

Lesson 2:
Please Don't Eat the Fruit!

A Bible Study Lesson of The Mt. Zion Church
We Have the Vision to be a LEARNING Church!

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We are Seeking the Face of God!

Introduction: In lesson 1, we discovered that we could awaken the enemy through a lack of humility. This occurs when we choose to usurp authority and when we do not submit to authority. Primarily the focus centered on our desires to function outside of God's structure within the church, however, a lack of humility will show itself in every area of our lives. Man's pride, at its core, is a desire to be God. If you have wondered where this desire comes from, today's lesson is for you! In this lesson, readers will discover that the enemy, Satan, has a four-part plan which he repeats to entice us to step out of our position and seek God's position. Enjoy!

Key Verse: Genesis 3: 1-6

Supporting Verses: Proverbs 4: 1-7

Scripture Context

The third chapter of Genesis represents the most horrific account of mankind. This chapter identifies how the perfect relationship between God and Man was broken through one decision. Prior to the incident recorded in the first six verses, readers can see the perfect union between God and Man. God and Adam communed together and spoke face to face. Afterwards, Adam and Eve fear God, are kicked out of Eden, have the first recorded incident of sacrifice shown, and are cursed. One can see the terrible consequence of sin. But how did we get here? Students will discover that Satan has four basic tricks he uses to tempt us and will be able to understand how scripture provides avenues for success when facing said tricks.

Trick # 1: God is Lying to Us Genesis 3: 1-4

In the first 4 verses, a conversation ensues between Satan and Eve. Note, Eve does not go in search of Satan. Satan approaches Eve and questions her regarding the Word of God.

The verse implies that Satan asks about God's meaning and His intent. Notice the question: "Did God really say...?" or to put it simply, did God really intend for you to not eat from every tree in the garden? This question calls into question God's command. Satan was not trying to help Eve have clarity about God's word. Satan sought to find a weakness in Eve's understanding of the word and her commitment to the word.

Then Satan blatantly twists the word and tells Eve that she will not die and that God is simply protecting His position as God by denying mankind knowledge they deserved to have.

When have you heard people suggests that God's word was not true or that God did not mean what He said? Write a few examples below as a reminder of Satan's trick # 1.

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| Satan lied to me about God in the following ways: |
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Trick # 1 positions us to negate God's word and to have a lack of trust in Him. If we cannot trust His word then perhaps there are other options for whom we can trust.

Notice, the lack of trust/faith issue stems from Satan bringing into question God's perfect truth. Some examples of Satanic lies.

1. You cannot be saved by Jesus alone.
2. You need to be defined by someone other than God.
3. You should find your own answers for life.
4. The Bible is not true. Man wrote it to control us.
5. There is no such thing as punishment.
6. There is no such thing as an absolute truth.

These and many more lies of Satan are ways to cause us to question God's truthfulness that is found in His word. Eve's disobedience did not begin with her eating the fruit. Her disobedience began when she listened to Satan tell her that she could not trust God's word.



Shield Against Trick # 1

To protect ourselves against Trick # 1 we must do the following:

1. **Know God's Word-** this step is the biggest challenge for us as we often skip spending time in God's word due to busy lives. This requires an active and consistent time of study of the word. If you are not in regular study of God's word you are at risk for the lies Satan tells!
2. **Seek God Before Decision Making-** this step requires us to slow down and pray before we make any big decisions in life. Imagine how different the situation would have been if Eve had stopped and asked God to help her understanding of what to do before she ate the fruit. God does not hide information from us, rather he teaches us through His word and through communicating with us about His desire for our actions.
3. **Seek Counsel from Others Who Are Following God-** Eve had an accountability partner that she did not check with before she ate the fruit. Granted, we see that Adam followed her rather than leading, but the point should not be missed that we often forget to check in with those who can remind us what God has said and what God means . Who do you have in your life that you can count on to hold you accountable to God's word?
4. **Know that Satan Wants You to Fail-** Remember, Satan's desire is to devour you (utterly destroy) and your walk with God. He wants to make your life more difficult and for you to be an example of weakness and failure. Therefore, know that what he says will always be either an outright lie or a manipulation of God's command. He wants you to fail.

Trick # 2: It is Okay to Satisfy Your Physical Desires Genesis 3: 6 a

In this portion of the text we find that Eve sees the fruit and views it as something good to eat. She chooses to satisfy her physical desires rather than obey God's word.

Have you ever been seduced by Satan to satisfy your physical desires? In what ways do you remember suggestions such as:

"It's no big deal this once...", "This will be fun if you try it.", "This will feel good if you do!"

How has satisfying your physical desires created problems for you in the past?

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When we choose physical satisfaction over God's word, what seems innocent has a way of creating chains for our lives and our ministries. Some things God says wait to enjoy when it is time. Other things, God says do not try this because the short-lived feeling of enjoyment will be accompanied by long-term pain and suffering.

Shield Against Trick # 2



To protect ourselves against Trick # 2 we must do the following:

1. **Know God's Boundaries-** God does not have a problem with us having pleasure. He does have a problem with us functioning outside of His boundaries. In all areas of our lives, we must know God's will for how we are satisfied physically. Do you use food, sex, power, exercise, etc. appropriately or do you use them outside of God's will for your life? Even if there is pleasure, if you use it wrong, God will be displeased.

2. **Trust God's Plan-** Often we seek pleasure in ways that are not part of God's plan. If we do not trust God's plan, then we will blur the lines for a quick solution rather than the blessing that God has in store for us. Trust that God is not trying to harm you. He wants you to have a full and complete life!

Trick # 3: It Looks So Good!

How many times have you been seduced into thinking that what you are doing is okay because it looks good? Think of the debt you took on because you had to have it now. Think of the people you have allowed into your life because they looked good physically, financially, and socially. Consider all of the eye catching items Satan has put before you.

Eve saw the fruit and it looked good to her. She realized too late that what looks good to you may not be good for you!



Seeing, in The Bible, often relates to knowledge and understanding. Satan wants us to think that our limited vision can understand the entire scope of an issue. In reality only God has that type of vision/understanding. He knew that looking and longing for the fruit would hide the danger. What are you looking at and calling good without hearing God say "that is dangerous"?



Shield against Trick # 3

To protect ourselves against Trick # 3 we must do the following:

1. **Ask God to Give You His Vision-**God will help you to see what is good for you and what will be harmful to you. He will tell you yes or no and you will have clarity regarding how to respond in situations where "it" looks good. This includes job decisions, dating, big purchases like cars and houses, friends, and even a church home because all of them can look good and not be good for you!
2. **Be Decisive, but Not Always Quick to Decide-** One challenge many of us have is that we move too quickly without considering all the possibilities. When Mary was told she would be the mother of Jesus, she stopped and

pondered (thought about) what she had been told. How often do you ponder and consider what you are doing? Do you just jump in without thinking? What impact does rushing to a decision have on your present and your future? Most carpenters use the adage, Measure Twice and Cut Once! Base your decisions on information and outcomes rather than outward appearances.

Trick # 4: It will Make You Wise Genesis 3: 6c

This trick is the one that gets all of us. The fruit was seen as something that would give them some knowledge they did not have. And guess what...It was an experience and knowledge that God did not want them to have. God did not want mankind to have a knowledge of and an experience of separation from Him due to sin. Yes, it is knowledge but it is undesirable knowledge. How many of us have experiences that which are undesirable instances. For example, I have knowledge of what it feels like to run into a car while riding a bike. Is it knowledge? Yes. Is it knowledge that I am glad I have? No. Likewise, God is such a good father to His children that he knows what we need to experience and He knows what we would be better off not knowing.

Our challenge is to trust God and accept His yes and no for our lives. We must constantly remind ourselves that God is a better parent than we are to our children. God seeks to protect us similarly to the ways we seek to protect our children and loved ones from hurt, harm, and danger.



Shield Against Trick # 4

To protect ourselves against Trick # 4 we must do the following:

1. **Trust God**-When you lack faith in God, you will try to answer the questions on your own. God desires us to seek His answers and to give us His knowledge. Proverbs 4: 1-7 discusses wisdom and concludes with the thought that in all the getting of wisdom make sure we get understanding. Part of the wisdom God wants for us is how much we can trust Him and his word. This is knowledge worth having!
2. **Bring Your Behavior in Line with God's Will**-The choice to disobey for knowledge's sake puts each of us in a precarious situation. It is us saying that we prefer to live outside of God's will. However, if we follow God's will for our lives, we will find that we will not miss or crave those things which are not for us.

Conclusion: The choice to eat the fruit by Adam and Eve ushered sin into the world. Satan has not changed his tactics. He repeatedly tells us that God is lying, that we should choose pleasure over obedience, that what we see is what we need, and that God is hiding information from us. When we succumb to these tricks, we will find ourselves separated from God and struggling which is not God's will for our lives. Today, make a decision not to eat the fruit!