

Genesis 3B (2011)

- We last saw Woman at a pivotal moment in human history
 - She encountered evil in the form of a snake
 - The snake was indwelled by Satan
 - And he brought Woman a challenge
 - Did God really say that they couldn't eat from any tree in the Garden?
 - Last time we said we were going to study this interaction carefully to note the way sin works in our life
 - First, we noted that the enemy is the Father of Lies
 - Notice here that his opening statement is a lie
 - How appropriate that Satan's first recorded words was a lie
 - Secondly, we noted that Satan's attack is directed at God's word
 - The enemy knows where the power of God resides in His creation
 - It's with His word
 - So Satan attacks at that point
 - He causes us to question and doubt God's word or become confused or distracted
 - In today's world, Satan seems determined to undermine God's word in all these ways
 - The Bible is attacked from all sides in the world
 - And in the church, it's also under attack
 - And that attack is neglect
 - Third, we noticed that Satan's charge was that God is holding Woman back from joy and freedom

- In v.1 he suggests that God has restricted every tree from Woman
 - Even if that had been true, it wouldn't be cause to doubt or impugn God
 - But Satan is appealing to pride here
 - He wants Woman to imagine how much better things could be if she went her own way rather than remain within God's law
- As we remember, Woman didn't fall for the bait, at least not yet
 - She responds by correcting the snake and agreeing with God's word, but she doesn't get the story quite right
 - She added some things and forgot other things
 - The sum effect of her answer was to leave an opening for Satan to pry open
 - Furthermore, her own uncertainty concerning God's word left her vulnerable to Satan's guile
 - So now Satan goes in for the kill

Gen. 3:4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!"

Gen. 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

- Satan directly challenges the truth of God's word
 - In Step 1, Satan set forth a proposition that was a lie and used it to attack God's word
 - In Step 2 the woman lacked the knowledge and confidence in God's word to refute the enemy's scheme
 - Now in Step 3, the enemy proposes an alternative path that he suggests will arrive at a greater benefit than God's way
 - He says you surely will not die
 - This is a direct contradiction of God's word and offers no compromise

- Woman is presented with a clear alternative to accepting God's word in faith
- Satan goes on to explain that the effect of eating will be having eyes opened
 - And this new awareness will make Woman like God Himself
 - She will know good and evil
 - Satan is implying that there is more to her existence than God has provided
 - In other words, God and His word are not sufficient
 - If she goes outside God's instructions, she can have an even greater existence
 - One that rivals God's
- Like most lies, it involves a partial truth
 - If she eats of the tree, her eyes will be opened
 - She will be more like God, in that she will now better understand what it means to be good
 - The lie is that she will also be less like God in that she will now know evil
 - Though God knows about evil, as He knows everything, He has no first-hand experience in evil
- Satan is proposing that sin has no consequences
 - And even more, that disobeying God's word will bring a great, better experience
 - That when we choose our own desires over God's commands, we will not suffer loss, but rather experience gain
 - This is the first and greatest lie
- Let's step back for a moment and consider sin's pattern
 - Sin is a disregard of God's will and His word and a reliance on our own ways and desires

- Sin is facilitated by a weak knowledge of God's word and can be easily twisted by the Enemy to ensure we arrive at a distorted understanding (i.e., a lie)
- Examples are easy to find:
 - Money is the root of all evil
 - God helps those who help themselves
 - Prosperity Gospel
 - All roads lead to Heaven
- As unbelievers, we were completely captive to the enemy's lies and knew nothing else
 - But even as Christians we can naively follow the enemy's half truths when we allow this pattern to repeat
 - When we live in a state of ignorance concerning God's word
 - And when we come to believe that making our own rules will arrive at a better result than the ones God has given us
- We come to believe that sin has no consequences and can be better than obedience
 - In time, the lie will be seen for what it is, but at what personal cost?
 - If we wait to cease sinning until we finally see the negative consequences of our sin it will be too late
 - We will have incurred even greater penalty
 - Like the person who ignores the warnings of smoking only to discover one day that they have lung cancer
- Woman's cost is about to be paid...

Gen. 3:6 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 desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

- With the Enemy pulling her strings, Woman's prideful spirit begins to pull her toward sin

- And the process begins with one simple word
 - Saw
- Woman saw the tree was “good” for food
 - But God already had declared it to be bad...not food
 - And this fact doesn’t change anything
 - We know the tree was a fruit tree, so taking notice that the tree had good food didn’t add any new information for Woman
- Looking at the language a little more closely
 - Woman saw that the food was a “delight”
 - This is the Hebrew word *taavah* – intense longing
 - And desirable to make one wise (gain insight)
 - *Chamad* – covet
- Woman is giving us a powerful example of how sin works in all of us
 - Almost invariably, it begins with the eye, what we see
 - We see something that leads to a longing and coveting and desire

[Luke 11:34](#) “The eye is the lamp of your body; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is full of darkness.

[Matt. 5:27](#) “You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY’;
[Matt. 5:28](#) but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

- Not every sin is connected to the eye or what we see – but I challenge you to think of one
 - If we include the things we can see in our mind’s eye, then it gets very hard to think of a sin that doesn’t involve seeing and the desire it brings
- Woman is falling prey to this trap

- She is letting her sight and her lusts direct her rather than God's word
- Seeing leads to temptation, and temptation leads to desire and lust which precedes and leads to sin

[James 1:14](#) But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.
[James 1:15](#) Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

- Temptation is not sin (Jesus was tempted in all things)
- But giving into temptation is sin
- In Woman's case, her lust is for the suggestion Satan planted into her mind
 - She notices that the tree was desirable to make one wise
 - How would she come to the conclusion that this fruit would make her wise?
 - Only that she accepted the enemy's story
 - This tree would make her know what God knew, or so Satan said
 - The next step in the chain began
 - Once lust was conceived, it grew like a child in this womb
 - And that growing will almost inevitably lead to a birth
 - And the birthing process begins with touching
 - Woman grabs the fruit
 - I wonder if she paused before she ate?
 - Remember, she had remembered that God told her not to touch the fruit or she would die
 - That wasn't an accurate quote, but now that she has touched and not died, I wonder if she began to doubt God's word even more?
 - Woman's poor memory of God's word is actually an accomplice now in drawing her closer to sin

- After all, if touching didn't result in death, why would eating, she might have wondered?
- I see this pattern very frequently today
 - I often encounter Christians who are troubled by contradictions in God's word
 - They have misunderstood a verse or passage of Scripture, and as a result they have come to believe it contradicts another passage in Scripture
 - In reality, the two passages are not contradictory, but because their understanding is incomplete, they see the problem with God's word rather than with themselves
 - As a result, they begin to lose confidence in the literal truth of all that God's word says
 - The enemy is only too willing to oblige in this process, feeding the doubt and offering alternative "truths"
- Finally, Woman sins by eating from the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil
 - God said she would die, but obviously Woman was still breathing
 - She didn't die at this moment, at least not physically
 - Adam will physically live for 930 years after eating!
 - And yet we know she died at that very moment in the sense of dying spiritually
 - She ceased to be holy and innocent and pure
 - She lost the ability to fellowship with God
 - But from her limited perspective, nothing much has changed
 - Now she must truly feel that God's word is untrustworthy
 - God said that eating of the tree would result in death, but she sensed no change
 - God was not present in the Garden at this moment, so Woman has not experienced the conviction that comes with God's holiness
 - That will happen shortly

- But for now, she senses no change in herself as a result of eating the fruit
 - Except for one...
 - She notices that after she ate from the fruit, she felt less connection with Adam
 - Suddenly, she feels oddly distanced from him
 - And instinctively, she feels the urge to share the fruit with him
 - In fact, it's the very next thing she wants to do
- When we live in sin, we will seek out others to share that sin with us
 - Misery loves company, and so does sin
 - When we live in sin, we are a bad influence, and not just because we set a bad example
 - The very nature of sin is that it spreads

[Rom. 5:12](#) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death **spread** to all men, because all sinned –

- It's a disease that moves from host to host, and when we indulge in sin, we will often feel like sharing it with others
 - If someone close to us hasn't made the same mistake, we will want them to join us to minimize our own conviction
 - And to validate our choices, to affirm we are right to do what we do
- In Woman's case, she would have felt an immediate distancing from Adam who was not yet a sinner
 - And she would have needed to share her sin with Adam to draw him to her side
 - We need to recognize the danger in our sin isn't limited to ourselves
- Finally, in one of the strangest and most disturbing lines in the entire Bible, we're told that she gave it to her husband with her and he ate

- Adam was with her, and when he was offered the fruit, he ate
 - No discussion, no debate
 - He just complied
 - There is some debate over whether Adam was present or not
 - I think the text makes that clear
 - He was “with her”
 - There seems little reason to include that detail unless it was intended to explain where Adam was at the time
- In truth, it doesn't matter
 - Whether he was there throughout the conversation or showed up only after Satan left, the Bible makes clear what role he played
 - Adam chose to eat without any deception

1Tim. 2:14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

- Adam can't use the serpent's deception as an excuse, no matter where he was at the time
 - Scripture says his reason for eating had nothing to do with the serpent's arguments
- What's more, Adam didn't protest like Woman did
 - He doesn't try to quote God's word
 - He seems completely willing to disobey
- But who's credited with the fall?
 - We might assume it would be Woman, since she ate first
 - But Scripture doesn't seem to place any importance on the order
 - Instead, it lays the sin of mankind at the feet of Adam

[1Cor. 15:21](#) For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.

[1Cor. 15:22](#) For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.

- Or Romans 5:12 which we quoted above
- Adam (one man) brought about the fall
 - Look at the next verse

[Gen. 3:7](#) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- Only after Adam ate were “both” their eyes opened
 - His eating produced the sin that brought down mankind
- Why wasn’t Woman credited with the fall?
 - According to the verse we read, deception was a legitimate defense
 - She was deceived by Satan into eating the fruit
 - Her own lust and sinful desire was the ultimate mechanism to bring her to sin, but the entire process was instigated by Satan
 - Had Satan not played his crucial role, we can fairly assume Woman wouldn’t have sinned
 - Why was deception a legitimate defense? Woman was innocent
 - She didn’t know evil, she was an innocent
 - Woman COULD be deceived in the full sense of that word
 - She could be led to think she was acting in an appropriate way
 - Can we use Satan’s deception as a legitimate defense as well?
 - No
 - After the fall, we have no defense because we are born into sin
 - We are not innocent

- We don't live a single day without sin, so we stand condemned regardless of what we do
 - Only by faith can we be rescued
- So if the fall of mankind must happen through Adam, why did Satan begin with Woman rather than going to Man from the beginning?
 - We might assume that Satan attacked the easy target?
 - But in reality, he attacked the harder target
 - Woman believed God's word and tried to defend it
 - Satan had to use deception to get her to act against God's word
 - But Adam was ready and willing to eat that fruit
 - It's as if Satan knew that Adam was going to be the easy one, but he had to work on Woman
- If this is Adam's fault, why was Woman put outside the Garden too?
 - It sounds like her action was not a sin, but rather the result of deception
 - Doesn't that mean she gets a free pass?
 - Perhaps, but since Adam ate too, it didn't matter
 - Woman was guilty of sin because Adam ate
 - His sin brought sin to Woman as well (her eyes were opened after he ate)
 - How does Adam's sin open Woman's eyes?
 - Well, here we see God's wisdom in creating Woman in such an unique way
 - Woman was created from Adam's flesh rather than from the ground
 - So now as Adam sinned, he brought sin to his flesh
 - And Woman being of one flesh with Adam experienced that sin with him
 - His eating brought both of them down

- We can now look back at God's decision to create Woman in this unique way as a form of grace, knowing where events were leading
 - He knows that one day Adam will sin, and He doesn't want one person inside the garden and another outside
 - So He creates in a way that will ensure that both go together
- There is one final outcome from the eating of the fruit
 - After, they knew they were naked and made effort to cloth themselves
 - First, what does it mean that they knew they were naked?
 - We talked about nakedness meaning vulnerability and shame
 - Now we see more clearly that with sin comes a sense of exposure, or vulnerability
 - Of the need to cover up and conceal ourselves
 - The feeling is so strong, they feel the need to create clothing
 - Not for weather protection or because of civil standards
 - It's inherently a reaction to our sinful nature – before God
 - It's a visible evidence that God has implanted in us a conscious
 - We instinctively recognize our unholiness before God
 - And their sin also meant they lost their transparency between one another
 - All the communication problems and difficulties talking in a marriage trace back to sin
 - Won't it be wonderful to have relationships in our new bodies that don't suffer from sin and the lack of transparency?