

The Story 2026

The Fall

Fairview Missionary Church | Angola, IN

Scripture: Genesis

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So last week, we started this series called The Story with the goal of taking you through all of Scripture, just giving you kind of this 10,000-foot view from Genesis to Revelation. And we're going to take seven weeks to do that. Now, before we jump in today, I wanted to do a quick survey, but I don't want anybody to have pride or feel guilt. So we're going to do the church thing and have you close your eyes, okay? And I want you to raise your hands if you have read through the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

So go ahead and raise your hands. Okay. So maybe 20%. Okay. Next question. How many of you think you could answer somebody's question if they said, "Could you just give me a five-minute overview of the Bible?" like Just tell me the story in five minutes or less. How many could do that? About the same amount, okay? So I ask those questions because I believe that the enemy has used the same tactics with us that he used with Eve in the Garden of Eden all the way back in Genesis chapter 3.

You see, in Genesis 3, which we're going to be looking at today, the enemy was able to convince her through his cunning and deception that she should question God's goodness and intent for her. She had everything available to her to know who God really was. He actually walked in the garden with Adam and Eve. We don't know how long they had this relationship, but she should have known his character, but she lost her focus. And you might say, "Well, Pastor, that's great."

But today I don't get to walk with God. I don't get to ask questions. But we have God's Word. We have the Bible in which God reveals Himself to us and teaches us about God's character, about His intentions, and about who He is, but you and I lose focus. So many things become more important than learning about God in our life.

And it could be anything that could take that place of instead saying, "I wonder what this book teaches us about God." So last week, we started with the story of creation in Genesis chapter 1. And there we learned that according to Scripture, his word clearly says that everything begins with him. He is the main character in the story of Scripture. We see that God is eternal, that He always was, always is, and always will be.

We see from Genesis that He is the creator of everything. We also notice that in the midst of His creation, that you and I, human beings, are the crown of His creation. We were the final things that He created and that He wants a relationship with us. We actually see that that was the purpose for all of creation so that He could have a relationship with us and that we have value because of who He is.

The Scripture says that we are created in the image of God, *Imago dei*, created in His image. And so as we looked at Genesis chapter 1 and chapter 2, it's almost like the beginning of a movie. You're introduced to some of the characters. You have God and Adam and Eve and you have the setting. It's this beautiful garden that he places them in. And you can almost picture the camera spanning across.

And you see Adam and Eve and God sitting there and they're looking at a beautiful sunset. They're enjoying each other's conversation and company, but something bad is about to happen, right? We've seen this in movies. Everything looks great, but a decision is going to be made that is going to change this entire new creation that God has made. Today, the dilemma, the problem of Scripture, is going to enter into the story.

Just like in a movie, there's going to be a problem that the plot is going to revolve around. Today, as we read in Genesis chapter 3, we are going to read about the fall and rebellion of humanity. So if you have your Bibles, I encourage you to open up to Genesis chapter 3:1. Again, if you're not familiar with the Bible, just open it up and Genesis will be right there. All right? Genesis chapter 3, starting in verse 1. And while you're getting there, let me just pray and ask for God's blessing upon our time.

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Word that reveals Your truth to us, and it reveals who You are to us. And so even as we read the text today, would we continue to ask the question, "What does this teach us about God? What does it teach us about ourselves? How can we learn? How can we grow? What is our next step towards You look like?" I do pray that You would open our eyes, that You would open our minds to hear from You.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen. Genesis chapter 3, starting in verse 1, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made." He said to the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' 'You will not surely die,' the serpent said to the woman.

'For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'" So when the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. The eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Adam and Eve rebelled against God by doing the only thing that God had asked them not to do. There was one thing. God says, "Do whatever you want. Eat from any tree. Just enjoy the creation I've made for you." But there's this one tree in the middle of the garden. Just don't eat from that. And of course, what do they do? They eat from it. They disobey God. It's very similar. Any of us who have parents, it would be like putting your kids in a room and say, "You know what?"

You can play with anything in this room." But in the middle of the room, there's a big red button, and you say, "Just don't touch the button." What are the kids going to do? They're going to touch the button, right? It's inside all of us. It's just part of that human nature now that we have. Of course, Adam and Eve choose to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And I also need you to notice that some people will say, "Well, Eve ate first." you know Then she gave it to her husband, Adam.

Do you notice that the scripture says, "Where was Adam when she ate of the tree from the garden?" Standing right beside her. It's not like she did that, and she's like, "Hey, Adam, come over here. Look what I did." Right? He is standing right there. He could have stopped it if he wanted to. Now, I remember reading this when I was younger and thinking, "What is the big deal with eating an apple from a tree? Doesn't God go kind of overboard with the punishment that He is going to put upon man and upon the world in which we live?"

Was there really something that wrong with eating from that apple?" Well, here's the deal. As I got older and I began to study this more, and theologians will debate, but most would agree that the first sin wasn't the act of eating the apple, but rather it was questioning God's character. You see, the serpent was beginning to convince Eve that somehow God was holding out on her, that God was not a good God.

Eating the apple was actually the symptom of that sin of being convinced that the character of God cannot be trusted. The implication being there that there's something that God wants to deprive you of that would give you great delight, that there's something in God's nature that would make him want to limit you, to take away your joy, or to steal your freedom. And so as we continue through this series, I want to continue to make truth statements based on what we read.

And so for today, our truth statement number one is this. All temptation starts with the idea that we have the right to evaluate what God has said or required and that it is subject to human judgment. True statement, that all

temptation comes when we begin to question God's character and we begin to believe that somehow we know better and God should be subject to us. We become God in the story.

All sin is the failure to believe that obedience to God brings you the purest good and the truest satisfaction in life. As soon as you do not trust completely and wholeheartedly and unreservedly in the wisdom and goodness of God, you are in trouble. All sin begins by questioning God's character.

Here is the big lie that the enemy would share with Eve and also with us, that the God of the Bible is narrow, that he is restrictive, that the God of the Bible is somehow unkind, that He puts us in bondage when we were made for freedom, that the God of the Bible by His law has held us back from true good and free personal expression. You see, when we begin to question God's goodness for us, when we begin to doubt that He has our best interest in mind, we begin to believe we know better than God.

God's vision was to be with His people. And when Adam and Eve sinned, that vision was ruined. Because Adam and Eve chose a different vision than God's vision, sin became a part of their spiritual DNA and everyone thereafter. And so as we read this in Genesis chapter 3, this is the saddest event in human history. We ruined God's creation.

And this event explains why things are the way they are in our universe. It is the reason for all of the imperfection and death that we know. We ruined the creation by introducing sin. And as we will see, this sin had far-reaching consequences. It did not just affect Adam and Eve. It affects you and I, but it also affected all of creation, which leads us to true statement number two, our sin doesn't just affect us, it affects everyone around us.

When we choose to disobey God, we are not the only ones that deal with the consequence. People around us will deal with the consequences. Because of Adam and Eve's sin, there is now a universal human condition of sin and brokenness that longs for restoration to the way things used to be. You can have a conversation with any human being and they know something is wrong in the world in which we live.

Something is missing, even unbelievers. They would say, "There's evil in this world. We are all born into sin." One of the greatest debates that happens between believers and unbelievers is the fact that unbelievers will look at a believer and say, "If your God is such a good God, why is there evil in the world?" Can I tell you that in my flesh, I often just want to say it's because of you, right? But it's also because of me. But we have the answer to that question.

Why is there evil in the world? Because of us, because we chose to bring evil into God's perfect creation. This is the divine record, Genesis chapter 3, of how evil entered the created world. And it's interesting to note that after chapter 3, for the rest of Scripture, the rest of the Bible is all about God's pursuit to get us back, to get things back to the way they were in the garden. It's interesting when you read through the Old Testament and get all the way to Revelation.

And so this is some of the view I want to give to you. When you look at the tabernacle that the Jews set up in the wilderness, they had images of palm trees and animals and these types of images of garden imagery. And then they build the tabernacle. And on the walls, they engrave images of trees and animals and fruits and things like that. And you get all the way to the book of Revelation. And when John is receiving this vision about what heaven is going to look like, do you know that it has trees and things like that because it is about getting us back to the way it used to be in the garden.

When men could commune with God, when they could commune with God, and they could be in the presence of a holy God, and everything was perfect. So how will Adam and Eve respond to their sin? Verse 8. This is good. "Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" And he answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" And the man said, "Isn't this good?" All right? The man said, "The

woman you put here with me. She gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it." So in the Lord God says to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman says, "The serpent deceived me.

And so I ate." And so the blame game begins. And we still fall into this today. It's her fault. It's his fault. It's their fault, which leads us to truth statement number three. We always have an excuse for our actions, don't we? It's always somebody else's fault. It's always because of my environment. It's because of my upbringing. It's because of what I was taught. It's because of the world in which I live. It's because of them. It's because of that person.

We need to constantly be reminded that you and I have free will and are responsible for our own decisions. We make our own choices. And so Scripture very clearly teaches the first step of salvation is admitting you have a problem. It's admitting saying, "It's my fault." I made the mistake. I messed up. I did what was wrong. And isn't it interesting?

Anyone who has been affected by addiction in this room or if you're watching online, whether it's yourself or somebody you're close to and you care about, you know that the first step to overcoming that addiction is first to admit you have a problem. Admit you have a problem. It can't be fixed until you admit there's something that needs to be fixed. And so that is the first step. Scripture teaches that you need to repent of your sins, confess your sins before God, acknowledge before Him, "Yes, I am at fault.

I'm the one that made the mistake." So what's the consequence of sin? Verse 14. "So the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals. You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head and you will strike his heel.

To the woman, he said, "I will greatly increase your pains and childbearing. With pain, you will give birth to children, and your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you. To Adam," he said, "Because you listened to your wife and you ate from the tree about which I commanded you, you must not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you. Through painful toil, you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food until you return to the ground. Since from it you were taken, for dust you are, and to dust you will return." Here we see the consequences of sin, which leads us to truth statement number four. The fall, our sin damaged humanity's relationship with God, each other, and the created world, introducing alienation and disharmony.

When we choose self-will over God's will, it leads to ongoing suffering and separation. When sin entered the world, it damaged our relationship with a holy God. It hurt our relationship with other individuals and anybody that's ever had an argument with a friend or with a spouse or with a child, sin is to blame. That is why we no longer get along as we were created to get along. But please don't use that as an excuse the next argument you get in.

All right? But it's the truth. That is why we deal with the issues we deal with. Let's wrap up in verses 20 and 21. Adam named his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living. The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. After Adam and Eve sinned, they became aware of their nakedness. They became aware of shame and guilt because they had done something they knew they weren't supposed to do.

And so to cover that guilt and that shame, the Bible says they made fig leaves to cover their nakedness. But now here in verse 21, we see that God took away their fig leaves and instead covered Adam and Eve with the skins of animals. How do you get animal skins? You have to kill an animal. Have you ever recognized before that in the Bible, this is the first actual recorded death, the death of the animal.

And who was it that killed that animal? It was God. And why did He kill it? To cover their shame and guilt. Are you picking up any imagery here? You see, as we read Scripture, as you see the beauty of this that is put together,

some people try to describe it as an upward spiral where things happen earlier in Scripture that foreshadow what is going to happen later, which then foreshadows what's going to happen later.

Here we see God offering the very first sacrifice, the shedding of the blood of an animal so that he could take those animal skins to cover the shame and guilt of Adam and Eve. And so here we have truth statement number five. For God to restore the vision of a perfect relationship between Him and His creation, the shedding of blood will be required.

This is why it's so important for us to get this whole view of Scripture. And I often will try to say it when we take communion, but I understand how weird it would be to come into a church if you didn't grow up in church and to hear the pastor or somebody upfront say, "Hey, we're drinking this wine or juice today and it is representative of the blood of Jesus because His blood covers us." I could imagine the images that would come in my head and I'd be like, "Well, these guys are weird," right? It wouldn't make any sense.

But when you read it in context of this, it begins to make a little more sense. And to understand even more that when the blood is shed, why did God have to sacrifice an animal? Why did that have to take place? Well, because again, remember, when we're reading Scripture, we have to ask the question, "What does this teach us about God?" We will learn over and over again that God is a just God. He is just. He is fair.

He governs this world with the perfect identity of justness. And so when something is wrong, when somebody does something wrong, a price has to be paid for that. Just like the world you and I live in, if I go down the road and I speed and I go over the speed limit and a cop pulls me over, I have to pay a price for that. The price needs to be paid. And so God is just.

And so he says, "Okay, a price needs to be paid in order to cover your shame and your nakedness and your guilt, but I will provide that in the form of a sacrificed animal, and I will cover your shame." Of course, this is signifying. This is foreshadowing when he would send his Son Jesus to die on the cross to pay our price because of our sin in order to cover our shame and our guilt and our nakedness.

That if we would be willing or allow and as weird as this image is, but understand the metaphor, if we would allow the blood of Jesus to cover us, then it can cover our shame and guilt, and we can be right before God. A price had to be paid because of the wrong. And so this narrative all the way at the very beginning in Genesis 3 begins to set the stage for a divine rescue plan, culminating, of course, in the promise of a Redeemer who comes in the person of Jesus Christ, who will enter into creation to reverse the effects and the curse of the fall.

Jesus will be the hero of the story. He is the hero. So why is all this important? It's important for multiple reasons. Let me just share with you. First, it's important that we understand this because it helps us understand why the world is the way it is. If anyone is ever to ask you the question or if you are ever to wonder, why is there evil in the world, we have the answer in Genesis 3. There is evil in the world because of sin and the fall. We brought it into the world.

God gave us freedom. And some people will ask, "Well, why did God even put that tree in there in the first place? Why did he even allow them to have the choice to eat from something that he told them not to eat from?" And the easy answer to that is, if you want a true intimate relationship with somebody, it has to be by choice, not by force. Had God made us in such a way that we didn't have free will, it would not be a relationship. It would be slavery. It would be a robot.

There would be no choice to even choose him. And so he had to make a choice. And in so doing, we made the choice. We used that freedom to turn away from Him, bringing evil into His creation. And so when we look at the world around us, we understand the entire universe has been affected by sin. This is not the way it was meant to be. The second reason this is important is because it gives us hope.

It gives us hope because God was not surprised by our sin. God was not surprised by the decision that Adam and Eve made in the garden. He had a plan from the very beginning, and he decided to make us anyway knowing

what we were going to do. And yet He loved us and He made a plan for that. He knew that a price would need to be paid in order to bring all of His creation back into perfection, and He was willing to pay that price.

1 John 1:9 says it this way, that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. And so it gives us hope as we live in this fallen world that this is not the end. This is not the end of the story. I know the end of the story. In the end of the story, Jesus wins.

And even as we look at this world around us, even though we may be able to put up images on the words behind that we sing for worship of beautiful landscapes and scenery. You think of mountain scenes and sunrises and sunsets and the beautiful oceans. If our fallen world can have those glimpses of beauty, how amazing is heaven going to be when sin and the curse is taken away?

This will be the new Eden. That's what we look forward to. So it gives us hope. It also is important because it helps us to have appropriate expectations in life. You see, when I read Genesis 1, 2, and 3, it helps me to have appropriate expectations for what life is going to look like. I need to recognize I live in a fallen world. There is sometimes this false belief.

And I don't know that I've ever heard a pastor really say it, but there's just this belief that, you know what? Once I become a Christian and once I begin to try to make good decisions, and once I stop making bad decisions, it means that my life is going to be perfect from there on out. It's just not true. And I know it's not true because I read Genesis 3. I still live in a fallen world that has been tainted by sin. And so it doesn't matter. Some people have this belief that, "You know what?

If I'm holy in the way that I date and in my engagement, and if I follow all of God's commands and I do everything how I'm supposed to, then when I get married, my marriage is going to be perfect." Please know that's not true. We live in a fallen world. We are fallen human beings. And so it gives me that proper perspective. I don't expect my life to be perfect. I know there's evil in the world. I am reminded that I'm actually in the midst of a battle that takes place every day.

But I am promised that God will be with me in the midst of that battle, and I don't have to go it alone. It also helps me have the right perspective that I no longer need to live by the rules of the earthly kingdom, but I can live by the rules of the kingdom of God. Let me give you some action steps and we'll be done. Maybe today, for the first time, you're here today, you're watching online, listening on the radio, and you're willing to admit for the first time you have a problem and you need help.

Maybe up to this point in your life, you've said, "It's their problem. It's not my problem." And today is the day that you decide to stop making excuses and pointing fingers. And please know this doesn't need to be some serious addiction or huge issue. We all have problems. I say it over and over again. We are all sinners in need of a Savior. And can I please remind you, you are never too far gone? Jesus wants to heal you. He wants to make you whole.

He wants a relationship with you. If you will confess that sin before Him and invite Him into your life and make Him the Lord of your life, that relationship will begin to be renewed and restored. Today is the day to get rid of excuses. Today is the time to quit pointing fingers and to humbly come before Him. Maybe you're here today and you have done that before God. You've said, "I understand. I'm a sinner. I need you.

I need your grace in my life." Maybe today, you realized for the first time, you had the wrong outlook on life. You were hoping for perfection. And so because you haven't experienced that, there's some angst there or anger against God because you've looked at God and maybe you've said, "God, I have done everything I know to be right, and yet I still deal with fill in the blank." Relationship struggles, financial struggles, health struggles. And so you've been mad at God.

Maybe today is the day that you can change your perspective. And you would believe the Word to be true when Jesus said, "In this world, you will have troubles. You will have tribulations, trials, however we want to interpret that. But take heart," he said, because he has overcome the world. Today is the opportunity to gain that eternal

perspective. I don't look for perfection in this world, but I do look forward to the day when there will be no more suffering or pain or evil.

Or finally, maybe today is the day you stop believing the lie and you realize the truth that God has the best intentions for you, that you don't believe the lie of the enemy, that somehow God is trying to hold you back. He's trying to hide something from you. He's trying to take away your joy. And instead, you believe the truth that God has your best interest in mind. He wants what is best for you.

And maybe today, you are encouraged to not lose focus. You say, "You know what? I don't know what the Bible has to say about God and about me and about the world, and you make the decision. I at least want to read what it has to say. What does it teach me about God? What does it teach me about myself?" I encourage you to do that as well. The altars are always open. We have people that would love to pray with you that will be up here. I'm not up at the altars today, but if you want to come talk to me after service, I'd love to do that.

If you just want to do business with God for whatever reason, you can come to the altars. Again, no one will bother you unless you go to the side and you specifically ask for prayer. Let me close. Heavenly Father, we come before you. And as we read this section of Scripture, we learn more about you that you are just, you are loving. You are fair.

You offer grace and mercy and forgiveness that you provide the sacrifice that is necessary to overcome our sin if we receive it because you won't force it on us. And so we thank you for that. We thank you for your grace. Thank you for the ways that you show your love to us. And Father, we do look forward to that restored creation, the way it was meant to be, the way you created it to be before we messed it up.

So, Father, help us to continue to have that hope that comes through Jesus. And it's in His mighty name we pray, amen.