

# The Captivating Crop

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Genesis chapter number 3. Genesis chapter 3 should be an easy find for you. Last week, we looked at the first five verses and we studied what I called the cryptic conversation where the serpent deceived and beguiled the woman and we learned how dangerous it can be when you listen to the wrong voice.

One that has an ulterior motive. One that has some underlying agenda. And it's not obvious in some cases, but it's present in the words.

And I said last week, just because somebody, whether it's your neighbor, whether it's your friend, whether it's a family member, whether it's somebody you respect or whoever it is, just because somebody, especially the television, has an opinion, it doesn't mean that you need to lend your ear. And there's a song, an old Sunday school song I learned when I was a kid. It said, oh, be careful little ears what you hear. And Eve needed to be careful, but needed to be careful.

She needed to be careful what she heard. And of course, that caused the fall of man there. We looked in Proverbs where Solomon commanded his son to cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

[ 1 : 2 6 ] Now, as we continue in the chapter, we're going to get into verse number six this morning and notice how not only the ears, but also her eyes played a part in this critical moment in human history.

And then another verse of that Sunday school song says, oh, be careful little eyes what you see. Let's read from the beginning and we'll lead right into our text in verse six, but we'll start in verse one to catch the context again.

And the Bible says, now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And a serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And now our text in verse number six, 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.

Lord, as we read and study this text this morning, please open our eyes to the truth. And Lord, may we not be deceived, may we not be blinded by things in this life, may our eyes look right on, and not to the right hand nor to the left.

[ 2 : 5 5 ] Lord, please speak to our hearts, and reveal things in our lives, reveal tendencies to us, that may be detrimental to us, and to our relationship with you, and may your spirit be able to work in this time.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. So last message was called the cryptic conversation. This morning from verse six, I want to preach on the captivating crop.

The captivating crop. In verse number six, it says, when the woman saw, when the woman saw, when Eve placed her attention, rather her focus, on the forbidden, she quickly became obsessed with something which I'll call its deceitful delights.

It was good. It was pleasant. And it was to be desired. Until this moment, it was forbidden. It was off limits.

And yet now that she's gazing upon it, she's seeing it differently. It's captivating her. These are takeaways from her observations.

[ 4 : 05 ] The positive, the goodness, the pleasantness, the desire to make one wise. And as she observed, she found all the justification that she needed to violate the command of God, and to abandon her morals, and her submission to her creator, and to step into something that she wishes to God and all humanity she could undo.

In verse number three, before we even get into what she saw, I want you to notice something. In verse number three, it says that this tree is in the midst of the garden. This tree is center. God placed it in the midst, and she sees it probably every day of her life. No doubt she passed by it frequently. Surely she saw this tree before.

It was not an unfamiliar tree to her. It was consistently present. And that being the case, it was still a non-issue to her and to her husband Adam.

But it wasn't until the serpent and his cunning coaxing and drawing her attention to it in a new light, after she fixed her gaze upon it, that now she's considering that this tree has value.

[ 5 : 15 ] And before we look at what she saw, I want to make a quick point just like that. It's right there front and center, every day of your life. You don't have to stray far from your daily routine to find things that will distract you or attract you and tempt you and could bring about your fall and could pull you away from obedience to God.

What you're going to need to learn to do as we study today is to control what you fix your eyes upon in this life, to be aware of what they are, to not be deceived, but to have your eyes opened.

This world, this is a fallen world now. It is no longer anything that even resembles this garden of Eden, this paradise. This world is filled with fallen things that are even designed to take you away from God.

The psalmist said, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. So Eve saw a few things and I like to look at this when she focused on the forbidden. The first one that she saw in verse six, when she saw that the tree was good for food.

It was good for food. Did you see that? The tree was good. The fruit of that tree, it was good. It was good. It wasn't bad. She saw that it was good.

[ 6 : 31 ] That's something Christians like to say. I mentioned it in Sunday school. There's nothing wrong with it. It's good. It's not harmful. It's not poisonous. It's good. I'm reminded of a passage in Jeremiah 24 where there's baskets of figs before the prophet and the Lord's like, what do you see?

And he says, I see this basket here. These good figs, they're so good and the other ones are evil figs. They're so evil, they're naughty figs, he calls them. He said, they're so bad, they can't be eaten. That's not the case here. These are, this is good fruit. It's not rotten and spoiled and it doesn't have this caution sign up and this, you know, skull and crossbones and danger.

That's not there. That's not the case. No, she looks at it. It is absolutely good. Of course it's good. God made it. It's good. He looked at what he made and said it was good and this tree was good for food.

It's not like it's going to hurt her. So it appears. It's not like it's pine cones that she'd have to ground up or something of that form. No, this thing has some real substance.

[ 7 : 38 ] This is quality food and it'll fill her belly and it'll satisfy her hunger and in the moment, I bet she's like, I'm feeling more and more hungry the more I look at it.

Eve notices for the first time that this tree, the tree that she's been avoiding, the tree that she's been taught to refrain from, she noticed for the first time it's actually quite good.

I never saw that before. She noticed how good it was and now she's captivated by its goodness.

And let me make the point. Many times, what appears to be good initially can turn out to be very destructive and dangerous and take you away from walking with God.

I'll give you one good example that's close by. Look at Genesis chapter 13. Just give you one biblical example here. on top of the Garden of Eden.

The tree was good for food. But just because it's good doesn't mean it's going to work out. It doesn't mean it's going to be good for you.

[ 8 : 46 ] In Genesis chapter 13, we have Abram and Lot traveling together and they've got herds and flocks and tents and servants and their servants are starting to strive together because they need to separate.

And so Abram says to Lot, verse number 9, Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee from me. If thou wilt take to the left hand, then I'll go to the right. If thou wilt depart to the right hand, then I'll go to the left.

And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. Even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

It's a very fertile, very lush pastures. Lot chose them all the plain of Jordan. Lot journeyed east and they separated themselves, the one from the other. And Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan.

And Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent towards Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. So Lot took the good land. He took what looked real good.

[ 9 : 49 ] I mean, beneficial, well watered. Nothing can go wrong with this. And you know the story. I trust you've read this passage in the next chapters up into the 18, 19, and 20 and how this turned out for Lot.

How did it turn out for you, Lot? You chose the good land. Well, you lost your wife. You lost your sons. You lost your grandchildren or whatever was coming down the way in that way.

You lost, surely you lost all your flocks and all your possessions and your position in that city that you had worked and worked your way into. And this man is a bachelor again, hiding out in a cave or in a mountain.

And by the end of this thing, he is just a wretch. I wonder what he thought of his decision to go towards Sodom and Gomorrah after his wife became a pillar of salt and his daughters and all of what took place down the road.

I wonder 30 years later as he looks back on his life and the decision he made with Abram, I wonder if he regretted that decision. If he saw how that choice to take what was good turned out to be the worst decision he made in his life.

[ 10 : 59 ] Now, you could contrast that with Abram because he didn't say, Lot, I'm the boss here. I've got the real riches. I'll pick what's good for me. I mean, he let him take this.

He said, I'll take the right or I'll take the left. It doesn't matter to me. It makes no difference to me. And Abram, in the rest of that chapter there, if you could skim through that in chapter 13, he gets blessed of God.

The land that he chose, God says, look around you. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to give this to you and to your seed after you. It's going to be yours. That's the land that he later said, that's a land of flowing with milk and honey.

That's the promised land. That's the good land. That's the one they went into and found those grapes with these huge clusters that it took two men to bear that thing. That's the land that Abram got.

Lot could have been there. But he chose what looked good to him. Who got the better deal? What can we learn here? I say just because it looks good doesn't mean it's right.

[ 11 : 57 ] They say looks can be deceitful. You better learn to study the word of God. Find out, does God have anything to say about this before I step into it? You better learn how to pray.

To seek the wisdom of God on a decision before you just say, well, that's a good one. Well, that looks good. It's got some, I'll fill out the list of all the pros. Forget the pros and cons.

Go to the word of God. Get on your knees and seek the Lord's face and get an answer from him of whether it's right or wrong. He'll impress your heart. You can discern the mind of God and you need to really discern it when it looks good.

Don't be captivated by goodness, Christian. What looks good on the surface may end up costing you more than you ever imagined it would. Now come back to Genesis chapter 3.

She saw that it was good for food and it was. But that goodness turned to be quite evil quite quickly. It was good for food.

[ 13 : 01 ] In verse number 6, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes. Let's consider this one for a moment. As she continues her gaze, there's another reason that she should partake that becomes apparent.

It's pleasant to the eyes. It's more than just quality stuff here. This is quite attractive. And as I said, of course it is. God made it good.

It's attractive. It's eye-catching. It's what they call today eye candy. You just want to get your hands on it. And isn't that true? We can get ourselves into real trouble because of the things that catch our eyes.

It could be a boy. It could be a girl. It could be a house. It could be a paycheck. It could be a car. It could be a vacation. It could be shopping.

It could be jewelry. It could be clothing. It could be the newest technology. It could be the newest appliances. The thing that will iron your shirt while you're wearing it and give you a massage.

[14:03] It's coming. And it will catch your eye. And once it catches your eye, it will get your attention and captivate you. There's plenty of things in this world that will captivate you.

It will attract your attention. Why? Because it's pleasant to the eyes. Industries, companies dump out millions and millions of dollars.

You know how much money is spent at the Super Bowl just in that three-hour period? How much money companies will spend to do one thing? Catch your eye. They want to catch your eye with something.

And when it's pleasant to the eyes, now you're thinking, now they're in. They dump so much money into advertising. To attract you. Now let's consider something here.

Go to Proverbs chapter 6. I'll give you two examples that are quite easy to pick up. We could probably make a list of 40 things.

[15:00] Of things that can be pleasant to the eyes that can be bad for you. Solomon wrote extensively to cause his son to take caution and to be warned of things in this life that can be detrimental and can take him away from God and from righteousness and the right way and the path of the righteous.

And in Proverbs 6, he warns about a beautiful woman that in the end is going to destroy him. And he says this in verse 25, lust not after her beauty in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids.

She, in verse number 26, is hunting. The picture is that he's the prey and she's the hunter and she's using her beauty to attract him, how to catch his eye and the lust after her.

And in the end, he's the one that's hurt. He's the one that's destroyed. In verse number 26, for by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread.

He could own his own company. He could have all these things, but chase after that beautiful woman and find it all gone. And he's brought to a piece of bread, poor with nothing.

[16:22] And Solomon warns about the evil woman and the flattering of the tongue of the strange woman. Be careful, Solomon, or be careful, son. Beauty, he says in chapter 31, is vain.

Beauty's a vain thing. Just because it's pleasant to the eyes doesn't mean it doesn't come with consequences and problems. So be wise. Look at chapter 23.

Proverbs 23. Here's just my second case here to point out a thought of things that are pleasant to the eyes but can be very dangerous.

In Proverbs 23, this is an interesting passage. I'll read through these first eight verses. And he's talking about being invited as a guest to a ruler's house.

Now a ruler would be somebody who's wealthy, who can put on a real spread, more than you. And so you're kind of being invited into this, you know, the upper crust of society kind of idea.

[17:22] And he says this in verse 1, When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee and put a knife to thy throat if thou be a man given to appetite. Why is that? Because you don't want to just be eating all of this top-notch stuff and fall in love with this.

And here's what he says in verse 3, Be not desirous of his dainties, for they are deceitful meat.

Labor not to be rich. Cease from thine own wisdom.

What's the son? What's he going to do? He's going to fall in love with this lifestyle. This is the way I need to live. This is me right here. I can do this every day. Be not desirous of his dainties, because they're deceitful meat.

There's something behind this. You're not going to have this. So what do you think? Now I'm just going to start laboring to be rich myself. This is who I want to be. Cease from thine own wisdom.

Verse 5 says, Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?

Something you don't have? You're going to start desiring that, are you? For riches certainly make themselves wings. They fly away. Amen. They fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

[18:32] Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats. For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his heart's not with thee.

The morsel which thou hast eaten, thou shalt vomit up and lose thy sweet words. What's happening here? Is Solomon's cautioning his son on setting his heart on these dainty, attractive, pleasant to

the eyes things that the rich have and they hold and they can offer.

And he says, In the end, you're going to lose your sweet words. You're going to be this ugly jerk when money has a hold of you. What's pleasant to the eyes, son, can change you.

It can change you and destroy you on the inside and it's not worth it. So, things that are pleasant to the eyes can very much be destructive. Labor not for such a thing.

Come back to Genesis chapter 6. It's good to eat. Good for food, it said. It's pleasant to the eyes. And in Genesis, actually look at chapter number 2.

[ 19 : 43 ] Look at Genesis chapter 2 and verses 8 and 9. In verse 8, The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he put the man whom he had formed.

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. So, I want you to realize what we read in chapter 3 that, or verse 6, that she saw that the tree was good for food and pleasant to the eyes.

There was no shortage of that in the garden of Eden of trees and fruits good for food and pleasant to the eyes or pleasant to the sight. The first two caught her eye but the third one is going to be the one that captivates her mind.

But consider this. When she fixed her gaze upon this tree, the tree that had been off limits and forbidden, it's good for food just like everything else.

It's pleasant to the eyes just like everything. It brought this abstain from category down to just common. It's just like the rest of them in that sense.

[ 20 : 54 ] It's good for food and pleasant to the eyes and she's surrounded by that. Before it was off limits and scary and forbidden. But now it becomes common.

Now it's just like the rest comparable to all the others not intimidating anymore. Why? Because she's letting her guard down and she's considering that this tree is captivating her. And I want you to think on this for a moment.

This is the same principle that's in your face every day of your life in this world. This fallen evil world. The whole world lieth in wickedness. And in this world what God would say abstain from keep away don't look at look not upon the wine when it is red in the cup when it moves itself like an adder.

All so many things to stay away from and resist. The world says it's just as good as the rest of it. It's all common it's all fine. You're living in a world that what God forbids the world accepts and says is fine.

It's common. And sin is deemed acceptable and right. It's even promoted as if it's right and okay.

And it's in your face at every turn. But Christian if you're going to stay clean you're going to have to keep your guard up even more.

[ 22 : 11 ] Don't let your guard down. Purpose in your heart not to defile yourself. How important it is for you and I to exercise spiritual discernment living in this world.

Living in Southern California. turning on the television picking up your phone and wasting some time on it. How important it is that you discern spiritual understanding at what you're looking at and what you're letting in.

Are you letting something that is forbidden to become common? To become just like everything else that God did make for you? Better be careful. Learn to say not so instead of say what's wrong with it?

Now back in chapter 3 in verse 6 here's the third one. The first two caught her eye. It's good for food it's pleasant to the eyes but that's what everything else was around her but it's that third one that captivated her mind.

It says 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. Nothing else in the garden was like this tree.

[ 23 : 20 ] What could that mean? What could that mean to me? What will my life be like? What is God keeping me from?

This ringing in my ears is ye shall be as the gods ye shall be as the gods and she's captivated now. This tree has fruit that is desired to make one wise.

She realizes I can have more. Suddenly her life that she has that she lives is just kind of ordinary because now there's the prospect of something else.

The prospect of better. The prospect of more. An enhancement to her reality. An enlightenment. The Bible says the eyes of man are never satisfied.

And I think the devil's been using this very angle ever since Genesis chapter 3. you can have more. You should have more. You've earned more.

[ 24 : 24 ] You deserve more. I don't think there's a person in this room that hasn't been confronted with this very thought. Hasn't been confronted in one way or another that you should you can have more power.

You can have more money. You can have more fun. You can have more things. You can have more. More freedom. More friends. More of what your heart longs for and lusts for. More. The temptation that Satan puts out in front of the woman has a way of blinding her eyes to the truth of what she knows God wants.

It captivates her the way it captivates us by appealing to our lust for something better. And today just like there an enchanted person leaves the word of God and what she knows to be true to daydream of what life could be like.

And she's on dangerous ground right there. But if you could stand there and just play Lee Lee Eve it's false. In a few minutes from now you're going to regret this mistake.

[ 25 : 40 ] Things are never going to be the same again. What's coming around the corner is sorrow and anguish and pain and separation from God and a curse upon you and your husband and the ground and it's all going to change.

You're going to get kicked out of here. Look around. This is the best you'll ever have it as soon as you touch that thing and eat of it. Boy if we could wake her up.

If we would cause her to see that it's not to be desired to make one wise it's going to make you into a mess girl get away from it. But there's too many discontented Christians that have the scriptures and have salvation and eternal life and have the spirit of God and yet they're just enchanted.

They're discontented. They're under a spell of lusting for more causing them to loathe the provision of their caring and loving God and daydream about more and better.

And the Bible says they're taken captive by him at his will. But thank the Lord we have an example to follow. You don't need to turn but it's in Matthew chapter 4 it's in Luke chapter 4 as well.

[ 27 : 02 ] that serpent came by tempting somebody else one day. He tempted the Lord Jesus Christ and in one of the cases he said to him fall down and worship me and here's what I'll do for you.

I'm going to give you all I'm going to give you the kingdoms of the world and what he says was he took them up on a high mountain apart and in a moment of time showed them all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them and the Lord Jesus Christ saw the power the prestige the honor and the wealth he saw it all in a moment of time the glory and he shot it down quickly with the word of God saying I'm only going to worship God I'll never worship you the scripture said it is written he proclaimed who he worshipped and no matter what you offer and Christ resisted that temptation and you know what he continued we resisted and he continued to walk a path that led to a cross he offered him a crown and Christ said no thanks

I've got something else to do I've got a cross to bear right now and it's not a crown and he knew from the word of God he knew that he would get that crown he knew that the future held those kingdoms in revelation now are the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever amen he knows that that crown those kingdoms are his to take one day but he resisted the temptation and chose to bear the cross so what's the remedy for you when your eyes get turned aside and considering something that's good and pleasant or there's a desire for better and for more I'd say this know what your future holds if you're a born again Christian know that that on the other side is something that's that eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard neither has entered into the heart of man what God hath prepared for them that love him understand what your future holds get on your knees and thank God for the garden that he has placed you in here and thank him for his provision and become grateful adopt that attitude to combat this temptation for dissatisfaction you might have to lay down your desires for more and trust God that he knows what he's doing and he's best take up your cross your cross isn't fun and it's not pleasant and it's not good like what she's seeing but you trust him instead and you obey him and you decide that money and power and pleasure all of that can't touch what I got from him on the inside and so I don't want it it's a lie the true riches

Christian are waiting for us out in the future so as Paul said be content with such things as you have because dissatisfaction is dangerous and as Eve found out it's deadly now it was much more than a glance what we're looking at when she 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 when she considered it and she contemplated upon it she became captivated so much that she took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her and the thing drops pretty quickly from there and now her life will never be the same and she'll never get back what she had and the rest of her life as I said will be under a curse and she's on her way to a slow death the rest of her life is going to be a burden there's going to be sorrow and affliction because she allowed her eyes to focus on what was forbidden now individually this morning only God knows what it is that I'm talking about for you only God and you know what it is that looks good right now that you're thinking that's what I want I don't know what it is I could guess but I could be dead wrong inside you surely along the way if it's not today it's there it'll be there something's going to look good to you something's going to attract you something's going to maybe even cause you to consider that this will be an improvement and you're going to want it you're going to be tempted to chase after it because you'll enjoy it I don't know what that would be but the Lord would know what that would be for you and I trust that he's capable and interested in bringing that to light in your life if you're willing to seek him and consider it there certainly are things that we need to commit to in this life but there's absolutely things that we need to abstain from and all throughout your life you're going to be tested you're going to be tempted to justify it to partake of it to go after it and if it's wrong it's going to cost you and it'll cost you dearly and if Eve could go back she'd change it if Lot could reverse it he'd change it every one of these men and John hinted at those sinners in his bible if they could go back they'd undo it oh be careful little eyes what you see oh be careful little eyes what you see for the father up above is looking down in love so be careful little eyes what you see what would you do if you could go back and fix some things of your past well you can't can you so what can you do today you can learn a lesson first from who you're listening to secondly from what you allow your eyes to get set on and fixed on and your heart gets caught in it and in the end if it's not of the

[ 33 : 48 ] Lord and you don't seek him and pray and learn how to talk and get his voice if it's not of the Lord it's going to mess things up and you're going to regret it and you might think well I'll deal with it that's how I thought as a stupid teenager I thought I'll deal with it I'll deal with my mistakes and regrets I'll just you know that's what it is but what if you could not deal with it what if you could make the right decision now by seeking God and keeping your eyes fixed on his word fixed on his will for your life fixed upon those things that are right and avoid a lot of mess along the way we've all made mistakes we all understand this stuff is so real and true certain things get your eyes distracted they catch your attention they get in your heart you go after them and then it wasn't what you thought let's be careful little eyes what we see Lord I pray that the thoughts in the message this morning would bear fruit that the caution would be heeded and received from the youngest to the oldest

I don't believe anybody's immune this world is full of distractions full of things to be desired and God give us discernment God give each one of us light and understanding give us your wisdom help us to desire the things that are right the things that are true the things that are honest and pure and lovely help us to think on those things to set our gaze upon that which is pure Lord we are we are men we are so easily distracted by so many things please give us grace give us strength give us conviction and open our eyes to understanding the truth Lord I pray you give victory to one here this morning that's that's on the edge that's captivated by something that's wrong or that's going to be a lead them astray in this world

Lord speak to their heart and illuminate their mind speak by your Holy Spirit let them know it's you let them know what's right and let them know what they can do about it pray somebody get the victory before it's too late and Lord for others that have already made these mistakes Lord I pray that they'd understand how easily they can repent Lord draw them to your side draw them to you this morning to a repentance and to a forgiveness and to clearing the air and to showing a way that they can move on Lord we're thankful that you're merciful and that you're gracious with us that you're patient and long suffering and that you understand we're flesh you understand we're prone to these things so God please work a work this morning that you'll be glorified in I ask this in Jesus name amen amen we're gonna have a moment here to give you a time to respond if you need to respond in any way if the Lord's dealing with your heart or if he's showing you something inside of you thatúa