

What went wrong?

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Date: 27 October 2024

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[0 : 00] I want you to imagine, maybe this is quite easy for you to imagine, that it is the middle of the night and you wake up feeling a bit hungry and so you sneak down into the kitchen and hope! your parents aren't going to catch you that you've woken out of bed and you see a big chocolate cake out on the side and you think oh I'm feeling pretty hungry maybe I could just have a little bit but you remember that your mum said do not eat the cake until tomorrow because it's your brother's birthday tomorrow and you're saving it for then but you think maybe no one would notice if I just had a tiny bit or maybe it would actually be a good thing if I tested it before everyone else ate it you know what you should do and that is right but you know what you want to do that is wrong and that is eat the cake why is it that we have these two kind of feelings inside us the pull to do what's right and to do what's wrong and when we choose to do something that is wrong that is what the bible calls sin and today we're looking at genesis 3 which tells the story of the first sin and explains why we all know what that feeling is like life can be difficult and often that is because we feel the effects of other people's sin family members politicians neighbors but we also know that we sin too we all know that we choose to do things that we know are wrong and yet we still choose to do them and so genesis chapter 3 is really helpful for helping us to understand why we have this sin problem and today we're going to go through in three parts first we're going to look at the story of the first sin then we're going to see the problem that we all still face and then we're going to see how

Jesus can help us and as I said there are some little activity sheets and things for anybody who would want one and but I want you to discuss this question with the people sat next to you so you might want to introduce yourself to the person sat near you and then discuss this question with them for a second what food would you find it hardest to resist if it had a sign saying do not eat until tomorrow and why don't you talk with the person next to you for a minute or two maybe five minutes so so

You okay, Dave? Yeah, we can. I don't know which one.

Maybe this one? I don't know. James will... This one. If you just, I think, run around and pointing down at them, then it should work.

Yeah, and if you point it at that one. Yeah. Maybe we could hear some answers. What food would you find it hardest to resist if it had a sign saying, do not eat until tomorrow?

[3 : 45] Pomegranate. Any other answers? Freshly baked bread. Yeah. Any other answers?

Maybe one or two, two. Marshmallow. Marshmallow. Yeah, I would find it pretty hard to resist too, I think. A massive marshmallow. A massive marshmallow, particularly. We're thinking today about the story of the first sin, when Adam and Eve could have resisted temptation, but actually chose not to.

And to understand Genesis 3, I suddenly got very dark, it's very important that we understand actually what happened in the first two chapters of Genesis.

We need to remember that God planted a beautiful garden full of many amazing things. It was a garden full of everything you could ever need. There were nice rivers, beautiful flowers, and all kinds of fruit.

There might have been delicious bananas, crunchy apples, refreshing grapefruit, lots of kinds of delicious fruit. Can anyone put their hand up and tell me what their favourite kind of fruit is that they would wish was in the garden?

[5 : 00] Bill? A pomegranate. A pomegranate again? And Tom? Maybe a watermelon. A watermelon. Yeah, Lydia? Apples. Apples. Apples. Apple rings, particularly.

Well, maybe the garden would have had all those kinds of delicious fruits. And God gave the first two humans a really important role in the garden. They were to care for the garden, to rule over the

things.

And maybe I just really want to eat this delicious fruit. And suddenly God's word has been twisted and forgotten. And it's a bit of a disaster.

There's the tragedy. She took some and she ate it. She also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it too. The snake has twisted God's words and Eve believed the lie. And now her and Adam have eaten the fruit.

Now, while I find a tissue, perhaps, I need to ask the person next to you. I'm not sure if I put this on the screen. Yeah. What should the humans have done instead of believe the snake?

Why don't you talk about that with the person next to you? What should Adam and Eve have done instead of believe the snake? Thanks.

[12:00] Thanks. You should have said shut that. You have that. You have that. You have that. All right, it was good for the drum. All right, I could do the helper for this bit.

So maybe Bill's going to help me. And you're going to say, suggest some things that the humans should have done instead of believe the snake. And then Bill is going to act it out, pretending that he's doing better.

Anybody got any suggestions of what the humans should have done instead of believe the snake? Yeah, Thomas? Kill the snake. Kill. Maybe you could stamp on the snake a little bit, Bill.

Yeah, the other thing. There we go. Okay, any other ideas what it could do to the snake? Yeah, Charlotte? Should have believed in God's word.

Could have said to the snake, I don't believe you. Get out of here. Bill, you could shout that at the snake. I don't believe you. Get out of here. Nice. You could have tried to tie the snake into a knot. I don't know if you can do that.

[13:30] Or you could have, they could have got the snake and thrown it out of the garden. There you go. Nice. Thanks, Bill. You can sit down. You can imagine, those humans are meant to rule over the animals, but instead they believe this crafty animal and let it deceive them.

And I was reading Psalm 119 last night, and I had this verse that said, I don't know if I'm on the screen. That's all right. Psalm 119, verse 115 says this, Depart from me, you wicked, that I may keep the commands of God.

That's the kind of thing Adam and Eve should have said to the snake. Depart from me, you wicked, that I may keep the commands of God. But the tragic truth is instead, they gave in.

They decide for themselves what is good for them. Eve decides to trust the snake rather than God. You might think of sin a little bit like this. Effectively, Eve and Adam say this to God.

Shove off God. I'm in charge. No to your ways. That's what sin is. Saying, shove off God. I don't want anything to do with you. I'm in charge.

[14:44] I don't want you to be in charge. No to your ways. I want to do things my way. And so rather than choosing God's ways, they actually think they're choosing their own ways.

But really, they're choosing the snake's ways. And Adam and Eve think they're doing something good. And actually, they do the first sin. They decide for themselves.

They judge that the fruit must be good. And actually, God must be evil if he's stopping them eating this fruit. But the real tragedy of the story is not just that it happened once a long time ago.

The real tragedy is that Genesis 3 tells the story of a problem that we still face. And you might think about it a little bit like this.

Every superhero has an origin story. You probably know, like when Spider-Man got bitten by a spider, he got superpowers. Well, Genesis 3 tells us a story a little bit like that, but kind of upside down.

[15:48] It tells us the origin story of how we have a great problem. And that is sin. And the story shows us two big problems that we all still face.

The first one is the twisting of God's word. The snake twisted what God had said, and so Eve decided to ignore and disobey God.

But the snake doesn't just do this once. In fact, as we see elsewhere from the Bible, that ancient snake called the devil or Satan leads the whole world astray.

And the devil still uses the tactic today of twisting God's words that we might forget it and disobey it. In fact, Jesus calls the devil a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth.

For there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language. For he is a liar and the father of lies. The devil takes what is true and like a twisted snake, twists it just enough and uses it

to pull us away from God.

[16:58] You think about it like this. What makes a lie really dangerous is when a lie is a little bit close to the truth. Because then you'll start to believe it. And when we forget or believe a twisted version of God's word, then we have the exact same problem as Eve and Adam in the garden.

Do you know one thing that really stood out to me from the passage as I was studying it the last couple of weeks? Is actually how little Adam is in the story. If you look down verses 1-6, he's basically not in it at all until verse 6, which says that actually, all along, he was just there.

And maybe I'm just interested in Adam because he has the same name as me. But I think it's actually quite important. So you think, what on earth has Adam been doing this whole time?

And he was the one to whom God actually originally gave the command in chapter 2. And so it was his responsibility to pass it on to his wife. And presumably he had a responsibility to protect her from this pretty strange, wicked snake that was coming up.

He had at least the responsibility to step in and say, no, I remember God said, actually, we must not eat this fruit. But instead, he just sits idly by, doesn't seem to care at all, lets his wife be deceived by the snake, and then joins in in eating the fruit.

[18:23] You think, Adam, what on earth are you doing? And then you think, are we actually that different? Think of all the times where we think, ah, I'll just let God's word be twisted or forgotten, not really stand up for it.

The fact of the matter is, as those who know and love God's word, we must stand up for it. We must share it with those particularly that we're responsible for.

I encourage you, this starts with yourself. And love God's word, for it is a gift from him. If we forget it, or lose sight of it, or let it get twisted to us, that is to our peril.

So know this book. Imagine if God gave you a book, what would you do with it? You would treasure it. Well, here is the book that God has given for us, so that we might know him and know his ways.

So let this shape your mind and shape your heart and your lives, and become the most natural thing to you in the world. If we want to protect ourselves from God's word being forgotten or twisted, we need to know and treasure God's word.

[19:35] But as well, particularly for those we have a responsibility to, it's really important that we keep sharing God's word with them. For parents, it's really important to take responsibility for children knowing God's word in your household, because it is an awful danger to them if God's word becomes twisted or forgotten or ignored.

It breaks my heart as we see the continued forgetting and twisting of God's word among many bishops in the Church of England.

God's instruction is that we must treasure his word and be so familiar with it, that when the devil comes around like a prowling lion, we know what he's doing is wrong.

So I plead with you, take responsibility for yourself and those in your care, that God's word is not forgotten or easily twisted, but that you know and treasure it. The second problem we still face is putting ourselves in charge.

And I need to discuss with the person next to you for a moment. If you are a teacher, this is harder for you, because you just have to imagine that you're a school pupil. But imagine that at school, for one day, you could be the head teacher.

[20:52] Why would you enjoy getting to be the head teacher for one day? Why don't you talk about that with the person next to you for a minute? Can I go for a second? I don't know.

I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. No, no, no, no. No, no, no.

And no, no, no. And no, no, no. No, no, no, no. No, no, no, no. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know.

I don't know. I don't know. And then all the time, like, we can find a drone to come over and drop us in the pan. So you enjoy doing it because you would then...

I'll make this one up to the pot. I'll make this one up to the pot. I'll make this one up to the pot. I need some problem granite now. Yay! At the end of the service, you could have some problem granite.

[21:51] I'll ask kind of what she would do. Maybe she would do something with vegan art. Maybe she would do something with vegan art. Maybe she would do something with vegan art. Would anyone like to share their answer? Imagine that at school, for one day, you could be the head teacher.

Why would you enjoy getting to be the head teacher for one day? Tom? I could boss everyone around. Get rid of lunch, get rid of break, and get rid of lunch break. Wow! You could boss everyone around.

Phil? Because I could make break last to lunch and lunch last to the end of the day. And then drop candy over everyone all day. Wow! You could make school seem a lot more fun, I would have thought.

Anybody have any other ideas? Why would you enjoy it? Yeah, Thomas? I would make it more than if the class got 100 and drinking water, so you would get time to make paper planes.

Wow! You could make it so everyone at school could make paper planes. Yes, Charlotte? I would make everyone to do their work. And they'll get to do their thing.

[22 : 56] And they'll get to do their thing. And they'll get to do their work. Wow! Charlotte would tell everyone to do their work. I think maybe Charlotte would make the best head teacher. But for all of us, why would we enjoy getting to do that?

Particularly if you can imagine being a school people one day. Is because we get to boss everyone around really. And we get to put ourselves in charge. We quite like the feeling of being in charge, I think.

And so we can easily think that God is being ungenerous or mean or stingy! If he's keeping some things away from us that we really want. It's a bit like saying, as we've heard before, sin is a bit like saying, shove off God.

I'm in charge. No to your ways. And when Adam and Eve ate the fruit, it's not just that they were tricked and innocent victims.

Actually, they chose to put themselves in charge. When we think that God is being kind of boring, and that he's stopping us doing something fun, we face the exact same problem as Adam and Eve.

[24 : 04] We think that our lives would be more fun and be more good if we're always allowed to do the thing that we want. Always allowed to watch that thing, or click on that thing, or do that thing with that person, or eat the chocolate cake that's for our brother's birthday tomorrow.

We want to be in charge. And we think that God is being mean. You see, the problem though is, and we can see this even day to day, let alone in eternity, that if everyone lived their lives like they thought they were in charge, it would make the world toxic and violent, and we'd hate each other. It's actually good for us to admit that we're not in charge of the universe, that God knows what's best for us, even if it goes against the kind of things we instinctively want. We have these two interconnected problems, twisting God's word and putting ourselves in charge, that are there in Genesis 3, and have affected us every day ever since.

And so what do we need to do when we see these problems? Well, the first thing that I think we should do is feel really sad about it, because actually we see in the Bible these problems, and we see in our lives these problems too.

And when we feel sad, it's right that we feel sorry, and want to turn back to God. Remember when Jesus said, the devil is like a murderer from the beginning, because he twists God's words and takes us away from God.

[25 : 35] Actually, the second thing that we should do is be on guard in resisting the devil. And just like at the beginning, that he came to Adam and Eve, and we kind of think, oh, we know what they should have done.

We should make sure that we similarly are on guard against the devil. But what we need most of all is somebody who can really and ultimately help us.

And the answer is Jesus can help us. It's really good news that Genesis 3 is not the end of the Bible story. Otherwise, we will be utterly doomed.

But instead, God carries on his plan to love and rescue humanity. And Jesus comes as a new and perfect man.

When he was tempted by the devil, the devil who once again tried to twist God's word, Jesus was ready and stood on guard against him perfectly.

[26 : 32] You could read this in Matthew chapter 5. And every time there, the devil tried to twist the Bible. Jesus replied with a good knowledge of the Bible, telling the truth of it.

Every time that the devil invited Jesus to go against God his father's ways, Jesus chose instead to stick with God's ways. Like Adam and Eve, actually like us, Jesus faced temptation.

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