

Q. Did Adam sin out of love for Eve?

A. "He gave up immortality to share death with the woman he loves." It's a great tagline for an epic love story about Adam and Eve, but is it true? Many think it is, and they see a parallel between Adam giving up his life for Eve, and Jesus Christ dying for His bride, the body of believers. But there are flaws.

Christ never sinned, but took on Himself the sins of His bride to save her from eternal death. Adam committed his own sin, did not save Eve or anyone else, and brought sin and death on the human race. Jesus' act was the epitome of trusting obedience; He completely believed that God would resurrect Him from death and save His bride. Adam's act was the epitome of disobedience; God put him in a paradise and told him he could eat the fruit of any tree except one, and the fruit from that one tree is the fruit he chose to eat.

That's not all. Genesis 3:6 indicates that Adam was right there with Eve when she ate the forbidden fruit: "... she took some of its fruit, and ate; and she gave some to her husband *with her*, and he ate it, too" (emphasis mine). Yet, he did nothing to stop Eve, and he seems to have instantly gone along with her suggestion to eat some of it himself. That is not the behavior we would expect from Jesus, who always rejected temptation (Hebrews 4:15).

Further, on the Cross, Jesus—although He was truly innocent and had been falsely accused and crucified—said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Love covers sins (Proverbs 10:12; 1 Peter 4:8) and bears and endures all things (1 Corinthians 13:7). Is this what we see in Adam? No. When God asked him whether he had eaten from the tree God had commanded him not to eat from, Adam's response was, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it" (Genesis 3:12). Adam didn't say, The buck stops here. He didn't say, I'm responsible for my family. He didn't say, Please forgive us, Father. His reaction was to put the blame on Eve, and, by implication because He gave her to him, put the blame on God. That's not love. That was a cowardly response stemming from Adam's innate selfishness.

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Did Adam sin out of love for Eve? No. True love would have driven him to stop her, and if Adam were unable to do that, he would have interceded with God on her behalf instead of joining her in her sin. If Eve was in any way an influence in Adam's eating the forbidden fruit—and it's by no means certain that she was (and she most certainly wasn't responsible for it)—then it would seem that his eating the fruit after she did was, perhaps, an indication of an unhealthy relationship in which Adam was trying to please his wife and do anything to win her approval. But when God caught them, like thieves falling out, Adam was very quick to betray Eve. Thus, his action, rather than selfless, was selfish.

If God intends that we see a relationship between Adam's sin and Christ's atonement, it must not be one of parallelism but of polarity. The two cases are diametrically opposite: one was sinful, the other sinless; one was the start of sin, the other its end; one was selfish, the other selfless; one was disobedient to a deserved death, the other obedient to an undeserved death (Philippians 2:8).

The account of Adam and Eve is not an epic love story. It is a tragedy of human weakness.

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