

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 4 – Sin Comes to Eden Part 1

Introduction: Genesis 3 tells us the origin of the problems we face in life. Sin, death, and all evil began in a perfect garden. When we understand how this happened, we can understand the problems we face and how to solve them. This week in studying Genesis 3:1 we learn about the nature of temptations, that we face from Satan.

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

^{KJV} **Genesis 3:1** 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?

² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³ 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. (Gen. 3:1-3 KJV)

Re-read Genesis chapters 1-2. What two primary characteristics of God are revealed in these chapters (look back at the previous lessons)?

Who is the serpent? What does Jesus say about his character in John 8:44?

How does the serpent's statement differ from what God had said in Genesis 2:16-17

How does the serpent's first statement to Eve (3:1) illustrate what Jesus said about him?

How does Satan's exaggeration of what God said reflect upon God's goodness (Genesis 1-2)?

How does doubt fit into his strategy? Why is significant that he begins with a question?

Can you list doubts you have about God's goodness?



Isaiah 57:15 says that God is near to the humble. One major aspect of humility is honesty in prayer before God about our sins. If you pray those doubts to God laying them out before Him in all honesty, what does Isaiah 57:15 promise you?

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Re-read Genesis chapters 1-2. What two primary characteristics of God are revealed in these chapters (look back at the previous lessons)?

The first is God is **good**

The second is that God, especially his word, is **powerful**

Who is the serpent? What does Jesus say about his character in John 8:44?

The serpent is Satan. Satan is the accuser of the people of God. He is a liar and a murderer. (John 8:44)

How does the serpent's statement differ from what God had said in Genesis 2:16-17

God said in Genesis 2:16-17, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. (Gen 2:16-17 ESV)

But Satan said, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Satan asks a question designed to make Eve doubt God's word. He is saying, "are you sure you heard God correctly Eve? Are you sure that is really what he commanded?"

How does the serpent's first statement to Eve (3:1) illustrate what Jesus said about him?

It illustrates that Jesus is right to call Satan a liar. In this case, Satan lied to Eve by reversing what God in his goodness gave and magnifying what in his goodness he prohibited. Humanity was free to eat from every single tree in the garden. But they were not to eat from just one tree. This lie made the command of God sound overly harsh and burdensome. That was purposeful to make God sound like he is not good.

How does Satan's exaggeration of what God said reflect upon God's goodness (Genesis 1-2)?

God's goodness to humanity was clear and expansive. God gave all of his creation to man to rule and subdue. He covered it with trees for beauty and for food. God only forbade one single tree to humanity. And again, it made God sound as if his laws were over-burdening and overly harsh. Humanity often focuses on the things God forbids but pays no attention to the overwhelming and overflowing goodness in the things that God does permit and gives to us as gifts.

How does doubt fit into his strategy?

Satan's strategy is diabolical in using doubt. First, he makes man doubt God's word. Humanity was made to be receivers of God's words, interpreters of God's world, and glorifiers of God's works.

Doubt however attacks all three. Satan wanted us to doubt God's word so we could not be sure we heard him, not sure how to follow him, not sure what he said, and left adrift with only our own thoughts to guide us. If we doubt God's word, then we doubt his interpretation of the world we live, his world. So, we are left adrift in this world with only our own thoughts to guide us in a world in which we can't make sense. And finally, doubt attacks our ability to glorify God because we cannot see His goodness. We cannot trust the goodness of His works, His providence, His creation, His person, His nature, or anything about Him. And so, we are robbed of our greatest joy and the deepest fulfillment of the depths of our heart: enjoyment in God and glorifying Him by enjoying Him.

Can you list doubts you have about God's goodness?

There is no wrong answer here. Let them talk and listen. Or, if they are hesitant to talk, ask them to write them down just for their own benefits.

Isaiah 57:15 says that God is near to the humble. One major aspect of humility is honesty in prayer before God about our sins. If you pray those doubts to God laying them out before Him in all honesty, what does Isaiah 57:15 promise you?

Isaiah 57:15 promises, "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite. (Isa 57:15 ESV)" God promises those who lay down their doubt in honesty, contritement, and repentance that, "he will revive their spirit and heart."

This is your opportunity to preach the gospel to them.