I Believed, Therefore I Spoke.

By Rev. Sheryl Stewart

Genesis 3:8-15 2 cor. 4: 13: - 5:1 Mark 3: 20- 35 Psalm 116

**Summary: Adam points to Eve, Eve fingers the snake; to whom will we point, except to our Savior?**

“Cognito ergo sum:” though my philosophy is as weak as my Latin, I know that phrase puts forth one of the great proofs of both humanity and reality. “I think therefore I am.” It falls short for me, though, and I prefer, “I believed, therefore I spoke.” Don can give you the Latin later.

This sermon carries on from the Pentecost theme of being given tongues to speak the wonderful deeds of God. It also ties in to both Mother’s Day and looks ahead to next week, when Don will celebrate Father’s Day. We tend, on those special days, to think of the Commandment, “Honor your father and Mother,” and we think that doing this means to do nice things for them or show them respect. However, I think there is something more profound which we can do.

Have you ever seen a child or young adult dressing or acting badly, or both at once? I will wager this thought enters your mind: “Who are the parents of this thug? They must be awful people to raise an inconsiderate lout like this!” The character of the parents is reflected in their children; hence, the best way to honor your mother or father is to be a good person and live a decent life.

One of the most telling arguments atheists have is pointing out the flaws in Christians and saying, “I won’t believe in any god whose followers do or say nasty stuff like this!” I will always have imperfections that God mockers might use for fodder, but at the core of my life is that Pentecost reality, “I believed, therefore I spoke.”

The Genesis story reminded me of that country song Rev. Jim shared once, “It’s not my fault!” There, you see it: “Not me, it was that woman You gave me!” Adam says. “Not me, it was that snake!” Eve protests. Every Mom and Dad knows the real culprit for anything that goes wrong is a live-in poltergeist named, “Not Me!” I’ve done it, too. When I broke the kitchen window swatting flies at my aunt’s farm, I ran around the barn to hide but found all the hay had been harvested, leaving me no hiding place! When I trudged back, there was Aunt Barb smacking the guilty, rolled up newspaper in her hands and asking me, “DO you know who did this?”

“A bad girl did it, Aunt Barb! She just ran behind the barn!” Somehow, she figured that out, but she still loved me, it is pretty much the same way with God.

Paul, who certainly had enough in his past that made people doubt and fear him, changed his life’s direction on the road to Damascus. Coming to faith, he wrote the title of today’s sermon, “I believed, therefore I spoke.” He shows God’s character in his character and we can see his ultimate destination in the movement of his life, even while he is physically in chains.

People can always find fault and suspicion in us. Even Jesus found his family coming to do an intervention and bustle him out of the dangerous public eye because he was “acting crazy!” He could not stop and said His truest family are those who do God’s will, despite the cost.

So, there it is and here we are after so many Pentecost celebrations, so many Mother’s and Father’s Days. What will come out of our lives? Will our lives speak of God and show God to be loving and honorable? Adam blamed his failings on Eve and even on God, who gave her to him. Eve fingered her tempter, trying to excuse that she was successfully tempted. Jesus, who could have stood alone, pointed to God as the source of His perfect life. Because of Jesus, I don’t need to excuse my blame, and I choose to point to Him, the life where God meets me, puts my feet on the road to heaven, and walks with me all the way home.

May this be the same for all of you. As you believe, so may you live!