

What is the difference between Adam and Eve and Mary? There are a number of them but there is a big one I will get to in a little bit. First though, I'll set the stage by looking at the reading from Genesis. How did Adam and Eve sin? They ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the one tree they were forbidden to eat from. Why did God not want them to know about good and evil? That seems like information that would be good to have. One reason is that God wanted Adam and Eve to rely entirely upon him and to trust that he would take care of all their needs. Until the serpent slithered his way onto the scene, Adam and Eve did trust God. The serpent caused them to doubt God's goodness when he asked Eve, "Did God really say, don't eat from that tree...you won't die. God knows you will become like him." That statement caused Adam and Eve to doubt that God had their best interests at heart. Still, why would God not want anyone to have knowledge of good and evil? The Hebrew noun for knowledge comes from the Hebrew verb to know, which is *yada*. *Yada* can have a range of meanings including to know something by deep, intimate experience. The most extreme form of this meaning is when the bible tells us that Adam *knew* his wife and she conceived a son and named him Cain. God does not want us to have a deep, intimate experience of evil. There is also the danger that this type of knowledge can give us power over and make us think we can decide for ourselves what is good and evil; if you wonder why the world is so messed up, that's the reason; we decide for ourselves what is good and evil.

Adam and Eve doubted God's goodness and sought to decide for themselves what is good and evil. How did Mary respond to a very confusing statement that she would have a son? She trusted. After getting clarification about how she could become pregnant since she had no relations with a man, she trusted in God's plan and said yes, "may it be done to me according to your will." Adam and Eve doubted God's goodness; Mary trusted and accepted God's plan.

Those are huge differences between Adam and Eve and Mary. They can easily be applied to our own lives—how trusting are we of God? Are we open to his plan for our lives? Do we desire to decide for ourselves what is right and wrong, good and evil? If you follow a political, or any other ideology, ideology that is at odds with the teaching of the Church, you are walking in the footsteps of Adam and Eve, not Mary.

There is another huge difference between these sets of parents. When speaking of Mary's reaction to the annunciation, Bishop Robbert Barron likes to make a distinction between the egodrama and theodrama. Adam and Eve were

seeking the egodrama; they wanted to be in control, the story was all about them. Mary, on the other hand, had found her place in the theodrama, God's story. Our stories might be good and important to ourselves, but God's story is the greatest story and it is the one in which we can find our greatest fulfillment.

God prepared Mary in a very special way for the role he was asking her to play through her immaculate conception, which means SHE was not contaminated by the sin of our first parents. God has not given us that same grace, but he has prepared us for our special roles in ways that are unique to ourselves.

What role is God asking you to play in his story?