



## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE “FALLEN”

Good morning.

Last week we talked about God’s purpose in creation – we called it The Big Story – the Story into which each of our Little Stories must fit:

Out of a heart of love with an intention of love, God is creating for himself a unique People – a People who are called by his name -- a People who recognize and reflect his glory – a People in whom he comes to abide – now and forever.

We also talked about the sin and rebellion that entered the world through Adam and Eve and quickly spread throughout humanity – spread to include us as well. In Biblical studies this is known as THE FALL.

And because of this FALL, sin and suffering and Satan and Death spread throughout the world – to eventually affect each of us.

So is that the end of God’s plan for humanity and creation? Did sin destroy his plan forever?

No, it did not. God’s Big Story has been opposed and deflected and delayed, but God has never waived in his intention to create a unique People for himself who are called by his name.

For many years I helped teach a faith-based barracks of men in a maximum-security prison. With each group, I would ask, “What do you have to do to go to hell?” They would usually answer ‘murder someone’ or ‘rape someone’ or ‘manufacture and sell lots of drugs’?

I would reply that those crimes would certainly help a person get to hell, but that was not the correct answer. “All you have to do to go to hell is wake up every morning, live life any way you wish, eventually die, and go to hell. This is our default setting. We are FALLEN. We are LOST. Unless something makes us eligible for heaven, we will end up in hell.”

So let’s talk this week about what it means to be FALLEN. Here are a few characteristics:

- Hopelessly enslaved to sin (to the point of addiction) –
- Very vulnerable to demonic influence and oppression –
- Spiritually dead –
- Spiritually blind –
- Corrupted heart –
- Existing in a state of hostility to God –
- Morally and ethically compromised --
- Separated from God’s People --
- Without peace --
- A limited capacity for love --
- Relational difficulties --
- Haunted by the specter of Death --
- Doomed to experience the wrath of God in The End --
- Destined to eternity in Hell --

**Romans 6:16-22**

**1 Peter 5:8**

**Ephesians 2:1-5**

**Matthew 13:14-15; John 9:39; Revelation 3:17**

**Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19; Romans 3:12**

**Ephesians 2:14-16**

**Romans 3:10, 20**

**Ephesians 2:1-4**

**Isaiah 48:22**

**John 5:42; 2 Thess 2:10; 1 John 2:15**

**Galatians 5:17-21**

**Hebrews 2:15**

**1 Thess 2:15-16**

**Rev 14:9-12**

But because of God's great love for us, he made a way for us to escape our 'fallen state' and experience life in its fulness---now and forever:

**1 John 4:9-10** *This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

Go to **Luke 15** and you will find three stories Jesus told which help us – and the people with whom we share the Good News – understand something of God's great, pursuing love for all of us:

- The story of the lost sheep
- The story of the lost coin
- The story of the two lost sons

Next week we will talk about NEW BIRTH – that supernatural transformation God's Spirit accomplishes in the lives of those who turn from their sin and rebellion and throw themselves on the mercy of God.

Blessings-

*Douglas*

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