

Learning to Stand

Genesis 3:1-13

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Intro

Genesis 3 is of course the story of the fall of Adam and Eve. This is a very important part of human history because from this event understand why the world is the way it is.

Each one of us today is affected by what happened on the day that Adam and Eve rebelled against God. We are facing consequences from that decision, but we all each face something similar in our lives on a regular basis.

What we need to do is to study and understand this story so we can gain the insight we need to stand in victory. We know that we have forgiveness of sin in Christ Jesus, and praise God that we do, but we need to also understand that God saved us from sin and wants us to grow in our faith so that we walk victoriously.

That is why studying the story is so important; we can gain the insight we need to stand and not fall when we understand the schemes of the enemy and become prepared to walk as God wants us to walk.

I. The Enemy Seeks to Devour

- The first character we see in the chapter is “the serpent of old” as he is called in other places in scripture.
- We understand this to be Satan of course, but it’s also important to see that he is not an ugly beast at this point; in fact the word in Hebrew tells us that he was actually “*the shining one.*”
- It’s important for us to have insight into who this “shining one” is and what he desires to do.

A. He comes as an angel of light

- This of course is perfectly in keeping with the fact that He is a liar, the father of lies and a murderer from the beginning.

John 8:44, “He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

- The nature of deception is to deceive, so therefore the schemes of the enemy must include coming in the appearance of something that looks good, that looks attractive, or enticing.

II Corinthians 11:14-15, No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

- Satan deceives by tempting Eve with the same lie he bought into, “You can be like God...” Doesn’t that sound good? Wouldn’t that be something, to be like God?
- In fact, Eve saw that it was good for food and desirable to make one wise, so she ate.

B. He desires to separate you from God

- When you look at this story and study other scriptures you see that Satan’s desire is to devour and destroy as many as possible.

I Peter 5:8-9, Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith,

John 10:10, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

- He desires to keep you from experiencing all that God has for you in Christ, so to do that, he must keep you from walking with God.
- In order to do this, he of course lies, as we will see in this story, he will lie about what God’s Word says, to keep people from the blessing God has for them.

II Corinthians 4:3-4, And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

- One of the questions that is often asked here is, what is his reason for wanting to destroy?

Illus – When Jordi and I used to manage apartments, we had what started out to be an innocent little water fight, which turned into her pushing me into the pool, but if I’m going in, guess who’s going in with me?

II. Know the Nature of Deception

- The dialogue between Eve and “the shining one” is a lesson in deception; to understand how Eve was deceived is to have preparation for standing victoriously ourselves.

A. Stand on the rock of God’s Word

- The first scheme was to try to get Eve to doubt what God had said. He begins by asking a question that is far off the mark from what God said, and suggesting that God’s Word was overly strict.
- If Satan can get her to doubt God’s Word, that becomes the first step in separating her from God.
- You see this attack in the world all the time.

Illus – When someone gives their life to Christ they often face that same question from some of their friends of the world, “You believe the bible? Don’t you know that was written by men?” Or, “don’t you know that it’s full of contradictions?” Of course they couldn’t tell you where they are if you handed them a bible.

Illus – It’s also sad to see young kids head off to college only to face atheist professors professing to be wise and challenging everyone’s faith.

They are trying to do the same thing that Satan was doing in the garden, to separate people from God.

- The answer is to stand on the rock of God’s Word and not be moved.

Ephesians 6:13, 16-17, Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm, stand firm therefore.... in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

B. Don't add or subtract from God's Word

- Eve's answer is close to what God said, but she adds something to it. She says, "God told us not to eat from it or *even touch it* lest we die."
- This is the beginning of religion -- adding to God's Word traditions and restrictions that God didn't say.
- The problem with adding to God's Word is figuring out where to stop. Often, these start out as something that is well intentioned, but losing its meaning and purpose over time.

Illus – One family's tradition was to cut the ends off the ham before putting in the oven. Finally someone asked why this was necessary, and it turned out that their great-grandma had a small wood stove and the ham wouldn't fit so it had to be cut.

Illus – Having clergy wear robes actually started out as a way to have leaders relate to the common man, but eventually came to mean exactly the opposite.

I Samuel 16:7, "for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart..."

- Though God didn't tell Adam and Eve not to touch it, that's was actually a good idea – don't get near the line of temptation is a good idea.
- But we have to be careful about adding to God's Word and creating rules that become definitions of righteousness and then judging other people according to how well they live by these rules.

Illus – First, there are those who say not to touch the tree, then others who build a fence around the tree, then those who build a fence further back.

The problem is that soon, a principle arises – the greater the restriction, the greater the righteousness. And it all becomes a way of judging people by their outward appearance or restrictive behavior.

Romans 14:1-2, Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only.

Galatians 3:11, that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."

- Eventually it comes to a point of misrepresenting God's heart; that God is a killjoy and doesn't want you to have any fun.
- In reality, God loves you and is very generous in His love; so much so that He doesn't want you to do those things which destroy and hurt you and those around you.

C. Know that what God does is good

- It's interesting to see that Satan boldly contradicts what God said, "You surely shall not die!"
- Notice then the suggestion that if she listens to God's Word that she will be missing out.

App – that's what many have in their hearts today, that somehow they will miss out on all the fun if they truly believe God's Word and live His way.

But in truth, it's just the opposite, to go the world's way is to miss out on all the blessings of knowing and walking with Christ.

Romans 6:21-23, Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Psalm 16:11, You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

- It's a play on what is good. She thought the fruit looked attractive, but it took away her glory.
- But what God does truly is good. When God created it was declared very good. **He is doing a good work in shaping and building our lives as a potter shapes and molds in His hands.**