

## ***A FRESH LOOK AT AN OLD PROBLEM***

Read Genesis 2.8-9 and 3.1-7

The old problem is deception, and it is still with us today.

Humanity moved **from**

Image bearing .....Innocence.....Intimacy

**to**

Pain.....Separation.....Death

Satan asked a question that challenged God's word  
Told a lie that challenged God's sovereignty  
Made an accusation that challenged God's character

1.Satan challenged the absolute truth of God's word.

It seems that Adam and Eve had become somewhat focused on the tree, so that they felt they shouldn't even go near it to touch it.

God said, Don't eat of it, and Eve added to the command – we mustn't touch it. It is a lovely tree, the fruit looks delicious, but we have to steer clear of it. You can almost hear them saying, 'I wonder why? What's wrong with it? It looks delicious.'

Have you ever been tempted by something that looks really good – or thought, 'There's no harm in that, it wouldn't hurt anyone. Why not do it?'

2.Satan responded with a lie. He challenged God. 'He said you would die, but you won't, instead you will be wiser'

We need to remember that up to this point Adam and Eve had never come in contact with a lie – they had no idea what a lie was. But the lie made them think, that perhaps they had heard wrong after all. Satan's word is one of freedom – you are free to choose, you can do it all, have it your way. He never mentions the consequences.

Sin always brings consequences. Adam and Eve listened and believed the lie. What were the consequences? How far did those consequences reach?

3.An accusation – challenging God's character.

God is denying you what is really excellent. He doesn't want you to know what he knows. He's trying to keep you under his control.

Have you ever felt that perhaps God doesn't really love you? He doesn't listen when you talk to him, you aren't really important to him?  
Many Christians have these **feelings**, but it is important to know the **facts**.  
What are the facts? Does God love every person, or only some?  
John 3.16 shows the depth of God's love for everyone in the world, and Jesus told the disciples and us, that we must make this fact known. Matthew 28.18-20.

Satan offers freedom of choice, liberty. But what is the outcome of his 'freedom'?

The true way to freedom and liberty is God's way. What is God's way? And why does it bring true freedom?

Our world calls evil good, and good evil. It rejects God and his truth, It says there is no 'absolute'. What you decide is true, is true for you.

Take a hard look at the church – God's people in the world today.

a.The church should stand up strongly for the truth, but is it? Are we being deceived in any way? Are we trying to be relevant to the world or true to God's word?

We are safe in the 'boat' of salvation, but if the water of the world gets into the boat we are in trouble.

Is the Church ME-centred or GOD centred?

Galatians 2.20

1 Corinthians 6.20, 7.23.

We aren't free to do our own thing if we are Christians.

b.Is the Word of God being taken out of the pulpit and replaced with man's good ideas?

Paul instructed Timothy to devote himself to teaching and setting an example by how he lived – see 1 Timothy 4.11-16. It is easy to lose track of the truth. What does he say about scripture? 2 Timothy 3.16-17.

c.Christian morality is beginning to look like the world's morality

God wants a lost world to see Christ in his people. We are called to demonstrate God's love and bring his salvation to the world.

That's just what Jesus did. How did he do it?

Romans 12.2

d.Non negotiable truths of who God is, are being redefined. But when anyone disagrees with God, that person is wrong.

Like Eve in Genesis 3, we aren't always sure what God says – we might misunderstand. So we need to know his word, to read it diligently. We must feed on his word, know the truth. See Acts 17.11 for a good example of this.

Some have lost the sense of God's sovereign love and holiness, they fail to see that God's laws are an explanation of his character, and an expression of his perfect love.

How do his laws explain his character and express his love?

In Genesis 2 we see that God provided all that Adam and Eve needed for food – but they were deceived into thinking that what they had was not enough

Are we ever guilty of that?

Three facts:

1. We can utterly depend on the absolute truth of God's word. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, how did he answer him? Matthew 4.4,7,10.

2. God is indeed Sovereign. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is unchanging, in total control of all things. Isaiah 44.6-8.

What God has done for us in Christ, is well explained by Paul in Colossians 1.13-20.

3. God is indeed good. His character is revealed in the Old Testament – Read e.g. Exodus 34.6-7, as God proclaimed his glory to Moses. Jesus also demonstrated this mercy, grace, patience, faithfulness, forgiveness and also true judgment.

His character and his word is our GPS – God positioning system.

God is unchanging. He is perfect in goodness. His word is our reference point.

We need to know our God and his word.

Humanity has sinned, but in Christ we can be restored to intimacy with our God.

The church needs to show a living God, a Sovereign God, as we walk with him.

We are the ones who let his glory be seen in this world if we live as Jesus did.

We need - revelation on the authority of God and Scripture

- renewal of intimacy
- revealing the image of God in us
- return to the narrow path that leads to God