

# GENESIS

## RockPointe Church Small Groups

Patriarchs of Scripture • Adam and Eve • Genesis 3:1-24 • Fall 2018

### Main Point

The ability of human sin to distort and twist our identity is the problem every human must address.

### Introduction

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

**Have you ever had to confront someone about something they did wrong? How did it go?**

**How do most people respond when confronted with wrongdoing? Why?**

**Why don't people generally like to take responsibility for their actions that harm others?**

As sinners, we all do wrong, but seldom do we like to take responsibility for our wrongs. It's part of our fallen human nature. As we'll discover today, it's been an issue since sin entered the world in Genesis 3. We blur, downgrade, and redefine truth to the point that we no longer recognize it as such and, therefore, believe lies.

### Understanding

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

| Have a volunteer read GENESIS 3:1-7.

The irony of this scene is heavy. The Bible began with God speaking all things into existence—including the serpent. And now the serpent that was created by the word of God has questioned the authority of the One whose word created him! With one subtle question, “Did God really say?,” He usurped the clearly communicated word of God. The serpent knew that if Eve doubted the source of the command, she would disregard the command itself.

**Let's begin by comparing Genesis 2:16-17 with this passage. What did God really say? What did Eve change? What contradictions and lies did the serpent make?**

**What are some examples of how we change or redefine God's commands as Eve did?**

**How are we tempted or deceived by influences that give similarly twisted messages? What are some examples?**

In his attempt to deceive and tempt, the serpent (Satan) directly contradicted God's words, cast doubt on God's sincerity, and spoke partial truth. As this conversation unfolded, Eve's own doubts emerged in the form of her adding a harsh exaggeration to God's word. Eve belittled God's word by adding to it. Her addition to the word of God misrepresented God as a harsh taskmaster.

**When have you been forced to answer the question "Did God really say?" How did you respond to the temptation to distrust God?**

**What does the serpent say about God's command in verses 4 and 5? What does he imply about God's character?**

When Satan can't get us to undermine God's Word through outright unbelief, he will try to get us to undermine it through misplaced trust. From this account we learn that one of the great dangers we face when handling the Word of God is the temptation to place ourselves in the seat of authority over it. What started as subtle skepticism became outright rebellion. Satan implied that God is a liar. Furthermore, he undermined the character of God by leading Adam and Eve to believe that God was withholding goodness from them.

| Have another volunteer READ Genesis 3:8-13.

**What were Adam's and Eve's explanations for their disobedience?**

**Why do people often cast blame on someone or something when confronted about their wrongdoing?**

People still blame their sins on Satan, their environment, parents, friends, or someone or something else. While temptation comes to us from many sources, we alone decide to disobey God; thus we are accountable for our sins (see Rom. 2:3-11; 14:12; 1 Pet. 4:5).

| Have a volunteer read Genesis 3:14-24.

**What consequences did Adam and Eve face as a result of their sin? How have you personally experienced the effects of these curses even today?**

God punished the serpent, the woman, and the man, drastically changing their lives (and thus also the lives of their descendants) forever. Their punishment included death. Adam and Eve did not voluntarily leave in penance for their sin, God sent them away. Life would be difficult. Their sin had driven a wedge between themselves and God. Their previous life was forever gone. They had sinned and thus had to live with the consequences. Sin entered into the world and the consequence of sin entered as well: death. Everyone will die because of sin.

**What do these verses reveal about the relationship between God and Satan?**

**What hope for the remedy of sin is given in verse 15?**

God's final statement to the serpent, while sealing his ultimate defeat and destruction, provided humanity with a glimpse of hope. Although hostility in the form of a life and death struggle would continue between the serpent and the woman's descendants, God declared that the serpent's life expectancy was limited and his end would be a violent one. The woman's offspring would deliver a mortal blow to the serpent's head, while the serpent would only be able to strike the heel of the woman's offspring. Thus God promised the ultimate defeat of the Evil One.

**Read Matthew 1:21. Who is the woman's offspring?**

**What will be the outcome of Satan's conflict with Jesus, according to God's punishment?**

**Read Romans 5:12-15. How do these verses relate to the sin problem of Genesis 3?**

**What is the gift God offers despite our sin, and what is the proper response to that gift?**

## Application

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

**How is the work of Christ on the cross a game-changer for Christians when we think about sin and death, the consequences of the fall?**

**In your own life, where might you be tempted to blur the lines of sin, to downgrade the issue, or even redefine it as something other than sin?**

**How can we encourage one another this week in our battle with sin and with remembering our true identity?**

## Pray

Finish your time in prayer. Give group members an opportunity to privately resolve to confess to God any sins they are aware of. After a few minutes of silence, conclude with prayer asking for God's forgiveness and thanking Him for His grace and mercy.

## Commentary

| Genesis 3:1-24

The woman's claim goes beyond anything recorded in God's instructions to Adam. Therefore it seems that Adam had given his wife an additional command beyond what God said, or else Eve herself exaggerated the command as Satan tempted her to view God as selfish and overly restrictive. The serpent, recognizing the woman's confusion, found a point of attack. Knowing that the woman would not die by merely touching the

fruit, he boldly contradicted what she had reported to be God's command. He then skillfully lied by distorting God's word, implying that God had prohibited people from eating the fruit only to keep them from becoming as knowledgeable as He. The woman was now fully deceived.

Since the woman did not die when she touched the fruit—in contradiction to what she had thought God said (v. 3.)—she ate it. Though Adam was with her at the time, he did nothing to stop her. Perhaps he wanted to eat of it as much as the woman did, but fearing the consequences, used his wife as a “guinea pig” to make sure it would not cause instant death. As the serpent had indicated, the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew, but instead of producing godlike power, the knowledge brought only a sense of human inadequacy, fear, and shame.

God took the initiative in reaching out to sinful humanity. This pattern—humanity sinning, then God seeking out sinners—becomes the primary theme of the rest of the Bible. Its ultimate expression is found in Jesus Christ, who came to seek and to save people alienated from God because of their sin; in Him God once again walked on the earth in search of sinners.

When Adam heard God, he was afraid. Rather than walking with God as righteous men of later generations would do, Adam hid from Him. Through the use of two direct questions God brought Adam to accountability for his sin (v. 11). God does not overlook sin, but He can be gently firm in confronting it. Adam answered neither of God's questions. Instead he sought to shift the blame for his sin first to the woman, and then to God. The woman passed the blame to the serpent and admitted that prior to eating, she was deceived (v. 13).

Though accountability began with God's confrontation of Adam, judgment began with the serpent. Because of the serpent's key role (being used of Satan) in bringing sin into the human experience, it would be permanently consigned to the position of ultimate shame, under the foot. Hostility between the first woman and the serpent would be passed on to future generations. This verse is the first foretelling of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though the woman had been deceived into eating the forbidden fruit, she was still held accountable for her act. Two penalties were imposed; both struck at the heart of a woman's roles in life. More than would have been the case had sin not entered creation, bearing children would add to the sum of anguish in the universe. Marriage would also be marred; though the woman's desire would be for her husband, sin would mar God's plan for marriage and create tormenting inequality and subjugation. The latter is a description of the ravaging effect of sin on a husband-wife relationship, not a prescription for abusing one's wife. Because Adam listened to and obeyed his wife's voice in preference to what God commanded (2:17), a curse would strike at the heart of a fundamental relationship in his life as well. Adam's relationship with the ground would now be forever damaged by sin. All the days of his life he would experience painful labor as he worked to bring forth the fruit of the earth.

The new name Adam gave his wife emphasizes the woman's life-giving role that counteracts the curse of sin, which is death (v. 20). Yet the divine order calls for a reciprocity exhibited in male servant leadership and female submission, both of which are modeled in Jesus Himself. By making clothing out of skins, the Lord

God graciously provided for humanity's need in a way superior to what Adam and Eve had done with fig leaves. Because of sin, people now knew good and evil experientially (v. 22). Since the gift of life was directly tied to obedience, man's sin meant that the penalty of death must be enforced.