

Subject: *Sin in God's Garden – Part 2*

Scripture: *Genesis 3:1-7*

As we read Genesis 3, especially in the light of what we know from Genesis 1 and 2, we are surprised and saddened, even shocked and appalled by what takes place here. Sin invades the garden God made for Adam and Eve. Sin corrupts the first man and woman who were made in God's image. Sin brings conflict in the first family and a curse upon the whole world. Last time we looked at the tempter. In this message we will consider the temptation. In our next message we will look at the tragedy of sin and the trouble or consequences it brought.

1. THE TEMPTER

Satan is a deceiver and a destroyer. He has the capacity to transform himself into an angel of light, but he is actually the prince of darkness. His method is deception and his motive is death.

John 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

2. THE TEMPTATION

A. To disobey God's command

Genesis 2:16-17 ¹⁶ *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

It was a clear command...a simple command...an authoritative (direct) command...a good command (everything God says and does is good)...an easy command. Adam and Eve were morally perfect, so it was easy for them to obey, and they lived in a perfect environment, so there was no negative influence or peer pressure for them to disobey God.

This was God's first and only command to Adam and Eve. It was not a suggestion or a wish. The temptation was actually a test to see if Adam and Eve would remain faithful to God their Creator.

1 John 3:4 *Sin is the transgression of the law.*

Sin is disobeying God's command. It is a challenge to God's supreme authority. Like Adam and Eve, we have sinned by transgressing or disobeying God's commands. We need a Savior because we have disobeyed and sinned against God. Salvation is God's double work of forgiving our sins and giving us a new heart to submit and obey. Salvation is God's work of changing our heart to repent and submit to Christ in faith and obedience. In salvation God gives us a new heart that is humble, submissive, and obedient to God's authority.

B. To doubt God's goodness

Satan's temptation came in the form of a question: "Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" His question implies that God is holding out on them. It was a

question to raise doubt about God's goodness. Notice Eve's response to Satan's question. She knew that God had given them every tree for food except one.

This is at the root of all temptation. Satan distracts us from all the blessings of God so we will doubt His goodness. The root of temptation is to doubt God and what He says. This is how Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness. We have the record of three specific temptations in Matthew 4. Let's look at the first one.

Matthew 4:1-4 ¹ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. ² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward hungry. ³ And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. ⁴ But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Notice what Satan said, "IF you are the Son of God..." In other words, he cast doubt on the very identity of Jesus as God's Son. If you are truly the Son of God, prove it. There was no need for Christ to doubt it and no need for Him to prove it. This is what had just happened at Christ's baptism in the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:16-17 ¹⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

C. To disregard God's warning

Satan contradicts the clear warning that God gave to Adam (vs. 4). The devil tempts us by convincing us that we can do what we want without any consequences.

Galatians 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

D. To desire God's wisdom

Satan suggested that if they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil their eyes would be opened and they would be like God Himself. This was a temptation to be like God. It was a temptation to be in control of their own lives (to be self-governed, self-ruled). It wasn't a temptation to fall and go down; it was a temptation to step up. Satan knew the power of that temptation because it was his own downfall.

Isaiah 14:12-15 ¹² How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! ¹³ For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. ¹⁵ Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

The temptation was to have God's wisdom and to be like God. The Bible tells us that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. We can only have wisdom by submission to God's will,

never by our own self-will. That was the 4-fold temptation: 1) to disobey God's command; 2) to doubt God's goodness; 3) to disregard God's warning; and 4) to desire God's wisdom.

Last Sunday night we had the Lord's Supper together and we read Scripture about Christ on the night of His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed three times: "Not my will, but thy will be done." Adam and Eve said, "Not thy will, but mine be done." Christ obeyed the Father's will to provide our salvation. We must obey the gospel to receive salvation. We must repent of our sin and trust in Christ as Lord and Savior.