



Shelby Christian Church

CORE 52: GETTING RIGHT WITH GOD - THE FALL

GENESIS 3, PROVERBS 16:18, JAMES 4:6, 1 JOHN 2:15-16 * 10/5/2025

MAIN POINT

The Fall

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been cited for a traffic violation? How did you feel when you first saw the blue lights in your mirror? Did you know what you had done?

Why do many people instinctively slow down when they see a police car?

The rules of the road are not very complicated. Stop signs mean that we are supposed to come to a complete stop before proceeding. The speed limit is clearly posted almost anywhere you drive. The rules of switching lanes are not complicated to grasp. Yet despite the fact that most traffic laws are easy to obey and are, in and of themselves, reasonable, most of us wind up getting the occasional ticket anyway. We all break the rules thinking that we are wiser than the rules, or that nothing bad will ever happen to us for flaunting them.

God gave mankind a paradise. Every single tree in the Garden of Eden was good for food (Gen. 2:16). Imagine a forest where every single tree had delicious fruit on it! Only one tree's fruit was forbidden, and of all the trees in the Garden, this is the one Adam and Eve wanted to choose from. They thought it would make them wise, but their decision was foolish.

UNDERSTANDING

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 3

Why do you think the serpent began by questioning God's command rather than directly urging Eve to disobey?

What does this passage reveal about the nature of sin and temptation?

How do Adam and Eve respond after eating the fruit (vv. 7–10)? What changes do you notice in their awareness and behavior?

In what ways do we see blame-shifting (vv. 11–13)? What does that suggest about human nature?

How does God's response show both judgment and mercy? (Think about the curses, the promise in v. 15, and the clothing in v. 21.)

How can we grow in trusting God's Word rather than questioning or twisting it?

Adam and Eve are tempted by the serpent, who twists God's words and convinces Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve gives some to Adam, and he eats as well. Immediately

their eyes are opened, and they realize they are naked, so they sew fig leaves to cover themselves. When God comes to the garden, they hide in fear. God confronts them, and both Adam and Eve shift blame—Adam blames Eve (and indirectly God), and Eve blames the serpent.

God pronounces judgment: the serpent is cursed to crawl and face ultimate defeat by the woman's offspring (a promise of redemption), the woman will experience increased pain in childbirth and struggle in relationship, and the man will face toil, sweat, and death as he works the ground. Despite their disobedience, God shows mercy by making garments of skin for them. Finally, He drives them out of the garden so they cannot eat from the tree of life and live forever in their fallen state.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PROVERBS 16:18

In biblical terms, what is pride? How is it different from healthy confidence?

Why does pride so often lead to downfall? Can you think of biblical examples where this happened?

What does this verse reveal about God's view of pride compared to humility?

Where do you see pride or self-reliance showing up in your own life?

The verse warns that pride and arrogance inevitably lead to downfall. When a person exalts themselves with a haughty spirit, they set themselves on a path toward failure and destruction. True wisdom calls for humility, because self-centered pride blinds us to our weaknesses and distances us from dependence on God.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JAMES 4:6

What contrast does James highlight in this verse?

What does it mean that God "opposes" the proud?

How does God respond differently to the humble?

How does "more grace" (or "greater grace") connect with the call to humility?

James emphasizes that while human pride leads to conflict and distance from God, God offers even greater grace. He resists the proud—those who rely on themselves and elevate their own importance—but He freely gives grace and favor to those who humble themselves before Him. Pride shuts us off from His help, while humility opens the floodgates of His favor.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 JOHN 2:15-16

What command does John give in verse 15?

What does John mean by "the world" in this passage?

Why is love for the world incompatible with love for the Father?

How do "lust of the flesh," "lust of the eyes," and "pride of life" describe the core ways temptation works?

In what ways do you personally feel the pull of "the world" (desires, possessions, achievements, recognition, etc.)?

John warns believers not to love the world or its values, because attachment to worldly things—whether physical desires ("lust of the flesh"), material or visual temptations ("lust of the eyes"), or

pride and self-exaltation (“pride of life”)—draws the heart away from God. Love for the Father and love for the world are incompatible; pursuing worldly desires separates us from God’s purposes and guidance.

APPLICATION

What effects of sin do you see in our culture? Can you give any examples of Satan seducing people with half-truths rather than full-fledged lies? Where do you see similar tactics of temptation in your own life or in the world today?

How do you see pride as the underlying cause of all sin? Why should we consider simple pride as mutiny against God?

How do you personally tend to justify or hide sin, like Adam and Eve did?

PRAYER

COMMENTARY

Genesis 3

verses 1–5 – The Serpent’s Temptation- The serpent, described as “crafty,” questions God’s command rather than outright denying it. This shows how temptation often begins by sowing doubt and twisting truth. The serpent exaggerates God’s prohibition: “Did God really say you must not eat from any tree?” (v. 1), making God seem restrictive. Eve slightly misquotes God’s command (“you must not touch it”), perhaps reflecting confusion or exaggeration herself. The serpent outright contradicts God in v. 4: “You will not surely die,” offering an appealing but deceptive alternative. He promises godlike knowledge (v. 5), preying on pride and desire. Temptation often combines truth with lies, appealing to human desires for independence, wisdom, and power.

verses 6–7 – The Fall - Eve “saw” the fruit was good for food, pleasing to the eye, and desirable for wisdom—echoing 1 John 2:16 (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life). Adam is present and also eats, showing willful disobedience. Scripture later holds Adam primarily responsible (Romans 5:12). Their eyes are opened, but not in the way they expected: they see their nakedness, feel shame, and attempt to cover themselves with fig leaves. Sin promises freedom but results in shame, guilt, and broken relationships.

Verses 8–13 – Confrontation with God - God walks in the garden, seeking fellowship, but Adam and Eve hide—sin creates fear and separation from God. God questions them, not because He lacks knowledge, but to draw out confession. Adam blames Eve (and indirectly God—“the woman you gave me”), while Eve blames the serpent. Neither takes full responsibility. Human instinct after sin is to hide, justify, and shift blame, instead of confessing.

verses 14–19 – God’s Judgment - Serpent (vv. 14–15): Cursed to crawl in humiliation. The “offspring of the woman” prophecy (v. 15) promises that one day a descendant will crush the serpent’s head while being struck on the heel—a foreshadowing of Christ’s victory over Satan (Romans 16:20). Woman (v. 16): Increased pain in childbirth and a relational struggle (“your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you”). Sin distorts God’s design for harmony into conflict and tension. Man (vv. 17–19): The ground is cursed. Work becomes burdensome, marked by sweat and frustration, and death enters human experience—“to dust you will return.” Sin damages every dimension of life—spiritual, relational, and physical. Yet God’s promise in v. 15 points to hope.

verses 20–24 – Mercy and Exile - Adam names his wife Eve, “mother of all living,” showing faith in God’s promise of life. God provides garments of skin (v. 21), replacing their flimsy coverings—an act of grace and perhaps the first hint of sacrifice for sin. God banishes them from Eden, not only as judgment but as mercy: preventing them from eating from the tree of life and living forever in a fallen condition. Cherubim and a flaming sword guard the way back, symbolizing both God’s holiness and the separation sin causes. Even in judgment, God shows mercy—providing covering, promising redemption, and ensuring humanity won’t remain in sin forever.

Proverbs 16:18

This proverb sits in a chapter emphasizing God’s sovereignty and the importance of humility and righteousness over human self-confidence (cf. Proverbs 16:1–9, 16:19, 16:25). It highlights the danger of pride. Pride is not just a personal flaw but a spiritual danger. It blinds people to truth, sets them against God, and inevitably leads to downfall. The wise response is to cultivate humility, remembering that honor comes not through self-exaltation but through dependence on God.

Pride (Hebrew: ga’on) often refers to arrogance, self-exaltation, or a sense of independence apart from God. It carries the idea of being lifted up above others.

Haughty spirit (gobah ruah) literally means “lofty of spirit” — someone who has an inflated sense of self-importance.

Destruction/fall signals collapse, ruin, or disaster — not just physical, but also moral and spiritual downfall.

James 4:6

James 4 addresses quarrels, selfish desires, and worldliness among believers (vv. 1–5). In this setting, James reminds his readers that God’s grace is greater than their failures and temptations. But God’s grace is not experienced through pride—it flows to those who humble themselves before Him.

“He gives more grace” – emphasizes God’s abundant supply of grace. No matter how strong temptation, sin, or human weakness may be, God’s grace is greater (cf. Romans 5:20).

“Opposes the proud” – the Greek word (antitassō) means to set oneself in battle array against. Pride places a person in direct opposition to God’s will.

“Gives grace to the humble” – humility is not self-hatred, but recognition of dependence on God. The humble receive God’s favor and strength because they acknowledge their need.

1 John 2:15-16

John writes to Christians facing pressures from a world opposed to God and from false teachings that compromise their faith. This passage emphasizes the incompatibility of worldly values and genuine love for God. Loving God requires detachment from worldly systems, desires, and pride that compete for our loyalty.

“World” (Greek: kosmos) refers not to creation itself but to the fallen, sinful system of human values opposed to God.

“Lust of the flesh” – desires of the body and sinful appetites that seek self-gratification.

“Lust of the eyes” – covetousness, materialism, or visual temptation that fuels envy or greed.

“Pride of life” – arrogance, ambition, or self-exaltation focused on status, power, or reputation.

“Love for the Father” – genuine devotion to God, expressed in obedience, worship, and moral alignment with His will.