

# DISCIPLESHIP

## SIN

There seems to be a basic lack of understanding of the nature of sin. Too many who call themselves Christians look at one sin or another as being worse in nature than another sin. However, it is important to understand how God looks at sin and how he judges it. What does it take to get rid of any sin, no matter how it is exhibited in our lives,

### **Everything Good:**

**Genesis 1:4** — *And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.*

**Genesis 1:10** — *And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.*

**Genesis 1:12** — *And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

**Genesis 1:18** — *And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.*

**Genesis 1:21** — *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

**Genesis 1:25** — *And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.*

**Genesis 1:31** — *And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

**Genesis 2:9** — *And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

These verses are all in the creation story of the world and of humanity. Notice that everything that God created was good. It was not good in comparison as being better, but rather it was good because it was the best that could be. This is the world that God made and brought humanity into. How then did the world become such a mess?

### **Innocence or Righteousness?**

What is the difference between innocence and righteousness, and does one preclude the other?

**Genesis 2:25** — *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

This verse is the end of chapter 2 in Genesis and immediately precedes the story of the temptation by Satan of Eve and then Adam. The statement declares that though they were naked they were not ashamed. They were not ashamed because they had no sense or understanding of evil and were fully assured of their relationship with God. They lived in the assurance that they were exactly as God had made them physically. Both Adam and Eve lived in the \_\_\_\_\_ of their created existence.

**Genesis 2:16-17** — *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: (17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.*

It is important to understand why God placed a tree in the Garden of Eden that he forbade Adam and Eve to eat. It is the same tree that Satan used to tempt Eve and which Adam then also ate. Why would God place something in the Garden of Eden that would be used to tempt Adam and Eve to disobedience? Why this tree? Was the tree itself the source of knowing \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ or was there more to it?

**Genesis 3:1-7** — *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, has God said, You*

*shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (2) And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: (3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, unless you die. (4) And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die: (5) For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (6) And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit and ate and also gave it to her husband who was with her; and he did eat. (7) And the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

Let us look closely at the temptation of Eve. Verse 1 is a deliberate misquote of God's command posed as a question. Satan does this in a way that any temptation can be justified as an \_\_\_\_\_ question. More openings to rebellion, sin, and disobedience have been opened by seemingly innocent question. People declare, I'm just trying to understand why it has to be this way or that way. Why can't we do it my way or a different way. All the innocent questions are avenues to do it anyway but God's way. Children do this all the time where their parents are concerned. Why do we have to do it that way, why can't we do it this way?

Verse 3 is Eve's response, but she adds something to God's command that was never the original intent or part of the instruction of the Lord. She says that Adam and Eve could not eat or \_\_\_\_\_ the fruit of the tree of Knowledge or they would \_\_\_\_\_. Did God say they would die if they touched the fruit or was the prohibition that they could not eat of the fruit?

Verse 4 is the first statement that Satan makes in \_\_\_\_\_ contradiction to God's command, but note that it comes after Eve has already reported God's commands inaccurately. Whenever we have \_\_\_\_\_ about what God or the scriptures say, it is easy to have that turned around on us to \_\_\_\_\_ us to sin.

Verse 5 is the zinger, the real temptation and the root of all evil and sin in the makeup of humanity. Satan tells Eve that when she eats of the fruit then her eyes will be \_\_\_\_\_ to new understanding, that she will be like "god" knowing good and evil. This is the temptation that all people have fallen to through all of human history – to be our own "god" and live our lives by our own desires, dreams,

and wants. Notice though, verse 6 notes that Eve had already seen that the tree was \_\_\_\_\_ for food, \_\_\_\_\_ to look at, and that it could make one \_\_\_\_\_ (PR Isaiah 47:10, Jeremiah 4:22, Ezekiel 28:4-7). The temptation laid before Eve by Satan was preceded by desire in her heart to eat the fruit, before she ever took the first bite. James 1:14 makes this clear, saying we are only tempted when we are drawn away from the Lord by our own desires. If we have a desire for something in our \_\_\_\_\_ that is contrary to God's will, word, or work then we already stand at the door of disobedience and rebellion. True obedience lies in first asking God to remove any wrong desire from our hearts, then temptation has no place to work (PR: Matthew 26:41, James 1:14, 4:1-3, 1 John 2:16). The end of verse 6 where it says that Eve gave some to her husband that was with her does not indicate that Adam was party to the temptation by Satan, but rather when she decided to eat of the fruit Adam was present.

**1 Timothy 2:14** — *Adam wasn't deceived, but the woman, being deceived, has fallen into disobedience;*

The Pauline epistle of 1 Timothy clearly states that Adam was not \_\_\_\_\_, but rather it was Eve that was deceived by the temptation presented by Satan. Why then did Adam eat of the fruit? The scriptures are not clear, and the only answer that rings true is the one of human nature. Adam knew that Eve had disobeyed, and by his joining in the act of disobedience by eating of the fruit, he and Eve would be together in whatever they faced.

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22** — *For since death came by man, the resurrection of the dead also came by man. (22) For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*

It is because Adam was not deceived by Satan that they could eat the fruit without harm or consequence, but knew that eating it was a \_\_\_\_\_ violation of God's law that the scriptures in 1 Corinthians 15 state that by Adam all die and thus it requires Christ that we may be made alive. Everyone who violates the law of God is deceived as to the happiness they can expect from sin and as to the consequences that follow.

**Genesis 3:7** — *The eyes of both them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

Nothing in their physical state had changed. Why then did they suddenly realize they were \_\_\_\_\_? The covering of the Lord was removed from them, not by God's action but as a natural result of disobedience, of sin. Verse 7 continues saying that they \_\_\_\_\_ fig leave together and made themselves aprons. It is evident that both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were felt by Adam and Eve. Both of these \_\_\_\_\_ are the natural human reactions to sin and rebellion against God. A person's natural reaction to sin is to cover it up by one means or another and so Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves because they knew they were guilty.

### **Why the Forbidden Tree?:**

Some may argue that if God had not placed a tree in the middle of the garden there never would have been a source of temptation. But is that true?

**Genesis 1:26-27** — *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. (27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

One of the elements of God's nature is free will, the ability to choose between different courses of actions. God created man with \_\_\_\_\_.

**Genesis 3:6** — *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

Looking at Genesis 3:6 again we see that Eve was not forced to eat the fruit. She made a conscious choice and exercised her free will. She then compounded her sin and gave Adam of the fruit. Was Adam less guilty than Eve in exercising his free will and disobeying God? \_\_\_\_\_. Prior to this point Adam and Eve were innocents, untouched by evil or sin, but they were not \_\_\_\_\_. True righteousness is always an exercise of free will to do what is right (PR: Isaiah 1:16-17).

The truth of the matter is that when creatures are given free will by an Almighty God there will always be times when that free will can come into conflict with the commands of God. We are then posed with the choice to obey God or to rebel and follow the dictates of our own desires.

**Isaiah 14:12-14** — *How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how are you cut down to the ground, who did weaken the nations! (13) For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the farthest sides of the north: (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

In Isaiah we are shown the example of Satan, also called Lucifer. He, as all angels, was given free will. While called to be the leader of the angels in serving the Almighty, pride rose up in his heart and he desired to \_\_\_\_\_ his throne above the stars of God and to \_\_\_\_\_ to be like the most high. How similar is the sin that Satan committed to the temptation presented to Eve, eat and “you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

### **Excuses, Excuses:**

**Genesis 3:8-13** — *And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (9) And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where are you? (10) And he said, I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. (11) And he said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you that you should not eat? (12) And the man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. (13) And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

Verse 8 says Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they tried to \_\_\_\_\_ themselves from the presence of the Lord among the trees. Everyone tries to hide themselves and thus their sin when temptation and sin have overtaken us. Our hiding from God is no more \_\_\_\_\_ than was Adam and Eve’s. Verse 9 says that the Lord called

unto Adam and asked, “Where are you?” Since God is all knowing, he already knew where Adam and Eve were so why did he ask Adam where he was. It is a way for God to start a conversation with Adam that will in the end reveal not just Adam’s sin, but the corruption that had already taken place in Adam’s heart. But there is a spiritual side to the question of “Where are you?”. When we sin where do we stand with God. We are then sinners in need of confession and repentance and in need to find some way to reconcile our relationship with the Lord Almighty. Note that verse 10 is Adam’s declaration to God is a round about answer. He says that he hid from God because he was \_\_\_\_\_, which is a half truth. The real reason he hid from God is because he violated the Lord’s \_\_\_\_\_.

Verse 11 has God being very direct in questioning Adam and getting to the root of the issue. The poignant question is “Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat?” Adam’s answer shows a depth of spiritual corruption that had already taken place with just one sin. Adam blames \_\_\_\_\_ and thus does not give a true \_\_\_\_\_ or show repentance by asking for \_\_\_\_\_. In all the remaining narrative about Adam and Eve there is no recorded instance where either one ever makes a true confession and asks God for forgiveness. This is the same God that Adam and Eve had such an daily intimate and wonderful experience.

Verse 12 shows Adam blaming Eve, as if that was a valid \_\_\_\_\_. In verse 13 Eve does basically the same thing though she blames the \_\_\_\_\_.

### **The Consequences of Sin:**

*Genesis 3:14-19 — And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because you have done this, you are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life: (15) And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. (16) Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in sorrow you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. (17) And unto Adam he said, Because you have listened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life; (18) Thorns also and*

*thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; (19) In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.*

Verses 14 to 19 clearly show that no one and nothing escapes the consequences of sin. Verse 14 shows the serpent being cursed to move about on its \_\_\_\_\_. Verse 15 is both part of the curse of sin. The serpent was not its own creature, but was an instrument of Satan and so the verse speaks of the continual struggle between Satan and those who are the Lord's. Some theological commentators look at this as a prophetic statement of Jesus' future coming. Satan will seem to win when Jesus is crucified, dies, and is buried, but by this very event, it is actually Satan who is bruised in the head which is a far more serious \_\_\_\_\_ than a bruised heel. The final victory of God over Satan does not take place until the end of the thousand year reign of Christ when Satan will be loosed for a short period of time until he is bound permanently in hell (PR: Revelation 20:2-3).

Verse 16 is the curse that is placed on women and verse 17 is the punishment that is laid on Adam. When God proclaimed that a man would rule over his wife it was never a declaration of a man's tyranny over a woman, but rather the rule of needing to make decisions that are first in accordance with God's will and then second for the nurture and care of the woman, either or both of which may be contrary to the desires of each party. Note that the reason that Adam ate the forbidden fruit was because he \_\_\_\_\_ to his wife. Temptation and sin will always lie at the threshold when we listen to \_\_\_\_\_ that are contrary to God's word and will. Verse 18 proclaims the \_\_\_\_\_ that daily life will become. Verse 19 proclaims that the end result of eating the fruit is \_\_\_\_\_. So did Satan lie when he told Eve that she would not die for eating the fruit (PR: Genesis 3:4)?

**Genesis 3:21-24** — *Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. (22) And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: (23) Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. (24) So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way of the tree of life.*



Verse 21 shows the goodness of God even while administering justice. He makes coats of \_\_\_\_\_ and clothed them. Leaving the temperate climate of the Garden of Eden to enter a challenging world with varying climate, clothing made of leaves would have been insufficient to provide protection and covering. Verse 23 and 24 point out a spiritual truth. Sin does not only bring about physical death, but a spiritual death that is marked by us being outcast from God. The only way that one can come back into the presence of God is for us to be reconciled to the Father by some way and our rebellion and sin put away. This Jesus did by his sacrifice on the cross (PR: Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18).

### **Death of Man and Creation:**

**Genesis 5:5** — *And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.*

**Genesis 25:8** — *Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.*

*The current life expectancy for the world in 2021 is 72.81 years, a 0.24% increase from 2020. Feb 12, 2021 (Source: [www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com))*

Tracing the life expectancy of humanity through the Bible and history it can be seen there has been a continual decrease over most of that time. Only recently has modern medical science turned around the decreasing life span of a person. The average life expectancy in the United States for 1900 was around 48 years of age.

Sin brought death into the world, not just for humanity but for all of existence.

**Romans 8:22** — *For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now.*

This verse states that all of creation groans and travails in \_\_\_\_\_ together until now. How does this statement compare with the physical laws proposed by science.

*The Law of Entropy tells us that **disorder always increases**. It tells us that anything and everything that God or man has ever made will always move from order to disorder. Order is always followed by disorder. (Source: [www.leadertoleader.org](http://www.leadertoleader.org))*

It is the breakdown in all of creation that shows the working of death in and through everything that has been created. It is interesting that the Second Law of Thermodynamics (which includes the concept of entropy) contradicts in every way possible the potential for an evolutionary process to bring about life with more and more complex life forms.

It is because of the process of death or disorder that it will be necessary for God to do the following.

***Revelation 21:1*** — *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

All of the old creation (which has been polluted by sin) will be done away with and a new heaven and a new earth without corruption will be created by the Lord and that new creation will continue for all eternity.