

Passage read and taught/talked through earlier in service.

**Introduction** Something goes horribly wrong between Genesis 2:25 and 3:24. At the end of chapter 2, the man and woman God created were living in union with God and each other in the perfect setting of God's garden. By the end of chapter 3, man and woman have been expelled from the garden by God with angelic armed guards posted to be certain they do not return. The most common phrase used to explain what happened in chapter 3 is that Adam and Eve fell. What did they fall into? What did they fall from? What shape were they in when they landed? Chapter 3 is the detailed account of how evil entered the world through a rebellious creature and the eventual rebellion of the man and woman against their creator. It is the first place to turn in the Bible to understand the concept of sin and its universal impact on our lives and world.

Sin changes everything. Understanding the message of the Bible is impossible without a grasp of the meaning and impact of sin on the human story. There are four very real and practical realities in our world today that come to light in this chapter. These realities are some of the ways that our lives intersect with sin and evil. These realities are taught in the Bible with reference to Genesis 3. Our dilemma is that we have learned to minimize these realities, ignore them and try to pretend along with the average person of the world that these are not of real consequence. Sin as it is presented in basic form is seen in our lives and world in the following ways:

Deceit	People are liars. Jesus taught that we lie because we are of the influence of the Devil. John 8:42-47; People not only deceive, but are easily deceived. 2Cor. 11:1-4. Our world is marked by trusting very few.
Darkness	Powerful evil forces exist and are active in our world. Unbelievers eyes are blinded to faith in Christ 2Cor. 4:4; Unbelievers live in the domain of darkness Col.1:13; believers face a constant fight against the cosmic powers of this present darkness Eph.6:110-12. Our sophisticated rebellion does not like to think of ourselves as deceived pawns playing out the script of evil forces in heavenly places.
Death	People die. Physical death is introduced as a result of the man's rebellion. Spiritual death, eternal separation from God is definitely a result of sin as described in Genesis 3. The consequence of sin is death Rom.6:23; Death came through one man Rom. 5:12-21; 1Cor.15:21.
Decay	People and things get old and fall apart. God says that creation itself expresses futility and corruption. It is groaning under the load of sins restraint assigned by God in Genesis 3. Romans 8:18-25

Let's examine Genesis 3 with the prayerful objective that we will grow in our appreciation of the one who came to seek and to save us from our sins. Your awareness and acknowledgment of your personal sin is absolutely foundational to your reflecting the glory of God in your life.

This chapter of scripture addresses key questions you may have about sin as it tells in narrative form how sin and its destructive consequences entered our lives and story.

**1. Temptation & Disobedience.                      What is sin and how does it work?                      3:1-7**

Note that the essence of sin is not a specific act of breaking God’s law, as significant as that is, but is rebellion, anarchy against your creator God. It is the replacement of God with some other form of government. It is the alternative form of government of self-rule. Sin in its various manifestations is the lack of submission to God’s words in behavior, attitude and nature.

Sin is your action, attitude and settled nature that accepts the lie that you can rule your world better than God, without God and in spite of God. Note from chapter 3 how sin works itself out in your life:

- v.1        **Suggestion** that God’s words are subject to our judgment.
  
- v.1-3    **Exaggeration** of God’s words that represent God as harsh/restrictive.
  
- v. 4-5    **Contradiction** of God’s words directly denying God’s trustworthiness.
  
- v. 6-7    **Rebellion** against God’s words that result in self rule and awareness.

The lie . . . John 8:42-47 . . . connect sin/lie and God’s words. For something to be sin it must be against God and his character. Sin works in these subtle ways to break down our trust in God and his words. We rebel against him in these terms of suggestion, exaggeration, contradiction and desire.

**2. Confrontation and Consequences.                      How does sin change/impact our world?                      3:8-19**

These verses describe the sad dialogue between the creator God and the man and woman after they chose to replace his authority with their own. Note that God pursues them, asks gracious questions and carefully explains the consequences of their choices. Man and woman, in contrast to God’s actions, hide, justify, blame shift and ultimately even blame God for their actions. Note and beware of how sin has changed things in your world.

- Your spiritual relationships.

3 ways you are affected spiritually – you need saving in each of these realms:

Banished from God	what began as hiding turns into being expelled with no way back.	8, 24
At war with evil.	The battle with your deceiver is an ongoing reminder of sin	15
Self contradicting	hiding, blame shifting, justifying rather than taking responsibility	12-14

- Your personal relationships.

Note the seeds of mistrust and selfishness that break down families, societies and relationships that result from this act of replacing God as sovereign.

Mutual estrangement v.7

Desire to dominate v.16

- Your physical existence.

Note the introduction of a life cycle that begins with pain (16), experiences struggle and frustration (17,18) and ends with returning to the ground from which you were made (19). Life is painful to renew and sustain. All creation groans under the curse and impact of life without God as Lord.

### **3. Life & Death.                      What hope is there for sinners being restored to God?                      3:20-24**

Note that the end of this chapter is not good news for people . . . the way back into the garden is more than hard, it is resisted by God. You cannot get back in without some form of help that is both from God, greater than the angels assigned to guard the gate and more powerful than the serpent who deceived you.

Hope for you and your sin is seen in two subtle ways that are developed as the main theme of the Bible in the following books and pages.

- Look for God's promise of life.                      3:20-21
  
- Look for satisfaction of God's wrath.                      3:22-24

### **Conclusion**

Acknowledge the impact of sin in your life. One ministry of the Holy Spirit that is going on in this room this morning is that he is convicting and convincing people of their sin, their need of righteousness and the certainty of judgment to come.

Repent and move past simply trying not to sin. Ask God to transform you at the attitude and nature levels. The ministry of prayer and the word is necessary to go deep into your heart and cause you to hate evil.

Appreciate grace that saved a wretch like you. Talk, sing and pray like one who was blind but now can see, was lost but now you are found. You must live like a sinner saved by grace.

## Study Questions

1. Read Genesis 3 together as a group and share observations, impressions and questions from the text.
2. Share your definition of sin. How has this study of Genesis 3 shaped or challenged your understanding of sin and its impact on your life and worldview?
3. Read 2Cor. 11:1-4 and John 8:42-47. How do these passages impact your view of believing or trusting others? What subtle lies are you believing or struggling with currently?
4. Think about/discuss the terms of suggestion, exaggeration and contradiction from point #1. How do these manifest themselves in your life? How do you recognize and resist them?
5. Do you struggle with sin in every area or dimension of your life? How does God's provision of grace and power in Christ make a difference in these dimensions/areas of life? Help the person in your group who has said or is ready to say, 'we will sin until we die, what's the use of trying to stop?'
6. Encourage the person in your group from scripture who is weary in their struggle with sin.
7. Review 3:20-24. Explain and encourage each other with the hope found in these closing scenes of god and man in the garden.
8. Pray together using scripture to encourage one another in your battle with sin.