

# STRENGTH IN THE STRUGGLE

## HOW TO BREAK STUBBORN HABITS

### Sermon Devotional Week 2 – Ground Rules for Change

Last week we talked about how each of us struggle with something in our lives. There is a temptation that each of us deal with. Pastor talked about a wide range of emotions we can experience after we “sin” and indulge in the temptation.

1. When you indulge in that temptation, how do you feel afterwards?
2. How do you respond to God after? Do you stop talking to Him out of guilt? Do you run right to Him? Why?

In the story of the Garden of Eden and the Fall of Man we see how Eve had taken her eyes off of everything God provided and focused on the one thing she was supposed to avoid. That one thing became what she wanted more than anything. When she ate of the fruit, and gave it to Adam mankind's innocence was lost and our relationship with Father had been broken because of sin. From that moment on we were in need of a Savior to restore the broken relationship.

1. Why did God even put a tree she couldn't eat from there in the first place? Wouldn't it have made more sense to not even have that tree there as an option for her to eat from?

It would be easy for us to play the BLAME GAME and blame Adam & Eve for creating all the mess in our world. If we did that, we'd be no better than them. They immediately started blaming when they were found out.

*Genesis 3:12-13, "The man replied, 'It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.' Then the Lord God asked the woman, 'What have you done?' 'The serpent deceived me,' she replied. 'That's why I ate it.'" (NLT)*

Generations have come and gone and we still try to blame others, or blame a situation when we mess up. Temptation by itself, is not a sin – it's a trap. It's a trap set by Satan, not by God. It's a trap set for us to fail. The key for us is to understand where those traps are in our lives. To

recognize the things that cause us to stumble or puts us in a situation that we know generally leads us to the same place of doing what we know we shouldn't do.

*"Knowing where the trap is – that's the first step in evading it." – Frank Herbert, Author*

How can you avoid temptation? You can't. Temptation is everywhere. What you can do is recognize what tempts you and put guardrails in your life to help you stop making that choice. The reason God put a tree in the garden that they couldn't eat from is because God doesn't want robots. He wants us to CHOOSE Him. He wants us to REMEMBER His goodness. He's not going to force His will on anyone. He chose us, and just like any healthy relationship, He wants us to choose Him back.

*John 10:10 "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life." (NLT)*

We all stumble, we all fail. That doesn't give us an excuse to keep doing it. We need to put guardrails in our lives, and make better choices. When we do fail, try to remember that God LOVES you still – even in the mess. Don't run FROM HIM, run TO HIM. Victory over sin IS POSSIBLE!

1. Are you able to recognize the "traps" that are set for you? What are some ways you can avoid them?
2. When was a time that you realized you played the "blame game" where you blame someone else for a decision you made?
3. What are some ways we can change the language from "blaming" to "taking responsibility?"

**Activity** - One way to avoid focusing on the "one tree" is to realize everything else that God has blessed us with. Take a few minutes and write down all the blessings you have in your life.

1. How does this impact your perspective of God working in your life?
2. How can you keep this list in front of you?

**Note to SG Leader:** *If someone shares a temptation or situation that is delicate in nature or has created an issue deep in their life or their family please encourage them to contact Pastor George Wakim, our Granite Life Coach at [gwakim@graniteunited.com](mailto:gwakim@graniteunited.com) Also please contact your Campus Pastor.*