



## “The Fall” Genesis 3

**Idea:** Sin steals, kills, and destroys.

**Intro:** We love good stories. What are the components that make up a good story? I think we can narrow it to two things: hardship and rescue.

We see these two components in C. S. Lewis’s best-known novel, *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*. In this story, four siblings (Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy) are evacuated from London during the Blitz of WWII and sent to live with an old professor in the English countryside. While exploring the professor’s house, Lucy enters a magic wardrobe that leads her into a wooded area with a lighted lamppost growing from the ground. She meets a faun named Tumnus and learns that she is in the land of Narnia.

Tumnus intends to take Lucy to the White Witch, a ruler who keeps Narnia frozen in a perpetual winter, but he decided to disobey the White Witch’s order and instead escorts Lucy back to the lamppost. Later on Lucy returns to Narnia with Edmund. He encounters the witch who entices him with sweet Turkish Delight and promises to give him more if he brings his brother and sisters to the castle. Later, all four siblings return to Narnia and learn about the tyranny of the White Witch as well as the prophecy of “the two Sons of Adam and two Daughters of Eve” who will set on the four thrones of Cair Paravel, and that Narnia’s true ruler, the great lion Aslan, will return from a long absence, bringing an end to the witch’s rule.

The presence of these two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve create a fury of activity within the witch’s kingdom. She demands Edmund’s life for his treason. Aslan trades his life for Edmund’s. All hope seems to be lost for Narnia until the great lion is resurrected from the dead. Together, he and the army of Narnia defeat the White Witch and her evil fighters. Narnia is liberated and peace and goodness once again dwells throughout the land. Hardship leads to rescue, which leads to a good story.

The greatest story ever told is the story of the Bible. There are four scenes in it: creation, fall, rescue, and restoration. Last Sunday we examined scene one. We learned that in the beginning there was God. He created all there is, and His creation was good. Adam and Eve were the pinnacle of God’s creation. He placed them in a beautiful garden in Eden. All was good as the first two humans enjoyed intimacy with God and His creation. Notice how Genesis 2 closes.

Read Genesis 2:25.

**Inquiry:** Genesis 3 opens up scene two of this great story. If this chapter were not in the Bible, there would be no Bible, as we know it. Why? Because the rest of Scripture documents the sad consequences of Adam's sin and explains what God in His grace has done to rescue humanity. By grasping the basic truths of this important chapter, you can better understand Paul's discussion of justification in Romans 5, his teaching in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 about men and women in the church, and his explanation in 1 Corinthians 15 of the future resurrection.

Let's look at the unfolding of this scene in Genesis 3. There are three aspects to the fall. The first is...

## 1. Disobedience

Read Genesis 3:1-6.

Adam and Eve were far from being equal to God, yet He lovingly placed them in charge of all He had created in Eden. God gave them the freedom to make decisions and govern the earth with one rule: don't eat from a specific tree. One day, God's enemy, a fallen angel named Satan (Lucifer), wanted to overthrow God so he took the form of a serpent and lied to Adam and Eve. He deceived them into thinking God was not good and did not have their best interest in mind. As a result, they knowingly disobeyed God. In rebellion, Adam and Eve ate the fruit, deciding that they, not God, would determine right and wrong.

There is no doubt about the disobedience of Adam and Eve. But why? What would cause or lead them to disobey God's clear word? We find three clues in this passage.

### 1) It was initiated by temptation. (3:1, 4-5)

A temptation is an opportunity to accomplish a good thing in a bad way. It is a good thing to pass a school examination but a bad thing to do it by cheating. It's a good thing to pay your bills but a bad thing to steal the money for the payments. In essence, Satan said to Eve: "I can give you something that you need and want. You can have it now and enjoy it; and best of all, there won't be any painful consequences. What an opportunity!" Adam and Eve's disobedience was initiated by the temptation of the serpent. He offered something very appealing. And what an offer it was.

The opportunity to be gods themselves is what he offered.

We find a second clue that led to their disobedience.

### 2) It was furthered along by neglect. (3:2-3)

The serpent questioned God's Word concerning the tree. He asked, "*Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'*" (vs. 1). He sought to raise doubts in Eve's mind concerning the truthfulness of God's Word and the goodness of His character.

Eve responded by reciting God's command about the tree, but she added to it. Her reply showed that she was following Satan's example and altering the very Word of God. By looking at what the Lord had commanded Adam in 2:16-17, we see that Eve omitted "*surely*" or "*freely*" (NKJV) and added the phrase "*neither shall you touch it.*" Further, she said, "*lest you die*" – a possibility – instead of "*you shall surely die*" – an actuality. So she took from God's Word, added to God's Word, and changed God's Word, which are serious offenses (Deut 4:2; 12:32; Prov 30:6; Rev 22:19).

By neglecting God's Word, Eve was easy prey for Satan's temptation. Contrast her response to temptation with Christ's response during His forty days of fasting in the wilderness, and you see

how critical the Word of God is for obedience (Matt 4:1-11).

The third clue leading to her disobedience is...

- 3) It was rooted in pride. (3:6)

Eve sinned because she was attracted to the fruit of the forbidden tree. She was walking by sight and not by faith in God's Word. Genesis 3:6 parallels the teaching of 1 John 2:16: "*good for food*" – "*desires of the flesh*"; "*delight to the eyes*" – "*desires of the eyes*"; "*desired to make one wise*" – "*pride of life*". What she saw stroked a cord of pride within her heart.

These are the three things that motivate the people of the world today; and when God's people start thinking like the world, they start living like the world.

*No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

– 1 Cor 10:13

Application: Temptation was present in the Garden, and it is present in our world today. You will always be tempted in your life. Temptation in and of itself is not sin. What you do with temptation determines whether or not it becomes sinful disobedience to God. Every temptation is, among other things, an opportunity to move closer to the Lord. Learn to say "no" to it and "yes" to Him (2 Cor 10:5).

Adam and Eve's disobedience brought about the second aspect of the fall.

## 2. Consequence

There are consequences for every decision we make. The consequences for Adam and Eve's actions were devastating. Like a virus, sin entered into all of creation and into the hearts of Adam and Eve. Sin, suffering, and pain were passed down from generation to generation; all of creation was distorted from its original design. We have all read or heard the stories of war, poverty, disease, greed, and scandals that plague our world today. These are all the result of sin.

We see the immediate consequences of Adam and Eve's sin.

- 1) Shame

Read Genesis 3:7.

The emotional health of Adam and Eve in verse 7 is starkly different from what it was in 2:25. It has been said that sin will take you further than you wanted to go, keep you longer than you wanted to stay, and cost you more than you were willing to pay. This seems to be true for the first man and woman.

Immediately after eating from the tree, their eyes were opened, and they saw their nakedness. They had no covering. Their conscience, their God-given inner judge, was sounding off. They experienced shame. Sin always produces shame and guilt.

- 2) Separation

Read Genesis 3:8.

God had told Adam that if they ate of the forbidden tree, they would surely die. When they heard God walking in the Garden, rather than coming to Him like other times, Adam and Eve hid in the bushes. Fear is a consequence of sin.

Their hiding speaks of the separation that had taken place in their lives. Sin had killed them spiritually, and it would eventually kill them physically. The Bible says, “*The wages of sin is death...*” (Rom 6:23a). The consequence of sin is death...separation from the God who created you to be in relationship with Himself.

### 3) Brokenness

Read Genesis 3:9-19

Sin breaks lives, relationships, families, and everything else. Today, we live in a fallen, broken world because of sin.

These verses reveal that brokenness. Adam blames God and Eve for his sin. Can you imagine how the conversation at the dinner table went later that night? It was probably pretty cold. I think Adam made his own dinner and slept on the couch that night.

Eve blames the serpent. And God pronounces judgment on sin. The serpent is cursed (vs. 14). The woman is judged with pain during childbirth and contention in the marriage relationship (vs. 16). Adam is judged with pain in his daily labor. Creation now would work against him (vs. 17-19).

Application: Sin is dangerous. We should never play around with it. We should never listen to its enticements and promises. It is a liar and a charlatan. It promises much but delivers little. It steals, kills, and destroys, leaving nothing but broken lives in its wake. This brings us to the final aspect of the fall.

## 3. Need

Adam and Eve were broken people. They were filled with shame and fear. They were separated from God and lost in a world that now worked against them. They were in great need. Today, we are broken people who too are filled with shame and fear. We are separated from God and lost in a world that is working against us. We are in great need.

There is good news in this story. In the midst of our need, we find a Savior.

### 1) A Seeking Savior (3:8)

Adam and Eve should have been running to God, confessing their sin, and asking for forgiveness. Instead, they were hiding from God. But notice what He was doing. God was seeking them.

*no one understands; no one seeks for God.*

– Rom 3:11

Billy Sunday used to say, “Sinners can’t find God for the same reason criminals can’t find policemen: they aren’t looking!”

God the Father interrupted His Sabbath rest to go find the man and the woman He had made in

His image.

Jesus described His mission in Luke 19:10 when He said, *“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”*

God then and today seeks you and me. He pursues and calls to each of us saying, *“Come to Me...and I will give you rest”* (Matt 11:28).

## 2) A Suffering Savior (3:15)

Verse 15 is the first prophecy of the Messiah. Jesus is the offspring of the woman. At the cross, Satan bruised Christ’s heel, but through His death and resurrection, Jesus crushed Satan’s head and won a complete victory over him (Eph 1:17-23).

Jesus as the holy Son of God died in our rightful place as sinners.

*but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*  
– Romans 5:8

## 3) A Saving Savior (3:21)

Adam and Eve’s response to their sin and shame was to sew fig leaves together and cover their nakedness. God’s response was to call them to Himself in faith.

After God sought out Adam and Eve, they once again believed God. They faithed into Him, which is seen in Adam naming his wife Eve (living). He believed God’s promises. In response to Adam’s faith, God removed their flimsy man-made garments and clothed them with acceptable garments that He provided.

Innocent animals had to die so that the man and woman might have a new beginning and be back in fellowship with God. Verse 21 is a beautiful picture of what the cross of Christ would ultimately do for sinners as the innocent One died for the guilty. Today, Jesus seeks out sinners so that He might cover their sin and shame.

**Conclusion:** This is God’s story. It is full of hardship but also rescue. It is beautiful but bloody. It is beautiful because of the Savior who willingly laid down His life on an old rugged cross. It is bloody because of the death that was required. The Bible reminds us that there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22). It also tells us why blood had to be shed. We have all sinned and fall short of God’s holy standard (Rom 3:22). The payment for our sin is death (Rom 6:23). We find it in the consequences we have talked about today. But even in our sin, God pursues us out of love (Rom 5:8). He desires to be in relationship with us. Humanly speaking, it doesn’t make any sense, but it is true. God loves you and me (John 3:16). And He calls us to turn from our sin and place our faith in Jesus and His work upon the cross (Rom 10:9-10, 13).

As we move closer to Easter, may gain a deeper love for Jesus and what He has done. May we begin to see people through a different lens. May we possess a greater urgency to tell as many people as we can about what Jesus has done for them.

What is your story today? Is your life filled with shame and fear? Has it been redeemed through the blood of Jesus?