

The tree of what!?!?

The story of Adam and Eve is a parable for the whole of mankind. It details our birth, death and gives us the building blocks of our rebirth to everlasting life. It is a story so simple it plays out like a game of checkers. But sufficiently complicated that it is almost completely misunderstood. Before you assume you understand, please read on, there may be a few very significant surprises.

The sin of Adam & Eve is **still** the most common unrecognized problem in the world today. Everyone knows what Adam and Eve did. They ate the forbidden fruit. Virtually no one knows what that meant then or especially now, at the brink of the end of the age. Nobody apparently, sufficiently, answered the question of what the forbidden fruit **is**. Or for that matter, what the tree it came from is all about. Most everyone just thinks that first sin of disobedience got them kicked out of the garden of Eden...which is true but completely misses the point.

This is not a tale of creation or the functions of man and woman so we will start with Adam and Eve and their state in the garden. Uh...chapter 2. It is actually hard to imagine how nice it was...the fruits of every plant and tree ripe for the picking, no mosquitoes, flies, stickers or cactus spines, all the animals gentle and undoubtedly obedient. All in a perfect climate controlled paradise where you could talk directly with God and He would answer and walk around with you. No worries about ANYTHING. Food anywhere you happened to be hungry. And the added bonus of running around gloriously naked with a perfectly formed mate. With whom you had a perfect relationship... no squabbles, no disagreements, just perfect companionship in peace and harmony and a true physical and mental understanding of the simplicity and perfection of God. After all, you walked and talked with God in the garden. You knew that he created you and all the other plants and animals and even stood beside you as He **BROUGHT** you all the animals to see what you would name them. More amazingly and from a purely male perspective He anesthetized you before creating woman (grin) and then He **BROUGHT** her to you. Some might complain about that last point but most men will heartily agree to the prior one. Anyway, God *was* bringing good things to you. It didn't even rain on you...just a mist coming up from the earth and beautiful sunny but cool days and warm no covers needed nights. True freedom to do ANYTHING you wanted to do. Well...almost.

God placed two very special trees in the garden and gave Adam and Eve **one, single rule**. We all know what the rule is but the point needs to be made that in all of their wonderful existence there was **only ONE rule**.

ONE single command that God gave in person to two adults with perfect brains and perfectly balanced minds. And we tend to think that Adam and Eve must have been brain dead to break that rule...“what, were they crazy?!?!?” Naked!Happy!Ignorant Bliss!!! And they gave it up for.....what.....an “apple.” Especially when you consider that they were told that in the day that they ate of it they would “surely die.” We all kind of laugh and say...heh heh...you can bet if I was there I wouldn't do that. Those two were nuts. Hmmm! We'll see.

Well, the next obvious question is...why did the breaking of one rule result in the whole of human misery, being kicked out of the garden, nasty plants and animals natures changed, Cain killing Abel and etc. etc. (drunkenness, molestation, sodomy, genocide, et al) and death? And why did God say in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die...and then strangely... Adam and Eve lived on for many years?

Really both questions must be answered together; as they are very basic to Christianity as a whole. So, to review and set context, the simple answer is that they did die immediately and in truth and when you die, as they did...to God and eternal life...misery ensues. Their physical bodies lived on in death as most do to this day. Physically alive and spiritually dead. When they were cast out of the garden of Eden they lost access to the tree of life and thus their death was immediate and certain; guaranteed in fact. And so was their misery, they chose Satan over God and obeyed the voice of the serpent and thus were cursed by God and still doubly cursed every time they obey the wrong voice. And that death was guaranteed not just for Adam & Eve but for all men (as all Christians should well know). This, of course, is the basis for the reason that Christ returned...to save as many as will come to Him from everlasting death. This is well explained in 1 Corinthians 15 “*21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*” And also in Romans 5 “*12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned— 18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all*

men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous." **This should be all well established in every Christian.** It is the very very basic core to understand the sacrifice of Christ. And, even though all were justified through the righteousness of the One (Christ the King), this does not mean that all will come and drink of the water freely. Many will choose death voluntarily as you will see later. This whole concept is extraordinarily important and is interlaced into the subjects we will be covering, which is why we quickly reviewed it again here.

So in Genesis 2 we have Adam and Eve in a state of naked, ignorant, bliss in which their circumstances could not possibly be better. God Himself walks through the garden and talks with them and they have every physical and mental need provided for them. And then in Genesis 3 we have the transgression and the cursing. All of this will be much in the focus of this discussion.

So the first thing to notice is that Satan was also able to communicate directly with Adam and Eve. You may also note that Eve was well informed if perhaps somewhat naive, because of a total lack of experience with anyone but God and Adam.

1Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She got introduced to a lie and believed it.

4And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And believing the lie pondered all the great reasons to break the rule and then convinced herself she should, based of course, upon the logic of the situation. This girl could think, was organized, and she made a list first.

6And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Ugh misery loves company. And the sin was accomplished. Notice that both their eyes were opened at the same time. Probably because they both were one flesh. Uh...married.

7And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

So verse 7 is key for a number of reasons. There are at least **four basic concepts** that need to be broken down to get to the heart of some of these matters and their more advanced cousins.

First...lets go back to the name of the forbidden tree itself. The tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Adam and Eve's eyes were opened to...what...the understanding of the difference between good and evil. They could judge for themselves what is good and what is bad...Soooo...what is so horrible about that??? Obviously, there is some hideous basic evil to this tree and this "eye opening" experience. But what is it? Even if you set aside the fact that Satan the Devil is sitting in the tree trying to convince you to eat of it (which in itself is bad enough from our 20/20 perspective), you are still left with the realization that just because their eyes were opened to the understanding of good and evil...God HAD to kick them out of the garden or permanently live with the resulting cockroaches...22 *"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."* They didn't get kicked out so much because they ate of the wrong tree but because...having eaten of the wrong tree God could/would not allow them to eat of the tree of Life and live, apparently forever, in disobedience as their serpent mentor Satan counseled them. But all humanity died when Adam sinned. So there has got to be something incorrigibly awful here, beyond just a single disobedience. So, **what is so horrible about knowing the difference between good and evil?** Such that, if you know it you shall surely die.

So this is the big question.....really the pivotal question for all humanity! Which Tree? and it is very obviously a case of either - or. **You can have either the tree of life or you can have the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Period. Simple choice.**

Satan is in the selection of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God's offer is the tree of life and you can't have both.

If you take your rest in the shade of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...you shall surely die. If you take your rest in the shade of the tree of life...you shall have life everlasting. Choose! Aargh! That was Adam and Eve not me! What? Help! ?!?!?!?!?!? What does this mean?

It's simple really. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was named perfectly. It's exactly what it's name says. It is the knowledge and understanding of what is good and evil and it gives humans the ability to SEE what is good or evil and to JUDGE for ourselves what is good or evil for us. Simple. But there is more.

It is important to note right off, that this tree doesn't give the understanding or judgment of God the Father; it gives understanding and judgment related to self, experience and situation. So what happens when we judge for ourselves what is good and what is evil? First as mentioned your eyes are opened...and then "...and **ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**" so there it is...Adam and Eve stole for themselves their own Godhood at the behest of Satan. "*For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God*" "*I will be like the most High*" (Isa 14:13 & 14). So the "original" sin of Adam and Eve is really the same sin as Satan's first. **In fact, by nature, it MUST be the first sin anyone commits, law or no law.** It actually defines **all** sin in a somewhat broader way than the law. Adam and Eve stole godhood in the form/example of fruit which gave them the ability to judge good and evil. In doing so they/*we* destroyed their/*our* obedience to God and they set the course for general disobedience and self will for the rest of humanity. *The very essence of the problem is that they decided not to do God's will but to follow their own will and decide what is important for themselves and to make decisions for themselves without God.* The **tree of the knowledge of good and evil** is also the **tree of my own will be done**, **The tree of enlightened self interest** and is very much the **tree of self-righteousness**.

So what does this really mean to us now? It should be obvious that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is really **BAD for man** though it surely doesn't sound like it by reading the words. It sounds like something you really should be an expert on. Isn't that what all books and movies are about? You know...good guy vs. bad guy. Protagonist versus antagonist. Yin versus yang. How could we **do** anything right if we didn't know the difference between good and evil. More importantly how could

you be "righteous" if you didn't know the difference? Hmm.

That tree got Adam and Eve cursed and kicked out of paradise though. And to get rid of the quite literally damned thing in man, God Himself had to come down AS a man and live and die a perfectly wonderful/horrible life and death just to remove that basic death curse that man was under because of that first sin and that awful tree. And Jesus Christ, having paid that price and removed that curse, asks only one thing. But what is that one thing?...?

He says come and drink freely of the water of life. He offers you the free gift of grace and freedom from every sin from Adam on down. And yet, there seems to be more. Something that is missing in us that prevents us from living the life of Paul and Peter and of Jesus Christ Himself. What is it???????

It's so simple we usually completely miss it, utterly. When Christ says "Come and follow me" He means it." **We have to give up our own will.** We have to give up our access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – the tree of my will be done – the tree of self-righteousness. **We have to cease judging with our own judgment, cease doing our own will, cease utterly doing those things that Adam and Eve gave us for an inheritance when they sinned.** That first sin still exists in every single person except they have received the sacrifice of Christ and God has given them His spirit.

Giving up your own will is not easy, it isn't usually a quick thing but remember Matthew 7:21 "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*" We just have to do this relatively simple thing... "**Come, follow me,**" Jesus said," (Mat4:19 et al) and God is faithful to do the rest.

Most of it is a mental/spiritual process in which God in His infinite wisdom entices, gently persuades, convinces, drags you out or plants a demolition charge and blasts you out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It's far easier if you don't wait for a nuclear bomb. It's the same process by which He works with you to jerk you out of your point of view and transform your thoughts and mind to something that is influenced by Him instead of Satan. There is no human mind without influence. God or Satan, life or death. You came preloaded with Satan 6.6.6 thanks to Adam and Eve and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The young mind grasps the knowledge of the tree of good and evil at about age 12 plus or minus.

Time for an operating system change.

When we take for ourselves the knowledge of good and evil we steal a very weak and impotent version of who God is, with our own limited experience, limited knowledge, limited understanding, limited power and short lifespan. A miserable counterfeit, without power and doomed to not just die, but to fry in hell forever. One of the most obvious symptoms of the disease from this tree is the clash of wills when one person wants to do one thing and another person something else. This, of course, results in conflict, a fight, perhaps a physical death. Something that God the Father, Jesus Christ and His disciples don't generally have a problem with amongst themselves. Not my will but my Father's will be done kind of scenario. Thus it becomes extraordinarily obvious that our individual wills must be utterly subdued and shown for the dead, malignant things that they really are.

Another obvious symptom/effect, of this multiplication of various wills (with population growth) is the need for human governments, contracts and agreements.

Governments et al are formed to prevent and contain conflict between nations and individuals. They function to force their own/group will on individuals. They are actually a construct of Satan to accomplish his will within his own horrible demonic society as well as to force men to "progress" (in whatever fashion) in the presence of disagreement. Instead of ONLY killing each other.

Remember how much God resisted even the idea of giving Israel a king. So when you have a political battle over a random issue, say, abortion; it is really just factions of wills fighting under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to force their view onto everyone else ensconced under the same tree. Same with every other political issue under the sun. Satan is divided and will fall.

Sometimes, God does involve Himself in a "political" issue. Which is not to say that just because God mentions something in the Bible or otherwise, that we little peon humans should in ANY way try to get busy and "help God out." We shouldn't move without specific direction and if He does ask something of us then it must and will be within the shadow of God's own hand. Ignorance of this principle is the leading cause of the horror known as organized religion. Specifically, walls made with untempered mortar (Ez 13 & 22, 1 Cor 3:10-15). Men doing what they want in the name of God and building huge faulty edifices both literally and figuratively and then blaming their confused mess and mass of conflicting doctrines on God (well, they usually view it as giving Him credit). Really, they are men who use Satan's

judgment instead of God's.

God is One and One with His church and yet we have many thousands of conflicting churches with millions of different ideas of what God has to say about any given topic. There **IS obviously, a very big problem.** Are you going to use your will to choose which church has the best doctrines for you? Are you going to choose which churches are the most awful because they do this or that or the other thing? At what point does God have any say over His own church?

Where does righteous judgment begin and how do we get there?

We MUST return to the state in which Adam and Eve were before they sinned. We absolutely must walk in a state of naked, ignorant, bliss, in which, we simply and completely obey that one rule which Adam and Eve broke. That single rule that Jesus Christ gave back to us when He died. Yes, that one about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It's the same rule as in Matthew 22 "*37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment.*" If you can't love God this way then ANY rule or law you keep or follow is simply another piece of fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Self-righteous from skin to core. Adam and Eve weren't simply told not to eat the fruit...they were told not to even touch it. It's basic nature is inimical to spiritual health in anyone but God the Father.

This is not to say that God wants a bunch of robotic automatons that don't think and simply follow orders no matter what...that is very obviously not the case and is related to the discussion of law found later on. It is part of the reason we were made a little less than the angels...for now. An angel is a servant. We are to be sons, with power and judgment. Hebrews 3:12-13 "*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*" If we then, as sons, wield the spirit and word of God there is no place for our own will. Is there any man that can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart? The answer is, emphatically, no. Or, at least not without the spirit of God within him...and then only as the Lord wills. So, again, what place is there for the will of a man? Note: this is not to say that

we don't reveal the thoughts and intents of our heart to others through words and actions and these things can sometimes be guessed at by discerning individuals but if a person is sitting in a dark room at rest what man unknown to the other can discern their heart?

The fact is that when Christ was here He was very clear about what we are supposed to act like...

Luke 18:16 *"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, **Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.**"* I wondered about this for a while and it soon became clear that there is more to this than meets the eye.

Does a little child understand the difference between good and evil? No...generally they don't. They accept their situation as reality regardless of what it is. They develop judgment slowly and experientially as they get older. More quickly if the people around them are ungodly and push them to develop their own standards. There is loads of evidence for this...starting with the fact that they will happily run around naked as jay birds without the slightest self-consciousness, Adam and Eve style. If you give them a gift they will almost always smile and be happy. There are, of course, exceptions but these are usually related to a lack of trust or emotional deficiency based upon a variety of conditions that I won't go into here.

An important side issue here that needs to be addressed comes in the form of a question... Is a true son of god a yellow pencil? Many people tend to think that Christians are yellow pencils...but they don't understand the depth of God. God has a plan so big we can't even really conceive of it and He is shaping people for so many different places in His kingdom that we couldn't imagine it even if we had forever just to think. The devil would like you to think we're all the same and boring and without originality though. He is the boring one though...he can't even get past death.

The yellow pencil syndrome concept is, in fact, an early hook to engage the tree of the knowledge of good and evil while we are still relatively young. We are taught to want to be different and special, to stand out from the crowd. And it is a hook that continues to be played with great frequency in persons of every age.

Everyone wants to be special and unique and they allow and or force their thoughts into ways to stand out from the crowd and be a "real individual."

Obvious symptoms of this behavior are things that people do to give themselves a flavor, such as, purple hair or funky clothes or other obvious affectations. Psychologists would undoubtedly describe this behavior as attempts to attract attention because of insecurities but that is just a coat of paint over the real problem. They and the vast majority of others with less visual symptoms are simply without God and *should be insecure*, because the only interface they have is with Satan and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They are in a twisted and distorted state that leaves them fragile, vulnerable and terribly insecure.

They tend to develop odd attitudes and tend to fall into basic pigeon holes like people who collect things or become highly passionate about business or sex or cars or *some THING* that is not God. They might even go crusader...with a "Save the whales!" Mentality. Fighting the "good" fight to end abortion...the "right to life" movement, or feed the world drives or evangelizing the poor natives in the jungle and all such like...or the opposite of them. It doesn't really matter what side of the issue they are on...it's a merry-go-round under the wrong tree. A Good versus Evil match that ends in all parties dying.

It is the reason that you see the yin & yang symbol I mentioned before. Even the Taoists recognize the basic truth of most peoples situation and of course they leave God out entirely...because they don't know Him and don't want to. I believe they say something like... "at the heart of evil you find good and at the heart of good you find evil." Everybody has seen the sign...you know the black and white round one with the two little opposite monochromatic, one-eyed sperm. It's Satan's and most people exemplify it, regardless of what their mouth says. People that engage the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are immediately caught up in justice and injustice like a dog chasing its tail. They love to get in the midst of a fray between right and wrong. It's a battle between the "do-gooders" and everyone else. When people go crusader they are, with so very, very few exceptions, absolutely epoxied to the trunk of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, such that NOTHING can shake them.

That is not to say that we ignore the basic things that our Messiah brought for us to do...feed the poor etc., but ugh we spend 30 million dollars on advertising to prove to everyone that we gave 5 million to 32 countries in Africa (maybe .005 cents per person).

Or, just as bad, stand up on some pulpit somewhere and declare what good people we are for raising x dollars for the food or whatever drive and then thank

God for it as if it had **anything** to do with God.

I dare you to find a corporate 501c3, or for that matter, disorganized (!) church that does “good works” without tooting their own horn or getting self-righteous about it. I won't say it can't be done, solely because God is in His heaven but I have serious doubts that **even one** exists at the moment. In fact, most people will be highly indignant just hearing such a thing stated. I can hear the outrage now. But, once again, how many churches does God have?...Hmmm. Most indignation and outrage is firmly in the shadow of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Getting back to the topic of will...it is critical to understand that **God has THE ONLY righteous viewpoint.** If your viewpoint, world-view, whatever you want to call it doesn't line up with God's you are doomed to disappointment and without change eventual death. The **only way** to peace is the total peace and harmony of the **single will of God the Father.** John 17:21 **“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one:...”**

God's one will is righteous, any other way is self-righteous by nature. There are no exceptions and no discussion. That is the basic simple truth.

There are only two choices...follow God or follow Satan. You can't follow yourself...that's following Satan.

God offers/demands the **free will to choose!** All four of those words are together...don't separate them. God didn't give you free will, **you stole it.** But, after that theft, He gave you a way out of death and **the free will to choose** eternal life, love, gentleness, kindness and every other good thing. Go back to the garden of Eden or die. Satan and the demons offer the freedom of individual viewpoints and “unique” personalities and allow people a semblance of freedom of will (with a number of horrible prices & influences) and permanent death a short time later. They can't give anything else, simply because they don't have anything else. They stole for themselves this same forbidden fruit which causes total disharmony and necessitates death. This is the most basic reason that God gave the law. This is also the real reason that the world is a confused mess of horrors.

Satan and the demons seek to justify their theft and their right to exist and be gods by trying to destroy God's plan for humanity. They spread their poison at

every opportunity. This is the reason you see things like the Columbine School, Virginia Tech and McDonalds massacres, et al.

Demons work by supplementing your own thoughts with their ideas and thoughts (not that yours are clean – due directly to eating from the wrong tree). They inject them directly into your consciousness and mostly, people take them for their own thoughts. That occasional *truly horrible thought* that enters into your mind is almost undoubtedly not yours **to start with**, but, as you entertain such ideas from demons, they become your focus and obsession and are there every moment until at some point you make them a true part of you and act on them. Columbine shootings, child molestation, rape, incest, murder, theft, home improvement, monster trucks, etc., etc., etc.

Thoughts and obsessions are the bread and butter of Satan and his failed plan to try to make God's plan fail. There is a reason Satan is called the prince of the power of the air. Satan is very good at deceiving man by whispering in his ear. He started with Eve at the very beginning in the garden of Eden and hasn't stopped since. Distraction is another favorite tool. If Satan can get anyone distracted... collecting stamps, baseball cards, trying to get in their neighbor's wife's pants...whatever...they won't focus on the truly important things. They wither and die never realizing that the choice was right in front of their face. Death by ignorance.

The simple fact is that Satan and the demons were defeated by God before they actually began but they didn't know that until too late. They are not omnipotent or omnipresent. They have a beginning and their end is misery. They lack all of the true qualities of God...they are like a photocopy that has gone through 50,000 generations and is barely recognizable. God has given them a short time in which to prove their way is best...they will fail. They are there to serve God even in their tormented state.

Man has the potential to become so much more...infinitely more in fact, than Satan and the demons following him. The last thing they want is for man to succeed at superseding them and becoming God in truth, aligned perfectly with God the Father & Son. So, they want to kill us at any cost...even the people they have succeeded in totally dominating. They enjoy their own servants being horribly mutilated and killed or sent to some horrible prison. Fortunately, they can only do what God permits them to do, otherwise we would all be dead instantaneously.

Most people, as a simple matter of course, will refuse to give up their own personal godhood (just as the demons won't give it up) even though it is a pitiful shadow of the glory they could have. But Satan isn't

willing to take the chance that they won't, because, God has the ability to turn even the worst horrible sinners back to Him.

Satan is paranoid and terrified that you will actually understand, believe and follow God no matter what your current state actually is. In view of all this, does it really matter what your sins are...that first and continual one is the only important one. Just make up your own mind and judge for yourself, and you are on skid row waiting to die.

This also clarifies the unpardonable sin in a way that makes perfect sense...but now is not the time for that.

Anyway, Satan can't stand the idea of you or anyone else succeeding at becoming greater than he is. He stole his godhood and decided that he would be above the stars of God. He will be relegated to the lake of fire and continual torment. God the Father and His Son and His adopted sons will win without question. It's just a matter of time and the will of the Father. Christ through the Father already utterly defeated them...it is just a matter of the other elements of God's plan, like the harvest of the whole world, being laid out before they are bound and cast into eternal torment and death.

Women in particular are highly susceptible to Satan's arguments as touted from the pulpit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It started with Woman (Eve) and that same weakness is still extant. Nothing has changed, though it is a rare woman indeed who has the understanding and humility to accept this.....at all.....much less with grace.

With women, the younger ones tend to go out to save the whales (they find a cause to become **indignant** and be **outraged** about) and the older ones tend to gossip and judge anything and everything in sight especially their apparently incompetent husbands.

And men, for the most part, are in exactly the same state as Adam was...listening to the wife about things she ought not to be thinking about, much less speaking about and then running off into the bushes to sew a fig leaf and try to fix something, anything (technologically?...probably) that cannot possibly be fixed by man.

Man builds something to assuage the guilt then says "look what I did" to distract anyone from noticing his miserable mortality. He also generally sits under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and either builds God in his own image or creates idols to worship which don't interfere with his ego or attract the mostly negative attention of his harpy wife.

Ego, by the way, is a term that can't exist without

the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

If all of this starts to sound like a bit of a rant; just back off and focus on the fact that it is generally and absolutely true; just not comfortable. Once again, the measure of righteousness or self-righteousness isn't how YOU feel about something, it's whether or not it comes from the tree of life or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God or Satan. Choose!

Second...and they knew that they were naked. So why is this example important.

First off, it demonstrates the actual change in their mentality. It shows that a portion of their brain was directly affected by the fruit.

Secondly, it was a "sin" that every "god" evidently knows without question; you can find it within yourself, just think about going down to the grocery store naked (uh...without being a pervert that is). And indeed, it is a societal norm to wear clothing virtually everywhere.

Third they were doing it as they had no need in the garden for warmth. There were only the two of them...they couldn't very well commit adultery or do some more heinous and grievous act. And besides that, Satan wasn't stupid enough to start off with one of our more "modern" horrors that early in the game, as Adam and Eve wouldn't have bought it and anything else would have been a poorer example anyway. Satan may not have been at a point in his miserable development that he could have come up with one of the "modern horrors" anyway. Remember, he was nt there from the beginning. In the end, nakedness was the example that God chose and it's a beauty. It shows how easily we exercise the tree of the knowledge of good and evil SO well. And the example epitomizes the human condition without God so clearly. Self-righteous.

To start with...really closely notice that Adam and Eve's actual mental state changed when their eyes were opened. Prior to the fruit, they had no consciousness whatsoever of shame or guilt or any of the emotions generally associated with nakedness. And yet Adam functioned perfectly in naming the animals and existing with God and Eve prior to that first sin.

Are we without shame and guilt? How do we get to that place where shame and guilt etc. don't have a grip on us...and if we do manage to get to a state in which there is a lack of consciousness of sin, *because of being within the will of God*, or stated more clearly...holiness...what are other people going to think of us?

Is there really a point at which we shall be hated of all nations? Is there really a point at which they will

kill us thinking they do God a service?

The answer, of course, is absolutely yes. People, at some point, will think you are a crazy lunatic. They will probably just notice what a nice person you are at first, but as you go around doing things that make no sense to them because you are following God's will and not your own, they will start to wonder. You will occasionally do things that make it obvious that you have no idea of the difference between right and wrong and could care less. At that point they will brand you and may imprison you.

And, just because most of the time you are healing people and dragging them out of their dirty selves...doesn't mean that they won't eventually understand that you are ultimately a permanent threat to their way of life.

How many of the early Apostles died peacefully in bed? Remember, **everybody** has demons inserting evil thoughts into their heads. God's sons have defenses for this but without God, people not only don't understand this, they claim these thoughts as theirs and end up enslaved to the mind of Satan.

It is very important to note the depth of the conspiracy against God in the society around us. Even portions of the (legal) definition of insanity, address a lack of individual will...*"Furiosi nulla voluntas est. A madman has no will."* Or, "The traditional test of insanity in criminal cases is whether the accused knew "the difference between **right and wrong**," following the "M'Naughten Rule" from 19th Century England." (<http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/insanity>) That last being so very obviously straight from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is not the whole legal story by any measure, but it illustrates how important the will (+knowledge of good and evil) is considered to be by man as a whole and within various legal systems.

In fact, by giving up our will to God we are not even close to being insane...God simply gives us His will via His spirit to replace our own. Which gives us the supreme advantage of not having to worry about anything; garden of Eden style. God will then take care of whatever **it** is in **His wisdom** but usually through us, like Christ's example. *"...But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. **And they marvelled at him.**"* Mark 12:15-17

Just because we don't use our own will anymore, doesn't mean we don't have preferences for things.

Preferences are great. I prefer blueberry pie to apple. But when they were going around the table giving out pie...and I didn't get blueberry...should I complain? Or, make it an issue of my will being the most important such that I will take somebody else' pie? No, absolutely not. I'll be thankful that I have pie and not let a root of bitterness enter in because **I didn't get MY favorite pie**. Even if it happens 23 times in a row. Or 70 times 7.

These are all the same issues that God dealt with in the Bible with David and Bathsheba and a thousand others. Apparently we just can't learn the lessons... It all boils down to letting go of our will...every second...every thought into captivity.

Satan will go to any extent to prevent man from really, truly facing the reality of the situation we exist in, so be aware of the realities of sacrificing your will...many will choose the wrong master, sacrifice their will to Satan and kill you thinking they do God a service.

So...back to the naked example...imagine going to church wearing a mini skirt or a muscle tee (or whatever is scandalous in your church) and then just wait for the wagging tongues. Everybody loves to exercise their judgment of right and wrong here *and it's not even written in the law of Moses! Just the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. The point here isn't for you to rebel against society or *law*. Paul et al were very clear about modesty as a general example (not law). The point is to follow God and let the chips fall as they may. The examples that Paul and others gave are mostly clear if you have a mind to understand them.

The behavior of a man within God's will, is, in the **great majority**, going to be within the law of Moses and within the laws and expectations of man. When he steps outside of these laws it will be God's will and will simply reflect the lack of flexibility of any law or opinion to contain the will of God (example follows in a later paragraph). And again...to get back to our example...Adam and Eve went to "church" all day, every day, butt nekkid. No scriptures come to mind where God tells them they will burn in hell for showing Him their woopdeedoo on a daily basis. Should you go to...uh...well, most anywhere intentionally in your birthday suit or something immodest? Probably not, but if your kilt flies up like David's did while dancing to the Lord don't be surprised if you **do** burn in hell for exercising your free will to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and complain about the king (the one God chose) and his lack of proper comportment whether it is King David in Israel or President Obama in modern day Babylon.

About ninety-nine point nine percent of the time when people feel indignation and raise their skirts in “holy horror” it's because they are reclined comfortably under the wrong tree suckling a bottle of the heady brew of self righteousness.

There is only **ONE** righteousness, and it is GOD'S; you know... “none good but one, He is God.” How many times was your Lord indignant when he was down here getting abused daily and accused of every evil? This is the KING of everything by whom everything was made. Offhand, I only remember the time when He threw the money changers out and a few railings against the Pharisees. If you can think of others...great...there weren't many and if ANYONE had/has a **right** to be indignant, it's Christ and as He was completely within the Father's will.

Conversely, YOU don't have ANYTHING to be indignant about EVER. Nope, not a single thing that anybody ever does to you, without exception, should you complain, whine, gripe, rail or rant about, especially your spouse. Absorb it, give nothing but good in return and **thank God** for His Graciousness.

And, if you are weak in faith, pray He doesn't have someone tie a rope around your neck and chuck you down a two-holer outhouse for months like Jeremiah. He planned everything out from the beginning.

Nothing man did, does or will do can shock God and it shouldn't shock you into taking a flying jump into the “tree of self-righteousness” whining like a baby about how you got treated. That tree is a thorny hag with no easy way out, kinda like a really vicious version of an African wait-a-bit tree only worse cuz if you touch it once too often you'll probably die there and rot forever.

In fact, this whole topic we are discussing, defines the difference between righteousness and self-righteousness. It's easy to accuse someone of being self-righteous and sort of make it stick, because it sounds good, when nobody actually appears to know the difference between self-righteousness and true righteousness.

A simple distinction that virtually no one appears to understand and a circumstance in which everyone accuses everyone else of being self-righteous.

Most people unconsciously and unjustifiably acknowledge their own position as righteous and accuse anyone else who does anything opposing their will, of being self-righteous. This is called hypocrisy.

People bandy self-righteousness about as if it were some kind of positional or mobile condition, with them being the center of the universe. It actually makes your brain hurt. It is a simple matter of which tree you are eating from and which God you are serving.

Ask yourself some basic questions before you flap your jaws needlessly under that **tree of my way is best**.

- ◆ Why do I need to say **anything at all**?
- ◆ Is this my own idea of what is right or wrong?
- ◆ Why is this important to me?
- ◆ Am I engaged actively in the outcome of whatever it is? Monetarily? Emotionally?
- ◆ Do I have something to gain even if it is just for my friend or acquaintance?
- ◆ Is the peace of the Lord upon me or am I wound up in indignation about some issue for which I should be utterly silent and let the Lord do His will in His time?
- ◆ Am I judging the world in this issue? Which I unquestionably know I should not do!
- ◆ Am I judging my brother in love, patience and in the spirit?
- ◆ Have I made assumptions about my brother's actions based upon my flawed judgment?
- ◆ DO I HAVE A DOUGLAS FIR IN MY EYE?
- ◆ Am I even aware of when God does want to say something through me? (usually we aren't)

At this time and in this place (America prior to the fall) it is almost without exception, a time to be silent.

In fact, if you have to ask that many “I” questions you should realize it's time to be quiet. But there is a time to ask those questions and then there is a time to be patient and quietly ask “Lord, what would you have me do?”

It's frightening how many people condemn others actions, behavior and/or person based upon the crap standards we've personally developed and learned over the course of our own experience in our diminutive lifetimes. We love to dig in to a bad attitude or be indignant because of someone else' actions and then grump, grumble and spout all kinds of trash just to show that we are important and that our will is RIGHT and he/she/they are wrong and stupid.

Be positively sure who you are serving before you show your dissatisfaction, sling mud, gossip and condemn. If you miss on the great commandment and following in God's will, everything after that is simply your own self-righteousness (especially the law and prophets) even if you say “*Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*” Matthew 7:22-23 And don't forget Romans 14:10 “*But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why*

dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” Matthew 4:1 “*Judge not, that ye be not judged. 2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. 3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? 5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”*

Gal 5:15 “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”

The reality is that we must become insignificant in our own eyes. Our will and our thoughts are junk that need to be sent to the dump.

Look around the world at the news or whatever source and ask yourself how much *garbage* God has to listen to and put up with everyday. He does it every single day from you and everyone else and **He** doesn't react poorly. Why should you?...it's not your servants and sons that are misbehaving.

But boy-oh-boy do we like to keep a running commentary and critique our brothers, friends, neighbors, politicians, enemies and etc. etc. etc. If you really need proof of this...sit down in front of the news and watch all the good and evil things that they throw at you and try your best not to allow your emotions to be tugged into indignation or to think or say anything good or bad about anyone that resembles a judgment. Just try it. We make the Pharisees look like veritable saints.

Yes, God will put an end to all the garbage in the world but not when **you** are ready and certainly not according to your critical self-righteous maunderings... but when **He** is ready and in **His** way. If you are part of the clamor of accusers right behind Satan then you will be booted into the lake of fire as well.

It **cannot be expressed strongly enough** how important it is to **be silent and rest in the Lord**. For those of you that can't hear very well...that's sit down,

shut up and mind your business! On a second by second, minute by minute basis. Every thought into captivity. Oh, that it were as easily done, as said.

But if we cannot snuggle up to the tree of life and walk in **our personal Garden of Eden** with **God** ignoring and despising our own thoughts, especially the ones Satan injects into our minds every hour of every day and our own horrible judgments and everyone else', then we are quite simply dead. Walking, talking skeletons waiting for destruction. The chaff of the harvest waiting to be gathered by men and burned. And to add insult to injury...we have the same exact sin as Adam and Eve. A thing we so readily condemn Adam and Eve for when reading Genesis.

Another point that should be made here, is that while Adam and Eve had perfect physical and mental circumstances...ours are more perfect. You say what?!?? It is absolutely true. Adam and Eve had those particular circumstances served to them on a platter of ease. God did it that way in part to prove to us that we would not do things correctly even if everything was utterly perfect. Think about what the scene will be at the judgment when something self-righteous pops out of the mouth of some desperate and soon to be condemned soul. God will shut them up with the absolute proof of the Adam and Eve story.

Adam and Eve were rich beyond compare in every way far beyond money and they gave it away to serve themselves, er, Satan. And you would do the same thing if God had not seen fit to grant you the riches of His grace and spirit. The very different vision granted by the tree of life, enables us to learn from the mistakes of history, spiritual or otherwise. We can **see** that simple, stupid little continual act of choosing the wrong fruit for what it is and we have the opportunity through Christ to avoid that error by doing what Adam and Eve didn't succeed at...the first and great commandment and its attendant obedience.

Yet another example of Matthew 20:16 “*So the last shall be first, and the first last:*” Adam and Eve had all the advantages and didn't and couldn't succeed and **we** with all the “disadvantages” and poor physical circumstances, **will**.

So who has the best circumstance? Yes, we have stickers and thorns and every evil known to man BUT we have every advantage because God has chosen us to succeed, to break the curses and to restore the promises He made in times past. With great adversity comes great reward.

Would I trade Adam and Eves garden for the one God has built for us? Tempting for a microsecond, but **I choose the tree of life**. The devil can fry in the tree

of the knowledge of good and evil in his time. It is a dead thing, beautiful and tempting but dead, dead, dead to anyone but God the Father.

In like manner to the example above of Adam and Eve at the beginning of man's existence, a similar example will be made on the end of the history of man. I won't go into the detail of the scripture, but, after Jesus returns there will be a millennial period in which a thousand years is set aside...Satan will be bound and man will have the absolute chance to live again as in the garden of Eden...Adam & Eve style, plus a lot of the things that men tend to worship as their savior instead of God, but which are good things. In particular, pieces of the law will be restored, the temple rebuilt yet again, the sacrifices restarted yet again. All these things are good things. They have tended, however, to be stumbling blocks for men under many circumstances. They can tend to lead toward the worship of the creation instead of the creator.

So, during the millennium men will have **every** advantage including many that Adam and Eve did not have. God will be once again walking and talking with men and accompanied in spirit and truth by many of His glorified Sons telling men “this is the way walk ye in it” etc. And they have that thousand years in which to, simply live with God in a second perfection. But, there's a hook. At the end of the thousand years God looses Satan from the pit for a “little season” and shockingly and appallingly man runs off and follows Satan and has to be largely exterminated yet again...aargh...for the third time.

Oh boy, you might say...what's up with that. God has a lot of reasons for having that millennial period but at least one of the primary ones is to prove without doubt, to man, that man can't do this alone. That, regardless of his circumstance, man cannot and will not do the right thing under his own power. Whether it is the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve or the Millennium and millions of people that have a present and past to look on for experience, a temple with attendant priesthood, as well as living examples of people that have become God themselves etc. man can't and won't do it right without the singular influence of the spirit of God within him. Jeremiah 10:23 *“O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* It proves to us the necessity to utterly destroy anyone who is not within the will of God and has proven it by loving and obeying God **when** Satan is running around trying to subvert us. There has to be a point at which we choose from between the two influences. We are simply incapable of obeying God,

even in the best of circumstances, with God standing right beside us unless He has chosen us, given us His spirit and we CHOOSE to follow His will against opposition. We must follow **our real** shepherd and not run off after another god. Unless a part of Him is in us forever, we are dead. Choose.

Yet again another similar example will be made using Old Testament times. The **period of the law** is another prime example of what God will bring against those who argue their own righteousness. God gave the law as a standard of behavior, a cutout if you will, from which, we could try to do it on our own with just a “schoolmaster” to help get us started a little better.

Really, at the judgment, the excuses are going to line up thick and stretch every which way. And God has an answer for every excuse. He has created, with our enthusiastic willingness, examples, against which no one can justify themselves.

God is among other things lining up various scenarios for the prosecution when the judgment comes. Whether it's Adam & Eve, the law, the millennium or one of the many other examples. There will be no self-righteousness to stand on. It is all sand and will wash away.

It is important to delve into the law example a little more clearly, even though much of the New Testament dealt with this, **there are a variety of things that were not made completely clear** and that within God's will. Revisiting this is absolutely necessary and serves, among other things as a foundation to more advanced understandings.

Just remember in the paragraphs to come...I will mix metaphors and similes unconscionably and probably horribly, relating specifically to the law with the object of bringing out some clear understandings.

First off, the law is dead. Every part of it is a dead thing, it hangs about your neck dragging you down unto death. It cannot comfort you. It cannot save you. It cannot do anything, of itself, except sever your head. It is a yoke to bind you to the earth and to your own judgment of the law. The law doesn't make exceptions, and after the first-coming it curses anyone who touches it, because you are not God, its creator and able to dress it and keep it. If you are of God then you have no necessity for it except its protection. **It is perfect and righteous** in that it models the behavior that God wishes man to have, and **it was established in perfect sharpness by God for His own purposes**. But it also serves as a backboard for Satan to score points against us when we step away from the tree of

life (by design). If we judge using the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the law surrounds us and cries for our death. It was a schoolmaster and a teacher ultimately to prove to man that having a behavioral standard will not solve his problems. **Having no-no's will not prevent man from disobeying God.** Nor will it make men righteous. Then, or now.

The law is the fiery sword that guards the way to Eden and to the tree of life. Yep, you heard it correctly. The sword that couldn't be found by all the Crusaders in the world was right there in front of all of us the whole time and we couldn't see it. As a minor bit of proof, ask yourself when the law of Moses was codified? What year? How many generations after Adam and Eve did Moses live? Then ask yourself why Christ had to live up the law of *Moses*???? Christ the 2nd Adam...why did He have to *live* up to the johnny-come-lately "law of Moses," perfectly? Shouldn't it be the law of Adam? Moses wasn't wasn't even a distant glimmer in the eyes of the first Adam...? Why did Christ have to live up to a law given many generations after the first Adam cut off access to the tree of life?

Simple really...the law is that flashing sword that turns every direction and prevents access to the tree of life to anyone that was/is not God (one with God). A state being determined by whose will a person is in, God's or anyone else's...Christ HAD to sacrifice Himself and change us so that the sword would recognize us as Him, so that we would not be destroyed in passing by the law to the tree of life.

The law was death to all of mankind from Adam until Christ as we noted before. He lived up to the codified law of Moses because He created that perfect sharp sword to begin with and the law of Moses was just that sword, unsheathed. Brought out into plain sight by God. It perfectly defines those things for which God will destroy man and not let him live forever. It addresses those issues that God takes exception to in man. The law is, in its flawless ferocity, protecting the tree of life from those who would become Satan...eating of both trees and perpetuating confusion in the universe. The law serves the strength and sovereignty of God and will destroy all who oppose God. When God says it is a sword that turns all directions...He wasn't exaggerating in the slightest.

As far as how man interfaces with the law...it eventually leads to man judging for himself. It begs rationality. What I mean by that, is that we have to continually judge for ourselves whether or not we are breaking the law. Constantly checking for compliance. And we **LOVE** to do it for everyone else around us too. Oo sinner! Whether it is a Sabbath days journey,

working on the Sabbath or adultery.

Just when does adultery start...? Is it ok to flirt casually with married women? Is it OK to be alone with married women for extended periods?...is it OK to go out to dinner alone with a married woman? Is it OK to do anything but have sex with a married woman?

There is always a gray area where man *rationalizes* doing or not doing something that will probably lead him astray. Every man's measure for right and wrong is different in that "gray area." It's a balancing act that is doomed to fail over an enormous precipice called death. The examples for this are endless...read nearly the entire old testament or read the new testament, particularly whenever the Pharisees accused Christ of *anything*. He didn't live up to their customs and modifications/hair splitting to the law. As if He would want to, He made the law - He knew how to keep it...it is the sword in His hand after all, He knew it's length. Corner stone rejected by the builders...

The law is generally the story of man trying to succeed in becoming righteous by himself with the assistance of a behavioral standard which he doesn't realize is a sword pointed at his heart.

Let's continue on with a question...that example I promised earlier.

Is it ever OK to commit fornication?

Most of you will sense a trap at this point so I will spring it. The answer is 100% yes. If you are outraged...fine. Read Genesis 38 again and then get used to it, New Testament notwithstanding. Yes, it was before Moses, if you have a problem with that read above about the law again or Hosea or anywhere else God performed a miracle to get man out of trouble after he wedged himself into a tight spot with the law and needed mercy. Would the outcome have been different after Moses? No.

The fact is, that Tamar played the whore just to get a child from Judah because a true man of God told her she would have sons of Judah. She *intentionally* slept with a man that was not her husband and **God blessed it**...even to the point of putting her in the direct line of Christ. This is GOD'S Judgment! And why didn't Tamar get stoned or, actually, burnt as the scripture says? Judah gave the answer...*"She hath been more righteous than I"* (**not more self-righteous**). Because this is GOD'S Judgment and it goes where the law cannot and it goes where man cannot (without God). Remember, God wields that awesome sword. It does His will. Not that it was particularly comfortable for Tamar...after all that, she still didn't get a husband...sons, yes, but she will be in the Kingdom

and have eternal life.

The law is like a train...it can only go where God made tracks. God is like a "supersonic 4 wheelin' ATV helicopter"...goes wherever He pleases, at whatever speed He wants, regardless of the terrain.

If you partake of the tree of life, you are of God and by God and you are his representative to do His bidding and His sword of law won't touch you.

So what are the limits? What is our standard of behavior? How do we operate in a society in which we don't judge with the eyes of men? What do we do if we can't easily judge our neighbors because there is no standard for keeping the Sabbath or going to Bible study or wearing particular clothes or listening to particular music...or...or...or..... Are there some judgments you need to give up? We so *greatly desire* something by which we can judge anything and everything... To not have a measure to judge by makes us feel uncomfortable and well...naked. Hmmm...I wonder why.

So what is is forbidden? The answer is simple for man...if it is of God's will, nothing is forbidden save one tree and everything is acceptable except that same tree. If it is of Satan, all is forbidden and nothing is acceptable and all is sorrow and death. Tread that strait and narrow path of freedom with care; for judgment comes. Remember Galatians 5:19 *"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."*

This is not the law! It is a basic truth...however, a person doing one of these things in the spirit, such as Tamar, is not following their own will, but God's. **There is NO CONDEMNATION for following the will of God.**

Just make awfully certain that you are under the correct tree or the government, the law, aka, the sheriff, the FBI or whoever God sets on your trail, will take you down and destroy you. If you go to prison because of God's will, then He will get you out when He wants you out. Read Galatians 5 all the way through again. When you do step outside of accepted behavior for whatever (God's) reason...you will cause gossip. The Only way you will ever stop tongues from wagging is to follow God until He stops them. Just think of all the controversy He caused by being the gentlest, kindest person to ever live...

Nevertheless, it is a true statement that no man is above the law. God is above the law however, as it's

creator and when YOU manage to follow your Lord, as He implores you to do, and shelter under the tree of life, enjoy well the fruit that does not prophesy death.

For the law can only prophesy death. God has it, like a perfectly fierce junkyard dog, on a short leash to devour those who refuse to obey His will. God isn't bound by a law He made for man...even physical laws like Sarah having a child at 90. Which is a true law as it was bounded by God though not codified as such, for man, by Him. It is not part of His sword. Why codify something that is as inevitable as taxes. It's a parameter that He set and stretches at will.

The codified law has a different shape and purpose but is still for His purpose. He sent the law for a time and a season and after Christ came, it still has all it's teeth and is still guarding the way to the tree of life.

It's primary purpose after the sacrifice of Christ is to devour unto death those that insist upon sitting under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and worshipping the law or anything else in self-righteousness. It precludes man from living forever in sin (without God). It's purpose and effect is until the judgment has finished and then, it too, will be removed.

There is no direct need for the law, in the same sense as the time of Moses, after the second coming, although there may be a few surprises yet to be revealed. At that point, it is there for those that are not under the tree of life. The temple system, the feasts and the sacrifices will be observed during the millennium, as well as whatever else God decides for that time. *Instead of the whole "law,"* those who have entered into the first resurrection will be there to say "this is the way, walk ye in it." They will be quickened as God and able to show judgment to men directly at the point of His sword. Better a living judge who can say yes, no or in between as God judges the need in every situation, than a dead judge who can only mechanically counsel death. Well was it written that the law is death.

It is still slightly mystifying to me that so many are so faithful to the law (sword, crutch, junkyard dog, schoolmaster). Even as a schoolmaster it was pretty harsh. That first lesson might be your last. Makes a high velocity ruler on the wrist sound great.

At what point did the law tell you that you were a good and faithful servant or son? And at what point did the law give you good gifts as a man does for his child? And what blessing did the law ever give anyone? True it prevented certain curses, and man that "lived" under it, was "blessed" more than those that did not have it, but, it was still in essence only a dam that held back the waters for a time because it contained/s no life. The high priest could only go into

the Holy of Holies once a year and they frequently had to drag him out by a cord around his dead foot. The law, even in it's Godly perfection still only served/s God for the short time that He has determined. Anyone standing behind the dam, believing in it, as their god, is destined for a long tumultuous fall. The river continues on to its eventual destination, death.

Why then, are there those that bow down and worship it? They bend their backs as slaves when they need only look up and see that God is their Father. And that He has brought us a better way. A true life that contains no death. A way that allows God in His wisdom to choose in each and every part of every life what is good for that person in peace.

The truth is, that the law appeals to man so strongly because it has so many hooks tied directly into our own judgment, based upon that first sin. We **MUST** use the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to be able to even interface with the law. And then, it's more than just a little scary to start up a dialog with a sword...the only will it has is to kill you. Much better to speak to God in the garden.

The law pretty much ends up as a crutch for self-righteousness. It was given to all men **by God** and because it is of God everybody wants to harness it for their purposes. So they voluntarily hobble around leaning on it until they trip and eviscerate themselves. Guts trailing behind, striding with upheld head, they don't even recognize their death. Why people worship the law is clear but why they stick with their choice so doggedly after a few bloody hack and slash sessions with it, can be a little perplexing. I guess part of the disconnect is the current lack of a temple and priesthood that would actually order them stoned in the short term. Still...perplexing.

Even more mystifying is the circumstance in which the law is partially kept, **intentionally**. Sort of a paradox. Like eying the sword closely and then choosing the particular spot upon which to impale yourself. It is a positive necessity for someone to be sitting under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, to choose selectively which Mosaic laws they will keep. I grew up in this crowd and I still can't quite grasp it, even though, it took (is taking?) me many years to escape that yoke. And even with this experience, I still wonder if they played keno to figure out which laws to keep and which to throw out. I suspect it boiled down to what a small group of "wise" men adjudged socially acceptable (aka not social suicide in American society, like not cutting your beard or wearing funny clothes...etc.) while still representing what they thought was an "ideal" hybridized standard of the law and the salvation of Christ.

Talk about a dichotomy. Abomination in God's sight.

Christ is sufficient for ALL our needs, not just the parts we think we can work Him into here and there. Why confuse Christ with His own sword? Why worship a sword? **A sword ONLY kills. And part of a sword through your spinal cord is all it takes.**

Anyway, it should be obvious to all, that regardless of how much anybody may want to walk the edge of that sword, i.e. keep the law, whole or partially, it is utterly and totally impossible to succeed. Both because of our obvious human frailty as the apostles so clearly showed, and, as all Jews are painfully aware, there is no temple...there is no high priest, no priesthood...there is no red heifer...nobody can even prove that anyone is actually an Israelite much less a Levite...etc., etc., etc.

More importantly still, "the veil was rent" (by that same sword). Christ left the temple and shredded the door on the way out. Christ left a direct message by this, clearly stating, this era is OVER! I have left it behind. And punctuated it by destroying the temple again by the sword as well a bit later on so that the hypocrisy could be revealed.

So, of necessity, anyone who intends to keep the law must fudge and rationalize. They must set up camp, and deeply entrench under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and then defend their position to the only possible outcome, death. It is a never ending battle of judgment as cracks are continually forming and doctrines are always in need of bolstering lest they fail under the assault from within and without.

The law is, by it's very nature, rigid. It cannot and will not bend to any will but God's. **God's will is what it is.** It can change and go anywhere without consultation with, to or from anyone. **He is the ONLY ONE with the freedom of an arbitrary will.** God is the only one without law. His will is law. And, that codified law of Moses is a line with a specific length and strength that God placed to prevent man from going anywhere he wants at his own will. This is the way it is and nobody will change it. Get under the umbrella of God's will and you have the freedom of God; live by the rule of law or Satan and you'll get sliced and diced. Once again, choose.

And, what does the law (without rationalization & judgment reserved to God and His tree) have to say about genetic engineering, the healthcare mess, space travel, cloning, the stock market, etc., etc., etc.? Do you want to make those judgments for God??? Many apparently do. They extrapolate for the purpose of adding to the law daily with new doctrines to support their views of the law. I suppose if you stretch the law

to govern these issues (by way of example) you could loosely categorize a few of the more modern problems under various “abominations” and a few others under various general “legal” categories, highly assisted, of course, with some really creative extrapolation. Kinda like hiding the great pyramid under a postage stamp.

The fact is, the law was and is perfect for its purpose. It doesn't need to address all of the “modern” abominations. Those who have seen it's lack (for their purposes) have a measure as to how far under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they truly are. The law has served as a schoolmaster and now it serves as executioner for the things that God will not tolerate in man. If God had greater purpose for the law He would have expanded it...but it wasn't necessary.

The law, any law (left unchecked) eventually ends up in total bondage and death by constriction. Look at all the laws we have here in America...2.5 million and counting. Legislature is simply a **disgusting** substitute for God. No-No's gone berserk. Creating imperfect laws and then retracting or modifying them and then creating more, continuously...an obvious example of Satan divided within and without.

An appalling characteristic of law, generally, is that by nature, it must proliferate. Man (multiple wills) drives it to proliferate by always trying to circumvent it to get his own way, following his own will. Law begets law begets law anytime anything new happens or someone does something different-stupid as opposed to same-stupid...worse than rabbits...a few generations and you pray for a bomb. Nuke it and let's start over.

You can see why God made the plan He did. One will is perfect harmony. Two wills is a fight. It takes two to tango. Even God “dropped the nuke” a couple times with man, **though He had/has a real plan**, not just a desperate need for relief as we do.

Fortunately, we don't need to dwell on these things in detail or emotion...but it is little wonder, though, that Christ raged against the Pharisees and Sadducees a bit. Little wonder that He will rage during His day against those that claim to be under the tree of life and make anew the law out of the new covenant/testament.

Paul's writings are so abused in this regard it is horrifying. As hard as he fought to bring Christ to the Corinthians and others and to break the hold the law had on them, *even as gentiles*, it would, I'm sure, dismay him to have so many of the things he wrote taken as law. I encourage anyone and everyone to read and understand Romans 7 completely in the context of this understanding.

One last note on the law. The law is so many things but I simply regard it with awe. **Not worship**...awe...it is **the most tremendous bad-ass**. Like a giant tornado

or the power of a hurricane. Anyone who stands up to it will bleed and fall. Anyone who has ever had respect for a weapon can only look upon the law with awe.

It is going to be a sight when Christ comes riding down on that white horse with that flashing sword in His hand. Wow! Solomon had it right for his time when he said...“*O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day.*” But that was all he had; he didn't have Christ. Seeing the law in all it's perfection for what it really is, makes me love God for creating it and putting it between every horrible thing and those in His Kingdom. I don't meditate on it all the day, but just as it reveals sin, it also reveals parts of God's will.

Many people will still be lost both in feeling and in deed with this understanding. They won't be able to stand on their own without the crutch the law or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil provides. And, even realizing its function, will succumb to death rather than face God and fall flat on their face, ask forgiveness for their judgments and submit their will. Can you say hypocrite? Pharisee?

Self-righteousness knows few boundaries. Those that cling to their self-righteousness will be hacked, slashed, and decapitated by the very law they profess to uphold. Not that the power of the law is limited to destroying unrepentant Jews and law breakers, it will take out the “*law abiding christians*” with fervor too.

*It will sever those that profess Christ but refuse to submit their will. In fact, this is the worst possible type. They camouflage their own strong will and rebellion with soft words and brown nosing suck-ups while categorically defying Christ in every respect, refusing to acknowledge any sin or the law (sword) much less their own most obvious encampment under the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These people steal the things of God for their own purposes and are convinced that the law was “done away with,” destroyed or disappeared or God killed it in His first coming or some other foolishness. **The law is not going anywhere until the last person who won't submit their will is slaughtered and burned.***

Hard to believe, but there is another whole tier of Pharisical self-righteousness well beyond the *sadness* of that displayed in New Testament times. This was prophesied, at least every other word, in the prophets but is generally ignored. In fact, the calamity written in the prophets is **highly focused** on the times we are so close to entering. Everyone will know when the beginning of the end actually starts. It will be **absolutely, painfully OBVIOUS** when the very beginning of the end starts. Jaws will drop and then the pain for the church/people of God and various others will begin.

You know...birth pangs... and that thing you do to

grain when you first begin the harvest...**cut it off**...and then **winnowing...threshing**...etc. Don't be toooo shocked and surprised when the sickle actually does strike. It has been sharpened up and leading into that first swing for two thousand years.

Third...fourth...and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. The nature of man is generally to **DO** something about sin. I mean...with all that judgment they have... Having been exposed to the law they are and were likely to stone first and then not even ask questions saying "Hah! We did God a service there." In the true reality of God, man **doing something** about sin, their own or others, is a near impossibility save as a simple confession. And we usually get energetically misguided about it, Catholics are a good example of this! self-flagellation, hail Mary's...etc...Not that Catholics are even Christians (or rarely). The Crusades were another great and gigantic example.

Anyway, in this circumstance in Genesis, Adam, with some help from Woman, invented an entire industry...sewing. This industriousness was inspired by a couple new emotions to man. **Guilt** and **Shame**. "*and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God*" so they **avoided responsibility** by hiding...which was soon to be followed by **Fear** and the first man-made **Lie**. "*And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*" Let's face it Adam wasn't just afraid because he was naked...he was wearing at least a couple fig leaves and besides nakedness begets shame and guilt in far greater measure than fear. Adam was afraid of God because he had definitively epitomized **Disobedience**. This cascade of bad behavior was soon joined by the **self-righteousness** of **self-justification** based on **Blame** and **Accusation**, first by accusing his helper and then God Himself and then the woman again. "*And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*" Followed down the chain by still yet more **Blame**. "*And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*" All of this bad behavior and truly horrible consequence started because of a simple act of self-improvement and self-interest. "*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.*" 'Ware the person that drives you down any road to self-improvement or self-interest. The beginning of all these things has led to a whole list of curses which last unto this day and will soon culminate in the Wrath of the Lord. A day I plan to be firmly ensconced under the wide spreading branches

of the tree of life (God willing).

To change gears for a bit...Why do you really think God will not bless **you**...the way **you** think **you** deserve...all those things that you, deep down inside, hold against God for not giving you...whether it was a family member that died or the love of your life that didn't work out or 10 billion dollars or the job or the legs you can't use anymore, cancer...whatever...after all God said..."ask anything in my name..." and...lets face it, everyone generally believes that they are faithful to God even if they/we really don't generally have a clue what being faithful is. Could it be because we aren't even close to a state of being within His will? Could it be because we haven't the slightest idea what His will is? Could it be because we won't let go of our will long enough to find out what His is? Could it be because we won't relax and walk as Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden...sitting under the tree of life and letting the world go by? Could it be because we refuse to return that which was stolen and humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord? Could it be because we refuse to give up our pitiful little judgments about the things that **we** interact with? The answer is yes all the way around.

We want our own way and everything else on a silver platter in the way that **we** want it...and it won't happen...ever. God's terms or Satan's terms...choose.

It's not even a question for me. God loves. Satan hates. Simple.

God's way is harder to start out because it requires a leap of faith, but then garden of Eden easy later and the eventual rewards are all out of proportion.

Satan's way is easy to start, requiring no initial action but results in immediate and retroactive, continual and terminal pain, stress and agony, followed closely by permanent death.

It really is a no-brainer when viewed in its simplicity. Application of God's way is more difficult... but certainly not impossible. Though entering the strait and narrow path in and of itself is by the grace, mercy and will of God. He chose you first, remember.

In fact, His way is as easy as releasing your grip. It doesn't necessarily require a postgraduate degree or 30 years of training (only what God has for each individual...agreed for a penny and all that)...it **does require**, that you sacrifice every dream of your own glory you ever had. It **does require**, that you put God above every other thing in this universe...your dreams...your money...the law...your family...your wife...your husband...your mother...your child...your job...your business...your beauty...your dog...your truck...*anything* that **you** have held up as more

important than God, has to be released without exception.

Satan and your own will has bound you up with these things and they must come second. It doesn't *necessarily* mean that God will take whatever your former idol was from you...but **if** He does, it **can't** be a problem to you or you didn't give it up. And if you choose wrong there is no question...you will lose it...maybe not immediately but ultimately and forever...No idols before God...Nothing.

Do you really think God is going to reward you with your idols if you choose death? LOL, perhaps He'll allow you that hell...but and if He does let it slide for a time...which He does at His will and discretion...it is because He has some other purpose in it or it's because your death is imminent anyway.

You must give up your ideas of yourself and allow God to make of you **and the people around you** (control freak!), what **He will**...Not what you think, **you** or they, should be. He is your CREATOR after all.

Creators have the right to do whatever they want...to prove it...make a pot...you can break it if you want. The alternative to God is eternal torture and death.

People often wonder why God promises eternal torture (hell) the answer is simple...it is your choice...that godhood/forbidden fruit we have all stolen deserves the ultimate penalty and comes with its own characteristics.

Hard to argue with Someone who can unquestionably enforce His will. Being locked in a fiery furnace is the best place for a rogue god. If you disagree...too bad...it's not a democracy or any other human or Satanic government!

One solitary **will**...remember. Choose life or choose death.

It's not about saying I choose life and then doing whatever you want as most "christians" assume, based upon getting away with it for so long in Babylon and elsewhere. It's about waiting and resting in the Lord...learning to become content with our circumstance, knowing that God put us there or allowed us to put ourselves there and won't move us until He is ready.

Whether it's prison or a bad marriage or a mean boss, an unrelenting lack of funds or real, true slavery with attendant abuse whether physical, sexual, verbal, mental, or all of the above, or a pleasant but seemingly meaningless life.

Whatever it is that you are dissatisfied with...is...simply, **good for you**. The more humbling that you submit to now, the less you may have later and the better you will fit into the perfect place that God has designed just for you. Whatever these things

are, they will grind, rasp, cut, form and shape you for the perfect purpose of God. Forgive it. And move on. In fact, all of these things are tools to form you and the people around you, regardless of how you may perceive them as evil (true or not). It's all a phenomenal workshop where God recreates man in His true image and spirit.

And rest assured that whatever your situation is, it is very near to changing completely and to most American "christians" abject sorrow, humiliation and degradation. Submit to the fiery furnace when it comes and live in God. God allows Satan and his demons to hedge us about sometimes (Daniel etc.) so that we can be reshaped and also to know and recognize the relief that we need and only God can provide.

It also allows us the opportunity to prove that we are of God by being content as Paul was, with little or plenty, or horrible abuse and physical death. The only real proof God requires is the gentle stillness and contentment with His will, that He sees in your heart. He can see it without your effort to "become righteous" via the law or via "grace" being an outlaw, or by your antics to impress the people around you.

If you are working really hard at it and stressing...you may have missed the point. You've engaged your own judgment of right and wrong to decide what behavior constitutes righteousness. Failure has been accomplished. Just relax. Thank God. Give Him the glory. Stop striving for *whatever (except God)*...even if it's tonight's dinner. Wait on God. Let Him initiate whatever it is that **He** wants. If it's hunger tonight, then thank God and pray His will be done that you might learn to submit in ANY circumstance. And perhaps...it's time for a spiritual feast with the wife and kids.

If you start/ed **something** (your business or whatever) by force of your own will...well then uh...it's clearly garbage whatever **it** is. That doesn't mean **you** should trash it...wait on God. Relax in the harness you've given yourself, it's the harness you need. And God may have His own purposes in it...far be they from you or your understanding. The time for waiting will be over when He decides it will be. Anything you try to force between now and then is guaranteed to be built on the wrong foundation.

Continuing on, God started off His punishment for "original sin" in the form of curses (punishment). Remember the review I mentioned at the beginning of this paper about Christ's sacrifice. Well that fits in here directly among these curses. The death curse is in fact the first and last curse that He gave. The first from the standpoint that God said "from the day that you eat of

it you shall **surely die**” and last from the standpoint that Adam and Eve had to leave before **the sword was placed** between them and the tree. Remember that it WAS God who cursed all men unto death for that first trespass. That death was given in the form of the sword which stands between us and the tree of life until the judgment. If you don't pass by the sword within the will of God; you get to be passed through by the sword until dead. This is much the same as the death angel of Egyptian fame. In fact, the cherubim in Genesis are indeed likely to have been one of the same. I have no doubt that those cherubim hold a distinct role in the Revelation but that is another story.

Anyway, God cursed all men to soul death at the time Adam and Eve sinned. Just who said in the day that you eat of it you shall **surely die**? That death remained until Christ came and “passed over” or “saved” us. It is real whether the example is blood on the lintel or the spirit of God within us. But **ONLY** if we are in **His will!**

It is a fantastic idea to go back through exactly what the sacrifice of Christ means after understanding all of this. I think we have largely understood the sacrifice but it has more impact and clarity when you realize that Christ was saving you from His own sword and our foolishness. Amazingly He is/was protecting us with the sword too. His word and His righteousness required the sword to be placed in order to prevent total never ending confusion pain and ugliness throughout the universe. The sin caused a lot of problems and God in His righteousness gave the curses to us so that we might learn who He is and how to live with Him.

Like an adult playing a game of checkers with a 3 year old. He put us on the board and we made bad moves from the first. But He has been smarter all along and countered our every move and found a perfect way to help us win regardless of our atrocious skills and total lack of understanding of the game. Incredible.

The rest of the curses started off with the most guilty party first, in this case, the instigator – the serpent whom it's pretty clear was cast down to the earth to stay as of this point. No more heaven.

Next, to the woman who was cursed with insecurity, sorrow and was specifically given under subjection to man and incidentally developed a severe and recurring pain in the whoopdeedoo. Being under man's **rule** wasn't originally part of Adam and Eve's marriage. Helper yes, subjection and total submission no. That subjection was a curse that sticks to this day, regardless of how women generally try to throw it off.

In fact, trying to throw it off just makes it that much worse for everyone. This curse came as a change in basic nature and manifests largely in the form of insecurity and fear. A weakness that is generally recognized by everyone and that God (as a curse) intended to be relatively and naturally exploitable by men. The only counsel I would give here is to be quiet, submit, accept **God's punishment as just** (man didn't invent or even suggest this) and **obey your husband as God**, according to what Paul said, lest God removes him and places you under something so much worse that you can't even recognize it as a replacement for your husband and marriage. Ladies, if you temporize or rationalize here you are lost. Face it, everyday if necessary, and repent. If you still have doubts about this...ask yourself why did God say “and women shall rule over you”...with such obvious contempt when speaking about the end time? It is because God made it one way and man/woman/Satan turned it upside down like we always try to do. The choice itself is simple...deny, chafe and die or accept, submit and live. Your will has to go.

And men, LOVE your wife FIRST, **gently**, as God loved us first, before we loved Him! She won't generally turn it around unless you do...you **are** the leader following Christ...and even if she doesn't turn it around, praise God and continue following God regardless of a rebellious, contentious wife; obviously you **need** a buzzsaw to grind down some parts of you that God doesn't want or to strengthen some parts that are weak.

When you succeed in following God's will, she cannot help but recognize it to life or to death. You can't choose for her and she can't choose (of herself) to walk alone without dying. Women if you have a problem with this...ask yourself if the bride of Christ will **EVER** disobey her Husband in the Kingdom. The answer is positively NO! And, that's what **you** are striving for. Just because your husband is not perfect doesn't mean you don't have to obey him. Who cares if you are smarter or naturally lead better or just don't like it. Either way, you definitely aren't perfect either. It's not a tit for tat situation on either side. If your marriage is a competition then you are both responsible to stop competing, whether the other one does or not. Before God a wife's duty is to follow her husband (with VERY VERY limited exceptions concerning unbelievers, like maybe your husband trying to take you to a swingers bar – once again not law but not behavior that you should involve yourself). It is highly uncomfortable, but necessary to sacrifice your will to your husband and by extension to Christ. Men...do you really think God is going to shoo you into the kingdom if you don't love your wife

as He loves us? Christ is **NOT** selfish nor is He unnecessarily harsh! Who are **you** supposed to be submitting to? How is Christ going to treat His bride? The fact is that God was clear about man and wife being one flesh. One single entity. They should be one in spirit too. One with God! It's a training ground for the Kingdom. 'Nuff said for now.

Lastly, we go on to our hero Adam for whom farmers everywhere have developed an undying painful, stickery, weedy, sweat. A sweat I would not personally attempt to trade in on a loan of a million dollars worth of tractors and a bunch of carcinogenic pesticides...the curse still won't go away you'll just have a greasier, more painful, stickery, weedy sweat and a million dollar loan to default on and worry about, as well as pancreatitis. This curse doesn't just apply to farmers...it applies to all the works of the hand of man. It bites us in our wages and in our work conditions, taxes and in the exposure to horrible chemicals, space shuttle crashes and on to the genetically engineered horrors they are feeding us everyday. It bites us in our marriages when we fight about finances. It is pervasive and it is still God's punishment for this "original" sin. And it is part of your new garden of Eden. Smile and enjoy. Shocking sometimes, how God views our circumstances.

One thing to note about all of these curses. They hit the person God assigned them to first and foremost and then they all come around and whack everyone else again and again. And then again, like a three stooges slap.

Childbirth scares and freaks men out as well...and PMS...aargh...and women fall into cactus and get burrs in their socks also and have to clean up after their husbands dirty, stinky, sweaty butts. And, lets face it, ruling over woman is no picnic.

As to the curses bestowed upon the devil...yep they come right back around too. Snake bites being the least of them. The worst of them being we have to inhabit the same planet with the devil, no respite except the Lord.

Curses aside...the early sewing industry was a failure...so God made them some better clothes for the long journey out of their climate controlled garden. They probably would have died from just the temperature shock...

It is also almost amusing to note that Adam was so busy guilting, sewing and justifying that he didn't even have the presence of mind to run his butt over to the tree of life, grab some fruit and choke it down quick (would've ended up Satan 2.0...but...). Actually, it was God's presence of mind to prevent it, but the point is made that even with perfect human intellect and the "enlightened self interest" of that horrible (to man)

tree, man is still **totally** incompetent without God. Even still, I suspect one direct disobedience was enough for Adam at that point at least for a while. Satan and his machinations always fail even when they seem like they don't.

Closing notes:

Both of the Trees were literally in the garden of Eden but as much as those trees were physically in front of Adam and Eve at that time, it should be obvious by now that they are also simple metaphors for the basis of the decision making process in our heads. The presence and absence of a part of how we individually make decisions. The tree of life itself comes with a whole suite of additional benefits to offset the "loss" of self will/opinion. The short list is *"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law"* er sword.

The biggest single advantage of course, is the Spirit of God, The Comforter, The Holy Spirit. Which is the Power of God and rightly divides for us that which we **MUST NOT** divide for ourselves. And this is why the spiritual man judges all things; for God judges all things. Tread softly within God's footprints.

It is also important to note that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not in and of itself evil. It is simply a tree that NO ONE but God the Father should ever touch. And though Jesus Christ does have direct access to it, being evidenced by the discussion in Genesis. It is because He was a part of God from the beginning. Christ voluntarily submitted/s His will to God the Father prior to anything, creation, Satan or man. Christ did not form His own will separate from God even though He had the opportunity. He is a true son in every sense. The alpha and omega. He is more than us in all ways and proved it yet again, by following His Father's will voluntarily in human perfection, blood notwithstanding, and saving us from ourselves, Satan and the law.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is a horrible evil for man (angels too obviously), but, it is a matter of perspective. Like chocolate for dogs. Tasty death. But for humans unreservedly, fantastic. Similarly with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, man and God.

God set the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden of Eden and started this whole plan from before day one as a measure of His wisdom. But make no mistake that it is solely and completely **HIS tree ONLY** (thus it's location in the center) and will remain so for eternity. Satan and man stole from the tree but we were all told VERY specifically never to even touch it. Far worse than a

hot stove. And guess what? There are the most serious consequences seemingly without end. That first mistake is, in fact, the worst mistake possible. Until it is corrected in your life, the flow of the spirit of God, by nature, must be extremely limited. God in His ultimate wisdom will drive us out of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil if we won't make a few baby steps to follow Him and get out under the power of His loving hand. It has been prophesied at least a thousand ways.

Read again the parable of the prodigal son. We are all prodigal, a thing we fail to realize, and we have all left God save Christ Jesus and He won't get an attitude. If we don't return, then every single one of us will end up guilty and condemned for one and all sins from Adam to the resurrection.

We must spurn the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and eat of that one good tree of Life in naked ignorant bliss to the world and self, following in perfect obedience to the will of The Lord our Saviour, the Way and the Truth and the Life, Jesus Christ who came not to bring peace but a sword. Amen