

Moravian Women's Association – Devotional Paper - September 2024

On The Journey Together

All journeys have a beginning and an end and here we are once again at the beginning of a journey through the MWA year, following our chosen theme 'On the Journey Together.' All of you reading this paper are somewhere on the journey of life and I am guessing that most of you, if not all, are also on the journey of faith, a journey which has become an integral part of your life journey.

September's paper is going to take us right back to the beginnings of our faith as we look together at some verses from the book of Genesis. 'Genesis' means the origin or beginning of something which seems an appropriate place to begin our theme. The creation story as related in Genesis chapter two, offers us some answers to the fundamental question: Why are we here?

Read Genesis 2: 4b - 7 and 15 - 17.

The human is brought to life with God's own breath – we come from dust but amazingly the life we receive is divine life. We are a part of God and God's story. We are given freedom but with responsibilities and boundaries. The responsibility is to care for creation. The boundary is to respect that there is a tree which is for God alone and we are to respect that which is God's alone.

Read Genesis 2: 18 - 22.

God acknowledges the need for 'man' to have an appropriate companion and 'woman' is created. Humans are made to be in relationship and community and we can only find personal fulfilment and wholeness in community – together.

This passage has often been used to justify male superiority, suffice to say that the Hebrew words used in this passage provide no justification for anything other than partnership on equal terms.

Read Genesis 3: 6 - 10.

And now disaster! I am always struck by the incredible image of intimacy of the relationship between God and humans when we read that God is walking in the garden. That this intimate relationship has been spoilt is immediately apparent to Adam and Eve as they hide themselves in shame from God. God calls out; "Where are you?" An alternative translation could be: "What have you been up to?" How sad and poignant are those words. We can hear God's sorrow that the intimate relationship God wanted with humans, indeed the relationship we were created for has been marred by human disobedience. Adam and Eve are exiled from the Garden of Eden, humans are exiled from the close relationship with God which was originally planned.

As Adam and Eve realise they are naked, they can no longer face each other. Their ability to relate to each other is damaged and so human relationships down the ages are spoilt.

Of course, as Christians we believe that the story above is not the final story for our lives. In love, God sent Christ to redeem us to enable us to regain our relationship with both God and others. And for this we should be truly thankful.

Questions to consider

1. Think about who you are – the family you were born into, the family you created, your cultural background, your natural gifts – perhaps you could share this with the Circle.

2. The creation story says certain things about us:

We were God's idea
Our time on earth is limited
We were created to be social to be in community
We are lives in progress
We are free but responsible
We are divine – a part of God
We are in exile – separated to some extent from God

Do any of these statements particularly strike you? Why?

Some thoughts in this paper are taken from: 'Spirituality Workbook' by David Runcorn (2006).