

## What Went Wrong?

### Day One: The Command To Trust

#### Today's Reading...

**Genesis 2:8-25** | *Now the Lord God planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

*10 A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

*18 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."... 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. 23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." 24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

**N**ot only did God create us with the grand responsibility to "image" Him (represent Him, reflect his character) to the world, but he also gave us the dignity of meaningful work. A life of thriving always includes serving a purpose greater than ourselves. Adam and Eve had the distinct privilege of being the managers, or stewards, of what God had created.

In a sense, God wanted them to build a culture in which God was glorified by culture that trusted Him enough to do what He said (authority), embraced His love and acceptance of them (identity), and did for each other what He did for them (activity). They were given everything they needed to do this. In other words they were set up to THRIVE: they had a close relationship to God, a beautiful place to live, all the food they needed, good smells (aromatic resin), a person

to love (and more to come), and meaningful and fulfilling work.

There was one more thing they were given: a **COMMAND**. Specifically, the command was “Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil.” Let’s make sure we understand some important concepts surrounding this command...

It is absolutely necessary that we understand the command in the

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They were given everything they needed to ... THRIVE

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context of who God is = **CREATOR**. If God didn’t create, then he had no standing in which to command. But because God created Adam and Eve He had the right to command

them. (Note: this is why there is so much debate surrounding creation. The person who hates the idea that they are accountable to God will look to other options to explain how they came to exist. The concept of unguided evolution has proven to be a less than satisfying explanation for our existence. For more on this see Stephen Meyer @ <https://stephenc-meyer.org/>)

Why did God command Adam and Eve to not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? The answer to this question has several aspects; let’s look at two...

First, this tree represented God’s **AUTHORITY** to declare good and evil, right and wrong = It stood for **MORAL AUTHORITY**. God had created the heavens and earth, and everything on the earth

and declared all that he created **GOOD**. This is a moral judgment. The reason God didn’t want them to eat from this tree was because He didn’t want them to take upon themselves moral authority. Their thriving as human beings depended upon them submitting to the God of the Universe who knew what was good for them - who had their best interests at heart. In other words, Adam and Eve couldn’t be trusted to decide what was **GOOD** for themselves.

The prohibition was God’s way of saying to Adam “**TRUST ME.**” Every good relationship requires trust and this was what God wanted from Adam - his trust. Adam would thrive as long as he trusted his creator. If Adam ate from the forbidden tree it would be an act of **REBELLION**—“I don’t trust you anymore.” The relationship would be damaged because trust was broken. And that’s what happened.

Please notice for future reference that at this point, Adam and Eve were “naked” and not ashamed. They were not just naked physically, but they were also naked emotionally and spiritually. “Nakedness,” in this context, symbolized vulnerability and innocence. Both Adam and Eve could be completely authentic and vulnerable since sin had not entered their existence. Up to this point they lived a transparent and carefree life.

**Scripture:**

**Genesis 2:15-17, 25** | *The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die...” 25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.*

**Meditate:**

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**Conviction:**

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# Day Two: Paradise Lost

**Listen to “Paradise Lost” by Tim Keller**

(Go to the Living FDFD website, Week Three, to listen to this sermon.)

**Scripture:**

**Genesis 3:8-24** | *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” 11 And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” 12 The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” 14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” 16 To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in child-bearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” 17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is*

*the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” 20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living. 21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. 22 And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.*

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## Day Three: The Fall

**T**he Fall started with an **ATTITUDE** (“Did God really say...”), not an **ACTION**. The word “really” has a mocking attitude behind it. The serpent is planting the seed in the minds of Adam and Eve that what God commanded is not fair or right. The decision not to trust God and to rebel against His authority in their lives started with the suggestion that God does not have their best interest at heart. Satan came to them to tempt them into thinking and believing that God’s way (obedience to God’s moral will) was not the pathway to personal thriving. He set out to convince them that they should explore the possibilities of a world in which they were free to make their own choices as to what is best for themselves.

Isn’t this the way most people walk away from the faith today. Today our rebellion most often starts with the thought that freedom and real pleasure lay outside the moral boundaries that God has placed on us. Add the attitude that it “isn’t fair” that God gets to make all the rules—that His ways are narrow and old fashioned—and rebellion against His authority takes flight. It doesn’t take long before a once trusting individual now finds that they have swallowed the lie that Adam and Eve swallowed, the lie that God is not for us.

It is also interesting to note that Eve said to the serpent that God not only forbade her from eating the tree, but also from touching it. This could be seen as a minor error in accuracy or it can be seen as an

indicator that she was beginning to believe that God’s way was too narrow. Notice that the serpent didn’t deny the existence of God, but that God was not GOOD. And now we see the first indication that Eve is believing it.

So the temptation was not to stop BELIEVING in the existence of God. The temptation was and is to stop believing that God is GOOD. Looking ahead to our discussion of redemption in Week Five, this violation of God’s command to trust is very important to understand. Our decision to TRUST in the KINDNESS of God, found in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, is the act that reverses what had been lost at the Fall. Our love relationship with God was lost through our failure to TRUST HIM, and now that relationship can only be restored when we place our trust in Him.

**Scripture:**

**Genesis 3:1-7** | *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”*

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

6 *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave*

*some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

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**Conviction:**

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# Day Four: The Consequences of the Fall

## Today's Reading:

**Genesis 3:8-19** | *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" 10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." 11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*

*12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

*14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'"*

*16 To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." 17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' 'Cursed is the ground*

*because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

**C**learly this passage answers the question, "What's wrong with the human race?" Or, "Why is life and relationship so difficult?" We all suffer because of the consequences of a broken relationship with God brought about by our failure to trust Him.

What is sin? Sin is rebellion. It is putting ourselves in the place of God. It is deciding for ourselves what is good or right. It is challenging God's right to tell us what to do.

What are the consequences of sin? The list of consequences are many, but two important one are...

**SPIRITUAL DEATH.** Adam and Eve and now everyone who has ever lived have a broken relationship with God and live their lives under a cloud of condemnation. This is why we all naturally feel guilty before God. John 3:18 is helpful in showing us this. Jesus said to Nicodemus:

*"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."*

Colossians 1:19-22 says, "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of

*your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation..."*

These passages clearly proclaim that because of the REBELLION of Adam and Eve, we have a SIN PROBLEM. The only resolution to our sin problem (our spiritual death, our own rebellion against God's authority, our need for reconciliation) is what Christ did for us on the Cross. So everyone of us can be alive physically, but dead spiritually. Unless God rescues us and we respond to that rescue, we will live and die as God's rebellious enemies deserving His condemnation. Because God is good He often works in us to produce true moral guilt. Most people know deep down, in their heart, that they are sinners in need of a Savior. But, unfortunately, they are successful at drowning out that sense and conviction that they need forgiveness for their sins.

**FEAR AND INSECURITY.** Look at the immediate consequences of Adam and Eve's decision to eat from the forbidden tree. They instantly hid. They hid from God because they didn't want to face Him - they were afraid of Him, because they knew that they had violated the relationship by violating God's trust. Also, for the first time ever they felt ASHAMED and did what came naturally, they tried to cover themselves. The physical act of covering themselves is, I believe, a metaphor for something that comes natural to all of us; we make excuses for our bad behavior, we blame others (they did this) and we pretend to be someone we aren't (the number one cause of debt).

J.P. Moreland has written about a world in which we are trying desperately to be in charge of our

own lives and God is demoted out of existence. He calls this state of being spiritually dead "the empty self." Read his thoughts below and decide whether or not you agree with his description of what it means to be spiritually dead.

*"The empty self is actually a ubiquitous incarnation of what is more broadly called the false self. Roughly, the false self is the false self we present to others, perhaps unconsciously, in order to make the world safe for us, to allow us to be in control of things, to gain attention or be ignored depending on our strategy, and to hide from others and ourselves what we are really like. The false self is a tangled web of internal tapes created by childhood struggles, pain, embarrassment, anxiety, and fear."*

He goes on to say...

*"The empty self is **individualistic**. These are self-contained individuals who defines one's own life goals, values, and interests as though one were a human atom, isolated from others, with little need or responsibility to live for the concerns of the broader community."*

*"The empty self is **infantile**. These are people who carry adolescent personality features well into their thirties. An infantile person is controlled by infantile cravings and constantly seeks to be filled up with and made whole by food, entertainment and consumer goods. The infantile self needs to be soothed and must have its desires instantly satisfied... For the infantile personality type, pain, endurance, hard work, and delayed gratification are simply out of the question. Pleasure is all that matters, and it*

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has to be immediate. Boredom is the greatest evil, amusement the greatest good.”

*“The empty self is narcissistic. Narcissism is an inappropriate sense of self-infatuation in which the individual is driven by and only by his or her own self-interest and personal fulfillment. The narcissist is superficial and regards others as mere objects, mere means to his or her own selfish ends. Self denial is out of the question. Spiritually, the narcissist dethrones God and his purposes in history from the center of religious life and places his or her own personal fulfillment in the middle. God exists to meet the narcissist’s needs, and woe to the Creator if he doesn’t live up to those expectations.”*

*“The empty self is passive. The passive individual is a self in search of pleasure provided by others. Such an individual increasingly becomes a shriveled self with less and less ability to be proactive and take control of life.” (The Kingdom Triangle)*

As you can see, our worst and most insecure self is the result of the fall. And almost everything that we do wrong; lie, cheat, lust, controlling behavior, jealousy, envy, greed, et cetera - all flow from our insecurities. Unfortunately, many people don’t come to Christ in hopes of Him solving their sin problem, they come to Christ with the hope that He can help them overcome their fears and insecurities that have made life so unbearable. This is an attempt to treat the SYMPTOM not the DISEASE. Only when we come to Christ in order to solve our most basic problem - our sin problem - will we ever embrace the greatness and beauty of the solution (the Cross / forgiveness of sins) as life-changing. I love what J.D. Greear wrote in his

book Gospel, “We measure God’s love by the Cross and His power by the resurrection.” This never seems to happen unless we understand and appreciate our REAL PROBLEM = SIN.

**Scripture:**

**Colossians 1:19-22** | For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation...

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**Conviction:**

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