



Series: Created | Sermon #6

Text: Genesis 3.

Sermon Title: When the good do bad.

Introduction

We are in the closing weeks of our Created Series. Next week will be our last week.

In this series we had a simple goal of helping each of us discover what GOD created us for. What our purpose is. Because when you know your purpose, you are able to set direction in your life and have confidence about what you are doing. So we looked at God himself. His power to create, the reflection of his beauty and majesty in creation, and his love as a father over the people he created. And we said the big step in understanding your purpose is understanding how you relate to God. **So our working idea was that God is not a part of my story, I am a part of God's story.** Our purpose...what we are supposed to do with our life... starts with knowing that we are characters in HIS story. He's the hero. He is the protagonist. **And then we said**

he created us IN HIS IMAGE. So our created purpose is to be visible tactile displays of the character of God. That's what we are put on this earth for: To display the glory of God through the unique ways he's designed each one of us.

We've talked about how people have dignity and value and deserve love not because of what they can give to the world but because of who they ARE as image bearers. And we looked at the beautiful design of men and women and how they, while both being image bearers, are created to compliment one another so that together they show off more of the character of God. We see that in marriage and we see that in the family of God called the church. In all of that we've painted a pretty wonderful picture of who you are created to be. You are God's representative on the planet. You are to cultivate the earth and its resources in order to promote the flourishing of the human race. You are to love others and to experience the love of God through others into your life. It's a wonderful picture.

But that's how the world SHOULD be, not how it is. Instead we live in a world saturated with smear campaigns, human trafficking, and mass shootings like the one in So Cal this week. The good world God created is not so good anymore.

The Lord David Cecil, after the Holocaust of World War II, said, *"The philosophy of progress had led us to believe that the savage and primitive was behind us, but it turns out that it was within us."* **See what he realized, and it seemed to haunt him a little, is that**

most of us have a wrong view of evil as *out there* when it is ultimately *in here*. And only when we understand our own capacity for evil can we really make sense of the world.

Today we are stepping into a very, very important chapter of the bible. Genesis 3.

Looking into Genesis 3 we are going to see why seemingly good people do bad things. Why *you and I* do evil things. Why evil things happen. Why the world is all jacked up. And the one word that is at the center of our answer to that question is the word SIN. **See Sin is the evil within us carried out at a personal or group level.** So as we look at the first sin today, I want to show you how sin works and what God did about it. Genesis 3 really is one of the most important chapters in the entire bible. Because if you are created by God, to be God's representative on earth...Why doesn't that come easier for you? Why do you do bad things & think even worse things?

Listen here's why this is so important: **Your awareness of your sin + your inability to do anything about it is what creates desperation for God in your life.** Awareness + Inability = Desperation. And in your desperation you allow him room to work. It's what makes Jesus relevant to you.

Winterizing the Irrigation System

This is how many people think about God. Eh. I know I'm not perfect but my "sin" is no big deal. That's an

awareness problem. You are misunderstanding both YOU and God. OR you start to realize there is evil in you. You are a sinner...And so you work hard to justify yourself. To explain it, to minimize it, to be really good in other ways. That's an inability problem. Both of these problems are often carried around by people who say they believe in God but there's no desperation for him. And so he never does anything in our lives and the whole time the pipes in our life are about to burst and we never knew it. Genesis 3 is a giant reality check on all of us where we are, all together, going to grapple with the depths of the evil present within us. **Listen to me: good people - live shallow spiritual lives with no purpose. DESPERATE people are the ones who find deep mercies from God and desperate people live with great purpose.**

Big Idea: My awareness of my sin + my inability to fix it creates desperation for a savior. Today's story is where God shows our ancestors, the first two people, the full scope of their sin. And then he does something remarkable.

Let's get into it. I'm going to walk through the story and as I do I'll show you how sin works. Because again, until you understand sin, Jesus is useless to you. So we'll talk about the nature of sin (awareness) and then its consequences (inability). And my hope here is to convince you, cards on the table, that you are *not* a good person. BUT, you have a really, really good God who loves you.

How Sin Works. - This is the awareness part.

[1] Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made.

The original source of sin is Satan, the enemy of God. Revelation 12.9 calls Satan the ancient serpent & Great deceiver. He is smart and he was made by God. He was a fallen angel....Before sin was in the world, it was in the spiritual realm. Satan rejected God's authority. The bible makes it clear that he is the father of evil and all evil finds its source in him. Now, if you are a skeptic, by this point in this sermon you may be putting your guard up. Listen, I'm trying to make sure as best I can that you get a clear picture of what Christians believe. And why I think it is the most thoughtful explanation for why the world is the way it is. And yes, that belief includes supernaturally evil forces at work in the world led by Satan.

He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?" Satan didn't just come in and strike the woman. I mean doesn't that seem like the obvious attack? No the serpent was smart. And knew that the greatest destruction he could cause would be to create a rift, a conflict, in the relationship between God and his people. And to do that, he would need the people to question God's authority.

Sin's doubts God's word

This is the question that you have to understand is at the heart of your sin. HAS GOD REALLY SAID? Has God really said don't sleep together outside of marriage? Seems silly. Seems old Fashioned. Has God really said

there is only one way to heaven? Seems intolerant. Has God really said our money is really his money? Has God really said turn the other cheek? Has he really said love those who persecute me? That seems nice & I believe in God and everything but when my desires are raging up in a way that conflicts with what God says....the impulse of my sinful nature is to ask: has God really said that!? And when start questioning whether we are falling for the oldest trick in the book. Literally. Satan's FIRST trick was to entice humans to doubt God. Look at Eve's response

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. 3 But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.' "

This may on the surface look like she is reciting God's command. But look closer and what you see is Eve distorting the original command. It's as if, in her heart, she is beginning to manipulate God's command in a way that makes her feel better about rejecting it

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die." -- Genesis 2:16-17 (CSB)

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. 3 But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You

must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’ ” -- Genesis 3:2-3 (CSB)

Sin distorts God’s word. First she **diminished** God’s generosity. Gen 2.16 - You are free to eat from ANY tree. Gen 3...yeah we can eat from the trees. Something bad was happening in her heart. God is no longer a generous father, he’s become some kind of overseer that just gives them an allotment of food. She **added** to his word about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: “or touch it.” God never said that look at genesis 2. She’s making God more legalistic than he is. She also **softened** God’s word. He said if you eat of it you will *certainly* die. She took out the certainty. She softened the consequences. Almost leaving room for doubt. I know you might think I’m reading too much into this.

1. First Off: THERE WAS ONLY ONE COMMAND! IF YOU HAD ONE COMMAND, and it was a LIFE OR DEATH COMMAND, And it was ONE SENTENCE...you could memorize it. If you can memorize pledge of allegiance, or your social security number, or ANY SONG by Post Malone.... And she sounds like a child when her desires lead her to question her parent’s rule about touching the oven when it’s on. “Well, we’re not suppppooossed to touch it.” Why does a child recite the parent’s command that way? That’s not how mom or dad say it. Mom or dad say “listen, I love you and for your own good you are not allowed to touch the stove. If you touch a hot stove, you will surely get burned.” The message comes out as protection from a loving parent. But then gets distorted...and recited as burdensome law keeping the child from having all they could. Because

before the child can reject the law it must question the law giver and then distort the law into something bad.

Listen this is what we do with God’s word. I get this all the time with high school and college students when it comes to physical boundaries in dating. “How far is too far?” The mindset of that question is that God wants to withhold something from you. That God is some cosmic party killer. When he says do not awaken love until its time...he’s doing it because he created physical intimacy between a man and a woman. He knows the best recipe. And he knows what will ruin it. He’s your father in heaven not the heavenly hall monitor. And he’s got the greatest wedding gift of all and so if he tells you what to do with it you run TOWARDS that because you love and trust your father in heaven. But we run the other way.

Paul said this in Romans 7. 7... I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, Do not covet. 8 And sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind. -- Romans 7:7-8 (CSB)

My sinful nature heard “OH...A LAW? I MUST BREAK IT!” That happens to every one of us. TODAY I’M JUST MAKING YOU AWARE. Question for you this week: **What do your interactions with God look more like lately? begrudgingly following the rules or fellowshiping with the Father?**

4 “No! You will not die,” the serpent said to the woman.
5 “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes

will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Now that the enemy has her thinking about it, he goes for the kill. And here we now get to the core of sin. God said you will die. Satan says you will not. This is where the evil lurking within us takes full form. So let me say this as plainly as I can.

Sin tells me God is wrong and I am right.

Now immediately some of you might respond to me: Well, sometimes I know it's wrong, and I shouldn't do it, but I do it anyways. We are going to talk about this in a minute but know this... your actions are a far better indicator of what you believe than your words are. You might SAY I know its wrong...but you believe its WORTH IT. Which means you don't believe eternity is at stake in it which means you believe God is small and weak and you have no idea who you are dealing with. You think you know better than God and so you act on that belief. THAT'S A HUGE AWARENESS PROBLEM. “eh, its no big deal” is actually the Biggest barrier to God working in your life.

And what I'm trying to tell you today is that you have to OWN that even if you play like you believe in God the God you actually believe in is YOURSELF. Cause when it comes down to it...you are going to sing “You're a good good ME. That's who you are...” You gotta see that sin is this nature within you that you then act on which is rebelling against being told what to do by God. And it is a LIE...listen...that EVE can't figure out. She's deceived.

So is Adam. So here's why that matters: you won't know you are believing a lie when you are believing it. That's the deception. And it won't be until the lie fails you and you are experiencing the destruction that you realize it. Ok here comes the moment. The fall:

6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Now we are here. Man and woman have decided God is wrong, they are right. And they act. And in that simplicity we find our definition of sin. I've been building it to show you how it works. But in its simplest form its what we see right here.

Sin is willfully disobeying God.

That's it. Sin is not complicated. It's simply choosing your way over God's way. What I want you to own right now is that this is something we've all done.
23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God -- Romans 3:23 (CSB)

In fact John says that we all have this sin within us and in one of the most REAL verses in scripture he says 8 If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. -- 1 John 1:7-8 (CSB)

Know what he's saying there? He's saying that when...in every setting...with everyone...we put up this façade like

everything is FINE. Like we have it all together. When we don't need anything and "we are good" or whatever. He's saying NOPE. If you think your life is good and you don't have sin...you are just deceived. That's all that's going on right now. Which is why whenever a couple sits down on Courtney & I's couch for premarital mentoring...and they keep up a smile and only talk about all the good in their relationship...and they do that for a couple months...ooo that's when we know we've got a problem. Cause they got some real issues. People that KNOW they are messed up...and own that it is their own sin that gets them there...those are the people ready to be changed by the grace of God.

Ok let me show you what happens next. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (First sin followed by the first cover-up) 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 So the Lord God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." 11 Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" 12 The man replied, "The woman you gave to be with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate." 13 So the Lord God asked the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Sin hides & blame shifts. When someone says, "It's not me; it's the people I'm around."

Bible says, "No. It's you. You're the problem."

Teenagers: *I hang out with the wrong crowd.* No, *you are the wrong crowd.* That's why you like hanging out with the wrong crowd. The problem is you.

See sin creates a forcefield of denial around us. We refuse to own our sin and we blame everyone else. And we'll never understand Jesus until we own our sin.

Now that we've seen how sin works I want to show you the consequences of sin. How unable you are to fix it. What you are going to see is God saying that this one sin has brought with it a total corruption of the world he's created. Let's keep reading...God curses the serpent and says

15 I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

THIS is our passage for next week. We'll spend the whole Sunday mining the wonders of this. IN SHORT: A child of eve is going to crush the head of the devil one day. And he will be wounded in that battle. This right here is the first ever whisper of the salvation Jesus is going to bring. It's here already in Genesis 3. STAR that verse.

16 He said to the woman: I will intensify your labor pains; you will bear children with painful effort. Ladies everywhere said THANKS EVE for that one. Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you. 17

And he said to the man, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘Do not eat from it’: The ground is cursed because of you. You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

Consequence of Sin: Conflict and corruption. Your desire will be for your husband means you will desire to be the head over him instead of him the head over you. Eve will be offered the beautiful role of “help mate” but she will rage against it. The husband will keep that role. And the danger for him is that instead of servant leadership he will abuse his power. Both of course lead to great conflict between the man and the woman that wouldn't be there if it wasn't for sin. Labor...both childbearing labor and vocation labor is going to be much more painful because sin has corrupted it. So we find ourselves saying things like...it shouldn't be that hard. That's right! It shouldn't. But sin has corrupted our world!

19 You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust.”

Consequence of Sin: Death

I want to stop here for a minute because this is very, very important. God told Adam & Eve they would die if they ate. The consequence for their rebellion was death. But, It wasn't just that Adam and Eve sinned and so *they* died. It was that through Adam's sin death came to ALL mankind.

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned. -- Romans 5:12 (CSB)
Genesis 5 lists off Adam's descendants and it says they lived a certain number of years...and then they died. Keeps repeating. Adam died, Seth died. Why? To hammer a point home. Death now comes for us all. One day you will die. YOU CAN'T FIX THAT. And on the other side of this temporary life is eternity. Have you considered that? But it gets worse. In fact there are several far worse consequences of this act than physical death.

Consequence of Sin: Guilt

Every Single one of us is now guilty by nature and by action. When Paul said death spread to all because all sinned...he's saying you are born with a corrupt, sinful nature. AND you will act on that nature. So we are all guilty of acting on the evil inside of us. NOBODY with kids questions this right? I mean nobody. Your kids do plenty of things you never taught them to do. They lie, manipulate, disobey. Why? Because that's what is in their sweet little precious hearts. Because we are all, even from our mother's womb...guilty sinners! And as we grow we try to do good things but our nature so corrupts our acts Isaiah 64 says

All of us have become like something unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a polluted garment; -- Isaiah 64:6 (CSB)

You can't justify your sin. Because even your justification is sinful. Your attempt to fix it is tainted with sin. “even our tears of repentance need to be

washed in the blood of the lamb.” - Jerry Bridges. And that guilty verdict on us means we must pay a price for our sin. Wages of sin is death. Not just physical death... listen

Consequence of Sin: Separation from God in this life and in eternity

vv. 22-24 says God drove them out of the garden. Sin brought a disruption to our relationship with God. And now every single one of us is alienated from God because of our sin. `Romans 8.7 - the mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God. Listen here's what I want you to see: the wage of your sin is not just physical death...it is spiritual death. It is eternal separation from God. Hell is the eternal fulfillment of what we, in our sin want: separation from God. And scripture says apart from Christ we deserve hell for our sin. And right here is where many disagree with Christianity. You will say “Listen, I believe I'm a sinner but come on man...eternal torment?” First, hell is far worse than you think. But it's not about torture, it's about justice. It is the justice carried out for rebelling against God. Which all of us have done. And if you say “that punishment doesn't fit the crime,” you don't understand who the crime is against.

If I were to slap Scott in the face, *maybe* he'd slap me back. If I were to slap you - might get punched. If I were to slap a cop, get thrown in jail. If I were to slap the president, I may get killed by SS. My action hasn't changed, the person I've done it to has. The more important the person I slap the greater the consequence.

Isaiah 6 - one glance at holiness of God and says “woe is me”

I don't have time to speak of the other consequences of sin. How you become enslaved to sin. How you become hardened in your heart towards God. How you become self-centered, a consumer of the world around you instead of a contributor to the world. But this is the power of sin. You are guilty, You are incapable of paying your debt because you sinned against a holy God. And even your best acts are corrupted and stained by sin. the payment for your sin is death and eternal separation from God.

Being aware of just how sinful your sin is...knowing you cannot save yourself from it...now I hope you are desperate for a savior.

How Jesus Rescues us from Sin

I feel like at this moment we need Paul's words to young Timothy. God sent his son Jesus into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. Paul, aware of his need for saving...was never more than a breath away from celebrating his savior. Desperate people are the ones who find the deep mercies of God. The problem is our sin right? . **If death is the penalty for our sins, then payment for our sins will mean deliverance from death.** This is the hope of the gospel. Jesus, who was *sinless, willingly* went up on the cross and died...he said...to pay for MY sins and for yours. Just like we ALL received sinful nature from Adam, romans 5 says we ALL

receive deliverance from that sin through one man's act.

19 For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous -- Romans 5:18-19 (CSB)

Theologians call it substitutionary atonement. We call it JESUS IN MY PLACE and we don't deserve it. We can't pay him back for it. Romans 6.23 says the wages of sin is death but the GIFT OF GOD. THE GIFT...is eternal life through Christ Jesus our lord. We were separated from God but in his death and resurrection he RECONCILES us back to him. We were dead in our sin but we are made ALIVE with Christ through his resurrection. Our outlook was terrible but Jesus rescued us!!! Thanks be to God!!!

This is why we are SO, SO insistent on preaching the gospel every weekend ya'll. Because it is our only hope. It is our victory. We really do believe grace is AMAZING. Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

The gospel declares victory of the Lord Jesus over death by deposing death of its power (evil) through the cross and robbing death of its prize (humans) through the resurrection.

The gospel is an invitation to live in fellowship with Christ rather than to suffer under the tyranny of evil. That invitation is extended to you today.