Begin this time of prayer with a minute of silence, focusing on intentional breathing as you welcome the Holy Spirit, the breath of God that created you, into your body.

God of power and knowledge, thank you for being our God and for creating a world grounded in your wisdom. Help us to trust you always, knowing that you are always at work in the world and in our lives in more ways than we can ever imagine. In Jesus' name, Amen.