Pastor Cassi Memory Verse: Romans 5:19

At the End of the Day Scripture Reading Genesis 3:1-7

 SLIDE 1: Title

Throughout our daily speech, we often use a figure of speech we call an “idiom.” Now the definition of an “idiom” is a device that is “a set expression or a phrase comprising two or more words, used to convey a situation”. An interesting fact of idioms is that the expression of those words is not always to be interpreted literally. A few examples of idioms include

* “Kicking the bucket” which really has nothing to do with a bucket.
* When we say something is “a piece of cake”, we aren’t speaking of a cupcake.
* When we say something costs “an arm and a leg” we aren’t trading in body parts for material goods.
* And when we tell someone to “hold their horses”, we aren’t asking them to run out to the local horse farm and grab a hold of the animals.

I think we use idioms more than we realize, and it’s been estimated that there are over 25,000 common idioms in the English language and their implications are usually readily and commonly understood. A few more like:

* “Letting the cat out of the bag”.
* “A fish out of water”.
* “Seeing eye to eye on an issue”,

I think you get the point. One of the more recent idioms that has caught my attention is the phrase “At the End of the Day.” You hear it in politics, in business, on the news. Once again, don’t take the use of these words literally. Saying "at the end of the day" doesn’t mean at 11:45 tonight. Some of the synonyms of “At the End of the Day'' would be

1. When all is said and done.
2. When the final straw is pulled.
3. In the Long Run

We’ve come to use this phrase, “At the End of the Day” to kind of fast-forward to the unmistakable importance of “the ending of the story” so you don’t get sidetracked with the details on how the story was unfolding. Here’s a simple example of “at the end of the day” in children’s stories:

**SLIDE 2: Tortoise and the Hare**

It’s the “Fable of the Tortoise and the Hare”, The story concerns a Hare, who ridicules a slow-moving Tortoise. Tired of the Hare's boastful behavior, the Tortoise challenges him to a race. The Hare sprints along the course and quickly leaves the tortoise way behind in the dust and, so confident of winning that he was, he stops to play - midway through the race. Still assuming that he’s way ahead, unable to be caught, and that he has the victory all sewed up, the Hare now takes a nap to rest up from the playtime. When the Hare awakes however, he finds that his competitor, the Tortoise - is crawling slowly but steadily, across the finish line before him. Were you to take bets before the race started, you’d have put all your money on the Hare. All indications of the story pointed to the Hare winning, but “At the End of the Day”, the tortoise won the prize.

I want to take this idiom of “At the End of the Day” and give it a few spiritual applications in our message today. For though things might look a certain way as they unfold and as we live out our lives, the results “at the End of the Day” might surprise us and should give us serious consideration. Since it is Women’s Sunday we of course are going to take a look at a woman in the Bible. We are going to start back in the Book of Genesis” where God created Adam and Eve.

**SLIDE 3: “Genesis” means “beginnings.”**

“Genesis” means “beginnings.” This first book of the Bible introduces us to the beginning of creation and lots of other things. A perfect world, a perfect garden, a perfect relationship. Often a walk in the cool of the evening with the One who created them and loved them. They had the perfect marriage. No tiredness, no fighting over the remote, no income taxes. Who could ask for anything better? Let's dig deeper here for a minute.

We see in this story that God wants to bless us with everything we need, including himself. He told the first man, “Feel free to eat of any tree in the garden of Eden, any tree that is, except one.” Healthy protective love gives boundaries. Some people say, “Why did God even plant that tree of the knowledge of good and evil if he knew Adam and Eve would choose it despite his warning?” From the very beginning, God allowed his children the ability to disobey, for without that, how can one freely obey? And what kind of a relationship would he have with them if he compelled their obedience?

Now compare what God gave them with what he declared off limits: they could enjoy many, many trees with wonderful fruit, but would need to avoid just one tree. In Genesis 2:16, “You may freely eat;” today we might say, “Eat to your heart’s content.” We have a generous God. Sometimes we focus only on his restrictions, thinking he holds back all the fun stuff. Yet, the Bible says his commands are not burdensome, but are for our own good. And we’re like the child who sulks because Dad won’t let us play in the road, even though we have a large fenced yard all around us.

Consider all the blessings God gave this first couple. Not only did they have lots of food, they had productive work—to take care of the garden; they had God’s presence as he walked with them; and they had all this forever, as indicated by the Tree of Life. They had everything they needed. They of all people should have been most grateful. Yet they were not content. Instead of focusing on what they did have, they focused on the one thing they did not have. Instead of trusting God and his word, they trusted the word of a creature we now know as Satan. As we heard earlier in our scripture reading Satan confused and deceived Eve and then Adam. The first thing Satan did was to get Eve to question God’s goodness. He did this by exaggerating God’s boundaries. “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” Now Eve corrected Satan’s error immediately, but noticed how she was now focused on what she did not have instead of what she did have.

**SLIDE 4: Genesis 3:4-5**

Next Satan questioned God’s motives. He said in verse 4 and 5, “You will not certainly die, for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” He suggested God lied to them out of jealousy that they would become like him. This is ironic, because Adam and Eve were already like God. They were made in the image of God. In thirsting for all knowledge apart from God, now they would gain some knowledge all right, but it would all be evil knowledge. To be fair, since it is Women’s Sunday, Eve sometimes gets a bad rap. Adam is equally to blame, and I’ll show you why. 1 Corinthians 10:13 assures us, for every temptation God will provide a way out, an exit, if we but watch for it. Eve had a way out standing right next to her. Satan had been talking to Eve in the plural, as in “you all,” so it appears Adam was standing there the whole time, but he was silent. Even though God had given him the boundaries, even though he had walked with God in the cool of the day, even though God had given him a helpmate to complete him, Adam stood by, seemingly blinded to what was unfolding before his very eyes. And then he took the fruit from Eve without a word of objection and thus abdicated his leadership role as the first human being.

Now let's pick up where that reading left off.

**SLIDE 5: Genesis 3:8**

Genesis 3:8 "During that day’s cool evening breeze, they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the Lord God in the middle of the garden’s trees."

You say, “Why would they do such a thing? Hide from God?” But we’ll also see that God is not surprised by the first couple’s fall from grace, nor from ours. Indeed, he has had a solution to our sin problem from the very beginning but that will come later. Back to Adam and Eve they were subsequently expelled from the “best house on the block”. Given their “walking papers” out of this Garden called “Paradise” and left to work the soil by the sweat of their brow.

**SLIDE 6: Genesis 3:23-24**

Scripture says: **Genesis 3:23-24** “the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to farm the fertile land from which he was taken. He drove out the human. To the east of the garden of Eden, he stationed winged creatures wielding flaming swords to guard the way to the tree of life."

I guess this is where someone first pointed out that the best real estate on the market has mostly to do with “Location, location, location”. They had lost their original “location.” And – “at the End of the Day”, sin had entered mankind, and we’ve all inherited the sin nature from the first Adam and have to live in a damaged and darkened world. You see, there are always consequences for sin. In fact, when we get to the end of the day, we discover something important about God, something important about Satan, and something important ourselves.

The Fall tells us much about God and about Satan, but it also tells us much about ourselves. Like Adam and Eve, we too are susceptible to temptation. Now temptation itself is not sinful. Like the saying goes, “The sin’s not in the bait; it’s in the bite.” But sometimes we set ourselves up unnecessarily. If you play with fire, you’re going to get burned. Like Eve, we stare at the forbidden fruit, we think about how good it will taste, we look at it with lust, we justify how it will make us wiser, we reach out and touch it, and finally we give in to it. 1 John 2:16 describes temptation as “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” Eve moved through all three.

**SLIDE 7: TITLE**

Which led to a massive problem for the human race: Sin introduced death. Satan questioned whether Adam and Eve would truly die, and you might think Satan was right, since they weren’t struck by lightning on the spot. But that very moment they began the dying process, sure enough, for sin always leads to death: death of innocence, as they realized they were naked; decaying of relationships, as they covered themselves in shame, blamed each other, and hid from God; death of eternal life, as he banned them from the garden and the Tree of Life; and yes, physical death, as their bodies began to age.

Romans 3:23 says, “The wages of sin is death.” The human condition is 100% fatal. And yet, early on, God promised a solution. In Genesis chapter 3, just beyond our passage today, in verse 15 God promises one to come—an offspring of Adam and Eve. The serpent will strike his foot; oh yes, Satan will do all he can to hurt this one to come. Yet at the end of the day the Savior will strike the serpent’s head. A foot strike you can survive, but a head strike is fatal. Satan is going down for good, and it’s all predicted right here in the third chapter of the Bible.

**SLIDE 8: Romans 5:12 & 15**

The name Adam means “man.” The first man failed. He stood idly by, passively participating in the destruction of the human race. Romans 5, verses 12 and 15: “Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned ... How much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many?”

The Bible calls Jesus the second Adam. He came to complete what the first Adam, the first man, could not do. The God-man Jesus came to die in our place, to take all our sin upon him, so that we could be reconciled to a loving God. Paul writes, in verses 18 and 19 of Romans 5, “Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”

Jesus reverses the curse. And in the very last chapter of the very last book of the Bible, we find that someday we get to return to the Garden of Eden, except for one important difference: instead of one Tree of Life, now there will be two! A double blessing of God’s eternal life, in fellowship forever with the God who made us and the Son who saved us. At the end of the day God’s plan will be complete.

**SLIDE 9: Where are you?**

Let me close with the question God asked Adam and Eve after they sinned and hid from God: “Where are you?” That’s a good question. Of course, God knew where they were, and he knows where we are. But he asks the question to get us to think about it. Where are you with God’s plan to pay for your sin? Are you hiding from God in shame? Are you blaming others for your failures? Or are you throwing yourself at the mercy of a loving God who ensured your sins were paid for on the cross?

God is eternal, existent from eternity past to eternity future. There is no beginning nor ending assigned to God’s life. The Bible also tells us that there is a literal Heaven and a Hell, the eventual destination for all who have lived here first. Life on earth can be seen as a testing ground, or a time and place where we can choose where we want to spend eternity. God has given us all we need to know both through His Son Jesus and His written word we call the Bible. Yet scoffers abound and excuses given why people don’t want to believe. Hear me when I say that rejecting God is not and never has been an intellectual deficiency, it’s a heart problem from the get-go. **Jeremiah 17:9** (NKJV) "9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? "

You see only God can change a heart, but we need to come to the foot of the Cross for forgiveness and salvation. Will those who chose to deny and forsake God’s Son Jesus be forever left in the dark? Will they never know the truth? Scripture says their destination of choice is final and it is eternal, and they will know at the end of the day who is Lord and who is God. Phil. 2:9-11 "9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him (that is Jesus) and given Him the name which is above every name,10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. You see, though there is clarity even today, at the end of the day, Jesus will be on His final throne and will rule and reign for the glory of His Father."

So, what about you today? You are my final example. Are you still trying to sit on the fence, trying to decide if you want to belong to the world or to God? I’m not asking you if you’re male or female, young or old, Republican or Democrat? I’m asking you if you are saved or lost? Those are the only two choices. Are you a child of God and have you been forgiven of your sins? For there is "an end of the day" coming your way and there will be no one sitting on the fence of indecision. God has placed his gift of salvation on the table in front of you, pre-purchased by the blood of His Son Jesus. And He asks You if you’ll accept it and open it. Because from that moment on, your citizenship can be irrevocably transferred to the census books of Heaven and your name written on the roll-books that’ll be read at the gates of eternity.

And at the final end of the day, you can be like the Apostle John who wrote in Rev 21: **Revelation 21:1-5** (NKJV) "1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new.""

You see, as you sit here and ponder all the struggles you have this day, this week, and this year. As you see the turmoil this country is going through, know that there is a day when Jesus will return and God Himself will make all things right. The question I want you to consider this morning is, at the end of the day, where are you going to be watching this all from?

For the decision is yours and the decision is now. Amen