

Sermon Title: **When We Were Created**

Bible: Romans 5:6-8, Genesis 1:27-28 & 2:7

Where & When: Sunday Worship Service at Gilroy UMC on March 10th, 2019

Audience: about 40 English-speaking Church Members

## **Opening Prayer**

Emanuel God, you are always with us. In this Lent season, we would like to be with you more and deeper. We are hungry for your grace and love. In Jesus' name.

Amen!

## **1. 2019 Lent Has Started**

*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.* As of this past Ash Wednesday, our 2019 Lent has started. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday, and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent is the season of spiritual preparation before the Easter celebration. Many Christians observe Lent by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, self-denial, and almsgiving; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. Some people do fasting, giving up things like chocolate or soda. Some of my friends decide not to do social media during Lent, such as facebook. The purpose of all of these is to build a deeper relationship with God alone.

On Ash Wednesday, we usually focus on sin and death. We use ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance. We cannot live forever. We came from dust, and we will return to dust. We are just a tiny speck, compared to this huge universe. Our lives are a very short period of time in a long history. We have a beginning and an end. In Jewish and Christian history, ashes are related to mourning and repentance. Matthew 11:11 says “they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” We are imperfect. We confess our sins as we face our sins. We are weak. We are hurt and cry out, when we face others’ sin and social injustice. Unfortunately or fortunately, I know my sins. It is impossible to deny this, because there are many. And I know that our societies are not that good in many ways.

## **2. Original Sin?**

Have you heard of Original Sin? Romans 3:23 says that “since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” So, today’s first scripture reading says “while we still were sinners, Christ died for us.” I agree that we are all sinners. I really appreciate God’s love, Jesus Christ’s cross and the resurrection. God came to us not for punishment, but for grace and mercy. God heals us, restores us, and saves us!

However, when I read the story of the first ‘sin’, or so-called the story of ‘original sin’, I do not like it. In the first book of the Bible, Genesis has the story of the first ‘sin’ in chapter 3. Adam and Eve had lived in Eden, the most beautiful garden. The serpent (or the snake) tricked the woman and the man to disobey God. Because they ‘sinned’, God’s punishment followed. In the idea of the original sin, because our first human beings had sinned, we, decedents, would be sinners and would also sin. I understand this story, but I do not like it.

### **3. Original Blessing!**

At my Seminary, I had to learn about this story again. But it is from very different perspectives. One of them is the perspective of Priest Matthew Fox, who wrote a book, “Original Blessing.” I love this perspective a lot, so I would like to share it with you. The story of the original sin is in chapter 3. But in chapter 1 and 2, we read about the creation of human beings. We are reading some parts of these stories today. “God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them...” “the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.” We are the image of God. The

breath of God is in us. We are all Children of God, before sinners. Children of God are the first and original identity!

Yes, we are sinners. But before that, we are all God's people!

Yes, we might have the original sin. But we are originally blessed. There is an original blessing first!!!

#### **4. When We were Created, the Breath of God...**

It is true that we are dust. We might be nothing. But when we were created, God formed us in God's image. When we were created, the breath of God came into us.

We are no longer nothing. We are something special and unique. When I feel stress, to relieve stress, I eat a lot. Even though I am full, I would like to eat more.

Although I know that eating cannot satisfy me, it is hard to stop eating sometimes.

We are more important and bigger than the whole universe. Even if I can eat all of the food in the world, it cannot satisfy my soul. Only God's love, God's grace can satisfy and fill my soul, and gives me the peace that the world cannot provide.

When we were created, God's presence, God's love and grace were there. And the Spirit of God is still within us, among us, and in our community. God always pours out God's grace to us, even though we do not know God, even though we are not able to see God. God transforms us when we accept God's love and grace. God is

with us, when we serve others and our societies. The grace of God - undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God - is in our lives all the time - already, now, and forever - through the Holy Spirit.

Sisters and Brothers, just relax and feel the breath of God. Please remember that we are dust. But God is coming into the dust! The breath of God is creating us anew. Just feel the breath of God!

### **Closing Prayer**

We remember when we were created, God was there. God's breath, God's presence, God's love is here and now as well. We are all your people and your children. In Jesus' name. Amen!

### **Possible Qs.**

1. Do you like the idea of the Original Sin? Why or Why not?
2. Do you like the idea of the Original Blessing? Why or Why not?