

A study of Genesis 1-12

WHAT'S GOOD

People often don't think about how important and necessary referees are to sports. The refs keep the rules. They have been officially designated to decide right and wrong in an event. Only when the refs give the signal does the announcer should, "It's good!"

We've previously read God's creative actions and the declaration of "It's good, it's good, it's good..." In the first two chapters, only one thing was "Not good," and it was quickly fixed. As we discussed last Week, God gave man and woman a job to do, and a single command—don't eat of one tree. Everything that man and woman could do, aside from eating from the tree, was "good" in God's eyes.

God is the all-powerful Creator. If anyone should get to decide what's good, it should be him, right? Our passage today introduces something new into God's Creation. It wasn't something God intended. Instead, it was something that humankind chose for itself. This Week's passage is the first time that humanity disagreed with God about what is "good," and its consequences are devastating.

By word and deed, we disagree with God about what is good every day. We might not think it's sin to watch certain shows, listen to certain songs, or do things that "aren't hurting anybody." Unfortunately, even if we don't say it out loud, the Bible calls that participation "giving approval." Anything God calls "not good" should be rejected, not approved. What's good isn't up to us, it's decided by the Creator.

GENESIS 3:1-7

¹ Now the serpent was shrewder than any of the wild animals that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Is it really true that God said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the orchard'?" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the orchard; ³ but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, 'You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it, or else you will die.'" ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "Surely you will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are literally thousands of questions a person might ask within the first three chapters of *Genesis*. We aren't afraid of questions and you shouldn't be either. The only concern we may have is where you turn for answers.

Outside the Bible, our first source for answers, there are many great resources. The QR code is one such resource. This article provides a more thorough summary of Genesis 1-3, but it's also a good site for your questions.



DISCUSSION

What is something you would like to be good at that right now you're not?

1. Who are the 4 key personalities in this passage? (1-6)

2. What consequences did the serpent say the woman should expect if she ate the forbidden fruit? (4-5)
What would not happen?

What would happen?

3. Which human never spoke? (6)

4. In what ways did each violate God's word in this encounter?

-The serpent (1, 4-5)

-Eve (2-3, 6)

5. What sin tempts you, promising something better for you than obedience to God seems to provide?

What did Adam and Eve do as soon as they sinned? They tried to cover up with fig leaves. Sin always has consequences, and it won't stay hidden for long. Maybe you're carrying around sin and can't cover it up anymore. Talk to your coach today.

ICEBREAKER

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

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STUDY NOTES IT'S OVER

The worst part of watching any championship game is the tears. Not the happy tears of the champions, but the sad tears of the losers. Teams work so hard, pour everything into the season, only to come up short at the very last opportunity. Sometimes the difference between a championship and going home empty-handed was a single mistake. It leaves players in tears saying, "We made it all the way here and it's over." You can't take it back, it is what it is. It's over.

The Bible doesn't really say how long Adam and Eve were in the garden. The way we often read chapter 3 is as if chapter 2 was just the day before. Adam and Eve could have been in the garden for days, weeks, months or even years between chapters 2 and 3. Understanding that some time has passed makes the events of chapter 3 all the more tragic. They have never known shame, bitterness, confusion, fear, or anything but love, joy, and peace. In Genesis 3, all of that came crashing down when they experienced the full weight of sin. They lost paradise, it's over.

REDEMPTION REQUIRES SIN

When it was over, Adam and Eve probably asked the same question you and I ask when we mess up, "How did this happen?"

The story began with a **serpent**. The Bible describes the serpent as "**shrewder than any of the wild animals that the Lord God had made.**" Later the Bible confirms that the serpent was the adversary, Satan, himself (Revelation 12:9, 20:2). No wonder he wants to see humanity fall.

Satan's words here give us great insight into our own sin. First, he asks, "**Is it really true that God said...**" That doubt-driven question conceals a rebellious heart. Any time someone asks of an authority figure's words, "Is it really true," they're seeking to justify something.

Second, Satan directly contradicts God, "**Surely you will not die.**" It's a lie and he knows it. The Bible says that, "**The wages of sin is death**" (Romans 6:23), which is not only passing away, but an eternal separation. Sin and sinners will not dwell with God eternally.

Third, Satan questions God's character, "**You will be like God, knowing good and evil.**"

Pastor Tim Keller wrote that, "Sin always begins with the character assassination of God." The implication is that God is holding something back, something good, something you want. If he were *good*, then he would give it to you.

Despite Satan's deceptions, Eve's response indicates several issues: First, she omitted God's lavish provision of *every other tree*—they had a paradise from which to eat. Second, she added to God's command. God never said, "**You must not touch it.**" Lastly, she only mentioned the tree's location, rather than what it was, "*the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*" This lack of clarity about who God is and what he said had devastating consequences.

Where, we might ask, was Adam during this scene? In verse 6, we see that he was right there **with her** as these events unfolded. He never spoke up.

Notice Eve's assessment of the tree after the conversation with Satan—the **fruit was good for food**. While any other food was "good" according to God's command, Eve now said this tree was "good." The very heart of sin is this, disagreeing with God about what is good. Once that determination was done, Adam and Eve **ate it**. Immediately, **the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked**. They wanted to be like God knowing good from evil. In an instant, they knew God was good and they were sinfully evil. It couldn't be hidden with **fig leaves**.

GOD IS REDEMPITIVE

Humanity has been dealing with the consequences of sin since Genesis 3. In fact, the Bible's teaching on sin offers a better explanation for the corruption, disease, and suffering in our world than any other world-view. There is no denying that people do wrong things, but why? They do wrong things because sin isn't just what we do. It has corrupted our very nature such that anything good is tainted by the imperfection of sin (Philippians 3:8).

An imperfect person can never attain God's standard of perfection. That is the reason God had to send his Son, the perfect sacrifice, so that imperfect people could receive his perfection. With Jesus, it's like playing a golf scramble with someone who always hits a hole in one—you may shoot terribly, but at the end of the day, you score a perfect 18. That "partnership" is a free gift. Do you want a perfect score?