



2/23/2020
Genesis 3:1-13

BIG IDEA

Giving in to temptation brings condemnation.

LOOKING BACK

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Invite members to share any questions or points that came up in their family discussions regarding last week's study. Invite them to share ways God continued to speak to them as they sought to apply those truths throughout the week.

- In your experience, when do other people typically feel bad about a sin they committed: at the moment they commit the sin, sometime later, or only if they get caught? What about you? At what point do you usually feel bad about a sin you commit? Why?
- Typically, are you most concerned with how your sin impacts your relationship with God or with people? What emotions do you tend to struggle with the most in regard to your sins?

LOOKING IN

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| *Ask a volunteer to read Genesis 3:1-13.*

- Why do you think that Eve ate the fruit?
- For you personally, what is the lesson of the fall?
- Has there ever been a time in your life when you viewed God's prohibition of something as unfair but later came to understand He was protecting you for your good? Explain.
- What things did Eve perceive to be desirable in the fruit she was forbidden by God to eat? What is the relationship between desire and disobedience? Does this mean desire is bad? Explain.
- Can you think of other biblical examples of how a temptation to sin promised more than was actually experienced?
- The big idea of this week's message is that "the culmination of temptation brings condemnation." Can you relate? Explain.
- What were Adam's and Eve's explanations for their disobedience (vv. 12-13)? Why do we often cast blame on someone or something when confronted about our wrongdoing?
- What does it look like to hide your sin (i.e. making excuses, not admitting or confessing it, avoiding people who would call it sin, etc.)? Ultimately, why does hiding our sins never work? What should we do instead?
- When is it easiest and most difficult for you to confess sin to God? When is it easiest and most difficult for you to confess sin to other people?

After Adam and Eve gave into their temptation and sinned, the first thing they did was hide. First, they hid from one another by making themselves garments from fig leaves, and then they hid from God as He sought fellowship with them. The condemnation that comes from sin impacts our relationship with God and also our relationships with each other. Still, God reaches out to us, taking initiative in our rebellion and shame to offer us grace and forgiveness.

LOOKING FORWARD

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- In what current situation might you be tempted to buy into the lie that God is holding out on you? Explain. How does Adam and Eve's story speak to you about that?
- How can you prepare now to be faithful in those times when you will be tempted by the question, "Did God really say?"
- Going forward, how can we help each other better deal with our temptations and sins?

FAMILIES

Use the following questions and truths to disciple your children throughout the week.

- With younger children, play a game of hide and seek.
- Which do you like better: being hidden or being found? Why? Does hiding ever feel scary? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to sin? When you sin, do you usually want to keep it hidden or to get it out in the open?

Because God loves you, it's always ok to let your sin be found. Because we love you, it's always ok to let your sin be found.

PRAY

Thank God for overcoming the humiliation and consequences of sin through Jesus' death and resurrection. Confess your sins to Him and ask Him to strengthen you whenever temptation comes.

COMMENTARY

| *Genesis 3:1-13*

3:1 The account of the temptation and sin of the first man and woman does not attempt to explain the origin of evil. Bible students have debated where evil came from for untold years and still disagree. While we may not be able to definitively explain evil's origin, the Bible affirms God's goodness and love, our disobedience and sin, and our need to confess our sin to God. The serpent, clearly identified in the New Testament as Satan (Rev. 12:9; 20:2), constituted the most cunning wild animal created by God.

3:2 To her credit, the woman attempted to correct the serpent's misquotation of God. She responded that God had created a wonderful environment providing both beauty and abundant physical nourishment. Rather than being selfish or stingy, God had lavishly demonstrated His generosity and love.

3:3 The woman gave her understanding of God's command. While much she said agrees with God's original command (2:17), she made three significant changes. First, she referred to the tree by its location rather than by its name, thus minimizing the importance of the tree and the possible reason God told them not to eat from it. Second, she declared God had instructed the man and woman not only to avoid eating the tree's fruit but also to avoid even touching the tree. Perhaps she believed not touching the fruit would better enable her to keep God's command, but her addition indicated she felt a need to modify God's command. Third, by not using the word for "certainly" in God's command, the woman tried to eliminate the certainty of the punishment of death.

3:4 Hearing the woman's response, the serpent directly contradicted God in stating death would not result from eating the fruit. Having accused God of being selfish and spiteful, the serpent then charged Him with lying. According to the serpent, God did not want humans to have some things He had, including knowledge, so He ordered them not to eat from one tree's fruit and threatened them with death to scare them into obeying. The serpent slyly described God in a negative way that caused the woman to doubt and disobey Him.

3:5 The serpent appeared to know God better than the woman, suggesting God was intentionally keeping her and her husband from becoming what they could. According to the serpent, eating the fruit would not lead to death but to a superior, divine knowledge and stature. Their eyes would be opened to a new awareness and knowledge, making them like God. The serpent partially spoke the truth. After the man and woman ate the fruit, they gained new knowledge and became like God but only in a limited sense.

3:6 The serpent's words accomplished their purpose. The woman believed the serpent's statements that God was withholding something good and that the punishment of death for disobedience constituted an empty threat. Furthermore, the fruit seemed to offer only benefits with no consequences. The benefits included food to satisfy physical needs, natural beauty to enhance the enjoyment of life, and the promise of wisdom to make humans like God. The woman's coveting led to her disobeying God to satisfy her desires.

3:7 Immediately the man and woman possessed new knowledge. They knew they were naked. The man and woman acted by sewing fig leaves together to create loin cloths to hide the parts of their bodies that differentiated them from each other. Fig leaves constituted the largest leaves known in Palestine, but they certainly would not create appropriate, long-lasting clothing. The pair's feeble attempt to cover their nakedness prefigured their feeble effort to escape condemnation by blaming others.

Probably, the man and woman gained wisdom. While God wanted humans to seek wisdom (see Prov. 3:13; 8:10-11), some wisdom remains beyond human comprehension, appropriate only for God (see Job 28:12-28; Prov. 30:1-4). God even might provide humans with some of this wisdom but only through revelation to those who honor and serve Him. To seek and seize knowledge outside a personal, mature relationship with God demonstrates arrogance and contempt for God. The man's and woman's selfish quest for knowledge and status damaged their relationship with God and with each other. Thus, they covered themselves before each other and hid from God.

3:8 Genesis often describes the close relationship God desires with individuals by using the word for "walk" (Gen. 5:24; 6:9; 48:15). What for the first humans had been an enjoyable daily communion with God became something to be avoided. The man and woman had hoped to become like God. Instead, they could not face Him. Hearing God approach, they retreated among the trees of the garden hoping to escape His presence. The shame they felt before God mirrored the shame they felt before each other.

3:9 God called out asking the man where he was. God spoke as a loving father. He could see them and knew exactly where the man and woman were, but He invited them to reveal themselves and admit their sin. The use of the masculine singular you indicates God spoke specifically to the man.

3:10 The man avoided answering God's question, but provided a reason for his hiding. The man stated he feared God seeing him naked and thus hid himself. While he did not answer God's question directly, the man's response indirectly acknowledged his sin. This sin had created a shame he had not previously known and had impaired his relationship with God (just as it had damaged his relationship with the woman).

3:11 The man's admission of nakedness revealed his sin. Rather than condemn the man, however, God invited him to confess.

3:12 Given the opportunity to confess, the man instead blamed the woman and God. The man implied the woman forced him to sin. He further charged God with ultimate responsibility because He gave him the woman. The man sought to convince God he was an innocent victim of circumstances, led astray by the woman whom God should have created with greater care. The man's excuse constituted a lie because he had eaten the fruit knowing exactly what he did (3:6).

3:13 God then turned His attention to the woman, providing her the opportunity to confess. Like the man, she blamed another, accusing the serpent of deceiving her. Both her and her husband's excuses indicated they realized they were in trouble and hoped to save themselves by shifting God's attention to someone else.