

THE FALL, PART 1

IN THE BEGINNING (GENESIS, PART 1) · GENESIS 3:1-13 · FEBRUARY 12, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden?"'"
(Genesis 3:1)

The Serpent, Disorder, and Questioning God

- What about the serpent?
- The agent of disorder in the world that God has ordered
- The question of God and disordered relationship with God

The Woman and the Man, the Garden with Two Trees, the Fruit and Human Choice

- God the gardener creates human gardeners
- The garden with two trees signifying ultimate dependence upon God
- The fruit and human choice for autonomy from God

The Catastrophic Effects of Human Choice Against God

- Disordered human life
- Disordered relationship amongst human beings
- Disordered relationship between human beings and creation
- Disordered relationship between human beings and God

Making It Real

- Facing into our own disorder: naming our shame
- Facing into our disordered relationships: looking at the ways we try to "cover" ourselves from others
- Facing into our disorder with the natural world: Facing into our misuse and failure as stewards of the world
- Facing into our disorder with God: hearing God's questions
- Facing the only One who can save us: looking to Jesus

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What sort of experiences in life make it clear to you that the world is not the way it's supposed to be or even that you are not quite perfect?
2. This weekend we continue our preaching series, "In the Beginning," drawn from Genesis 1-3. This week we look at Genesis 3:1-13, the first part of what is known as "The Fall," or the fall from your grace. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through

- His Word, and then, whether you're on your own or with a group, read that text aloud.
3. *Background: This portion of Scripture begins with the serpent approaching the woman with questions. We often wonder where the serpent came from or what type of serpent this is. Serpent symbolism pervaded the ancient near eastern world, variously representing wisdom, trickiness, and death.*
 4. What would you say characterizes the serpent's question of the woman in verse 1?
 5. After Eve's response (verses 2-3), the serpent proposes another thought (verses 4-5). What is at the heart of that proposal?
 6. What actions to the man and the woman make in response to the serpent's suggestion (verse 6)? What is the result of their actions (verse 7)?
 7. What would you say is the significance of the humans' eyes being opened and realizing their nakedness?
 8. How would you say this same sense of shame continues to characterize human life and relationships?
 9. With verses 8-10, we see the impact of this action upon human relationship with God. What is this impact?
 10. How does this relate to the original vocation of humanity and their relationship with God (see Genesis 1:26-29; 2:7-8, 15)?
 11. How would you describe the resulting chain of finger-pointing in Genesis 3:12-13?
 12. Next week we will explore the long-term impact of the fall from grace, but what is one thing God is revealing to you through the study of Genesis 3:1-13? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize Genesis 3:9
- Draw, ink, or paint all or part of this story of the Fall in Genesis 3:1-13. As you do that, what stands out to you most? Consider what God is speaking to you about your own tendency to turn away from God for other things. When you finish, consider sharing your prayer reflections and/or artistry with a friend.
- Watch the Bible Project video, "Genesis 1-11": bibleproject.com/explore/video/genesis-1-11/
- Read one of the following:
 - John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*
 - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*