

Discussion Guide

Week of February 23, 2014

Genesis 3

Passage Overview: Genesis 2:4-25 amplifies in greater detail the compressed statement of God's purpose for humanity in 1:26-31 to populate the earth as his image-bearers. The terse, poetic language of chapter 1 is explained in a narrative of the creation of humanity in the garden-sanctuary of Eden in chapter 2. When God's command to Adam and Eve in 2:16-17 is disobeyed in chapter 3, at the instigation of the serpent, consequences ensue for everyone involved. Sin invades the universe. Nevertheless, God's grace still abounds in his judgment, as the offspring of the woman will conquer the serpent (3:15) and procreation and dominion will continue, though only through pain (3:16-19).

Understanding God's Word—Read Genesis 3:1-24.

- While Adam and Eve were to care for the garden-sanctuary of Eden by subduing the beasts and obeying God's word (Gen 1:28; 2:15-17), they end up being subdued by a beast by compromising God's word and are thus exiled from Eden (3:24). Compare how God's instructions are subtly changed from God's original instructions in 2:16-17 to their recollection in 3:1-5. What changes do you see?
- In what ways do these subtle changes to God's word reflect a distorted picture of God's character in Gen 3:1-5?

Living and Applying God's Word

- Look carefully at the consequences of sin in Gen 3:7-13. How does sin break down relationships, both vertically between God and humanity, and horizontally between Adam and Eve? List all the results and consequences you see of sin.
- God's punishment of the first sin is swift and sure. Describe the punishment for each of the following, noting how Adam and Eve's punishment link up with their original calling in Gen 1:28: (a) serpent, (b) Adam, (c) Eve.
- Even in the midst of punishment, God's grace and gospel are evident. Describe the promise that is present even in the punishment of Adam and Eve.
- How is God's grace evident in Gen 3:20-21? What hints do we have about the coming sacrificial system and Jesus, the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Why is it so important to remember both the goodness of creation (Gen 1-2) and the fallenness of creation (Gen 3)? What kinds of problems result when you forget one or the other?
- Look at 3:6. How do each of the following play a role in the committing of sin: (a) the emotions, (b) the mind, and (c) the will? Why is it important to see that every aspect of our nature is now polluted by sin? How does this change the way you think of your own sinfulness?
- What have you learned from Genesis 3 about sin that has stood out most to you? How can it make a practical difference in the way that you live?

Prayer: Pray that you would have a greater understanding of the depth of your sin. Ask God to move your heart to marvel at his grace, even as it's displayed in judgment.

Announcements

- Midweek Fellowship (Weds through the end of March, 5:45-7:30pm)
- Deacon Candidate Q&A—Bill Harrison (Feb 26, 7:30pm)
- "One Another" Member Meeting (March 2, 6-7:30pm)