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If you have a Bible turn to Genesis 3...

Today starts a new series ... Look To The Rock.

In this sermon series we are going through the O.T. searching for Jesus.

The purpose of this is to help you see how all the Bible is a bunch of stories that tell one BIG story ...

And to train us on how to read all of the Bible to see Jesus.

In fact when we see Jesus in the O.T. we get a clearer picture of who He is.

And our first stop is right near the front of the Bible in Genesis 3.

Genesis 3:1-5

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 But

the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” 11 He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” 12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

**14 The Lord God said to the serpent,
“Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;**

**on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.**

15

**I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”**

16 To the woman he said,

**“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.**

**Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you.”**

17 And to Adam he said,

**“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife
and have eaten of the tree**

of which I commanded you,

‘You shall not eat of it,’

cursed is the ground because of you;

in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

18

thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;

and you shall eat the plants of the field.

19

By the sweat of your face

you shall eat bread,

till you return to the ground,

for out of it you were taken;

for you are dust,

and to dust you shall return.”

20 The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

22 Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

The first 3 chapters of Genesis are about the story of Creation.

But the main purpose isn't to give us the answer of how the world and universe came to be.

It is answering the greater questions we have as human beings ...

Why are things the way they are in this world ... and how am I supposed to live in it?

In our day and age we tend to write off accounts like these with a bit of scientific snobbery.

They are just silly myths trying to give a childish answer to the origins of life.

I would argue, in our modern age we have our own myths about these things ...

No scientist can observe the Big Bang... it is a theory.

Which is to say ... it is an assumption.

BTW, do you know the most commonly held view of the Big Bang?

- It is based on the existence of an infinitely dense ball of matter the size of an atoms nucleus.
- Suddenly at some point before time and space ... there was a chain reaction that caused this impossibly dense particle to explode out.
- So ... at one point before there was time a particle existed.
- Then at some point, due to unknown factors, this particle suddenly exploded out.
- From this center of existence came forth everything that exists today throughout the universe.
- So there was nothing, then suddenly there was everything.

- **Sound vaguely familiar???**
- But slap some numbers and equations on it, suddenly its logic and reason...
- But a Creator God is religious hocus-pocus.

I'm telling you this not to speak down to science and its pursuits.

Actually, when it comes to the origins of life and the creation of all things ... We are more closely aligned than we realize.

Science gives us many helpful answers of HOW things work and WHAT they are made of.

But science can't tell you and I how we OUGHT to live.

And that is what the ancient world was more interested in.

They wanted to understand how this world was ordered and how BEST to live in it.

They were comfortable with the categories of good and evil.

GOOD was order, harmony, peace.

EVIL was chaos, disorder, destruction.

To be GOOD was to live in pursuit and desire for truth, love, justice, community ...

To be EVIL was to live in pursuit of power, oppression, control, greed, lust, jealousy, murder, coveting...

And the Bible is saying that Good and Evil aren't evolutionary impulses to perpetuate the species...

And they aren't impersonal invisible forces that pull at us in different directions ...

They are personified in the deities of God and Satan.

All That Is Good Comes From God; All That Is Evil Comes From Satan

And by nature these two are opposed to each other.

This Genesis account isn't meant to explain some kind of never ending cosmic balance:

- Good is always offset by Evil.
- Or Good is only possible if there is Evil.

What it tells us is that there is a war being waged for the possession and control of humanity and creation.

And it is a war of Good vs. Evil.

In the beginning, God created everything "Good."

His world was in perfect order and harmony ...

Weather was great ...

No weeds to pull ...

Even the mosquitos didn't bite.

He placed man and woman in this perfect world ...

They were one with God in love, identity, and purpose.

God made them his image bearers.

And their mandate was to go fill the earth with loving communities that worshipped and obeyed God-- replicating Eden over and over again.

This was God's plan and purpose.

And if you study the Creation account closely you see God's goodness written all over it.

That is what we were created for.

This is what the Kingdom of God is like.

But Satan, the serpent in Genesis 3, is the enemy to all that is God, which means he hates all that God created.

And he can't create like God can ... so instead he works to destroy and ruin the goodness and order and peace of God's kingdom.

But he doesn't come like a big scary dragon as He is depicted in Revelation.

Instead he comes as a serpent ...

Subtle, crafty ... but always deceitful with mal intent.

Which is what we see in his conversation with Eve.

Satan Confuses And Distorts God's Character And Commands

In Verse 1, his first words were ...

“Did God actually say?”

The slide toward sin begins here.

Adam and Eve had a clear command from God not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil.

That word was authoritative over them B/C it came from God.

Today, we have God's Written Word ... the Bible.

It is our highest authority.

To disobey it is to disobey God.

We don't live by any other measure or revelation.

It also means we don't have an excuse of not knowing.

Which makes knowing the Bible extremely important.

If you are a Jesus follower, the less you know of God's Word the easier it is for you to be deceived and disobey.

But that is NOT the only tactic Satan has to get us to sin.

Eve was able to quote God's command perfectly.

So, Satan goes another route ...

He gets to what he really wants us to believe:

God is holding out on you.

He isn't good ... or loving

He is in the way of you reaching your full potential.

That is the counterfeit truth Satan wants us to believe ...

God isn't good ... he is withholding.

And you don't have to remain stuck under God's thumb.

You have it in your power to be just like Him.

The only thing holding you back is your blind obedience.

So, deny him, cast off his commands and take hold of your true destiny.

Actually, this is at the core of Satan's belief.

It is why he was cast out of Heaven.

He thought he could be like God ... & He still does.

Think about how our modern age thinks of religion.

It is limiting, backward, & anti-progress.

The Age of Enlightenment began the pursuit of casting off God to be God ourselves.

We became our own arbiters of truth and purpose.

Which is why today we say, without much thought to its veracity, that “truth is a personal matter.”

You have yours and I have mine.

There is no empirical truth.

Which, ironically, is an empirical statement about truth.

And this points to how deeply Satan’s deceit is encoded into the social consciousness.

The default isn’t to obey and believe in a good God.

The default is to distrust Him.

To cast him off and live life on your terms.

That is the course of this world.

Which isn’t being as free as you might think.

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this

world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

What this is pointing out ... and what Adam & Eve quickly learned is that ...

Denying God Doesn't Set You Free; It Enslaves You To Sin And Satan

Here is the big problem we all face ...

We have Satan deceiving us.

Those deceptions are normalized and declared to be true in our culture.

And on top of all that ...

We have our own disordered desires that agree with those lies.

Once Satan tempted Eve ... she looked at the tree and its fruit differently.

Sin always starts with looking ...

When you look long enough at an object of disobedience it will begin to look back into your heart.

As Eve looked at the tree ... three things happened that had never happened before:

- **She rationalized it. [it's just food]**
- **She got pleasure from it. [delighted her eyes→ heart]**
- **She put her hope in its promise. [make one wise]**

Sin always comes packaged this way.

We rationalize it ... [it's just a little lie // it's not hurting anyone if I look at porn (flirt with co-worker) // God doesn't care what I do with my body]

It hits our pleasure buttons ... [it makes me feel good]

It promises to give us something we don't have. [It will take away the pain I'm feeling // It will fill the void I have // It will give me what I need]

But sin never delivers on its promises.

It comes with immediate gratification ...

But when the pleasure of the moment wears off, it turns on us & enslaves us in guilt and shame.

Guilt says, "You've DONE wrong."

Shame says, “You ARE wrong.”

This is how Satan turns on us after we sin and accuses us.

He comes to us and accuses God.

And once we sin, he turns to God and accuses us.

Through sin, guilt & shame robe us in a new skin we can’t shed.

And we know that we can’t stand before a holy, righteous God that we’ve rebelled against.

Guilt and shame are why we run from God ...

Or, try to cover over our sins with homemade self-righteous outfits.

- **We put on the shirt of moralism & the pants of legalism**

We are just like Adam & Eve.

It looks like this: “I can sleep with my girlfriend B/C I serve at the soup kitchen on weekends.”

The soup kitchen is the fig leaf covering of that sin.

Serving at a soup kitchen is a good thing to do, but it won’t set you free from your sin.

Here is the bad news of the Gospel.

You and I are sinners.

And there is nothing in our power to separate us from being guilty and ashamed.

But the good news of the Gospel is that God chooses to intervene and fix what we can't.

That is grace. [getting what you don't deserve.]

It was God who sought out Adam & Eve who were in hiding. God will always find you, no matter how far you run from him.

When He finds you ... there is no hiding your sin.

He leads Adam & Eve into their confession of what they did.

This is for their own good.

This is a part of the process of repentance.

Confession is the act of saying true things.

Sin begins with believing a lie, and so we need truth to break into our hearts again to be set free from it.

That is what confessing our sin is all about.

That doesn't mean there aren't consequences for sin that we may have to deal with in this life.

We see how that played out in this chapter ...

Bitterness in childbirth...

Strife in relationships ...

Hard-work that doesn't yield much fruit.

But that's not the end of the story ...

Genesis 3:21

“And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”

God isn't acting like the fashion police here.

**He wasn't looking at their loincloths and thinking ...
“That is not on trend.”**

God is establishing the law of atonement for sin.

God Sets Us Free From Sin Through A Sacrifice

Adam and Eve made leafy garments.

God made garments of skin ...

Don't think Silence of the Lambs ...

Think Deer Hunter.

There is a good chance they exited Eden in leather and fur.

But that set the pattern for atonement for the rest of history.

Innocent blood must be shed to atone for sin.

This is why Abel's sacrifice was accepted and not Cain's.

Abel sacrificed from his flock...

He followed the pattern God set.

And God sustained this pattern in Israel's worship.

Sacrifices of atonement were necessary to remain God's people.

But still, God's people lived east of Eden ... outside his garden Kingdom.

Which is to say, they lived in the domain that Satan ruled and held sway.

And all of the Bible is telling a story of God establishing his Kingdom within enemy territory.

This is why Abraham was called ...

To become the nation of Israel ... set apart to God alone.

To worship Him alone and obey His commands.

But they were just a foreshadowing of something greater.

Someone superior would come from the offspring of Abraham...

He would come to crush the power of sin and Satan through a final, perfect sacrifice of atonement.

Genesis 3:15

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring her offspring, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

God was the first person to preach the Good News of the Gospel.

Here, at the beginning, He prophesied the coming savior ...

Born of a virgin ... the offspring of Eve ... the “seed of Abraham”...

Whose final and perfect sacrifice would set us free from sin.

And by this Jesus would also crush the power of Satan and bring us back into His kingdom.

At the cross Jesus’ heel was bruised, but Satan’s head was crushed.

Yet, we are in a kingdom in the middle of enemy territory.

There is a war still being waged.

We need to remember that.

Satan is still fighting, deceiving, destroying what he can.

Because one day he will be fully defeated when Jesus returns, takes over and casts him out.

Until that day, we are still in this cosmic war being waged between Good and Evil.

And as followers of Jesus we are called to battle.

We fight for the captive soul with love and the truth of the Gospel.

We wrestle with principalities and powers through our prayers and our faithfulness to our confession.

We don't fight with our own power, but in the Lord's strength and His might. (Eph 6:10).

If you are not yet a follower of Jesus:

- There is no middle ground, neutral territory to occupy in this war.
- You are either on God's side or Satan's.
- Until you believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior, you are on Satan's side.
- You are being led around by the nose to follow the ways of this world... wrapped up in your desires and entangled in Satan's deceptions.
- Today you've heard the truth of the Gospel.
- Today you can make a decision to move to God's side of the war.

If you are a follower of Jesus:

I feel like the Holy Spirit wants to ask us this...

“What are you fighting for?”

“Who are you fighting for?”

LETS PRAY

COMMUNION