



The Fall – Genesis 3

Deep down, mankind is basically good. Deep down, mankind is basically evil. For centuries, people have argued about which of these two opposing statements is true. There is evidence is for both sides of the arguments.

This is the paradox of man – we are given a high position over creation and we are a dismal failure in our relationships with God, each other and the rest of God’s creation. We are that this is because of the event of Genesis 3. It is absolutely necessary to understand who we are in light of Genesis 3 to make sense of your life.

1. Temptation

In 3:1 we are introduced to the serpent. Who is the serpent?

Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 identifies the serpent as Satan. We are never told where he comes from. He is not eternal. He is powerful but he is not equal to God. He was part of creation but must have rebelled against God. Here we are only told what we need to know. That Satan exists.

The use of the serpent is typical of Genesis which describes actual events but uses symbolism as it does.

What does Satan do? He has a strategy.

a. Questions God Word

We see the question in 3:1. The answer to the question is no. He didn’t say that. The woman answers. In 3:2-3 Eve she starts well but she adds don’t touch.

b. Questions God’s goodness

In 3:4 Satan says God is a liar. Satan is calling into question the goodness of God. He makes God out to be a cosmic spoilsport. Satan is saying God only said what he said because he’s not for you. He causes Eve to doubt the goodness of God. This is a powerful temptation. We are tempted in the same way.

Either when you’re having a hard time or when you want to have a good time. Saying either why is God doing this to me or surely God wouldn’t want me to miss out on this. Satan is real and powerful. Satan appeals to many parts of her in 3:6. The emotions, the body and the mind. If you are like me some thing’s tempt you and others things don’t.

You need to know your weaknesses. What are your weaknesses?

Do you know them? Satan does. If you don’t them then Satan knows you better than you know yourself. If you don’t know them then you can’t guard yourself. Do you guard yourself?

Here’s a suggested strategy.

1. Know your weakness. 2. Know God’s Word. 3. Know God’s goodness in the Gospel.

2. Sin

We see in 3:6 the offer is too intoxicating. Eve ate the fruit. So does Adam. He should have known better. God gave him the command. V.17 will show he should have stopped not only himself but Eve as well.

Men have the responsibility. It doesn't mean Eve is any less guilty but the man is more responsible. This continues the pattern we have already seen God established in Genesis 1-2.

What have they done? What is wrong with eating a bit of fruit?

It is wrong because God told them not to: it was an act of blatant disobedience. BUT what is the tree? What is the knowledge of good and evil? Surely it is good to know the difference between right and wrong? Yes but the 'knowledge of good and evil doesn't just mean to know what is right and wrong.

It is to claim the right to decide what good and evil is. To have the wisdom only God can have.

Their sin is that of law making, not just law breaking. They are saying 'From now on God we want to decide what is right and wrong. Good and bad, beautiful and ugly, we are setting the standards by which we will live.' It is a claim to be God. They were rejecting his authority, his goodness and saying we want to be independent of God. We can know what is good and evil but not decide what is good and evil. Right and wrong. Sin is not just doing bad things. It is about who is God in your life. You or God.

SIN is rejecting God and his authority over your life and making yourself independent from Him.

This has been the nature of sin ever since. This brings a virus into the world that is passed on to every human since Adam. What they did we do.

Paul says this in **Romans 5:18-19**.

¹⁸"Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."

These are real events with real long lasting effects. We are all born in condemnation. We then express it. That is why you don't have to train children to be disobedient. You have to train them to be obedient. Sin is deeper than surface actions

Read what Jesus says **Mark 7:18-23**

¹⁸"Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? ¹⁹For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")

²⁰He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' ²¹For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.' "

Sin is from within a man's heart. This means our hearts are like lawn bowls that are waited to lean to one direction. We are waited by sin and our hearts are inclined to sin.

These are radical ideas. This is a radical truth. You know what your friends think when you say this. It is counter culture.

The common answer to the question what are we like is that we are basically good.

We aren't. If you don't believe this you'll either be too hard or too soft.

Too hard on yourself and be surprised when you do something wrong. Or judge people expecting everyone to be perfect.

Too soft on your self and not expect given the right opportunity you won't do things you could.

3. Consequences

God enters the scene and now appears not as Creator God but as Judge of his creation.

All relationships are affected:-

Man and God

In 3:6-10 God still seeks them out. They try to hide from God. They try and hide with a fig leaf. This is kind of comical. Their relationship with God is shattered.

Men and women

In 3:7 we are told their eyes are open. This is a metaphor. It is not as though before they were walking around with their eyes closed. This is a surprise in light of 2:17. I thought God said they'll die. This is death of a different kind that will lead to the physical kind. Physical death is not the worst kind of death. They suddenly realise the partner they have cannot be trusted. If that is the case they need to hide.

When something goes wrong they start blaming each other in 3:11-12. This is an even bigger indictment on the man because instead of speaking up when he should have he was silent and now when he does speak up instead of taking the responsibility he puts it on the woman he is suppose to stand up for.

The disharmony between man and woman is also in 3:16.

The word '*desire*' suggests a longing to take control over him. See 4:7.

He will rule over her no longer exercising his role in a loving, self-sacrificial way.

Man and creation

In 3:17-18 we see the harmony between people and the creation has ended. There is now a struggle to take care of it.

The climax of the consequences is that Adam and Eve are cast out of the Garden in 3:22-24. We see God's mercy in this. God doesn't want us to live in sin forever. If we die he then can bring us back to life and give us new life - a fresh start. From now spiritually they are dead, cut off from God's presence.

Solution

In 3:15 there is a prediction that at some point in the future a human offspring will cause the serpent's downfall as his head is crushed. Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that this is Jesus.

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

Jesus is the one who crushes the head of the serpent. By his death and resurrection, Jesus made it possible for us to be free from bondage to Satan. Jesus is the one who reverses the consequences of sin.

Like chicken pox sin is something that cannot be dealt with by covering up the symptoms that appear on the surface. The virus has to be dealt with.

Do you admit you are a sinner? That you have the problem of sin?

Have you turned to Jesus as the only solution to your problem of sin?

The only way to have the problem of sin dealt with is to turn to Jesus and trust in his death to free you from the bondage to sin.