

## **Foundations #3 – Moral Absolutes?**

Genesis 3:1-5

Intro:

*“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” Psalm 11:3.*

We have considered that question for the last few weeks, and do so again today.

A recent Barna study substantiates another foundation being attacked and eroded right now, in our time. Dr. George Barna, reported:

- 72% of Christians say people are basically good, 66% don't accept that all have sinned, and 75% blur the seriousness of sin.
- Many believe “Sin is an outdated concept”

If we know Jesus as our Personal Savior, *which is the ultimate foundation,* **And** we build our lives on Him and His Word, **There will be change!**

- When we are saved by faith in Jesus, **we become a new creation**, created in Christ Jesus to good works.
- The **Holy Spirit of our God works in us** to help us **desire His will** and then to **have the ability to live it.**
- We learn His Word, His Truth, and, believing Him, **begin to live that truth.** We hopefully, day by day, become more like Him!

Here's the challenge, and the problem we address this morning:

**If Christ and His Word are the truth for our lives, the foundation for our future, then that which conflicts with Him are not true and trustworthy.**

**There is a real, life or death battle, which is raging.** The essence of it:

1. That God's absolutes aren't absolute.
2. That God's absolutes may be true, but don't apply to me personally.

### **I. The Exposure**

We begin today again in the beginning. In Eden.

Why?

*Most of what has happened since, and particularly, much of what we are seeing play out in our world began there. If we understand Eden, we might better understand and be equipped for today.*



In the initial conflict in Eden, we find the core attack set in motion which has fueled conflict ever since:

### Genesis 3

1. ...**hath God said**, *Ye shall not surely die?*

*Satan began by questioning what God had said. The Word of God.*

4. *And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: -*

*Satan, the liar, claimed that God lied. That He can't be trusted.*

- That's still the core of every cultural argument today — whether it's about marriage, life, or truth itself.

5. *"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then **your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods,**"*

- Satan **offered alternatives** with wonderful promises, all which **in truth were deadly lies, and they failed. They always do.**
- Satan offered them control. To be their own "gods"

**5." ...knowing good and evil. -**

**There it is! The subject for today's study, the seed for our struggle.**

**At least two levels of meaning:**

#### **1. Perception/Discernment:**

The "Father of lies": **If you do this, sin, rebel, you will like God have the powers of super knowledge. You will know..."**

#### **2. Power/Decision. Control.**

*"as gods... knowing"*

Satan's pitch: **"You get to determine "good and evil". "Right and wrong".**

*"God or no one else will be able to tell you what to do."*

**"You will be..."**

- "as gods"
- "knowing" — same word as Gen. 4:1 — "Adam knew Eve and she conceived..."

Creating. Populating. Producing!

Summary: **What we find exposed in the garden is Satan is the lie of the ages, the seed of destruction, and catalyst driving our crisis today.**



**Satan:** *"Your reasoning and personal truth is real; God's isn't!"*

- Good and evil.
- Right and Wrong.
- Righteousness and sin.

**There are absolutes, and they absolutely matter!**

**If there are no absolutes, then nothing is absolutely true — including the claim that there are no absolutes!!**

You'd think that we **would have learned, right?! That we wouldn't need to answer those questions?**

Yet, the serpent has slithered right in amongst us, in our hearts, homes, church... and is still seducing God's children with his lies. The consequences are devastating.

## **II. The Extent Of The Problem.**

- To suggest that it is **just serious would be a vast understatement.**
- **It doesn't just affect us; being affecting us it diminishes our witness of Jesus and the gospel and imperils our generation!**
- As with everything that happened that day, **it was deadly serious.**
- The Cross is the eternal reminder of the deadly consequences of sin, as well the eternal declaration of the love, purpose and power of God's love!

### **A. History is a showcase of the ravages of sin and evil.**

#### **B. Jesus warned that the devil is still at it!**

John 8:44 -

*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.*

Jesus in Matthew 15 bluntly warned of the reality and results of sin:

19. For *out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*

### **C. Sin was a problem and addressed by name as well as nature throughout the New Testament.**



**\*\*\*Note:** The primary message of the New Testament was NOT to tell the world to turn from its wicked ways. That was the primary message of the prophets of Old...

**The mandate of the New Testament: *"Tell them about Jesus! Preach the Gospel! "It is the power of God unto salvation!"***

However, *to those who know Jesus*, God doesn't "dumb it down". He doesn't lower or erase the standards. His love doesn't negate the demands of righteousness: It raises it!!

### 1. Romans 12

9. Let love be without dissimulation. ***Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.***

### 2. 1 Thessalonians 5

22. ***Abstain from all appearance of evil.***

### 3. Many of the epistles were written to address and confront sin in the lives of God's people.

Ephesus – Ephesians 5

***1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;***

***2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us...***

3. ***But*** fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

***7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.***

Galatia – Galatians 5

19. Now ***the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;***

Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,



21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Rome: Paul – Romans 6

12. ***Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.***

13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

James – the half-brother of Jesus: James 1

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15. Then when ***lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.***

16. ***Do not err, my beloved brethren.***

### **C. It is a Problem Today.**

We have the Barna study which verifies the reality of the problem in our country.

***But we know, don't we?***

Questions in almost every area of life. The same basic issues mentioned by Jesus and Paul -

**Morality. Sensuality. Marriage. Decency. Truthfulness. Values.**

**Honesty. Integrity. Faithfulness....**

It's not just the world, the outside. **It is the world on the inside.**

- Among us, those who claim to know Christ, **there is a crisis.**
- The foundation of what we believe and ***then how we behave is being shaken.***
- ***Is right, right?***
- ***Is wrong, wrong?***
- ***Is it really sinful, and deadly, when I ignore God and do what I feel is right for me?***

If that's where Christians are, ***imagine the confusion in the world!***

**WE ARE NOT LEGAISTS!**

**Grace doesn't erase God's standards — it empowers us to live them.**

Two aspects of our answer to "Absolutes":



1. Is right, right, and wrong, wrong? Is sin, sin? **Absolute Moral Truth.**
2. Is it really wrong for me? **Personal Absolutes!**

#### **A Personal Illustration.**

When I was very young, we received word that my little cousin, maybe a year or so younger than I was, had drank some Drano, a deadly drain cleaner/opener. She was in critical condition. She thought it was Kool aide. It wasn't. What followed was horrific... Hundreds of surgeries...

Thankfully, God had a plan for her life. She survived. Even thrived. In church still. A wife, a grandma, loves the Lord.

**It looked like Kool Aide, but it wasn't. Rebranded sin is still deadly!**

### **III. Exploration.**

#### **A. The Psalmist – The Working Of God's Word. Psalm 119**

It keeps us from sin.

11. *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin* against thee.

It is timely and timeless!

89. LAMED. For ever, O LORD, *thy word is settled in heaven.*

It guides me step by step with Him to what only He can do!

105. NUN. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

133. *Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.*

*How do I know right and wrong?* **Know what God said!**

*Who determines what is good or evil?* **Only God!**

#### **B. Stories.**

##### **1. John 4 – Jesus and the woman at the well.**

17. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18. ***For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.***

##### **2. John 8 – Jesus and the woman caught in adultery**

7. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.



11. She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, ***Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.***

### 3. Luke 19:1-10- Jesus and Zacchaeus

7. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and **if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation**, I restore him fourfold.

9. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. ***(i.e.- The change is the proof!)***

10. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

In every instance, The order Is the same:

**Truth is told, sin is named, grace is extended, change is demonstrated!**

- Salvation always comes first! Jesus first!
- Then, the change He and His word bring!

**From Eden to today, the serpent's lie has always been the same: 'You decide. You define truth. God can't be trusted.' But Jesus gives us another way.**

### **IV. Exhortation**

**In the metaphor of Jesus story of the wise man and the foolish man –**

**God – who set the boundaries of the earth the day of creation, has also declared the standards of righteousness; good and evil, right and wrong.**

**Right and wrong is determined by the character and the Word of God!**

**A. Jesus in Matthew 7- Spoke of the foolish man who, though he reasoned well and worked hard, built his life on sinking stand. When the foundations he chose to trust were shaken and tested, It fell! They failed. ***"Great was the fall!!"*****

**Who was that person?**

**The One Who Listens to the lies of Eden - Satan's Lies –**

***"You Can't trust God!"***



***"You decide... You do what you want!"***

- ***Don't do*** what He says!
- ***Better, Do what He has forbidden!*** It won't hurt you. You won't die. It will make you happy!

**B. Then, Jesus spoke of the wise man, the one whose life and house will stand when the foundations are shaken.**

***Who is the wise man or woman or boy or girl?***

The person who will ***"Hear my words... and do them"***

***Jesus - "I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly!"*** John 10

Jesus – ***"The words that I speak... they are life!"***

***If you love me...***

***"Keep my words... Keep my commandments..."*** - Words of Life!

***Thou shalt... We are to do what He says when He says as He says!***

James 4:17

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

***Thou shalt not...***

There are things that are wrong and should not be a part of the life of a child of God!

James – ***"Do not err! Sin... when it is finished... bringeth forth death!"***

**The Solution is Jesus!**

He died that we might live!

He speaks so that we can live abundantly the life He died to make possible!

God hasn't changed His mind. He hasn't relaxed His character and principles.

He blesses obedience and godliness as we look to, live and live for Jesus!

He tells us the consequences of not doing so:

Loss. Natural consequences. Divine chastening.

The Judgment Seat of Christ – Eternal ripples!

**When the foundations shake, you don't have to fall — you can stand, if you're standing on the Rock.**