

Their eyes were opened

- **Introduction to the Genesis Story**
 - Questions about the reality, historicity, and literal interpretation of Genesis stories.
 - Diverse views within the church on interpreting these stories.
- **Personal View on Genesis**
 - Non-literal interpretation to avoid unproductive questions.
 - Genesis stories reveal human purpose, the nature of the world, and the character of God.
- **Comparison with Ancient Myths**
 - Other ancient creation stories depict gods as warring beings using humans for their battles.
 - In Genesis, God creates humans to tend and make His creation fruitful.
 - Biblical humans produce food for themselves, not as slaves for gods.
- **Human Vocation in Genesis**
 - Humans are placed in the garden to till and tend it, highlighting creativity and sustaining life.
 - Permission to enjoy the world and its fruits.
 - Prohibition of eating from the tree of knowledge as a reminder of human limitations and dependence on God.
- **Temptation and the Fall**
 - The serpent misleads Adam and Eve about the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit.
 - The core issue is the lack of trust in God and the desire to become like gods.
 - Eating the fruit symbolises human rebellion, self-sufficiency, and determination to exclude God.
- **Consequences of the Fall**
 - The opening of Adam and Eve's eyes leads to shame, self-consciousness, and alienation from God and each other.
 - The fruit, meant to symbolise life and goodness, becomes a symbol of sin and rebellion.
- **Restoration through Jesus**
 - Parallel with the Emmaus story where the disciples' eyes are opened upon recognizing the risen Jesus.
 - The act of breaking bread symbolises reversing the sin of Adam and Eve.
 - Holy Communion as a celebration of grace, mercy, and the renewal of creation.

Questions:

1. What are the implications of reading these stories as allegorical rather than historical? How does this affect our understanding of human nature and our relationship with God?
2. What does the unique portrayal of God and humanity in Genesis tell us about the Judeo-Christian understanding of the divine and human purpose?
3. According to the sermon, Genesis describes human beings' purpose as tending and making the world fruitful. How can this idea be applied to modern life? In what ways can we fulfill this vocation today?
4. How do you understand the balance between freedom and obedience in your own life? How does this story influence your view of human limitations?
5. The story of the fall highlights the theme of trust in God versus the desire for self-sufficiency. How does this theme manifest in contemporary issues of faith and morality? Can you identify situations in your own life where trust in God is challenged?
6. How does the resurrection of Jesus transform the meaning of "having our eyes opened" compared to Genesis 3:7? In what ways can this transformation impact our self-image and our relationship with God and others?