

Lessons in Life -- Lesson 20 – God Protects Them from Their Sin

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

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Introduction: Re-read Genesis 3:1-21. In this lesson on Genesis 3:22-24 we will look at how God protects Adam and Eve from the consequences of their sin.

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

²² Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"--²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen. 3:22-24 NKJ)

Re-read 3:4-5. What phrase in 3:4-5 is repeated in 3:22? What does "become like God knowing good and evil" mean?

Has man actually become a god or does he act as if he were a god? Explain.

Why is it so important that Adam and Eve not eat of the Tree of Life?

What does God do to prevent them from eating? Why would God be concerned about this? Wouldn't His telling them of the problem be enough?

What does the fact that God "drove out the man" from the garden tell us about Adam and Eve? What are they losing by leaving the garden?

How does this painful experience show that God is good?

Is there any hope of another garden? Read Revelation 21:1-4 and Revelation 22:1-3.

Who will not be in the new garden? Who will be in the new garden? Revelation 20:5-15; John 1:10-13; 5:22-29; 6:28-29.

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Do you have assurance that you will be in the new garden? Why or why not? 1 John 5:11-13

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Re-read 3:4-5. What phrase in 3:4-5 is repeated in 3:22? What does "become like God knowing good and evil" mean?

The repeated phrase is, "you will be like God, knowing good and evil." It was God in the garden who told Adam and Eve good and evil. God because of His infinite knowledge told them the good which was that they could eat of all the trees except one. The evil He warned of was not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eating of that tree would bring death. The temptation that Satan set before them was that they themselves could take on the role of God and decide for themselves what was good and what was evil.

Has man actually become a god or does he act as if he were a god? Explain.

Man has not become God or a god. Man will always be a creature, the creation of God. But man acts as if he is God. We are told in Romans 1:18-24:

"18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness **suppress** the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and **exchanged** the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of

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their bodies among themselves, 25 because they **exchanged** the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

Humanity claims to be God, acts like they are God, but, in reality, are doing nothing more than exchanging the glory of the one true God, for the glory of the creation. We believe we are the master of our fates, the creators of providence in our lives, the arbiters of morality, the executors of justice. But, in reality, we are only suppressing the truth we know truly in unrighteousness.

Why is it so important that Adam and Eve not eat of the Tree of Life?

If Adam and Eve ate from the tree of life in their fallen state, then they would have lived forever in a fallen state, with no ability for redemption or eternal life with God.

What does God do to prevent them from eating? Why would God be concerned about this? Wouldn't His telling them of the problem be enough?

To prevent Adam and Eve from eating from that tree, he sent them out of the garden, into the wilderness east of the garden. God loves Adam and Eve and so, in his love, to protect them, he sent them into that wilderness. Telling them about the problem simply wouldn't be enough. Adam and Eve have already shown they can not be trusted to obey oral commands. How much more so now that they have fallen into sin.

What does the fact that God "drove out the man" from the garden tell us about Adam and Eve? What are they losing by leaving the garden?

Adam and Eve would lose being in the garden-temple, where they were assured of being in the presence of the Lord. In the garden, they were provided for in God's overflowing goodness. Outside the garden, they live under the curses God placed on them. The fact that God drove them out, means that they did not want to go. But in his love, God drove them out.

How does this painful experience show that God is good?

In forcefully driving them out, God shows His goodness by protecting them from themselves. Rather than allowing them to stay where they were with the real possibility of eating of the Tree of Life and thereby sealing them to a hopeless fate, God puts them through this painful experience of being driven out because being outside the Garden was the only place where they could find the hope of eternal life. In the hope of eternal life is the promise of going to a future and better garden, but they must do this God's way.

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Is there any hope of another garden? Read Revelation 21:1-4, and Revelation 22:1-3

Revelation 21:1-4 tells us,

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

Notice the parallels with the garden. The dwelling place of God will once again be with man. God removes death and all the curses.

Revelation 22:1-3 tells us,

“1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.”

Notice the parallels with the garden: the river flowing through, the tree of life again, the removal of anything cursed, and the presence of God in that place with man.

Yes, there is hope of another garden. This time we will truly have our created destiny of eternal life with God.

Who will not be in the new garden? Who will be in the new garden? Revelation 21:6-8; 20:11-15; John 1:10-13; 5:22-29; 6:28-29.

Revelation 21:6-8

⁶ And he said to me, ^a"It is done! ^bI am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. ^cTo the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷ ^aThe one who conquers will have this heritage, and ^bI will be his God and ^che will be my son. ⁸ ^aBut as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, ^btheir

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portion will be in ^cthe lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is ^dthe second death." (Rev. 21:6-8 ESV)

Verse 8 shows us clearly who will not be in the new garden. This is not a call to work our way into the new Garden, but to show us clearly that we must repent of our sins and look to Christ as our only hope of salvation. The person who truly repents and looks to Christ has the assurance that Christ will make real and radical changes in his life. No longer will that person be known for the sins of verse 8.

Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence ^aearth and sky fled away, and ^bno place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and ^abooks were opened. Then another book was opened, which is ^bthe book of life. And ^cthe dead were judged by what was written in the books, ^daccording to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, ^aDeath and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, ^zaccording to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then ^aDeath and Hades ^bwere thrown into the lake of fire. This is ^cthe second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, ^ahe was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15 ESV)

This is the account of the final judgment which is called “the Great White Throne Judgment.” These verses show us clearly the fate of those who do not repent of their sins. They will be called to account for their wicked deeds and then cast into eternal punishment in hell.

John 5:22-29

²² ^aFor the Father judges no one, but ^bhas given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they ^ahonor the Father. ^bWhoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, ^awhoever hears my word and ^bbelieves him who sent me has eternal life. He ^cdoes not come into judgment, but ^dhas passed from death to life. ²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, ^aan hour is coming, and is now here, when ^bthe dead will hear ^cthe voice of the Son of God, and those who hear ^bwill live. ²⁶ ^aFor as the Father has life in himself, ^bso he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he ^ahas given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for ^aan hour is coming when ^gall who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, ^athose who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. (Jn. 5:22-29 ESV)

Who will be the judge at the Great White Throne Judgment? Jesus, Himself, is the judge. All men will stand before Jesus. Emphasize clearly and strongly to your students that they will personally meet Jesus. Many of our students have faced judges and faced

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sentences. Meeting Jesus as the final judge will be a far more significant event. Jesus will either be the judge who casts them into eternal hell because of their sins, or He will be the Judge who exonerates them before all men and who invites them to enter His eternal kingdom, the new garden.

John 1:10-13

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet ^athe world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to ^ahis own,¹ and ^bhis own people² ^cdid not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, ^awho believed in his name, ^bhe gave the right ^cto become ^dchildren of God, ¹³ who ^awere born, ^bnot of blood ^cnor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (Jn. 1:10-13 ESV)

The way to avoid the eternal punishment of hell is to receive Christ.

6:28-29

²⁸ Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing ^athe works of God?" ²⁹ Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, ^athat you believe in him whom ^bhe has sent." (Jn. 6:28-29 ESV)

Do you have assurance that you will be in the new garden? Why or why not? 1 John 5:11-13

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¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us ^aeternal life, and ^bthis life is in his Son. ¹² ^aWhoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write ^athese things to you who ^bbelieve in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 Jn. 5:11-13 ESV)

Listen to them here. Let them share their assurance or lack of assurance. Listen if their assurance is based on their works or ability to earn access into the new garden. Remind them, we are not saved by our works, we are saved by the work of another. Remind them in love that we gain access when we realize we do not deserve it and have done nothing to earn it, in fact, all our works prove that we should not be allowed there! We gain access when we repent of our sins, that is have heartfelt sorrow for our sins. And as we see our sins and apprehend the mercy of God in Christ, we turn to Christ in faith. We trust in Christ's work alone for our salvation, not our works. Our works are important, they are evidence of a living faith and tokens of our love to Jesus for so great a salvation, but we are not saved at all, in any way, and not helped one little bit, by our works in getting into the new garden. We enter by repentance and faith in Christ alone, by the grace of Christ alone, all to the glory of God alone.