



**SCRIPTURE:**

Genesis 3:1b-13

**SERMON:**

Over the past week, my wife and I have been in Jamaica on our honeymoon. Now some of you may hear that and say “But you got married 5 months ago, why are you just now going on your honeymoon?” That’s a great question, thank you for asking. I married my wife Carly on July 9th of this year, and we planned to leave for our honeymoon on July 11th. We were very excited, this was the first time we would go on a big trip without our parents, this was my first time flying out of the country, we had our entire week planned with all these things we wanted to do while we were there. There were a lot of first experiences lining up for us on this trip that made it very exciting.

We woke up very early on July 11th and drove to my in-laws house where we then met my father-in-law and he drove us to the airport. We got out of the car, said our goodbyes, and very excitedly made our way into the airport check-in station. We checked Carly in without a hitch, then scanned my information and an error sign showed up. So we walked up to the lady at the counter and asked for her help. She politely asked for my passport and I placed it on the desk. She paused awkwardly for a second and looked back up and said, “Where’s your other one?” To which I nervously replied, “I don’t have another one.” - in case you are like me and you’re totally uneducated on the American passport system, there are actually two passports you can get. One of them is the blue booklet that apparently everyone in the country except me has, and the other one is a small card that looks like a driver’s license. The booklet allows you to travel across the world in any capacity. The passport card only allows you to travel on land. As you may guess, I had a card and my wife had the booklet. This lady looked at us with absolutely zero compassion in her voice and said, “Well you ain’t getting on this plane.”

Then I, as a husband of less than 48 hours, had to turn to my wife and tell her that we are not going on the honeymoon that she’s been dreaming of taking. It’s funny now, I’ve been on the receiving end of many jokes since then, but you can imagine the feelings and emotions running through me at that moment. As the head of my household, I was responsible for leading us into this new life we are beginning, which started with a trip,

and while carrying that responsibility, I committed an utter failure. And because of my negligence, we both had to suffer the consequences of it. The reason I'm telling you this story is because if you'll notice in verse 9 of our passage, the first thing the Lord does after their sin is address the man. The reason God does this is because Adam, as the head of humanity, is the one responsible for their actions, just like I was the one responsible for us not making it to Jamaica. And just as we both had to sit through the consequences of that failed leadership moment, all of Creation has to sit through the consequences of the Fall. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 8.

*Romans 8:22-23 - 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together... 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves... groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons*

The sin of Adam and Eve brought the fall of God's orderly design for Creation into chaos. In that chaos all of Creation groans because it feels the heavy weight of the presence of sin, and in that same presence we find ourselves groaning inwardly waiting for the return of our Savior who will remove us from the presence of sin and usher in a new Creation.

**V1b - He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"**

"Did God really say?" is the first step on the ladder of spiritual chaos. What Satan is doing in this statement is really tricky. What he's doing is at the heart of a lot of problems. This is at the heart of bad theology. This is at the heart of a lot of sinful actions. This is at the heart of ignoring personal holiness. I wouldn't say that this question encompasses the entirety of those issues, but I would say this is at the heart of it.

Now I want to make a distinction here. I do not mean to imply that asking questions about something you're unsure about is wrong. Asking questions is what got me to the point I'm at today. If I had not asked questions about Scripture, I don't think I would be in ministry right now. And there are other instances where asking "Did God really say?" is actually necessary.

The attitude with which you ask this question makes all the difference. The reason we can speak firmly about the serpent asking the question is because his intent was not to gain a better understanding of God's command, no, his intent was to completely undermine the commands of the Lord. His desire was not to uphold the never-withering

Word of God and understand it better, it was to twist what was clearly stated in an effort to undermine it.

How does Eve respond to this treacherous question:

**V2-3 - 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.’”***

Eve’s initial response to the serpent is excellent. This is the ideal response to temptation. She quotes the words of God back to the serpent. This is the same thing that Jesus did when He was tempted by the serpent in Matthew 4. He quoted Scripture back to Satan. Now I want to look at something. Let’s read the original quote from God in Genesis 2:

**Genesis 2:16-17 - *And the Lord commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree in the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”***

If you’ll notice, what Eve quotes and what God originally said are not the exact same. Originally in Genesis 2 God did not say that they’re not allowed to touch the fruit, He simply said they’re not allowed to eat it. So, why did Eve add this extra command? Believe it or not, there’s actually quite a bit of debate about that. Some say She was nervous because of the serpent and misspoke. She added an extra law in between her and God’s Law. Regardless of why she said it that way, it doesn’t matter because it didn’t stop them from touching or eating the fruit.

Although Eve didn’t get the command exactly right, she did quote the punishment correctly. For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. This death means a death physically, spiritually, and eternally. Their physical death did not come immediately because of the Lord’s mercy. He granted them life more than what they deserved. Adam went on to live over 900 years of borrowed time. However, physical death did eventually come for their bodies.

Samuel Beckett - *“Everyone is born over a grave.”*

This death would also bring a spiritual death:

**Ephesians 2:1 - *And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.***

The death coming for them would place a spiritual barrier between them and the Lord that makes a relationship impossible without a just atonement to fix it. This is the same situation that today's unbelievers find themselves in. For the one who does not repent, eternal death is the final result, and this would have been the end result for Adam and Eve without the Lord graciously atoning on their behalf.

How does the serpent respond to Eve quoting God's words:

***V4-5 - 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."***

This is the logical conclusion of the question posed in verse one, in the manner in which the serpent asked it. Asking the question "Did God really say?" When you have already determined that you don't like what it is He said, punches a one-way ticket to the chaos that comes from denying God's Word.

Let's examine how the serpent poses this to Eve. I would argue that he actually gives her a half-truth. He's not entirely wrong on all accounts. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened - true you will be like God, knowing good and evil - also true. God even said as much at the end of chapter 3 in verse 22. He tells them some truthful things in order to ease them into the lie:

"You will not die. You'll be like God. He just doesn't want you to be like Him. God is jealous. He wants to keep you oppressed so that He can rule over you. You're not doomed to die if you become like God."

What the serpent pushes on them is a desire for autonomy. One thing I have learned in my theological studies is that humans hate determinism. We desire autonomy for ourselves. We will look more into this later on.

For now, let's look at how Adam and Eve react to the serpent's deception:

***V6 - 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.***

I want to give you a warning. This is where we need to start being careful in the story. It is far too easy to look back in time at Adam and Eve in this moment and say “Why would you do that?” “It’s just a fruit. Leave it alone.” “If it was me I could have said no.” But I want you to pay attention to the language used here. “Delight to the eyes” can also be translated “Lust to the eyes”. The serpent presented the fruit to her in a way that made it desirable to her. It was lovely to look at. It was attractive. This is the same thing that happens to you today. If we saw sin for what it really was, we wouldn’t want it. If we really saw every sin as a vile and seditious act that it is, nothing about it would be attractive. The reason that we commit sins is the same reason Eve did. Because they are presented before us in an enticing way. The serpent sneaks around whispering half-truths in your ear about how much pleasure sin will bring, just as he did to Eve.

They already had everything that the Lord said they needed. Everything they had He said was good. The only thing in the first two chapters that wasn’t good was Adam being alone and He fixed that with the union of marriage which He also declared was good. He had given them all that they needed and deemed that it was good, but it wasn’t good enough for them. They weren’t content with what the Lord called good, so they determined to gain a knowledge of good and evil for themselves. They defied the Lord’s standard of what was right and wrong.

They chose to define morality for themselves (just like man still tries to do today) and with this redefinition they find themselves in a very dark place.

***V7 - Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.***

Now we have the completion of the half-truth the serpent promised. They indeed did have their eyes opened to the knowledge of good and evil. There’s a lot of debate over what exactly the knowledge of good and evil is. I won’t go into all the possible interpretations, I wish I had time to. But here’s what we can absolutely say about it. There was something that they either didn’t have or didn’t recognize before eating the fruit, and now that they’ve eaten the fruit there is something about their naked bodies that makes them ashamed. Attempting to replace God, they had their eyes opened to good and evil, and what this new revelation brought was the recognition that they could not be God.

What happened after their eyes were opened with this new knowledge? They knew that they were naked. Previously, in Genesis 2:25 - the man and his wife were both naked

and were not ashamed. So what changed? They've been naked this whole time, but now they're all of a sudden ashamed of it. Why? Because in attempting to replace God and become their own lawmakers, they had their eyes opened to the knowledge of good and evil, and what this new knowledge brought was the realization that they would never truly be lawmakers. They could never be God, and this made them ashamed in their natural state. In trying to "play God" they became less than human. They fell, and their fall brought with it all the shame of sin that still weighs on Creation.

***V8 - 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.***

What does it mean that they heard the sound of the Lord? How did they hear Him?

Matthew Henry - *"He came into the garden, not descending immediately from heaven in their view, as afterwards on mount Sinai, but he came into the garden, as one that was still willing to be familiar with them."*

He did not present Himself in a physical body, because God does not exist in a physical body outside of the incarnation

**John 4:24 - God is spirit**

God exists as a spiritual being, transcendent beyond our natural universe. What Moses is doing when he writes this is using what's called anthropomorphic language. This simply means that he is using human words or phrases to describe God, who is not human. Although God is spirit, He did present Himself before them in some way that enabled them to recognize who He was. Listen to what the prophet Jeremiah said about God's presence on earth:

***Jeremiah 23:23-24 - 23 "Am I a God at hand, declares the Lord, and not a God far away? 24 Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? Declares the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the Lord."***

The Lord is omnipresent. His presence fills all the earth. Jeremiah says He is a God at hand. He is close to us. He is so close, in fact, that man cannot hide himself from Him. Yet, Adam tried to hide from Him anyway.

What happens when the Lord approaches them in the garden?

**V9 - *But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"***

Who is at fault here? Was it not Eve that ate the fruit first and Adam just followed suit? Even Paul said in 1 Timothy Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Eve was the one who was deceived, yet the Lord called to the man. Why? Look back at verse 6. She also gave some to her husband who was with her. This doesn't necessarily mean that Adam was staring over her shoulder, but he was at least in the vicinity while she was talking to the serpent, and he did nothing to stop it. He was responsible for the actions of his household. He was charged as the head representative of humanity, and failed to lead his people in the face of this temptation, so the Lord called him out of his hiding.

How did Adam respond to this call from the Lord?

**V10 - *And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."***

He was afraid of the Lord. Fearing the Lord is not something Adam had done before, at least not that we have recorded. And up until now he would have no reason to fear him because he had always been obedient until now. This is a brand-new emotional experience for Adam. And why does he fear? Because he knows the punishment that the Lord has promised. He knows what is coming. Adam knows he has transgressed against a holy God, and he knows that that holy God has commanded a punishment for his transgressions.

Not only was he in fear of the death that God had promised, he was also afraid because he was naked. He was afraid for God to see him in his nakedness. He was afraid to be seen in his shamefulness.

**V11 - *He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"***

Look at Adam's answer:

**V12 - *The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."***

Look at Adam's immediate response. "I didn't do it" "It's the woman" "She did it" "She gave it to me" - His first reaction is to put the blame on someone else. And now we have the broken rupture of the relationship between the sexes. There is now a little thorn in their relationship. This is something that pastor Nick will cover next week in verse 16.

Not only does he look to blame Eve, but he actually tries to turn it on God too. The woman whom you gave to be with me. "You played a part in this too" "You're the one that gave her to me" "You're at fault too" - But notice God doesn't let him off the hook here. God doesn't say "Ah you got me. I'll let this one slide." No. In fact, He doesn't even engage with Adam anymore. Why? Because God's actions don't negate man's responsibility. Yes, God placed Eve in the garden with Adam. Yes, Adam is still responsible for his marriage.

Then He turns His questions towards Eve.

***V13 - 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."***

The man blames the woman, and the woman blames the serpent. No one accepts responsibility for what has happened. Look how quickly the results of sin have infiltrated their hearts. This entire interaction happens within minutes. They just ate the fruit, and they're already doing everything they can to get out of being held responsible.

### **1. Prepare a battle plan for temptations**

***2 Corinthians 11:3 - But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.***

Paul tells the Corinthians that he's concerned that the serpent will attack them the same way that he attacked Eve. How did he do that? By cunning deception. He asked her things that made her question God's commands then he completely denied God's Word. He made it easy for her. He gave her an out. This is the same way that he still attacks you today. He provides the opportunity, then he whispers in your ear: "You will not surely die" - "God will forgive you anyway" - "No one will find out about it"

This may look different for everyone. Maybe there's some phone numbers you need to delete, or some old text conversations you need to delete so you can stop going back and reading them. Maybe you need to memorize some verses that you can preach to

yourself when temptation comes to ground yourself in the Word. Maybe you need to increase your prayer time or even pray sporadically throughout the day (this has helped me tremendously). Maybe you need to cut off some relationships that keep pulling you back in. Whatever that looks like for you, you have to have a predetermined plan for how you will deal with these scenarios, otherwise you're just a helpless mouse waiting to be devoured by the snake.

## **2. Be content with what the Lord has revealed**

***Deuteronomy 29:29 - The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.***

There are things that the Lord has revealed to us through Creation and through Scripture, and there are things that He has chosen not to reveal to us. This is a very common struggle for people in theology (I know it is for me). A lot of times young people studying theology, or even people who are brand new to theology feel that you need to take a stance on every single topic remotely implied in Scripture. But not everything in Scripture is communicated clearly enough for you to take an honest position on it. We have to be okay with saying I know *\*these things\** and outside of this the secret things belong to the Lord. This was the failure of Adam and Eve. They weren't content with what the Lord had revealed to them. They wanted this new knowledge that the fruit offered. They wanted to be like God and know everything. They wanted intellectual autonomy for themselves. And you know what sucks? Humans today aren't any better.

Alistair Begg recently said in a sermon, *"We are not free to tamper with Scripture." This is the heart of every single cultural issue that Christians engage: Roe v Wade, Respect for Marriage Act, gender-affirming surgery for children. There are far too many professing believers and pastors who are caving on these vital issues. Or they won't all out affirm these things but they'll stand back with hands in their pockets and say "The Church has no place in the public square" (in which case you might as well affirm it). But listen to what Begg said, "The danger is an increasing danger, that those who should know better are losing their convictions, not about sexual matters, but about the authority of the Bible. It's the same bullet that Satan had in his gun in the garden." But now Satan asks the question with even more deceptive words: "Yeah, but you live in a different cultural context. You need to conjoin Scripture to modern times." "Yeah, but Jesus was God, you should elevate His words over the epistles"*

R.C. Sproul - *"When God says something, the argument is over."*

He has communicated to us exactly what He intended to communicate from before the foundation of the world, and what He has declared will stand forever.

### **3. Accept responsibility for your actions**

When God called on Adam his immediate reaction was to turn to Eve. When God called on Eve her immediate reaction was to turn to the serpent. It's too easy to turn and blame sin on every obstacle in the way. "Well God if that person hadn't cut me off in traffic" - "Well God if you had given me better circumstances" - "Well God if my spouse would just understand" - Yes, God placed them in the garden. Yes, God placed the fruit in the garden. Yes, God gave Eve to Adam as a helper. And Yes, Adam was still responsible for his sins, just like you are still responsible for everything you do as well.

Romans 5

- Preach. The. Gospel.
- Imputation / propitiation
- Original sin refers to the consequences of the first sin, not the first sin itself
- Adam and Eve made with the ability to sin, not as sinners
- Adam was not born in sin, but he became cursed because of his sin. Christ was not born in sin, but He became a curse because of our sin.
- Not only did you not earn His grace, you did everything not to earn it

Tony Evans - *"Sin is a dread disease from which all of creation is crying out for a cure."*

#### **REVIEW:**

- What was the serpent really asking in verse 1? (James 1:5-8).
- What changed to make the tree look good for food and a delight to the eyes in verse 6? (1 Timothy 6:6-9, Luke 12:15, Philippians 3:19, Proverbs 16:18).
- What changed after they ate the fruit in verse 7? (Genesis 2:8-9, 10,15,16-17,24,25).
- Was God literally walking in the garden in verse 8? (John 4:24, Genesis 1:2, Proverbs 15:3, Jeremiah 23:24, Psalm 139:7-10, Isaiah 43:2).
- Did God not know where Adam was in verse 9? (Hebrews 4:13, Psalm 134:104, 1 John 3:20, Matthew 11:28-30, John 6:35 & 37, 2 Peter 3:9).
- Why was Adam afraid of God in verse 10?

#### **REFLECT:**

- What should Eve have done instead of engaging with the serpent? (Proverbs 4:14-15, 2 Timothy 2:22, 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 4:7).
- Why didn't God let Adam and Eve die immediately when they ate the fruit?
- How has Satan deceived you in the past?
- How did the decision by Adam & Eve affect all of humanity? (Romans 5:18, Psalm 5:15, 58:3, Romans 3:23, Proverbs 28:13, Genesis 3:21, 1 Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53:5).

#### **RESPOND:**

- What are some things you need to change or get rid of in order to fight against temptation?
- Is there sin in your life right now that you need to repent from and ask for forgiveness?

#### **MEDITATE:**

- Genesis 3:6 - *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.*

#### **MEMORIZE:**

- Romans 5:17 - *For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*

#### **PRAYER FOCUS:**

- TJC Director of Creative & Communications: **Hunter Christian**
- NAMB Church Planter: **Tyler Wiley** - Middletown, OH - *Refuge Church*
- Unreached People Group (UPG): **Laven** in United States
  - Population: 37,000
  - Christian: 0.0%
  - Evangelical: 0.0%
  - Primary Religion: Ehtnic Religions
  - Primary Language: Laven
  - Status: **Unreached**