

SIN

... small act; big consequences
Genesis 3:1-7 Part 2 / 3
WEFC November 2, 2008

We hate it, yet we like it. We know it is wrong, but at times it is a pressure reliever.

... as the little girl explained that a “LIE” - not telling the truth – a LIE was – “An abomination to the Lord, ... and a very present help in a time of trouble.”

That is SIN.

We go through this love – hate struggle with sin. Loving at the time what it delivers, but hating to pay its bills.

We laugh and joke about sin, then weep, cry and walk around in shame picking up our selves that are now wounded, bruised and bleeding.

Sin is attractive ... powerful, but devastating.

It can be in your face, breaking every rule, cutting across the lines of decency, letting it all go.

It gives us a sense of pride ...at times we are strangely gratified to know that ... “**Did I ever get the best of them.**” “**I told them straight to their face.**” - ... yet in our more honest and sober moments, we know that all we did was protect our dirty side.

We speak our mind, only to wish, in the end that we had not.

Sin is bold, calloused and crude ... but also frustrating and terribly.

Sin is awful, disgusting, inhuman, ... the rotten, putrid, rat-infested garbage dump that each of us houses within.

Words erupt and into the mix is added mistrust, hatred, bickering, fighting, profanity, brutality, war, brutality ...

Sin always is deadly – statistically operating at extremely close to the 100% casualty rate.

Genesis 3 rates as one of the more uncomplimentary pages of God's Word.

Here we are confronted with what we naturally are not interested in hearing, but must get into if we are to change.

We are reminded of a side of us that we wish we never knew about.

This is a personal thing, but it is much bigger. The Stalins, Hitlers, Idi Amins, Mugabes, Morgentalers and a host of others kill human life as if it was just one of the normal activities in which people engaged.

Answers, some answers, as to what went wrong and why are given to us in God's Word ... enough to fill in the big blanks,

Whatever went wrong affected all of humanity.

Genesis 3 explains ...

Key Thought:

Sin, primarily, is excluding God ... His character and comments.

Turn please to this chapter in your Bibles ... and note **WHAT DOES NOT HAPPEN** in **Genesis 3:1-6**.

Sin came to be because ...

1. **God was not invited to be actively involved.**

In the opening six verses of this account there is no effort made to get first hand information from God Himself.

He is neither called upon nor fairly represented.

He is talked about, but not personally involved.

He is the center of the attention, but not in attendance.

He is analyzed, His words are quoted, but God Himself is not invited to speak.

Those involved state their opinions, make their comments, yet at no point is God summoned to speak to the situation.

Transition

Of all things a serpent, a talking snake takes the stage with Eve and Adam in the event ... a strange crew for a such a historical event that would produce devastating results.

We turn to what happened that day.

Sin came to be because of ...

2. **An objective evil - a real devil**

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The account of **Genesis 3** contains details that are hard to stomach. We have for starters a talking serpent ... Our minds find this a stretch.

Yet it is wiser to take what is said as realistic ... and here is why.

- Serpent I.D.

The serpent, an animal created by God, is said to be superior to the other wild animals in its shrewdness.

This snake is more than just a snake.

This creature is a “front” for the devil.

The devil slips into the Garden of Eden incognito ... a tactic employed many times since.

Why Eve would not have been alerted to a sinister act being committed in hearing a serpent talk ... the text does not elaborate.

Neither is the origin of evil explained.

What we are told is that this “representative snake” is ANTI-GOD.

This is not an ordinary snake ... snakes do not normally converse with people.

The snake is one of God's creatures ... clearly indicating that it does not have any kind of divine-status.

It is not WITHIN Eve, nor is it just a VOICE IN HER MIND. It is a OUTSIDE OF HER, REAL, OBJECTIVE EVIL.

Evil in its most concentrated form is defined and displayed in a prime source – the devil.

When the Bible author notes that the snake is SHREWD, it just may be that he is alerting us to carefully examine the comments of this witty one.

Read "between the lines" when we hear this voice. It will not be wise to take what is being said at face value.

- Whose questions are never an inquiry, but a strong suggestion to evil.

Questions are extremely powerful communicators of a message.

What goes through your mind when you hear someone ask you ...

- Do you always look like this way?

Almost immediately our minds begin to investigate.

- What is wrong with my appearance?
- Did I miss something this morning?

- Is it my hair, my facial expression, creased clothes, a missing button?
- What do they see that I am missing?

Questions can effectively be used as a way of NOT ASKING FOR information, but SUGGESTING information.

Therefore, when WorldView "questions" are being raised we need to discern whether information is being sought or suggested.

Questions are a way of softening the mind to receive what it would normally reject outright because of its wrongness.

The devil's methods are not at all innocent.

"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

What interests the devil is not what God said, but what He did not say ... for in that crack there is room for insinuation, or at least an interpretation of what "really" was meant.

God, ... is He a straight shooter, or does He mumble when He speaks?

Our words of tremendous importance. They explain who we are. They represent our integrity ... whether we keep our word or deny it.

Our word is the currency by which relationships work.

The moment words become suspect, or untruthful, from that point on matters become complicated. Trust is fractured, people go into a protective mode ... a massive breakdown occurs.

We have all experienced it.

"Did God really say ..."

Did you really hear what God said?

"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Compare that with what was written in **Genesis 2:16-17**

And the LORD God commanded the man,

"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

God did not say what the devil said He had said ... which is what we would expect.

The devil distorts God's words in order to damage God's character.

The devil seems to be saying: EVEN THOUGH GOD HAS SAID YOU SHAL NOT EAT ...

He makes a wrong statement ... to draw Eve into conversation.

Eve interrupts him to correct him.

Note it now, and we will pick it up later, but enough has been said to suggest that God may not be as good and truthful as He made Himself out to be.

Transition:

... and that got the ball rolling in the wrong direction.

Sin came to be because ...

3. It is not enough to know and quote God's Word

Eve responded ...for the most part quite accurately.

Genesis 3:2-3

"We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

She does add a bit to God's word, but has the core of God's intent.

But though she knew God's word ... knowing and quoting it would not stop her sinning.

The Word is effective only when APPLIED.

We need no one to remind us that it is all too easy to know the right answers to life, but end up with the wrong results ... simply because we do not follow through on what we know to be true.

Eve corrects the devil ... and ins so doing becomes a “teacher of theology” the “religious expert”.

She shows that she has superior knowledge ... and is now seen as helping out the poor, misinformed serpent.

Transition:

The devil keeps the ball rolling.

The time for subtlety is over. Now it is all or nothing ... and with a new level of intensity and venom, out come the next words.

Sin came to be because ...

4. God’s Word became “de”-consequence-“d”

Genesis 3:4

"You will not surely die.

(The Hebrew may mean either CERTAINLY YOU WILL NOT DIE or IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT YOU WILL DIE.)

In either case what tips the odds in favor of sinning is that you can do it without any consequences ... and if there are any, at least according to the devil, they are good consequences.

You can do what you want and not have to worry about answering for your actions, being responsible for your words, backing up what you hope you never have to repay.

This is the language of an alarmist ... scaring you into a particular kind of behavior, but having the where-with-all to make their threats come through.

Here is God crying wolf ... when nothing even remotely important is happening.

But that turns out to be a fairy tale and lie ... a devastating one.

Whenever we, along with Eve, think that we can sin and not have to pay for it, then we know that we’ve been hoodwinked ... and we have lost touch with reality.

Transition:

The devil is not done.

He has taken away sin’s punishment ... and now he babbles further.

Genesis 3:5

... God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Sin came to be because ...

5. God was perceived incorrectly

The serpent has successful awakened in Eve the thought that she is a creature of a RESTRICTED STATUS.

God has you under His authority ... and a bit to tightly ... with the admission of DO NOT TOUCH added.

God’s measures are too harsh.

***The woman looked at God's command as a WARNING ...
God warned us because He is concerned for our well-being
... NOT BECAUSE OF HIS AUTHORITY.***

He is a good and kind God who does not want us to get hurt.

***He said this because He is benevolent ... not because He is
showing us that He is in charge.***

***And the devil notes ... You are wrong ... in interpreting this a
warning ... this is a command indeed.***

He is threatening, but it is an empty threat.

Take a good look at The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Why do you think fruit trees were created?

My dear, why don't you think for yourself and use the brain that God gave you?

If fruit grows on trees, then the fruit was meant to be eaten ... not left to hang there ... uneaten, unused. That is what we call being wasteful, being un-green.

Do you really believe that THAT tree ... represents the one and only correct WorldView and its reality?

Do you really think that the full understanding of the tree can be handled only by God and not you?

**Did God make you a moron? Use some common sense.
Does God make stupid rules? Obviously not ... so
something is not making sense here.**

Here is the conundrum that is set before Eve.

God alone knows the "power" or the implications that have been invested in this tree.

There is something in this tree that is beyond humanity ... that if humanity gets a hold of, it will not be good for them.

Even if Eve and Adam ate of it, they still would not figure it all out.

This tree was "loaded" with meaning and significance that neither of the first two people, nor we, understand its depth.

...and so the devil declares ...

Eve, get with it. Can't you see what has happened.

God is not who you think He is.

Genesis 1 and 2 have been telling you that God is good and does only what is good all the time.

But you cannot really believe that ... here is why?

He makes trees and gives people appetites and then says, "Don't eat!" ... ridiculous!

If you cannot eat of every tree, then you may as well not eat of any.

Sorry to burst your bubble, Eve, but as I said, God is not as good as you think.

He sets you up with great potential, but does not let you find self-fulfillment, but leaves you frustrated.

He is mean, jealous, self-absorbed, unwilling for you to walk on His turf, by no means given to sharing.

Take what you can and what is there for yourself.

After all, what is God going to do about it?

If you eat, then you will get in on the next level of self-fulfillment.

For crying out quietly ... God knows that when you eat of the tree ... you will get the full picture. Your mind will be opened.

You won't need to listen to God's limitations and unreasonable demands.

You will be able to make you own decisions, call your own shots, and determine where you would like value to be found.

Just like God did for you.

Up until this point in time, He set the limits.

He told you what could be done and what could not be done.

Well, God does not have those exclusive rights.

That is not solely a function of God's, but it is one that God wants to keep from you, to limit you from your full potential because He is not as good as He makes Himself out to be.

When the new patient was settled comfortably on the couch, the psychiatrist began his therapy session.

"I'm not aware of your problem," the doctor said. "So perhaps, you should start at the very beginning."

"Of course," replied the patient. "In the beginning, I created the heavens and the earth..."

The devil is creating a separation between a confidence in God's Word and practicality / common sense.

If a disconnect can be made between the two ... then the next step towards sin will be much easier to take.

This he convinces Eve to do.

Sin came to be because ...

5. A subjective, personal criteria for "good" trumped God's objective truth.

Genesis 3:6

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Up to this point God had set up ONE MEASLEY LIMITATION on the world's first couple.

One limitation among many options.

Eve, embarrassed that she is in submission to God, no longer defends God as evidenced by her silence.

With an awakened embarrassment to God's authority over them, she looks for an alternative interpretation to the Tree.

What God has said was only ONE WAY OF LOOKING AT THE TREE.

To know what was true, she would need to conduct an experiment.

God withheld from Adam and Eve what He knew they never could handle.

Doing it would not increase their potential, but destroy them. It would rob them of contentment, not give them fulfillment.

In wisdom and graciousness God placed the tree there to let them demonstrate their confidence and dependence upon Him ... a lesson that was lost on them ... and us.

God's Word did not "make sense".

Eve gauged the tree.

Common sense / practicality told here that ...

- Fruit is fruit and meant to be eaten. If it is edible then eat; no need to restrain yourself because God said, "Do not eat."

By all appearances, as she gauged it with her eye, there was nothing to be feared.

- It looked good
- It had appeal.

It opened up new doors that allowed her to be more herself.
Here is how she would make her mark on the world to come.

- She would now define her own self.
- She would prove to all that she really could grab the bull by the horns and not get gored.
- It was smart to replace submission to God with personal autonomy
- It was more prudent to remove imposed limitations and feel the freedom of personal choice gently blowing in your face.
- Before **God**, it is said, **saw that it was good**. Now Scripture with sadness notes that Eve saw that it was good ... desirable for gaining wisdom. She takes on Godlike responsibilities.

... and she took the fruit that she was commanded not to eat ... and ate of it, and Adam along with her.

... and SIN entered the world.

Friday, August 08, 2008

**Edwards: I Was "99 Percent Honest" [\[Byron York\]](#)
His just-released statement:**

In 2006, I made a serious error in judgment and conducted myself in a way that was disloyal to my family and to my core beliefs. I recognized my mistake and I told my wife that I had a liaison with another woman, and I asked for her forgiveness. Although I was honest in every painful detail with my family, I did not tell the

public. When a supermarket tabloid told a version of the story, I used the fact that the story contained many falsities to deny it. But being 99% honest is no longer enough.

I was and am ashamed of my conduct and choices, and I had hoped that it would never become public. With my family, I took responsibility for my actions in 2006 and today I take full responsibility publicly. But that misconduct took place for a short period in 2006. It ended then. I am and have been willing to take any test necessary to establish the fact that I am not the father of any baby, and I am truly hopeful that a test will be done so this fact can be definitively established. I only know that the apparent father has said publicly that he is the father of the baby. I also have not been engaged in any activity of any description that requested, agreed to or supported payments of any kind to the woman or to the apparent father of the baby.

It is inadequate to say to the people who believed in me that I am sorry, as it is inadequate to say to the people who love me that I am sorry. In the course of several campaigns, I started to believe that I was special and became increasingly egocentric and narcissistic. If you want to beat me up - feel free. You cannot beat me up more than I have already beaten up myself. I have been stripped bare and will now work with everything I have to help my family and others who need my help.

I have given a complete interview on this matter and having done so, will have nothing more to say.

There was no loud crash, no big bang, just a quiet deflation of life that became immediately recognizable to both of them ...the consequences of which we will look at, Lord willing, next week.

... in conclusion ...

Key Thought:

Sin, primarily, is excluding God ... His character and comments.

This the essential truth that we must be nailed down in our minds from **Genesis 3**.

Sin is first and foremost an offense, a violation, a hideous act against the one and only personal God of the universe who created us.

Sin does internal damage to us ... big time.

Sin warps, distorts and damages our relationship to others ... big time.

But the greatest damage, the prime loss is in relationship to our God.

One of the other Old Testament characters got the point well when he wrote ...

Psalms 51:4

Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight ...

The words came after David decided to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He was king and could make his own rules.

As a married man, after sleeping with a woman, killing her husband ... and watching the child that came of that illegitimate affair die ... he says these words.

His actions have resulted in the taking of two lives, and destroying a woman's life.

... and he says ...

Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight ...

What is he thinking?

He actually has it right.

Our sin is always primarily and initially a telling God to take a hike.

It is a hellish disregard for the most honest, caring, kind, truthful, and understanding Being that there is.

Sin is always primarily a destroying of the vertical relationship – God and us.

We think we are smarter than He ... our arrogance.

We think we are stronger than He ... our foolishness.

We think that He does not have all the answers ... our blindness.

By our attitude and actions we dismiss His influence and authority ... our stupidity.

But none of that changes reality. God is still good, supreme and sovereign!

Sin cuts us off from the only One who can make a foundational and required change in our lives.

God designed our lives to be operating at maximum ... at their absolute best when we are in dependence, submission, and cooperation with Him.

... we rejected that.

That poor call on our part did not end our lives ... as we will see ... it resulted in a living death ... not where we cease to be ... but we live and move in hollowness.

We function, but not fully.

We live, but with handicaps.

We operate, but we are out of sync.

Here is why this sin against God is of such a serious magnitude.

The perfect prototype of relationship was to be our relationship to God.

On the basis and functioning of our vertical relationship with God all other relationships would spin off.

If this relationship was right ... so would all other relationships be good.

If this relationship was not good ... all other relationships would suffer.

This vertical relationship was and remains critical.

In losing the prototype of relationships, we lost the model for all other relationships.

In other words ... without God ...there is no solution.

He IS the solution.

The first couple intended to gain something good from sinning, but nothing good comes from sin.

There was for Adam and Eve no need to covet because all creation was at their fingertips. It was theirs.

There was no envy or jealousy because they were at the top of creation.

There was temptation to immorality because there was only one woman and one man and they loved each other deeply and sincerely.

... and sin took them down.

They had God ... not as a distant, theoretical, unseen Reality, but One with whom they got along tremendously ... they experienced life at the maximum.

It all came down to this: a restless unwillingness on their part to stay inside the circle of limitation which God in His good and wise knowledge set around them.

Sin today is just as sinful as it was back in **Genesis 3**.

Sin is still as damaging, devastating and deadly.

Sin still smirks, even though it stinks; it smiles though it is pained; it stakes out territory even though it knows it is not welcome.

But **Genesis 3** is in God's Word to tell us that sin can be forgiven ... at the cost of death ... the death of Jesus Christ.

Here we have the reason why things are so bad, but Jesus Christ has come to tell us how it can be so good.

Just because we have the ability to do something, does not mean that it is permissible.

Just because something is available does not mean that it should be used.

(Ill. Drugs)

Just because we think we know what needs to be known and done, does not mean that we have the truth.

... and that is why God gave The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

He knows far better than we.

His limitations are not disadvantages, but blessings.

His words are not fluff, but effective.

His analysis is not an opinion, but law.

His goodness, though at times questionable, remains in tact.

His acts, difficult and perplexing as they may be, stumping us as to their present usefulness ... are like that tree that stood in the garden ... of a wisdom that we do not comprehend.

To us, they are impractical.

It does not make sense.

We look at what God withholds from us and think ... why?

Sex does not need a paper to make it work ... so why wait for marriage?

Following the truth can be risky ... but dishonesty can save our necks ... so why suffer with the truth?

My Way

Co-written by Paul Anka & Frank Sinatra

As performed by Frank Sinatra

Hit # 27 on the Top 40 charts in 1969

And now, the end is near;
And so I face the final curtain.
My friend, Ill say it clear,
Ill state my case, of which Im certain.

Ive lived a life thats full.
Ive traveled each and evry highway;
And more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

Regrets, Ive had a few;
But then again, too few to mention.
I did what I had to do
And saw it through without exemption.

I planned each charted course;
Each careful step along the byway,
But more, much more than this,
I did it my way.

Yes, there were times, Im sure you knew
When I bit off more than I could chew.
But through it all, when there was doubt,
I ate it up and spit it out.
I faced it all and I stood tall;
And did it my way.

Ive loved, Ive laughed and cried.
Ive had my fill; my share of losing.
And now, as tears subside,
I find it all so amusing.

To think I did all that;
And may I say - not in a shy way,
No, oh no not me,
I did it my way.

For what is a man, what has he got?

If not himself, then he has naught.
To say the things he truly feels;
And not the words of one who kneels.
The record shows I took the blows -
And did it my way!

Sin is not primarily something that hurts us.

It is primarily an excluding of God.

It is telling God, I am not satisfied with your perfectness, your
WorldView, your statements.

I think I can do better.

It is the smart-alex-ness of our arrogant selves that tells God to
beat it; we don't need His "insights".

Sin ends up being proud of the garbage of life ... a twisted and
messed up way of living.

**People refused to believe the most honest "Person" in all of
time and history**

The irony, however, lies in the fact that they were already "like
God" because they had been created in his image ([1:26](#)).

There is a struggle between good and evil, God and the devil.
The battle is not between equals ... and here is where we get
confused.

The battle is between a superior good God and an inferior bad
devil. But for a variety of reasons, the superior good God allows
the inferior bad devil to wreak a significant amount of damage
without rushing in to make everything right.

This leaves Him open to a good amount of criticism that seems to
be on the money.

Yet ... upon further digging into God's Word indicates that God's
deliberate, slow, but steady process is working ... though it often
gets lost in the blood, pain and bad publicity that seems to
garnish far more press.

There is a solution to sin – Jesus Christ