

The First Sin
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A few questions about human nature: What does it mean to be “gullible?” We are familiar with the term “con artist.” What is “con” short for and how does it describe how con artists operate? What causes people to be prone to be gullible or to be persuaded by con artists? In recent years we’ve heard the term “FOMO.” What does that mean?

In this morning’s study of Genesis chapter three we’ll see the world’s most accomplished con artist, Satan, pull off his greatest “con” in the Garden of Eden. We will also see humanity’s first case of “FOMO” and the devastating results of bad choices. Finally, we’ll see how all this still haunts humanity today and what we can do to avoid being “conned” by our adversary the devil and how to defeat our natural FOMO.

The point: Humanity lives amid a great spiritual battle for souls. In battle you must understand your enemy, their tactics, and how to defend against them. Thankfully, if we are followers of Christ, the Spirit of God living in us is greater than the forces of evil that wish to destroy us. Our job is to watch for the blind spots of the sinful nature we inherited from our first parents to avoid being gullible like they were.

Genesis 3:1–7 (ESV) — **1** Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” **2** And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, **3** but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” **4** But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. **5** For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

- Why is what we just read the reason we’re in Bible study today?
- The theme of scripture from Genesis 3 forward is restoring humanity’s broken relationship with God because of Adam and Eve’s bad choices.
- As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Genesis 3 points to why He had to come.
- As we look at these verses let’s agree that based on all of scripture, the serpent is Satan, and Satan is God’s enemy and our enemy. Let’s look at his tactics.
- Verse 1: What was Satan’s first tactic to deceive Eve? (Rev. 12:9; John 8:44).
- Verse 4: How was Satan’s statement a half-truth? More on this in a minute.
- Verse 5: Eat this and you’ll be like God – you’ll BE God. We’re not arrogant enough to think we could be like God, right? More on this in a minute.
- Look back at 2:16-17 from last week. Was Eve’s problem starvation and hunger? Then why was she so tempted? God did more than supply their needs and yet what did Satan cause Eve to believe about God?
- Our lesson writer says, *“Once Eve started questioning God’s goodness, disobedience was just an action away.”*

6 So 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 to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. **7** Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

- Verse six: Eve succumbed to the “delight of the eyes” and natural “desire,” she disobeyed God’s command, and Adam did the same.
- Paul wrote in Romans 5: *“sin came into the world through one man...”* Why is Adam blamed for the fall of humanity when Eve sinned first?
- Verse seven: What made them feel the need for the fig leaves (see 2:25)?

21 And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. **22** Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” **23** therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. **24** He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

- Adam and Eve tried to cover their sins with leaves. God killed animals to clothe them. Verse 21 is a picture of the first blood sacrifices to cover sin and shame.
- Adam and Eve suffered the consequences for their disobedience.
- They were banished from the perfection of the Garden and given an “expiration date” on their physical lives so they wouldn’t live forever in their sinful state.
- Because of their disobedience we are all living with the curse of sin.
- That’s the bad news, but there is good news. As Paul wrote in Romans 5: *“sin came into the world through one man, and...death spread to all men because all sinned...”*ⁱ but here is the good news: *“...the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.”*ⁱⁱ
- Genesis points to Jesus. Thanks to God’s grace and Jesus’ sacrifice, we can trust Him as Savior and Lord and be clothed in His righteousness instead of living in the shame and guilt of sin.
- This week in his RESET devotional podcast Jeremy quoted **Romans 16:20 (ESV)** — **20** The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
- That’s the good news of grace, but we’re still living in a sinful world.
- We might read these verses, shake our heads, and say: *“God was so good to them, how could they have been so foolish?”* Why would that be hypocritical?
- Let’s look at the “family resemblance” we inherited from Adam and Eve.
- Satan is our enemy, but he has a strong accomplice in carrying out his schemes.
- Cartoonist Walt Kelly’s character Pogo stated: *“We Have Met the Enemy and He is Us.”*ⁱⁱⁱ Meaning we humans can be our own worst enemies.
- Let’s revise that thought: *“Our enemy is Satan, and our sinful nature is his accomplice in deceiving us.”* The sinful nature we inherited from Adam and Eve gives Satan a lot of help in persuading us to sin against God.

- Let's learn from the tactics Satan used with Eve.
- *"Did God really say?"* Casting doubt on God's word. How can we fight this?
- *"You won't surely die!"* Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). How can we know the difference between Satan's lies and the truth?
- Also related to the word *"...you won't die,"* the lie is *"A little sin won't kill you!"*
- Sin is pleasant for a season (Heb. 11:25) [Illustration: Donuts and defibrillators].
- Verse 6: The fruit looked good and was desirable (same word as coveting in the Ten Commandments.) The idea: *"I wonder what that would taste like or feel like?"*
- Are desires a bad thing? If we are wired for desire, where can things go wrong?
- Satan's lie: *"God is holding out on you! He's keeping you from the good stuff!"*
- Adam and Eve had all they needed and lived in perfection, yet they craved this "forbidden fruit." If you put a child in a room full of toys but tell the child not to touch the TV what will happen? Why?
- I believe wanting forbidden fruit goes further than just desire for pleasure.
- Is the kid touching the TV really their desire to show the parent who is boss?
- Satan said to Eve, *"God knows you'll be like Him."*
- God is threatened by you, He knows if you eat this you will BE God.
- We're not arrogant enough to think we can be like God, right?
- What are we thinking when we disobey what God tells us to do?
- When we think we know better than God, that is the sin of pride.
- C.S. Lewis: *"Pride is the mother hen under which all other sins are hatched..."*^{iv}
- Let's put all this together. Here are a few of Satan's favorite lies:
 - *"God didn't really mean you can't do this! Don't be a fuddy duddy!"*
 - *"Is that really a sin. Even if it is, a little sin never killed anyone."*
- Some of our own destructive ideas when we run with Satan's lies:
 - *"God wants me to be happy (that is not in scripture by the way); so why shouldn't I have the things that would make me happy?"*
 - *"What would it be like if I had that job, that house, that car, that spouse?"*
 - *"Maybe God is holding out on me just to keep me in line."*
 - *"Maybe my ideas are better than what those rigid church people say."*
- It's easy enough to resist those lies and ideas here in Bible study class. How can we resist the devil after we leave church?

So, What's the Takeaway?

- Way back in the 1950's Alka Seltzer had a slogan: *"Relief is just a swallow away."*
- Adam and Eve learned that isn't true, and we're paying for their disobedience.
- We've clearly seen the tactics of our enemy the devil. How can we have victory?
- Peter told us in **1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) — 8** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
- Ephesians 6 says the "armor of God" will enable us "to stand against the schemes of the devil."^v What does that look like day in and day out?
- First, don't try to fight Satan and his demons yourself. **James 4:7 (ESV) — 7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
- While we are to resist and Satan will flee, WE need to flee from temptation.

- **Proverbs 22:3 (ESV) — 3** The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.
- When faced with a tempting situation, flee; don't put yourself in a place to be tempted in the first place.
- What about those “cunning and crafty” lies from Satan and his demons?
- That's why we need to read and memorize scripture. **Psalm 119:11 (ESV) — 11** I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.
- Do what Jesus did when He was tempted: Refute Satan's lies with scripture.
- We should use the same rule of thumb with the world's greatest “con artist” we should use with any con artist: If it sounds too good to be true, it is!
- If we've trusted Christ we should BELIEVE that God loves us and wants us to have everything that is best for us and ONLY what is best for us.
- When Satan and his demons start lying, just repeat that truth.
- THAT is the kind of resistance to Satan's ideas that will make him flee.

ⁱ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Ro 5:12). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

ⁱⁱ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Ro 5:17). (2016). Crossway Bibles.

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.thisdayinquotes.com/2011/04/we-have-met-enemy-and-he-is-us.html>

^{iv} Lee Strobel, *The Case for Grace: A Journalist Explores the Evidence of Transformed Lives*

^v [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Eph 6:11). (2016). Crossway Bibles.