

Genesis 3:1-7 The Fall of Man

03/26/17

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

(Pastor prays)

The easiest path to trouble, alienation, discord and strife, the easiest path to the temptation of sin is that of instant gratification.

We see a thing, have a want, commit a sin and then feel regret. It’s a pattern as old as our very first parents and a problem as real as the Lord Jesus being nailed to a cross. In our text this morning what we have is the common foundation for every sin that has ever been committed and every war that has ever been fought. Every heated argument, or lustful glance finds its root right here in a conversation.

Today we watch as Eve, the mother of all living, talks to Satan, the father of all dying, and this conversation introduces sin and the need for a Savior; but not a Savior from Satan as much as a Savior from self. In the text, the serpent never denies the goodness of God. He simply sows small seeds of doubt. This passage reminds us that...

Our Biggest Problems Are Our Own Sinful Selves

There is plenty here, but I’ll keep it to one point today.

There Is a Predictable Method to Sin

It's almost always the same. The narrative opens with a description of the serpent. Revelations 20:2 says, *the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan.* Genesis 3:1 says, *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.* The serpent was more clever, astute, cunning and aware. He is discerning. He can read body language and tone of voice. He is not clairvoyant, he is just super aware. He is aware of every chink in the armor of your soul. And the best way to cause you to sin is to cast doubt.

He Casts Doubt on God's Love

Notice in verse 1, *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.* Moses, the narrator called God "the LORD God." That is a personal, close relationship. Satan talks to Eve and starts the question like this, "Has 'God' said?" He doesn't deny the goodness of God. He is simply sowing small seeds of distrust. In verse 1, the serpent drops the holy name of God in order to make Him seem more distant, more removed and less caring. Who here – what person sitting in this church-- hasn't at least at one time wondered, "If God loves me, why am I going through this?" You see, the very last thing that Satan wants any of us to embrace is the ocean of God's love found at the cross. It's why we love John 3:16 so much: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* What does Satan do? He casts doubt on God's love but He doesn't stop there.

He Casts Doubt on God's Word

Let me show you what I mean. In verse 1 again, *He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"* Do you see what he's done? He has reversed what God said back in Genesis 2:16, *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden,*

When the serpent is talking to Eve, he flips it over and says, "Did God *actually* say you may not eat of *any* tree in the garden?" Instead of being liberating, the serpent makes God sound like He is restricting them, like He is holding you back from something, like

He isn't really interested in you being the best you. And the little phrase, "Has God said?" smuggles in the assumption that God's word is subject to our judgment instead of us being subject to what God's word says.

And you'll notice what Eve starts to do. She speaks in verse 2. Let's pick it apart. By the way, in this passage, every time Satan says "you," it's plural. Eve was not alone. Adam was there. In verse 6 it says "she gave some to her husband who was *with* her." Eve had to be tempted subtly; but not Adam. She just said, "Here, eat this" and he ate it – no questions asked.

Let's go back to the dialogue. In verses 2-3, Eve fumbles in her response. Her attitude starts to change. In verse 2, she drops God's personal name too and then she minimizes God's blessings. God had said "you may eat of any tree in the garden." Then in verse 3 she adds to the restrictions, (*neither shall you touch it*) exaggerating, making God seem more harsh than He is. And suddenly, we don't see God as the provider. He seems like the oppressor. A distrust of God's word soon leads to disobedience to His command. So this is what Satan is going to do in our lives. He casts doubt on God's love for us. He questions the authority of God's word. But he presses even further.

He Casts Doubt on God's Motive

In verse 4-5 you have the serpent's word against God's word. So often the first doctrine to be denied is judgment and it's what is going on in verses 4-5. *4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

The serpent is now claiming that the sin will bring blessings, benefits and freedom. You are going to be like God. Isn't that what we want? Freedom? Freedom to determine for yourself what is right for you and what's wrong for you? So that God's not the judge of good and evil – you are. The temptation was then (and still is today) to break out of the constraints of God's authority.

But if you think you have escaped and have real freedom to choose your own way, you'll find out that you're not really free. You then are a slave. You will be in bondage to your own sin. Watch the tragedy of verses 6-7. *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired*

to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Look at the description of the fruit in verse 6: good for food, a delight to the eyes. It's desired to make one wise. It's the *something* that John would warn about in 1 John 2:15-16, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.*

Genesis 3:6-7 gives us a pattern of our sin. She saw, she took, she ate and she gave. Her decision gave priority to pragmatic values: what feels good, what looks good, what works. It's the same path we take. It's true, the easiest path to temptation is that of instant gratification. She took. She ate. So simple an act has created so terrible a problem and it started instantly.

Look at the effects of sin in verse 7. *Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.* Back in 2:25 they were naked and not ashamed but in 3:7 they were using fig leaves to cover themselves. How pathetic a covering for so great a sin. The impulse we have when we sin is a sort of self-protective, self-atoning one, some act to cover our sin.

Adam and Eve sinned and instead of being driven back *to* God, their sin drives them *away* from God. And that sin has been driving us away ever since. Our sin shows our need for a Savior. According to Ephesians 2:13, *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.* The cross reverses the curse, removes the shame and restores fellowship with God.

(Pastor explains The Lord's Supper and prays)