

A Change of Address

Scripture: Genesis 3:1 – 12

Jan. 12th, 2025

How many of you have ever had a change of address? Maybe a better question - Has anyone never had a change of address? For those of you that have had a change of address, can anyone give me the address of all your changes?

I can still remember all of my addresses - 1237 Park Avenue in Williamsport, 17 Hoover Road in Williamsport, 722 Persimmon Tree Apartments in Dover Delaware, 302 Sherman St. In Muncy, 152 West Water St. In Muncy, 105 Center St. In Millville and 37462 Pettinaro Drive in Ocean View DE.

Please understand that this message is not one in which I am giving to inform you that I am seeking a change of address. I am very happy to stay with you a while longer at BBCC (DOC)!

But my original address and your original address are the same. We both start at the same address. Does anyone know our original address? It was in the garden! It was in the Garden of Eden, often called paradise. Let me explain:

We all have our original address in the Garden – The Garden Center in Paradise. Look at our original address. It was located in a wonderful neighborhood full of vegetation and wild life. It was a wonderful place in which perfection seemed possible. Our original address was the kind of place that you could sit on your front porch and smile all day. It was beautiful and it was perfect.

It was so perfect that the builder of the neighborhood was your neighbor - God. When we woke up, God was right next door. We could wave at God and wish him a good morning. Every day either God would invite us over for dinner or we would invite God over. It was perfect!

At our original address there was a tree planted squarely between our house and God's house. The tree stood at the front corner of our lots. The tree was always visible. In the morning, while waving good morning to God, there stood a tree right at the corner of our property and God's property.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life and death stood right in front of us. This tree was always in our line of sight. When we would walk next door to invite God over, we would have to walk in the shade the tree. God planted the tree right in the middle of our neighborhood.

God told us not to eat the fruit of this tree. Our original address was perfect but the tree stood there tempting us always!

When did our original address change? When did the fall from grace take place?

In our scripture reading from Genesis, we have the eating of the apple. Eve ate the apple from the tree. Then she gave it to Adam to eat. Many of you would probably say that this is when the fall from grace took place. When Adam & Eve ate the apple from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and life and death - that is when our address was changed.

If this is what you think, I think you are wrong! The time of our fall from grace was not at the eating of the apple, it happened a little later. The time of our change of address happened a little later.

Our change of address started when God ask - 'Where are you?' God did not ask this because he did not know where we were. God knows geography and he does not need a geography lesson. God know all things, so this question is not given out of the lack of knowledge.

This question is ask so that Adam & Eve have a chance for forgiveness. God offers Adam and Eve a way out so that they could stay in the garden. God still wants Adam and Eve to stay with him, so God ask the question - 'Where are you?'

The change of address for Adam and Eve starts when they answer him. The fall from grace starts when they answer him.

Look at what they did. They heard the sound of God, the one who had been their companion in the garden, and they hid from God in a group of trees. When God said - 'Where are you?' Adam said he was afraid of God because he was naked even though God and Adam were together a 1000 times before.

But God gives Adam another chance to stay in the garden. God gives Adam another chance to not fall from grace. God ask a second and a third question - 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?' God is trying to allow Adam and Eve a way out from disobeying him. God is looking for Adam and Eve to ask for forgiveness. But they chose not to. Adam and Eve start playing the blame game.

Adam goes first in the blame game. Adam blames Eve and in a roundabout way, he also blames God because he put Eve here. Adam takes no responsibility for his actions. He simply points the finger of blame at others!

God, for one final time now turns to Eve and ask her a question - 'What is this you have done?' Eve is given the final opportunity to ask God for forgiveness and not cause a change of address for her and Adam. But she also plays the blame game. Eve says - 'The serpent deceived me and I ate the fruit.'

With this statement, Adam & Eve have sealed their change of address. Their address was no longer going to be the Garden of Eden!

Our original address was also changed on that day and we have from that time forward tried to return to our original address. It was not until Jesus came to us that our returning to our original address was possible.

Christ came to us and showed us the way. Christ came to us and opened the gate to the garden. Christ came to us and gave us the forgiveness that Adam and Eve did not use. Christ came to us and put paradise within our grasp again!

There is a song – ‘Do you know the way to San Hosa’. Well for us - there is a song – ‘I know the way to the garden.’

Let us pray:

Dear God we thank you for your Son. We thank you for the fact that through Jesus we have access once more to the paradise that Adam and Eve lived in for some time. We are sorry at times when we do not ask for your forgiveness and we play the blame game. Let us re-establish our original address in the Garden.

We pray this in the name of the One who has shown us the way -
Jesus Christ. AMEN.