

### 1. The Command

- a. In order for man to live and to rejoice in His creator, man must understand that he is dependent upon God for every good thing. God is the creator, we are the creatures.
- b. Therefore God gave man a command (Gen. 2:16-17). The command included freedom to eat and enjoy every tree of the Garden.
- c. But in order for man to enjoy and to eat of every good thing, man must accept them as from the hand of God who made them. Therefore, the command included a negative. ONE tree, you will not eat.
- d. If man was to live as he was created, he must first recognize God's sovereignty as well as his own dependence upon God.
- e. The name of the tree does not indicate that something would be added to man's knowledge, but it indicates the source of that knowledge. Where does our knowledge of good and evil come from? The only answer is in the command of God.
- f. As a promise held out to man, God created the Tree of Life. If man obeyed God, he would be confirmed in the blessed state forever – symbolized by the Tree of Life.

"In ethics the ultimate question is, What has God commanded?, not, What is most expedient?, nor, What, according to the nature of things, is the good or the best? And the ultimate test of our loyalty is preparedness to obey simply and solely because God has commanded. When man fails here it intimates the bankruptcy of moral character." (John Murray)

But I would take this one step further. We also must trust and believe that God is good, and therefore is a "rewarder of those that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

### 2. The Temptation (Gen. 3:1-5)

- Satan began by questioning God's word, phrased in such a way as to cast doubt on God's goodness and provision. "Did God really tell you not to eat of *every* tree?"
  - "He couldn't have possibly said this. How could God make something and then just randomly, out of the blue, forbid you from eating it.
  - "This can't possibly be right – unless, of course, God is up to something...What could it be?"
- Eve answers, and takes the bait. God said not only that we couldn't EAT it, but we couldn't even TOUCH it, or we will die.
- Now that Satan has her hooked, he flat-out denies God's word.
  - He does not deny the command, but denies the effect of the command.
  - In doing so, he implies that God is not good, but knows something that He doesn't want Eve to know.
  - Satan contends with the idea that goodness only comes from obedience to God. That might be ONE way, but we really need to use our own judgment.
  - Eve was created to enjoy life; the temptation was that Eve could enjoy life to the fullest on her own terms. God is just being selfish.

3. The Fall: Genesis 3:6
  - Eve responded to Satan’s temptation:

First, she “saw that the tree was good for food” – this was never under dispute. But in doing so, she showed that she believed Satan’s lie.

God did not command them to refrain from eating the fruit of the tree because there was something naturally poisonous in the fruit. Surely the birds and other animals ate freely from the tree. God created all things good, but he did not grant those things the prerogatives that belong to deity alone. That is, although the tree was good for food, “man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deut. 8:3). Eve began by separating the meaning of the tree from the words of the Lord, thinking that life is food and drink. Thus she confused the creature with the creator, and looked to the meats for the belly as the source of life.

Second, she saw “that it was pleasant to the eyes” – This word means to lust after, to desire greatly. It was not a sin to desire. But it was a sin to desire what God had forbidden. To desire that which God has forbidden is to cast doubt on God’s goodness and provision.

Third, she saw that it was “desired to make one wise”. This is the same word used in Exodus 20:17 –

**Exodus 20:17** Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

Then she ate the fruit of the tree, and she gave it to Adam, and he also ate. Through Adam the whole human race fell under the curse.

This curse affects every endeavor of man. Since sexuality is such an important part of man’s created makeup, the effects of the curse are first given in sexual terms: They knew that they were naked.

Next week – the effects of the curse in human relationships.