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Genesis 3:1 - 3:6



Genesis - Steve Gregg

In this analysis, Steve Gregg delves into Genesis 3:1-6, exploring the multitude of themes within the passage. He notes the role of pain as an alarm system, the potential pitfalls of altering God's word, and the dangers of idolizing one's partner. He also highlights the internal urges for temptation and the consequences of sin, as well as the importance of maintaining God's character traits. Ultimately, this passage serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of succumbing to temptation and failing to put God first.

Transcript

Let's come now to chapter 3 of Genesis and read the, really kind of the turning point. There's been a lot of turning points already, you know, of sorts, but this is the key turning point of history, I suppose, since the creation, because this is when it broke. This is when the things as we now have them began to be the way they are instead of the way they were.

And that is, of course, a world full of rebellion and sorrow and death, sickness, pain, and all of those things. By the way, on that point, someone once asked me if Adam had not fallen, would there be any pain, or is pain a result of fall? For example, if he dropped a stone on his toe, would it hurt? And I guess you could similarly say if he stuck his hand and held it in fire, would it hurt? I would say, yes, there would be pain. Pain is a good thing.

It's the alarm system that tells you that something is not as it should be. The nervous system was probably present in every living creature that has one now before the fall, and the nervous system is there to tell you that something is not going right, something is not healthy, something needs to change. If you accidentally put your hand on something hot, you want it to hurt, otherwise you just burn it up.

That's the problem with lepers. Leprosy doesn't eat away the flesh. Leprosy just eliminates feeling.

It deadens the nerves, and lepers have no feeling in their flesh. So they're continually

banging parts of their bodies against stuff and damaging them, but they don't know it. And eventually they actually wear off their fingers and their toes and things like that, because they don't have the advantage of feeling pain.

So I think it's a, when we say there would be no death, there would be no sickness, there would be no evil in the world without the fall, I don't know if we could go so far and say there would be no pain, because obviously there are things that we would wish to feel pain about, or else we'd, you know, we'd damage ourselves very permanently. In chapter 3 we read, Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God indeed said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.

And the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and that a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

She also gave it to her husband, and he ate. I should say her husband whipped her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked.

And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, Where are you? So he said, I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.

And he said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat? Then the man said, The woman whom you gave me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. So the Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the cattle and more than every beast of the field.

On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

To the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception. In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.

Then to Adam he said, Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying you shall not eat of it, cursed is the ground for your sake. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are, and to dust you shall return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil, and now lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever. Therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken.

So he drove out the man, and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword, which turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life. It's kind of important to read the whole chapter before we talk about the early verses because right off we're introduced to the serpent. And the serpent not only plays a role in the opening verses, but is somewhat treated as a character in the latter part in ways that are important for us to pay attention to.

I would point out first of all that the serpent here is not said to be Satan. Now it was Satan, but it doesn't say so here. Satan is actually a very obscure entity in the Old Testament.

Satan is only mentioned by name in three different contexts in the Old Testament. The book of Job, in the opening two chapters where Satan appears before God and accuses Job. Then in the book of Zechariah, chapter three, there is a vision that Zechariah has where Satan is accusing Joshua the High Priest.

And then in the story of David in Chronicles where he numbered the people, it says that Satan moved him to number the people, which was the wrong thing for him to do. Those three times, and only those three times in the Old Testament, Satan is mentioned by name as a character. By the way, the term Satan is used many times in the Old Testament, but not of a specific character.

Because the Hebrew word Satan is *satanas*, it is the ordinary word in Hebrew for an adversary. And there are lots of times that the Bible talks about people having adversaries and the word Satan is used in the Hebrew text. But they're talking about human adversaries in many cases.

Because Satan simply means the adversary. But there are a few times where the term the adversary is used of a particular character, the one who accuses Job, the one who

accuses Joshua the High Priest, the one who moves David to number the people. Now, of course, even in those passages, it could be translated the adversary.

And one might wonder, well, then does the Old Testament even teach that there is a specific character named Satan? Or is it just that he was an adversary, maybe in each case a different adversary? Well, no, it is a proper name, because in the New Testament, which is not written in Hebrew, the Hebrew name Satan is used as a proper name. So even though one might wonder, if you just read the Old Testament, you might wonder, is Satan a proper name in any of these cases? Or is it just always referred to an adversary, the adversary? Because usually it is the Satan in the Hebrew text, the Satan accused Job, the Satan moved David. And if you translate the adversary, you might conclude it was some, who knows which adversary.

But that Satan is a proper name for one that we call the devil is confirmed by the fact that when the New Testament speaks about the devil, it uses the Hebrew word Satan as the name for him. For example, when it is said that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub, his critics said in Matthew 12, he said, if Satan is casting out Satan, then his kingdom cannot stand. And when Peter accused Jesus, Jesus said, get behind me, Satan.

Now, if he had said, get behind me, and then he used the Greek word for adversary, then we might think, well, he's not speaking about a personal being, but he uses the Hebrew word Satan as if it's a name. And so we do recognize that there is a Satan. However, the word Satan is not used in Genesis 3, nor any equivalent word.

We just read of the serpent talk about as if it were one of the animals. It says, now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. It almost sounds like, you know, there's a lot of animals.

One of them was a serpent and he was the most cunning of them all. And there's no place in this chapter that identifies the serpent as anyone other than just that reptile speaking to Eve. Now we do have later scripture to inform us about this, because in Revelation chapter 12, in verse 7, and we will not bother about the interpretation or identification of fulfillment of this particular passage at this point in Revelation.

It's not my to start commenting on Revelation, but only to make an observation about the language that is used in Revelation 12, 7. It says, war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out that serpent of old.

Now, that statement, that serpent of old, is a clear reference to Genesis, the only place we read of any particular serpent of old. He says the dragon was cast out that serpent of old called the devil and Satan. So we see that this one character who was the serpent of old was also called, or has since been called the devil and Satan.

Now the word devil is from a Greek word, Satan from a Hebrew word. They're kind of the same in meaning. Satan is a Hebrew word that means an adversary.

Devil in the Greek is diabolos, it means an accuser. And the words kind of overlap if the adversary happens to be the one who's your adversary in court accusing you. He's the prosecutor.

So devil, which is in the Greek diabolos, which means accuser. And Satan, which means in Hebrew adversary, are both terms, names apparently, by which the old serpent of old is called. So we come back to Genesis recognizing here a character who is not really by name for us as such until you get to the last book of the Bible.

But this is the work of the devil here. Now you might say didn't somewhere in Paul's letters, didn't he mention that the serpent was the devil? Actually Paul didn't get quite that explicit. He came close, it may be, in 2nd Corinthians 11.

In 2nd Corinthians 11 verse 3, Paul says to the church of Corinth, But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. Now he said as the serpent deceived Eve. He didn't say as Satan deceived Eve, but certainly Paul saw this as the work of Satan.

Paul saw the deceiver of the church and of everybody as Satan. And so we have here a story told as if it's one of the animals and the story is not told as if it's anything more than that. Now many people feel that when you come to a story like this where the snake is talking, that we have clear mythological elements here.

Even some conservative Christians, Hank Hanegraaff for example, who's generally a conservative Bible teacher, he personally believes that this is more like a figurative. And he and I have talked about this because I do take it literally. I believe that the snake really talks.

And his concern was that snakes don't have the vocal apparatus. They don't have the tongues and the things that are in our throat and so forth that make it possible for us to speak intelligibly. And therefore the snake wouldn't be able to talk.

And of course my position was that I don't know that the devil in speaking through an animal needs to employ vocal apparatus. Sometimes demon-possessed people speak in multiple voices at once. I don't know if the vocal cords are being used for all those voices or if it's simply the sound that the demons are making quite apart from using the biological and anatomical machinery of speech.

In any case, I don't have any problem taking this literally. If it was intended to be a parable or a myth or a legend or an instructive fiction, there is no place in the Bible that informs us of that. Every time the story is told or alluded to, it is alluded to as if there was a serpent involved.

There was a serpent who deceived Eve. The war in heaven is between the dragon and his angels. And that dragon is that old serpent who deceived Eve, who deceives the whole world.

So to my mind, I'm going to take it absolutely literally. If somehow, you know, someone said, well, I think it has more of the marks of a made-up story for teaching a lesson, I'm not going to go to the mat with anyone about that. But just so you know, I take it as an actual story.

I believe the devil inhabited an animal. Can a devil inhabit an animal? Do we have any information from the rest of scripture to incline us to think so? Well, Jesus cast demons into pigs, and the pigs became, it would appear, demon-possessed. They didn't do any talking, as far as we know.

Probably some squealing and some gurgling as they went down to the bottom of the sea. But no articulate speech came out of those pigs. But nonetheless, the Bible does confirm that demons can inhabit animals.

We know that the devil or demons can inhabit people. Judas was inhabited by Satan, and many people in the Bible are said to be inhabited by demons. So I don't have a problem here seeing the snake as a literal animal, which came to be possessed.

Now, you know, I say, but wouldn't Eve kind of be suspicious when one of these animals starts speaking articulately to her? Well, she apparently wasn't suspicious. What can we make of that? I don't know. Maybe, it may be possible that she was just new on the block.

She had just been created maybe the previous day, who knows? And she was so naive, she didn't know what animals could talk and what animals could not talk. After all, there are animals that at least mimic human speech. Certain birds, obviously, are able to mimic human speech.

Maybe she was aware of that. Maybe she didn't know how many animals there might be that could talk. We might think she's pretty silly to think that a snake would normally talk, but she didn't have a lot of frame of reference here.

You know, she probably had not explored the entire animal kingdom yet, and she apparently was caught up in the conversation. Consider this, much later in history, long after everybody knows, and everybody knew that animals don't talk, Balaam had a conversation with his donkey and didn't seem suspicious. His donkey spoke to him, and instead of him fainting, he argued with it.

So, you know, who knows? People can be confused at times. Maybe he thought he was dreaming. I don't know what he thought.

But the point is, maybe when something supernatural is going on like this, after all, maybe the mind is being befuddled. I have no idea. But I have no problem with the biblical claims, and so I'm going to just proceed as if this really was a snake.

And later on, when God cursed this creature, he said, on your belly you will go. Which, of course, it suggests that this creature was going to have a future life, and perhaps future generations, because I'll put enmity between your seed and the woman's seed. So this is actually a biological creature that's going to have offspring, and it's going to have a future, you know, on its belly.

It also suggests that perhaps before God cursed it, and said on your belly you'll go, maybe snakes did not go on their belly. Some people have said that the Hebrew word that's translated serpent here means more literally something like a bright, upright thing. There are many scholars who question whether a snake is really what is in view here at all, because the Hebrew word is, I guess it has some ambiguity about it, and they're not sure whether it's really talking about what we call a snake.

But the fact that it later went on its belly certainly fits the description of a snake more than any other kind of creature we know. But it may have been a bright, upright thing before. It may be that the snake actually had legs, and lost them as part of a judgment upon it.

You know, there are some species of snakes, David, that still have what herpetologists call spurs. Of course snakes don't have any appendages that resemble legs, but they have some snakes where you might expect to find their hips, have scales that are shaped differently, and look like maybe evolutionists would regard vestigial legs, suggesting that they are left over from an evolutionary ancestor of the snakes that had legs. But it may be that those spurs that lead evolutionists to think that snakes evolved from creatures with legs may be a testimony that God has left on the animal to its actual history here in the Garden of Eden.

In any case, having mused about this snake and its nature, we really should concern ourselves more with the conversation that took place, because that is where the significant action took place in the story. Apparently the snake, or the serpent, introduced the conversation. Eve, it would appear, was not very far from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil at the time of this conversation, because she could see it.

Verse 6 says she saw the tree. She saw the fruit. So she had come within view of it.

Now was she toying with temptation? Was she kind of wondering, you know, what about this tree that God said not to give? Was she doing that? Or was it, as I said earlier, that Adam and Eve were expected to come to the tree of life on a regular basis, and it was in the midst of the garden where this other tree was there too? That whenever they would come to the tree of life, they would also encounter the option of the tree of the

knowledge of good and evil. I'm not sure which is the case. Either Eve was dangerously toying with temptation just by going to visit the tree that she's not supposed to eat from, or else she was innocently in the area because of other things that were quite legitimate.

In any case, the snake, serpent, begins to raise questions in her head. With this strange, ambiguous question, he says, has God indeed said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? I've always found that question a bit confusing, just the way it's worded. Has God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Shouldn't he say, has God said there's any tree that you should not eat of? Or has God said that you can eat of every tree of the garden? But certainly God had not even said anything resembling you cannot eat of any tree of the garden.

He'd said almost the opposite to that. The question is peculiar. And I don't know, maybe it was maybe the state of that peculiar way in order to just throw her off balance and to make her not even sure what the question meant, but it made her think about the subject.

And she answered the serpent almost accurately. She said, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. It's often been observed that Eve added something to what the command of God had actually said.

Because in verse 17 of chapter 2, God had said in the day you eat of it, you shall surely die. But she said we're not allowed to eat of it or touch it. So she did seem to present a modified version of the command.

Now this, I believe, was a wrong thing to do. She was adding to the word of God. It may not have been her fault, because she was probably dependent on Adam for her knowledge of what the command was.

God gave the command to Adam in Genesis 2, 17 before Eve was created. Now we do not read that God separately gave her the command after she came along, or if he just expected Adam to pass that along. If Adam had passed it along, he might have made the addition.

It might have been his fault, not hers. After all, it's actually a reasonable enough addition. We're not allowed to eat this fruit, Eve, therefore don't even touch it.

You start touching it, you're going to be toying with it, you're going to eat it. Now that sounds like good advice. And lots of times when people add to the word of God, what they add sounds like good advice.

For example, the Bible says don't be drunk with wine. And so there are Christians who say Christians should never drink any alcohol. Why? Well, because you're not supposed to drink too much, better not to drink any at all.

Well, better perhaps, but not part of God's command. God never said you can't drink any alcohol. He did say not to get drunk, but some people who have had especially bad fortune with drunken people in their families, alcoholics and such, they have, when they become Christians, they become very totally, you know, no touching alcohol at all, because they've seen what the abuse of it can do.

But we might as well say that you shouldn't eat because gluttony is wrong. Therefore, don't eat food. God made wine.

God made alcohol. He even advocates its use in medicinal purposes in 1 Timothy and also possibly in Proverbs chapter 31, the advocacy of the use of wine for medicinal purposes. There's reason to believe that alcohol, which has medicinal value, was made so that its medicinal value could be exploited by man.

And that to say we should never drink an alcohol is to go not only to extend the command against drunkenness beyond its proper place, but maybe even to deprive people of something, a boon, that God had in mind for man to benefit from. Hard to say. But it's that same kind of thing.

Don't eat it, and in fact, don't even touch it. Now, I personally think that if you're not supposed to eat something, you'd be best off not to touch it. I think that's good advice.

Whether Adam gave her that advice, or whether she came up with it, I don't know. But I think it's a good advice. And I would say that a person who's got trouble with alcohol, if they tend to get drunk, it's good for them not to drink any alcohol.

Great idea. But great ideas and God's word are not on the same plane. God's great ideas and man's great ideas are not of equal value.

And that's where legalism comes from. The problem between Jesus and the Pharisees was that Jesus thought you should do what God said. The Pharisees thought, well, we're going to do what God said, and we're going to do what God said.

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And that's where legal authority comes from. The Pharisees thought you should do what God said and what the Rabbis said, and what they called the traditions of the elders. They, what the Rabbis did in Jesus, actually before Jesus, a couple generations earlier, they, What the Rabbis said they were doing was building a hedge around the Law.

An example of this would be the law, you shall do no labor on the Sabbath, and you shall not bear any burden on the Sabbath. These are actually commands of God. But, unfortunately, God didn't exactly define what constitutes labor and what constitutes lifting a burden.

So the rabbis felt, well, our people, if we don't define this better for them, if we don't put a finer point on this, our people might overstep the law. So we should define for them what constitutes labor that they cannot do, and what constitutes bearing a burden that they cannot bear. And so they wrote 46 pages of tractates in the Talmud about what constitutes breaking the Sabbath.

And they got down to real nitpicky stuff. If you pick up a stone such as you might throw at a bird, that is not bearing a burden on the Sabbath. If you pick up a stone such as you might throw at a cow, that is bearing a burden on the Sabbath.

Wearing a false tooth or a wooden leg was considered bearing a burden on the Sabbath. Carrying clothing under your arm was a violation of the Sabbath, but not wearing clothing. If your house was on fire and you gathered all your clothing out of the house and carried it out on the Sabbath, you're breaking the Sabbath.

If you took time to put them all on and wore them out, you're not breaking the Sabbath. If you throw a stone in the air and catch it in the same hand, that was breaking the Sabbath. If you threw the stone in one hand, they had all this kind of stuff.

Now, that's adding to the Word of God. And Jesus came into conflict with the Pharisees about it because they're legalistic traditions. They were building a hedge around the law.

They said, we don't want our people to get too close to violations, so we'll even move the boundary out a little further. If they do this, they're also in violation. Even though God only said not to do this thing, which is a little further inside the boundaries.

Now, what was going on here in the Garden of Eden is a hedge was being built around the law. God had said, don't eat it. And either Adam or Eve came up with the idea, you know, just to play it safe.

We shouldn't touch it either. But notice when she is called upon by Satan to tell him what God has said, she includes her own or Adam's good ideas along with what God said. God said, we can eat all of these, but this tree here, we can't eat it or touch it.

Now, you know, when you're in spiritual warfare, the best sword you can have is the Word of God. That's what Jesus used himself when he, you know, faced personal temptation in the wilderness. He quoted the Word of God.

It was that he could not think of any more potent weapon to bring against the temptation. Eve had the Word of God too, but she alloyed it. She polluted it.

She diluted it with human ideas. Once you begin to lose track of what God said and what part is what our denomination teaches and what part is really in the Bible, then you can really get in trouble. You know, the Bible says that women should dress modestly, but one denomination may say that they should only wear long dresses and head coverings, you know.

Well, if you're in that denomination all the time, you think that dressing modestly is that, and so, you know, you begin to think that someone sins if they don't wear a dress, a long dress, because, you know, that's not modest. You see, it gets to be a challenge when you're in religious company to know how many of the things that are expected are really what God expects, and how many are things that man added on. And we begin to see the beginning of that problem right here.

And the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die. Now, in this, it was a direct contradiction of what God had said. God said, you will surely die.

The serpent said, no, you won't. However, technically, Adam and Eve did not appear to die on that day. God said, in the day you eat of it, you'll surely die.

The devil, some people say the devil was right and the God was wrong, because after they ate of it, they didn't die that day. Now, we'll have more to say about that in a bit, but many of the things the devil said are technically true. He said God knows in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God knowing good and evil.

Now, is that true? Well, it is true, in a sense, because it says in verse 7, when they ate, the eyes of them both were opened. Well, the devil said your eyes will be opened. God knows that.

God did know that. It's true. Their eyes were opened.

Furthermore, God himself declares at the end of the chapter, in verse 22, the Lord said, behold, man has become like one of us to know good and evil. Isn't that what the devil said would happen? God said it did happen. The devil, in a sense, told the truth.

But this is an instance where you can actually tell the truth in order to deceive, because there's other parts of the truth, more important parts that were left out. If you tell part of the truth, you may give the impression that's the whole truth, and the more important part you omit is the part you're hiding. You see, what the devil suggested is, if you violate God's commands, you'll be more like God than you are now.

You'll be like him to know good and evil. And by implication, that's really what matters. That's the way you really want to be like God.

You know, God knows what's right and wrong. He doesn't need someone to tell him every day to do this or do that. You guys, you and Adam, you're dependent on God to tell

you what to do and what's right and what's wrong.

If you eat this tree, you'll have that intuitive knowledge yourself, just like God does. You won't need God to tell you. You won't need to follow God's instructions.

You can follow your own heart. You can be an autonomous moral agent. You'll have internal awareness of right and wrong that you can follow from your own internal volition and not have to be dependent on Daddy telling you what you to do every minute.

In other words, you can break off this relationship with him and be as autonomous as he is. You can be like God. That is, you can be in charge, like God is in charge, because you will have the competence that God has to know good and evil.

You'll be like him in that way. So who will need him anymore? That is the implication. Now, there is truth in the fact that they did have their eyes open.

They did know good and evil. The statements they made are true, but the implications were misleading. Like, you're going to be more like God.

The truth is that once they became sinners, they became less than, less like God than they were before, in the only sense that matters, and that is in terms of holiness and righteousness. You see, God has traits that theologians call incommunicable traits, and he has communicable traits. Those words mean this.

The incommunicable traits of God are the things that he alone possesses certain traits and no one else can possess them. He can't communicate them or impart them to others. God, for example, is eternal.

He's invisible. He's omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent. These are the traits of God that describe the kind of being that he is.

He's a being on another order than all created beings. We cannot be like God, like that. We cannot become a being on the order of being that God is.

Those incommunicable traits are describing the essence of what God is in himself. But there's another set of traits of God we could call communicable traits. They have to do with his character, not what kind of being he is, but what kind of person he is.

Is he a good person or a bad person? Is he honest or dishonest? Is he just or unjust? Does he play fair? Is he loving? Is he compassionate or is he cruel? These traits are traits that God can give us. We can become like him in these ways. These are traits of character.

These are not attributes of being. They are personal character attributes. The incommunicable traits of God are those which he cannot let you have because they're him and there's no one like him.

That's just the kind of being he is. The traits that are his character describe the kind of person he is. And we can be the kind of person that he is.

We're supposed to become like him in those ways. Now you see what happened is Eve was seeking to have one of God's essential incommunicable traits. God has sovereign authority over what is right and wrong.

That's the way in which she sought to become like God. But the way that she should have wanted to be like God, holy and good and righteous, those traits that people need to be like God, she forfeited. There's a sense in which she was more like God, but in a more important sense was much less like God.

And therefore, what Satan told her was a part of the truth that led her to see things out of focus and to make a bad choice and not really ultimately to get what she hoped to get. She did not become like God on the whole. In one little sense, yes, but not the other.

Now in verse 6, having heard what the devil said to her, we now see the reaction in her own person that led her to succumb. And by the way, this temptation story has forever become, and rightly so, the sort of prototype of temptation. You know, anyone who teaches on temptation can do no better than to at least look at this story first, because this is the first temptation, and it has all the elements of temptations that we will encounter in our own lives as well.

A deception from the enemy and an internal response of the wrong sort on our parts. In Eve's case, it says in verse 6, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, well, she gave in. She took of its fruit and ate.

Now, what did she see? What influenced her to do what the serpent was trying to get her to do? Three things. She saw that the tree was good for food. It would play a role in satisfying the appetite for food.

It was good for food. But it was also pretty. It was pleasant to the eyes.

Now, I don't know if this particular aspect would have played as well on Adam as it played on Eve, because women have more of an aesthetic sense, I think, and women often have just an appreciation for things just because they're pretty things. Men sometimes are a little more pragmatic and say, what's this good for? Throw it away. But if it's pretty, many times a woman will be more interested in it because she wants to decorate the home and so forth.

Women, not all women, but lots of women, I think most women probably, like to have pretty things around the home and stuff. And a man, he comes home and says, do you see anything new about the house? Same house. Same bedroom.

That's all I care about. Same kitchen. But she hung up a new picture.

She's got something hanging over here. Because that's part of what women are made to do, is to make life beautiful. And so she says, that fruit is really attractive fruit.

I'd like to eat that. And I'd like to take them home and decorate. I'll put a bowl on my table at home of that fruit.

That's really attractive fruit. It's pleasant to the eyes. And it's also desirable to make one wise.

Now she couldn't tell that by looking, but she was told that by the serpent. She took that to be so. That this is not ordinary fruit.

It would change your consciousness if you ate it. We might compare it to certain drugs. You know, certain things that grow on trees or grow on plants.

If you take them, they change your whole mind. Because they're consciousness altering. She had been told that this fruit is not just good to look at and good to eat.

It's also consciousness altering. You'll become wiser. You'll have intuitive knowledge of things that you don't know now.

Your eyes will be enlightened. You know, maybe it had opium in it or LSD or something like that. But probably not.

I don't really think the fruit was magical or supernatural fruit. I think something happened to her when she ate it. Not because of intrinsic qualities the fruit had.

But because the act itself was an act of rebellion against God. And you can't rebel against God without changing something in you. And she saw, judged, that this tree was attractive on all bases.

Now, when you consider these three things, they really quite correspond with what John said in 1 John chapter 2. Because John is warning his readers against succumbing to the worldly temptations. And in John chapter 2, verses 15 through 17, John says, Do not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. He said, If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Then he says, Because all that is in the world, he lists them, the lust of flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Those things are not of the Father. Those are of the world, and the world passes away, and the lust of it, but he that does the will of God abides forever.

John says, All that the world has can be reduced to these things, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The lust of the flesh is simply a reference to bodily

appetites. By the way, bodily appetites are not evil.

God created them. He created them because if you didn't have them, you wouldn't do some things you need to do, like eat or reproduce. God happened to assign man the duty of eating, as he commanded him, of all the trees you shall eat, and the duty of reproducing.

He said, Be fruitful and multiply. God could have just expected bare obedience, and not made either of these activities enjoyable. He could have just said, Don't forget to do this.

Put it on your list. But he didn't have to put it on a list, because he made those activities, things that we like to do. We like to eat.

We like to do, we like sex. And so these things, God, when he made man and woman, and said it was very good, he made them sexual beings. He made them with the palate to enjoy good food.

Certainly our nervous system is such that we enjoy certain kinds of touch. And I'm not thinking sexually, just non-sexual touch. There's a lot of ways that God made our nervous system, our digestive system, our reproductive system, where just out of the goodness of his heart, he made some things pleasurable to us.

Those pleasures are defined as the lusts, or the desires. The word lust is not always a bad word, just the desire. The desires of the body.

Now, the desires of the body are not evil in themselves. Eve, there were other trees that were good for food, and it wasn't wrong for her to eat them. The problem is when the lust of the body leads you to do something you're not supposed to do.

You see, your body is an undiscerning oath. Your body is just, you know, sort of the animal part of you that has cravings. And without governing your body by your spiritual knowledge of God's will, and bringing your flesh under control of the spirit, your body will take those appetites that in themselves can be legitimate, and do illegitimate things with them, because the body is undiscerning between right and wrong.

But the mind, the soul, the spirit, that part that is informed by God's words, tells us, wait a minute, my cravings to eat are legitimate in this situation, but would not be legitimate in this situation where I'm fasting, or where I'd have to steal food to eat to satisfy this craving. And likewise, the desire for sleep. Sleep is very pleasurable.

But you could sleep more than you should. You could sleep when you should be working. Sex is pleasurable, and it's good, but it's not good all the time.

It's not good in the right, it's not good except in the right circumstances, which is marriage. So the lusts of the flesh are not evil in themselves, but they become an

inducement to evil when we are not governing them by what we know God said we should do. Eve had the lusts of the flesh.

She saw the tree was good for food. Tasty, probably. Looked like it.

There's an appetite there. The lusts of the flesh, and that became an influence upon her in the decision she made. The lusts of the eyes is a reference to acquisitiveness, the desire to acquire things that you see.

Things that, it's obviously different than the lusts of flesh, so it's not related to fleshly pleasures. It's related to things that we want just because we want them. Because we like the way they look.

Or others may envy us because we have them. Because, you know, what is the point of getting a great looking car, or a great looking house, when one that doesn't look as great could still be as functional? You can get someplace just as fast, but you don't want to drive a car that's ugly. And there are cars that are ugly.

And you want to drive a car that you like the way it looks. You don't want to live in a house that you like the way it looks. An ugly house might keep the rain off you and the heat in, in the wintertime just as well.

But there's an aesthetic appreciation that God built into us. Not just the desires of our flesh, but an aesthetic sense, which God himself apparently has also in himself, because he made things beautiful. And he liked them.

And so he made us so we like things that are beautiful and aesthetic. We like, we're attracted to things just by the look of them. That's the lust of the eyes.

And that's when Eve saw that the tree was pleasant to the eyes. That's the lust of the eyes operating, as well as the lust of flesh. And then there's what John called the, the pride of life, which, which I think refers to an ungodly ambition to be more than you really are supposed to be, or at least something different than what God intends for you.

It's an ambitious desire to promote yourself beyond what is legitimate. And that's what Eve had when she saw the tree was desirable to make her wise. Wise in a sense that wasn't, wasn't right.

Nothing wrong with being wise, but the wisdom she was seeking wasn't a legitimate wisdom. And yet she knew, she felt she would be promoted by having it. She would be like God.

She'd be elevated in her status by having this wisdom. So we see that she is succumbing to all the things that John identifies, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. And we won't take the time now, but when you study the temptation of

Jesus and the wilderness, there were three of those.

And it's not difficult to find a correspondence in those three temptations of Jesus to the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes. So that in a sense, Jesus and Eve both faced similar internal urges under temptation. The difference is, there's more than one difference, but one difference is that Jesus defeated the temptation, did not succumb, and Eve did succumb.

What's more, Jesus did it when he was starving, and out in the wilderness, he nonetheless defeated the temptation. Eve had had a good meal recently in all likelihood, because they could eat all day long, and she didn't have any shortage of things. She wasn't fasting, she was in a garden, and yet that wasn't good enough for her.

And we need to be careful about this, because we can be that way too. We become spoiled. We become convinced that because we've been given a lot, well, we deserve a lot.

And maybe we even deserve more than we have. I won't take the time to illustrate too much, because our time is too much almost gone. But the point here is that when God gives us a lot, sometimes instead of making us content and satisfied as it should, it makes us spoiled.

It's good to be deprived of some things once in a while, because then we get it through our head that we are not the lords of the universe. There are things that we can and things we cannot have, things we can and things we cannot do. But when a child is raised by parents who indulge it all the time and never say no and give it everything it wants, and they're rich parents so they never, they spare no expense to the child, they think they're doing good to each other, they're making that child a spoiled brat.

And that child, I know because I've been, I lived with one for a while in their adult life, but that child grows up thinking they should have everything they want when they want it. And that's not good for a child. First of all, the world isn't going to give it to them.

It's a good way to make a child unhappy for most of their life. You try to make them happy as a child, you do it the wrong way, you're going to make them unhappy the rest of life because they're going to go out of the home saying, whatever I want, I should have. And they won't find the world to agree with them.

The world is not going to treat them like the parents treat them. The world doesn't love them like the parents think they love them. And therefore the world deprives them of things because that's reality.

And the child has no capacity to appreciate that. When you're spoiled, to my mind, the definition of being spoiled is that you have no capacity to be grateful. Because whatever kind thing is done to you or given to you, you don't have the capacity to be grateful

because you just figure you deserve it.

You know, you're used to it so much you think you deserve it. And Eve was given so much that she thought she deserved anything she wanted, apparently. And I'm not going to blame her.

Her husband did the same thing. It says at the end of verse 6, she also gave to her husband with her any ate. And the statement that her husband was with her has led many to believe that Adam was standing right there next to her while this whole temptation was going on.

Now, it might not be that we're intended to see it that way. It might simply mean he was with her, you know, in the garden. He was, he shared the same garden, he shared the same home with her, and she gave it to him.

But it sounds kind of on the surface like it's saying he was right there at the tree while the serpent was doing all this talking. If that's true, then he certainly was negligent of his duties. And he should have jumped in and prevented this from happening.

Adam would certainly be the, he would certainly be the one most at fault if he is watching all this happen and supposed to protect his wife and didn't do so. But Adam and Eve both ate. Now, at a later time, Paul tells us in 1st Timothy chapter 2 that the woman ate because she was deceived.

But he says the man was not deceived. Well, Eve did testify later that she in fact was deceived when God confronted her. She said that the serpent beguiled me, deceived me, and I ate.

God didn't accuse her of lying there. She was deceived. The serpent deceived the whole world.

But Paul tells us that Adam was not deceived, which is interesting because, I mean, he must have been at least somewhat deceived, but not in the same sense. No one sins unless they're deceived. I'll just give you that.

You know why? Because you wouldn't. You would never succumb to temptation if you saw everything as it really, really is. When you are tempted and you sin, it's because you're seeing your values out of focus.

You're ignoring remote consequences of your actions. You're convincing yourself that what you're going to gain by the sin is going to outweigh in pleasure the regrets you're going to have later. You never would sin if you weren't deceived about some of these things at that moment.

Because all those things are untrue. You will never enjoy your sin more than you will

regret it ultimately. You will never sin when you see your values correctly.

You've got your values out of focus when you sin. Now, Adam, therefore, like anyone who's ever sinned, was deceived. But I think what Paul is saying, he wasn't deceived by the words of a serpent, like Eve was.

Adam certainly made some bad judgment calls here, or else he wouldn't have eaten. But he didn't take in, like the woman did, what the serpent said, as if it was true. And therefore, the woman thought that God was holding out on them.

The woman thought that God's intentions were not all that kind toward her, and that he was trying to keep them from something that would be better for them. The devil is accusing God's character of essentially that. God's holding out on something that's good for you.

And she made that mistake. And this is the mistake many of us will make when we're tempted, because, you know, when you want something and God says you can't have it, the temptation is to think, well, but that thing will make me happy. That thing will enhance my life.

My life will be better if I have that. This is a good thing for me. But you see, the scripture says, no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

They that seek the Lord will not lack any good thing, the Psalms say. So twice in the Psalms it says God will not withhold any good thing from us. Are there things God has withheld from us? Yes, there are indeed things that he has withheld from us, but no good things.

The things that he has withheld are not good for us. We get deceived when we think that's not true. We think God has said I shouldn't have it, but he must be just trying to hold out on me something because I really think I'd enjoy that.

I really think that's a good thing for me. I really think I should have that. And you won't sin unless you think that way.

And that's deception. But she thought, you know, by direct suggestion of the enemy, God's holding out on you. You think God says that's bad for you, but I'm saying it's good for you.

God's holding off on something good that you would benefit from. And she believed that. That's a deception.

Adam wasn't deceived by that. We aren't told exactly what went through Adam's mind, but we have to suggest that once Eve had fallen, once Eve had sinned, Adam, who was more aware of what was going on here, must have known that he had just lost his

eternal partner, unless he went with her. There's a sense in which I think Adam was choosing between God and the woman, as sometimes men do.

Certain marriage choices men make, or for that matter, women make, boil down to idolizing a man or a woman above what God says. For example, when you marry a non-Christian. The Bible says don't marry a non-Christian.

But my life would be so much wonderful if I did. God says don't do it. He's not withholding a good thing from you.

He's withholding a thing for you that's not good for you. But Adam, it seems, had to choose between wife and God. He could live forever righteously with God, and who knows, maybe God would have made another woman for him.

Or he could say, I want this woman, even if I have to forfeit God. So he went with her, against God. As far as I can tell, if he wasn't deceived like she was, as Paul says, then that must have been how he was thinking.

And you remember Jesus said, whoever loves wife or children more than me is not worthy of me. And Adam showed himself to be unworthy of God. He failed the test here too.

She failed first, but then his test was, what do you put first, your woman or your God? And he put the woman first, and that's where the trouble came. We're going to have to stop there. Tomorrow we'll pick it up at verse 8. We'll also talk about the naked thing.

That's in verse 7. So we'll talk about that there.