

Lesson 5

The Fall: Man's Contribution

Introduction: In the past three weeks, we have looked almost entirely at God—His attributes, His plan, His sole role in creation. This week, we will look at humanity and the beginning of their participation in God's plan—rebellion. This rebellion will define humanity's relationship to God, expressing man's unyielding need and utter inability to fulfill that need. Ultimately, this will be satisfied in a Deliverer. This deliverance was planned before time began as God is not surprised by man's rebellion.

In order to understand this lesson, we need to remember the original instructions and warning that God had given to Adam when He put him in the Garden of Eden.

God planted two special trees in the middle of the garden.

- **Read Genesis 2:9.**

Among all the trees God created—flowering, shade, and fruit—we know that there were two special trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I believe there are three main reasons why God placed those two trees there and gave the command to not eat from the one.

- First, God created man to be dependent upon Him. He didn't create man to be independent. They would have had to keep eating from the Tree of Life to live forever, and God wanted them to remain dependent upon Him to show them what was right and wrong.
- Second, remember that God created man in His image with a mind, will, and emotions to be able to have a relationship with man. Along with that comes the ability to choose to obey or choose to sin. In the true sense of being created in God's image, man had to be given the ability to choose.
- Lastly, remember God's plan from before the foundations of the earth that would be carried out through Christ. Without sin and a fall, there would be no need for a Savior.

Discussion regarding God's Plan: Remember, God is all-knowing. He knew full well all that mankind would ever do and ever become long before He created us; hence, 2 Timothy 1:9.

Since God knew full well that mankind would indeed choose to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, why didn't He choose to NOT create it? Why was His solution an eternal plan of redemption by grace and through God the Son instead of just removing the opportunity to become sinful?

Col. 1:16 – “all things were created by Him and FOR Him” ...Him, being Jesus. A sinful human race living in a fallen world, for which our holy Creator God sent His Son down to die for UNDESERVINGLY, provides

a revelation of the glory of His grace that could not have been revealed otherwise.

*We only ask the previous question because we have too small of a view of God. We think it would be better to be sinless, happy, and trouble free than to know the glory of His grace. To us, the suffering isn't worth knowing Him more because we are not wowed by His greatness!! **Consider Romans 8:16-18, 28-29; and Ephesians 2:1-7 with this point in view.***

- **Read Genesis 2:16-17.**

God warned Adam that disobeying Him would result in death.

Until this time, everything that Adam had experienced was only good because God had provided everything he needed. He had never seen death before. However, at this time, God made it clear that if Adam wanted to be independent of God and disobey Him by eating the forbidden fruit, then he would die.

Discussion: What do you think it meant when God said Adam would die?

- First, Adam would be **separated** from having a spiritual **relationship** with God. This means that Adam would become “corrupted” and would move from being God’s friend to becoming God’s enemy. His **fellowship** with God would be broken. The very reason God had created Adam in His own image was so

that man could **enjoy** a relationship and fellowship with God. But if Adam disobeyed Him, the part of Adam that was made in God's image—his **mind, will, and emotions**—would become marred and corrupted and thereby separated from God. Adam would **die** spiritually, and the wonderful relationship he had with God would come to an end.

- Secondly, Adam would die **physically**. This did not mean that Adam would die immediately that very same day. It meant that Adam would be **cut off** from God, his source of life, and he would eventually experience physical death. When Adam's body would come to the point of physically dying, his **spirit and soul** would become separated from his body. It would be going back to what he was before God breathed life into his body.
- The final aspect of death that Adam would experience would be **eternal** death. Having first died spiritually and then physically, Adam would then be **separated** from God forever and would never again have an opportunity to enjoy God's love and friendship. In and of himself, there would be no way for Adam to escape this **judgment**.

Now God had placed everything in the garden that Adam and Eve would ever need.

More important than all of the vast variety of fruit and vegetables that God had created for man was the

fact that Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with each other and with God.

Though Lucifer's effort to rebel and take God's place resulted in judgment, being cast from heaven, and becoming Satan, it didn't stop his efforts to try and become "like God." His next attempt at trying to become "like God" would be through his effort to cause mankind to become sinful.

- **Read Genesis 3:1.**

The text seems to imply that Satan chose the serpent because of its appearance—that a talking serpent may have had a greater impression upon Eve.

That is the real issue here—Satan disguised himself as something other than what he is to make his lies more believable. Eve was unaware that it was really Satan who was talking to her. At that point, Adam and Eve only knew what was good. They probably didn't even know that Satan existed!

Today, Satan is the same and his intentions are still the same also. Namely, he still seeks to deceive people by disguising his lies to make them believable.

- **Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.**

It's the degree of our knowledge of God that determines how deceivable we are. To the degree that we don't know God, we will we have an inflated

view of ourselves and our desires; i.e., we will want what WE want even more than what God may want for us.

This is the height of pride. We end up thinking we know what is better for us than God knows. We become self-sufficient and trust in our own understanding. Was this how God first created Adam and Eve to be? To be self-sufficient, trusting in themselves? No, He created them to be dependent upon Him.

So, let's read **Genesis 3:2-6**. There are several things going on here from Satan's perspective and that from Eve's.

- As far as Satan was concerned:
 - He still wanted to be God.
 - He wanted man (the object of God's love) to sin so that God would have to punish him.
 - He disguised himself, deceived Eve, and outright lied to her. He lied to her about God and called God a liar!
- As far as Eve was concerned:
 - She didn't really know or believe what God had truly said.
 - She doubted God's goodness and love.
 - Because she doubted God's goodness, this caused her to doubt His word, which led to believing Satan's lies and committing sin!

Notice that Satan didn't grab her and force her to eat the fruit. It was her lack of confidence in God and His goodness that made her deceivable, which led to her sin. Had she not doubted God's goodness, she wouldn't have eaten the fruit and there wouldn't have been anything else that Satan could have done about it.

Discussion: How are these facts regarding Satan and Eve's interaction significant in our own lives today? **When we are tempted by sin, the solution isn't to focus on Satan and "pray him away," but the real issue is our lack of knowing God! It's true that Eve didn't know this was coming from Satan, but she didn't NEED to know. Had she been confident in the goodness of God, she would have recognized the lies. Bottom line, Satan doesn't need to be our focus, God does.**

Notice that Eve was deceived by Satan, but Adam outright chose to disobey God's direct command.

It's also interesting to note that the nature of Adam and Eve's sin was the same as Lucifer's: wanting to be their own God, their own authority, and not live in dependence upon God. It's also in us today!

When you were kids, did you ever find it difficult to obey your parents or teachers? This comes from wanting to be your own god, just like Lucifer wanted back then.

Why is it that we often disobey the word of God? It comes back to not really being confident in who He is and what He is like. To the degree that we don't know God, it will be impossible for us to walk in

truth. For we can't TRUST God if we don't know Him!

- **Read Genesis 3:7-8.**

Now God had said that if they ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that they would die. So, did Adam and Eve die? YES! Was it immediately? YES! Physical death wasn't evident in Adam and Eve immediately upon committing their sin. They were still breathing and walking around. But that very moment they had died *spiritually*. Their souls and spirits, which were made in God's image, had become corrupted and separated from Him. They were no longer able to know, love, and obey God.

Also, at that very moment they did die physically in the sense that the process of aging and death began to take place in their bodies. Then, upon their physical deaths, they would also become separated from God eternally with Satan in the lake of fire.

God always carries out and fulfills His promises. Adam and Eve had become enemies of God. God cannot have fellowship with those who disobey Him because He is holy and righteous. For that reason, Adam and Eve would no longer be able to enjoy the friendship they once had with God. They were originally innocent, pure, following the Lord. Now they had become corrupted and were under Satan's control.

Verse 7 proves this. Originally, they were naked and unashamed. They were pure and innocent. They did

not have any evil or sinful thoughts. However, once they had sinned, their minds became corrupted and for the first time they began to “know evil” and were therefore embarrassed.

The second proof is that they had tried to provide for their own needs. They were created to depend upon God for everything. Now they were depending upon their own ideas and abilities to cover their own nakedness—just as Adam and Eve depended upon themselves to clothe themselves and “fix” their problem.

Today many continue to try to make themselves acceptable to God through their own efforts, to fix their outward appearance. Can you think of ways that people try to do this today?

- Going to church
- Being baptized
- Giving money to church
- Doing something good for someone else
- Praying
- Reading the Bible

As hard as some people try to make themselves acceptable to God, all our attempts are useless!

The third proof of their becoming corrupt and separated from God was when they tried to hide from God. This also is another proof of their not being confident in who God is and what He’s like.

When God had first created Adam and Eve, were they afraid of anything?

They definitely weren't afraid of God—He was their friend. Everything in the world was good and beautiful. Sickness and death did not exist, and they had no fear of any animals, for they were all tame and none would harm them.

But after Adam and Eve had sinned, they became afraid. Was it right or wrong for them to be afraid at this point? I think it was both. It was right in the sense that they had committed the one thing that God had warned them not to do. The thing which He said they would die for.

God always does what He says. He punished Lucifer and the angels for their rebellion against Him, and He also punished Adam and Eve for their disobedience. God is faithful.

Look at all the fear that exists in the world today. It's all the result of sin and disobedience against God. Have you ever done anything that you've tried to hide and keep others from knowing about? That's fear from disobedience.

On the other hand, I also believe it was wrong for them to fear. Their fear of the punishment was a continuation of doubting God's goodness. Even though they had sinned and forced God to have to punish them, it didn't change the fact of Who God is and what He is like. He was still good, merciful, gracious, and loving even in punishment!

- **Jeremiah 23:23-24**

When we sin, our natural tendency is to fear and try to hide it just like Adam and Eve did. But once again, we do this because we don't know God and we doubt Him, Who He is, and what He's like!

Just as God knew where Adam and Eve were in the garden, so He also knew they would rebel against Him. He even planned for this. After discussing fault, God called out Adam, questioned Adam, and explained the consequences of sin for individuals and the world around them. Finally, God references the remedy for that brokenness—the crown jewel of the eternal plan of redemption.

- **Read Genesis 3:15.**

Along with giving the hope and promise of a coming Deliverer here, God also begins to point out some of the characteristics of His coming. God only gives a reference to Him being of the seed of a woman. He does not say the seed of the man and woman but only the woman. This is a reference to the virgin birth. The Deliverer would have to be born free of the seed of the man; otherwise, He too would be born with a sin nature.

God also gives the promise that the Deliverer will overcome Satan. God said that Satan would bruise the heel of the Deliverer, but ultimately, He would crush the serpent's head. The "head" symbolizes authority. When Adam and Eve sinned, Satan gained power, authority, and influence over them. But here

God is giving the promise that the coming Deliverer will overcome Satan, deliver people from his control, and restore them to oneness and harmony with God.

God also said that the Deliverer's heel would be bruised in the process. During the process of the Deliverer overcoming Satan, pain and suffering would be inflicted upon the Deliverer. Yet a bruise on the heel is not fatal; therefore, Satan won't win in his battle against the Deliverer.

Discussion: Name some of the things we have learned about God, His character, or His attributes thus far.

- He's eternal
- All-powerful
- All-knowing
- Omnipresent
- Loving and kind
- Holy and righteous
- Hates sin and punishes those who rebel against Him

What characteristic do we see in the fact that God promised to send the Deliverer? God is loving, merciful, and gracious. Adam and Eve had disobeyed God and deserved hell. He didn't have to promise a Deliverer. But, again, GOD IS LOVE, and even His judgment and punishment is carried out in love! There could be no greater manifestation of the love, grace, and mercy of God all wrapped up in one event!

Also, we can never forget that He had planned to carry out His plan of redemption through Christ before time began. God showed His love and

kindness for Adam and Eve by giving all that they would need and more through creation. When they sinned, they deserved to go to hell; but instead of just sending them to hell, God gave the promise of a Deliverer. God showed His mercy by not sending them immediately into the lake of fire. He didn't give them what they deserved. Then God showed His grace by giving them what they didn't deserve, a Savior.

Did God lose Adam and Eve once they sinned? Did they drop off His radar? No! Just as He was aware of their location, He also intimately knew their makeup and the eventual manifestation of their desire to become God. God was not surprised by their sin, and even in explaining the consequences of it, He referenced the plan that was on His heart before time began—a salvation that comes from Him.

To go deeper into this topic, read through Lessons 6, 7, and 9 in the full Knowing God curriculum.