

Notes And Helps to Instructors

Thank you for volunteering to lead a group through the treasures of God's word! You may feel overwhelmed or inadequate, but you can do this! The leader notes are designed to help you grow in knowledge and love for Christ and for you to help pass what you have received to your group. Here are some suggestions to help equip you to grow in your teaching and leading ability.

- These lessons could simply be read, and a group would receive something but that is not how they are designed. The notes are designed to grow you as a leader so you might tailor the lesson for the needs of your group. Some groups may not have much of a knowledge base in the bible, so the concepts must be brought down to their level. Other groups may have a large knowledge base and you may challenge them with more information. The key is to know your group. If you begin leading a group in one way and find that it is not connecting, it is alright to modify and bring down or raise up the level of information.
- The more preparation you do the stronger you will be as a leader. Let the study material be a joy for you! Let it feed you as you prepare! The more you are fed the more you have to give to your group.
- There is no set time on how long a lesson may take. Lessons could be slowed down and take several weeks to finish. Perhaps in leading a group, one question captivates the group and leads to a fruitful conversation. If that happens, that is good! You are in no hurry. If you can finish the material in a week, then great! But if it takes several, that is great as well! The important thing is that they receive deeply from the gospel of Jesus.
- Pray about your lesson! Pray as you prepare! Pray as you teach! Remember we do not teach or exercise our gifts in our own strength. The Holy Spirit is the one who opens the heart and mind. Pray for the Spirit to move in your heart and the heart of the group.

May our merciful Triune God bless your study and your group that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith-- that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

In Christ,

Prison Discipleship Ministry

Lessons in Life -- Lesson 6 – Sin Comes to Eden Part 3

Introduction: In Genesis 3:4-5 we have Satan's second response to Eve. Go back to Lesson 4 and review what you learned about Satan in that lesson (Genesis 3:1). In Lesson 5 we saw that Eve by her words begins to doubt God's goodness which is sin in her heart (Genesis 3:2-3). Satan seizes that doubt and goes for the outward sin. How does He do it?

Read this passage at least five times then answer the questions as best you can:

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:4-5 NKJ)

How does verse 4 illustrate John 8:44?

Read 1 Kings 3:5-10. Solomon prays for wisdom "to discern between good and evil." To whom did Solomon look for wisdom to judge between good and evil? To whom does Satan want Eve to look to judge between good and evil?

Who is the one source of knowledge so that we can discern good and evil? Where is that source?

How do men and women in our day make up their own minds about good and evil? Give three examples.

Think carefully about your own life. How has your desire to judge for yourself what is good and evil affected your life?

Remember that God is near to the humble (Isaiah 57:15). If you confess those sins to Him, will He forgive you? If you find this hard, a good prayer would be, "God I committed this sin, but I find it hard to admit it to you. Please help to grow in honesty and humility before You."

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How does verse 4 illustrate John 8:44?

⁴⁴ "You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. (Jn. 8:44 NKJ)

Jesus said that Satan was a murderer and a liar from the beginning. God said that on the day that they eat from that tree "they will surely die" (Gen 2:17). The emphasis on dying shows that there is something more than physical death in mind. When Satan lied and deceived mankind, he murdered them, in spirit and in body. From that point, mankind was dead in their sins and trespasses, and the process of physical death began in them.

When Satan says to Eve "you shall not surely die," he is lying. At the best he is telling her a half-truth which is a lie. When she ate the fruit, she did not die immediately as if the fruit contained a horrible poison that produced immediate death. The serpent knew that when he had sinned against God, God did not immediately kill him. In fact, he was still alive and functioning.

The fact that we do not feel or experience the consequences of sin immediately is no sign that the consequences are not real and will destroy us. In fact, sin often feels good. Moses chose affliction with his people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin which only endure for a season.

²⁵ Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; (Heb. 11:25 KJV)

God is the only One who truly knows "good and evil." Man (Adam and Eve and us) can only use his limited reasoning and observations to make choices about good and evil. Man's ability is severely limited and tainted by sin, so his choices are always wrong not

in the sense that man is as wrong as he could possibly be but in the sense that every choice is tainted with sin unless he listens to God's Word.

Read 1 Kings 3:5-10. Solomon prays for wisdom "to discern between good and evil." To whom did Solomon look for wisdom to judge between good and evil? To whom does Satan want Eve to look to judge between good and evil?

1 Kings 3:9, Solomon prays, "'Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.'" Solomon asks for God to give him wisdom and understanding that he may discern between good and evil. Solomon did not lean on his own understanding, but on God's. This he taught in Proverbs 3:5-8:

"5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
6 In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
7 Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
8 It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones. (ESV)

Solomon was king, but knew that he was a man, and moreover, a sinful man who lacked wisdom. Solomon knew he was a creature, created by God. He was not God and would never be. He looked to his God to give him the wisdom and understanding he needed and found it in his word.

Satan on the other hand, in saying, "you can be like God" deified mankind; mankind can be god themselves and do not need God. We can be god! And as gods we are the ones who determine right and wrong, good and evil, life and death. We are the captains of our own soul, have the power to create the world we want, and can live (finally) to the fullness of our human potential. All these of course are lies.

We were created in the garden as creatures, made in the image of God. And from the beginning, we were created to need the word of God. We were made to hear God's revelation, interpret God's world, and worship and reflect his glory. In Satan's first lie, he made mankind doubt God's word. In his second lie, he called God a liar, bringing into doubt mankind's ability to interpret God's world. And in his final lie, he deifies mankind.

Who is the one source of knowledge so that we can discern good and evil? Where is that source?

God is the only source of the knowledge of good and evil. That source is found in God's Word, the Bible. When men follow their own sinful hearts in determining good from evil, we are using our evil, sinful, fallen, and deceptive hearts as our guide. Proverbs 14:12 tells us, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (ESV)

The bible tells us that we can trust God's word and person to lead us in what is good and evil.

⁹ How can a young man cleanse his way?

By taking heed according to Your word.

¹⁰ With my whole heart I have sought You;

Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

¹¹ Your word I have hidden in my heart,

That I might not sin against You! (Ps. 119:9-11 NKJ)

¹⁰⁵ Your word *is* a lamp to my feet

And a light to my path. (Ps. 119:105 NKJ)

¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17 NKJ)

¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15 NKJ)

How do men and women in our day make up their own minds about good and evil? Give three examples.

Listen to the students here and let them speak. They may share with you things personal to their own lives and share their hearts. The answers here are infinite, let them share a few. If they can't come up with anything, here are some suggestions.

Substance abuse – thinking that drugs and alcohol will make me happy.

Sex – having sex outside of marriage between one man and one woman for life.

Music – listening to vulgar, violent songs.

Think carefully about your own life. How has your desire to judge for yourself what is good and evil affected your life?

Let the students give answers. Listen for them to share their heart. When we hear their heart, think of how the gospel answers what their heart is crying out for.

Remember that God is near to the humble (Isaiah 57:15). If you confess those sins to Him, will He forgive you?

¹⁵ For thus says the High and Lofty One
Who inhabits eternity,
whose name *is* Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy *place*,
With him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit,
To revive the spirit of the humble,
And to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (Isa. 57:15 NKJ)

If you find this hard, a good prayer would be, "God I committed this sin, but I find it hard to admit it to you. Please help to grow in honesty and humility before You."

Humility is not some act of self-denial or beating oneself up. Humility is being honest before God about my true nature and the acts that flow from that nature. Psalm 51 and Psalm 32 are good examples of honest humble prayers.

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17 NKJ)

Martin Luther in his 95 Theses said about this verse that when Jesus preached repentance that He meant that all of the Christian life is one of repentance.

Do you practice repentance?