

HUMANITY DISOBEYED GOD

CORE PASSAGE: GENESIS 3:1-7,15,21-24



CONTEXT

God created everything good: the sky, the land, the sea, the animals, and so forth. Then the writer of Genesis continued to recount in greater detail the creation of humanity. God formed Adam out of dust and placed him in the perfect garden of Eden. Adam was free to eat any fruit except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Then God introduced into His creation Eve, who would help Adam fulfill God's purposes. Blameless, they were naked without shame. However, this changed after Satan came on the scene in the form of a serpent to deceive and manipulate.

KEY CONCEPT

Sin results in shame, separation, and death.

As you examine Genesis 3:1-7,15,21-24:

- Identify lies Satan might use today to make us question God and His goodness.
- Think about how our view of God impacts our approach to repentance of sin.

TIMELINE

The Eternal God Creates Humanity (Genesis 1:26-2:25)

1: God Created Adam

3: God Gave One Prohibition: Do Not Eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

2: God Planted a Garden in Eden for Adam to Work and Watch Over

4: God Created Eve to Correspond to and Be a Helper to Adam

SESSION STUDY: The Fall of Humanity and Its Consequences (Genesis 3)

Daily Readings

☐ Day 1: Genesis 3:1-7

☐ Day 2: Genesis 3:8-13

☐ Day 3: Genesis 3:14-16

☐ Day 4: Genesis 3:17-19

☐ Day 5: Genesis 3:20-24

☐ Day 6: Psalm 6



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

SIN RESULTS IN SHAME (GENESIS 3:1-7).

Identify the questions and diversions presented by the serpent.

1 Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. 3 But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’” 4 “No! You will certainly not die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

The cunning serpent approached the woman with misdirection, raising a simple question about what God had prohibited. The question seemed harmless, but it caused the woman to focus on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In doing so, the serpent appealed to the woman’s pride and introduced doubts. The serpent built upon those doubts, raising questions about God and His intentions. We can blame Satan here, but disobedience always involves a choice—a choice of faith. Eve’s choice was to listen and continue the conversation with the serpent or trust God and focus on what the Lord had said. Often when we neglect our time in God’s Word, it is so much easier to fall into sin, especially if we doubt or misrepresent His truth. That was where Eve found herself.

LEADER NOTE: When humanity disobeys God, we are sinning and are choosing a wrong path for our lives. We sin when we are tempted by Satan as well as by our own fleshly desires and wants. And when we choose to sin because of those temptations, nothing good happens. We start to stray from God and His Word. If His Word is not in us, if we do not know what God has to say to us, we are more susceptible to sin, like Eve was. But God truly is good and wants good for us. He knows that when we obey Him, it will lead to blessing, fulfillment, and joy found in being in fellowship with Him. When we disobey, we sin, which then leads to shame.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

MAN: In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence, whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin.

What lies might Satan use today to make us question God and His goodness?

The woman, enticed by the serpent and the desirability of the forbidden fruit, chose to eat it. She gave some to Adam, and he ate as well. In this one act, they demonstrated a lack of trust in God and His good character. They viewed God as a tyrant, failing to see His protective hand and caring heart for His creation. They trusted what they could see, believing themselves to be wiser than God. In doing so, they brought upon themselves guilt, seen in the newfound shame they felt with being naked. They were enlightened but at the cost of their innocence. They needed to cover up what they had marred with their act of sin.

LEADER NOTE: The sin of Satan is pride and thinking that we are able to do things on our own. In this instance, thinking we can be like God and thinking we can cover our sin ourselves. But when we do try to act on our pride, we find our acts insufficient and our ways lacking. We eventually come to realize that only God is able and sufficient to do all things.

What protections might a person put in place to withstand temptations?

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“Remember that pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul’s peace and sweet communion with Christ; it was the first sin that ever was, and lies lowest in the foundation of Satan’s whole building, and is the most difficultly rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps in, insensibly, into the midst of religion and sometimes under the disguise of humility.”¹
—Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758)

Notes

SIN RESULTS IN SEPARATION AND DEATH (GENESIS 3:15,21-24).

Highlight words and phrases that point to God’s grace and mercy.

15 I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel. . . . 21 The LORD God made clothing from skins for the man and his wife, and he clothed them. 22 The LORD God said, “Since the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” 23 So the LORD God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove the man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

Confronting their rebellion, God declared that the serpent would move on its belly and eat dust (Gen. 3:14). Humanity would now be marked by experiences of pain and death, returning to the dust from which Adam was formed (vv. 16-19). And God also put hostility between the woman and the serpent and their respective offspring. Yet one offspring of the woman would take a hit from the serpent and simultaneously deal the crushing blow to the serpent (v. 15). This promise, often called the proto-evangelium—“the first gospel”—points ahead to the cross, where Jesus, in His sacrificial death, ultimately won the victory over Satan, sin, and death.

LEADER NOTE: Genesis 3:15 contains words of God’s curse upon the serpent for its role in deceiving and tempting the woman and the man in the garden of Eden. If we couldn’t already figure out the serpent’s identity, Revelation 12:9 and 20:2 make it clear that the ancient deceiving serpent is called “the devil and Satan.” According to Revelation 12, his goal was to devour the woman’s offspring, whom we know as Jesus, but unable to do so, Satan wages war against the church, comprised of the offspring who obey and believe in Jesus.

The redemption of humanity was God’s plan before He spoke forth the first ray of light on the first day of creation. Peter declared that the perfect Lamb was chosen before creation (1 Pet. 1:18-20). God had a plan in place prior to Adam and Eve’s rebellion that included His Son’s death, burial, and resurrection as the means of redeeming and restoring His good creation.

How would you describe a God who already had a plan in place for redeeming His creation?

Notes



The effort by the man and woman to cover their bodies with leaves fell short. So God clothed them with animal skins (Gen. 3:21), which involved the first sacrificial death to atone for their sin. God provided for Adam and Eve what they could not provide for themselves.

One more consequence was needed: the couple had to leave the garden and God’s presence (vv. 22-23). In their new sinful state, Adam and Eve had earned death and separation from God. But in cutting off their access to the tree of life, God made possible their redemption from sin and death. With God, death can give way to new and eternal life.

LEADER NOTE: In one sense, banishment from the garden was grace on God’s part. If humanity stayed in the garden with the ability to live forever, eating of the tree of life, they would be living with eternal sin, guilt, shame, and sorrow. God knew humanity wouldn’t be able to handle that. Physical death was now a reality, for good and for bad, as they left the garden.

Adam had failed to guard the garden from evil, so a new guard was required—cherubim, or holy angels (v. 24). And when God later gave instructions for the tabernacle, cherubim were woven into the veil that separated God’s presence in the holy of holies from the people. But after Jesus offered Himself as the final sacrifice for our sin on the cross, the veil was torn (Matt. 27:51). God now invites us into His presence and eternal life through faith in the Son.

How does our view of God impact our approach to repentance of sin?

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Sin and death entered the world through the action of one man, Adam, but the grace of God resulting in righteousness and life for all who believe came through the one man, Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:12-21).

Notes

ARRIVAL

ASK: As the group arrives, encourage them to record on a board the candy they find the most tempting. As they write, ask: What makes it so appealing to you?

CONTEXT

SAY: God is the Creator of all things good. And within His created order, there are rules and boundaries for our good, although we may not always see it. God formed Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden of Eden, blameless and without shame. They were in paradise and could eat of all the pleasures of the garden except one. Even with all the options before them, tempted by the serpent, they chose poorly. They trusted in the character of the wrong person and didn't trust in the character of the One who was for their good, and this resulted in dire consequences.

TRANSITION: After most have arrived, identify some common reasons given for the appeal of the candy selected. Comment that today's study looks at the temptation of sin and the consequences of falling to it.

RECAP

OUTLINE: On a board write, "The serpent approaches Eve." Invite the group to add the next step of the events found in Genesis 3, creating a story board or outline of the story as it unfolds.

SAY: God created the world and it was good. The crown of His creation was humanity, whom He created in His image and whom He gave the assignment of overseeing, or ruling, His creation. Note that Genesis 2 gives more details about the day on which He created the first couple, Adam and Eve. God provided the couple with purpose, food to eat, and a warning to avoid only one tree in His garden. Adam and Eve were blameless and innocent, but this innocence would end because of sinful choices that would impact all of God's creation.

TRANSITION: Our intent today is to analyze the characters involved in the events we just outlined.



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Notes

GROUP ACTIVITY

CHART: Direct your group to page 16 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find a table of the characters from our core passage. Recreate this table on a board in your room so you can record the group's findings as they interact with the Scripture text.

Personality Profilers

What four one-word descriptors would you use to identify each of the following?

ADAM

EVE

SERPENT

GOD

READ: Invite a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 3:1-7,15,21-24.

INSTRUCT: Create four teams to take on each character and provide four words that describe their assigned character based on Genesis 3:1-7,15,21-24. Encourage them to refer to the comments in the PSG for assistance and to reference verse numbers with their answers.

REPORT: After the teams finish, call for a volunteer to share the four words they selected and reasons why. Record the participants' conclusions along with the appropriate verse numbers in the table on the board throughout this activity. Encourage participants to record these in their PSG as well. Ask: "How did the personality of each impact the interactions that took place in Genesis 3?"

CONNECT: Looking at the first question on page 13 of the PSG ("What lies might Satan use today to make us question God and His goodness?"), invite the group to suggest ways Eve could have responded that might have helped her resist temptation. Ask the group if they agree with the quote from Jonathan Edwards, soliciting responses. Lead the group to identify protections they could put in place to withstand temptations.

Notes

DEBRIEF

Which voices do we listen to most in our lives, and which voices should we listen to most? Why?

SUMMARIZE

Call attention to the key concept for this session: Sin results in shame, separation, and death (PSG p. 17). Emphasize that God had a plan for redemption prior to creation. In His mercy, God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden for both their punishment and protection in order for redemption to occur. An animal was sacrificed to cover Adam and Eve, and likewise, Jesus covers our sin through His atoning death on the cross. Forgiveness and salvation are found only in Jesus.

HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Guide the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG. Specifically highlight the **Hands** section in this week's study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.

 **HEAD:** Some people dismiss the impact of the deceiving nature of sin, especially when faced with their own sin. A person may view their choice as a right as opposed to an opportunity to honor God. Others may view resisting a specific temptation as a badge that earns them a relationship with God, ignoring the pride involved in their reasoning. All sin brings shame, which further separates us from God, and leads to death.

What factors influence your view of sin and its results? How can you adjust your view of sin based on Genesis 3?

 **HEART:** We may not always grieve over sin and the shame it brings to us and others. We often minimize God's love for us, forgetting that through repentance we discover that God's heart is warm toward us and that He longs for us to be with Him. As a result, we fail to grieve over sin properly, continuing to believe the lie that God is holding out on us.

What keeps you from grieving sin in our world? How does grieving over sin reflect our love for others?

 **HANDS:** Since sin causes shame, separation, and death, we must turn to the gospel for restoration and redemption. The gospel empowers us to resist and flee temptation. That same gospel should be carried to all sinners, knowing that God offers them redemption through faith in Jesus.

How can you encourage others in your group to resist and flee temptation? How can you hold out the gospel to any person who falls to sin?

Notes

NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this week's session.

- Spend focused prayer time on Psalm 6. Compare verse 4 in different translations, providing a summary to the group. Encourage them to write a prayer following the prompts found in Praying Scripture on page 17 of the PSG.
- Examine your life looking for how surrendering to Jesus has removed the shame of sin.
- Hold one another accountable for resisting temptation, creating a plan based on the responses shared in the Hands discussion.

Lead the group in a time of prayer, focusing on Psalm 6:4. Thank God for His faithful love, expressing your gratefulness for His providing deliverance through His Son. Ask God to help you live in light of His deliverance through faith in His Son, seeking to resist temptation as a means to honor the Son.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

CLOSE: Pray with your group through Psalm 6 as you close.

References
1. Jonathan Edwards, quoted in Henry Rogers, Sereno Edwards Dwight, Edward Hickman, The Works of Jonathan Edwards, vol. 1 (London: W. Ball, 1839), xcvi.