



Sunday, January 6
The Oldest Promise for a New Year
Andy Hale

Read Genesis 3:1-5

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

2 *The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"*

4 *"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5** "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

The Talking Snake is also referenced in the New Testament. And his purpose is to lead the world astray.
Revelation 12:9

The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Point out the two ways that Satan tempted Even –

He tempts her to doubt God's Word.

He tempts her to doubt God's goodness.

How have you been tempted to doubt God's Word and His goodness? Remembering that temptation is not sin but giving in to that temptation and acting on that temptation is when we choose to sin.

Eve is tempted but then chooses to sin and Adam makes the same decision – the decision to sin.

6 *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

Adam and Even deliberately choose to something other than God.

7 *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.*

The temptation was presented as a way to freedom. Unfortunately, it was not a new freedom and independence but they found shame and a need to hide. Sin always promises something and never delivers on the goods.

8 *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

They feel they have to hide because their relationship with God is distorted. They had everything they needed and yet they thought they needed more. Sin has twisted their view of Who God is. They run and hide.

This is a very sad verse. God goes looking and they start hiding.

We still try to hide in our sin and we try to hide our sin from God and from others. We deceive ourselves in our craft of deceit.

9 *But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

God goes after them even in their sin. He keeps loving and goes looking. God pursues us. It is a natural response for us to go running in our sin but here we see God pursuing Adam and Eve and He pursues us as well. The difference is we view His pursuing as punishment rather than grace and truth.

10 *He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

Fear enters the world. What a sad verse. There is no mention of fear because of behavior until this verse. God does not intend us to live in fear. It is a result of our sin and the sin of others.

11 *And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"*

Take time to look at the three questions God asks Adam and Eve - Where are you? Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten the forbidden fruit?

God asks because He knows they need to confess. He keeps asking Adam to have a relationship - now the relationship is one of confession and restoration. There was no need for confession and repentance before sin entered into the world, but God in His mercy offers another chance for a relationship with Him.

12 *The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."*

Adam blames Eve (and possibly even blames God for creating her) It is amazing what lengths we will go to defend our sin.

13 *Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

What is God going to do to these unapologetic people? How will he respond to those He has created and provided for? With this big of an insult to Himself, how will He respond? The answer will more than likely surprise you. It is so unlike the way most of us respond when we are wronged.

14 *So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. **15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." **16** To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." **17** To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. **18** It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **19** By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

20 *Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.*

21 *The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*

God does not hide the truth of their sin. They have ruined perfection. It's going to be harder, more painful and worse. But He does not leave them without hope in their sin.

v. 15 - the first gospel. The first word of hope in a now fallen world. Jesus is coming and God addresses the serpent before he addresses the sin of Adam and Eve. He is the God of restoration.

v. 21 - God made them clothes of skin. They could not cover their sin with fig leaves. God sheds blood to cover their sin. It was a temporary and external covering. The first sacrifice was made by God Himself. The final sacrifice of Jesus is not temporary and just external.

1. God comes to find you in your sin.
2. God promises hope in your sin.
3. God provides a covering for your sin.
4. God keeps all His promises in Jesus.

Application for us:

1. Don't hide in your sin. Confess it.
2. Don't try to fix it yourself. God never asks us to fix ourselves. He did not ask Adam and Eve how they were going to fix it. He told them how He would fix it. You trying to fix it is an affirmation that we don't trust God to fix it. Compounded sin. Fig leaf fixes - success, \$, academics, career, possessions, our children to impress others, social media, posing and posturing, religion
3. Believe God's promise in Jesus.
4. Be a church of restoration.

Encourage those in your group to consider what may be fig leaves for them. (temporary coverings that will only hide our sin for a short time)

Share prayer requests and pray for one another.