



The Story of Scripture

LIFEGROUP STUDY

SESSION TWO: THE STORY OF SEPARATION (8/14/2022)

JOHN 1:10-13; GENESIS 3:1-7

MAIN POINT

The consequences of sin are death (spiritually, relationally, and physically), suffering, disease, conflict, injustice, pain, toil, and separation between God and humanity.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Have you ever heard anyone refer to a car as a “lemon”? What are some characteristics of a car that is described this way?

Have you ever had the experience of purchasing a car that fit this description? How did you deal with the situation?

In our study of the Scriptures today we will consider a different kind of lemon: a spiritual lemon. The Bible teaches that all people are born into this world with a “lemon” of a soul. There are many folks that look from the outside as though everything is in good working in order, but inside is a corrupted, malfunctioning soul. We will examine the problem of sin and man’s relationship to sin. We will specifically consider the origin of man’s sinfulness, the depth of man’s corruption, and the consequences of our sinful state.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ GENESIS 3:1-7.

After God rested from creating the heavens and the earth and all that they contain, what did He see according to Genesis 1:31? How does this compare to our experience of the world today?

Look back at Genesis 1 and 2. What do we know about the nature and purpose of mankind from the creation account? How was mankind intended to bring God glory?

The result of Adam and Eve's (and ours) sin was full and final spiritual death (Romans 6:23). They still had physical life and they weren't completely cut off from God. They were able to look to God for the hope of redemption because of his promise to them in Genesis 3:15, but their hearts of flesh had been replaced with hearts of stone. The communion that they enjoyed with God was shattered (Isaiah 59:2). Instead of basking in the warmth of God's love they now had to seek shelter from His consuming wrath. Yet God promised that He would send a Redeemer. The seed of the woman would one day come to destroy the work of the enemy. The curse would be lifted. A Rescuer would come (Genesis 3:15).

Do you believe that God's character and His Word are completely trustworthy? How do your life and actions give evidence for what you believe?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 1:10-13.

How was Adam's sin connected to the reality that mankind rejected Jesus at His coming? Why are we unable to change the impact of sin in our lives apart from Christ?

How have you experienced the reality that you are unable to turn from sin on your own? How have you experienced freedom from areas of sin in your life through Christ?

The tragedy in the garden and the ensuing drudgery that is the story of mankind's constant rebellion against a merciful and gracious God was the backdrop of John 1 and the coming of the Redeemer. Intermingled with the astounding news that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us is the description, "the world did not know him" and "his own people did not receive him" (vv 10c, 11b). How can this be? How could people see the power, teaching, and compassion of Jesus Christ and still not recognize Him and reject Him? The answer can be traced all the way back to the garden.

How can we reconcile the wrath of God with the great love of God? What does it mean to be under the wrath of God? Why must we tell others the truth about God's wrath in order to truly love them?

Have you come to grips with the reality that God's wrath against those who remain in their sin is just and fitting? Why or why not? How does this reality affect your worship, prayer life, and evangelism?

The sinful condition itself is terrible. The thoughts, words, and actions that our sinfulness produces are nauseating. But what makes a corrupted state so desperate and hopeless is the fact that it places us against God. Those who remain in their sin are God's enemies and under His wrath.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Are there any passages of Scripture that have been especially meaningful to you as you have sought to obey the Lord and give Him glory in your context? What are they? How do they connect with your present life?

What sins are you most often drawn toward? How do you battle against sin and battle for God's glory in your life? How can your fellow church members and pastors help you?

If you are in Christ and no longer under God's wrath, have you truly let that reality set in? How might you be shaped by meditating on the fact that God now feels no wrath whatsoever toward you—even when you sin—because Christ has already bore that wrath? How should this make you a more joyful, thankful, loving person?

PRAYER

Pray humbly before the Lord with repentance. Spend time recognizing that we are radically corrupted, spiritually dead, and absolutely hopeless unless He acts on our behalf. Praise Him for acting on our behalf. Let your heart be drawn out toward God in love and worship because of the gospel.

COMMENTARY

| GENESIS 3:1-7

3:1 Though we know the serpent was an instrument of Satan (Rm 16:20; Rv 12:9; 20:2), it was just a created being. Its description as cunning suggests it offered a wisdom not based on the fear of God. It tried to take Eve's focus off the abundance of God's provision.

3:2-3 The woman's claim that God said, You must not . . . touch the tree, or you will die, goes beyond anything recorded in God's instructions to Adam. Therefore it seems that Adam had given his wife an additional command beyond what God said, or else Eve herself exaggerated

the command as Satan tempted her to view God as selfish and overly restrictive. If Adam added to God's command, he almost certainly had a good motive—after all, if Eve never touched the tree, she certainly would not eat its fruit. However, the sad truth is that when people add to the word of God, they create confusion and trouble.

3:4-5 The serpent, recognizing the woman's confusion, found a point of attack. Knowing that the woman would not die by merely touching the fruit, he boldly contradicted what she had reported to be God's command. He then skillfully lied (Jn 8:44) by distorting God's word (Mt 4:6), implying that God had prohibited people from eating the fruit only to keep them from becoming as knowledgeable as he. The woman was now fully deceived (1Tm 2:14).

3:6 Since the woman did not die when she touched the fruit—in contradiction to what she had thought God said (v. 3.)—she ate it. Though Adam was with her at the time, he did nothing to stop her. Perhaps he wanted to eat of it as much as the woman did, but fearing the consequences, used his wife as a “guinea pig” to make sure it would not cause instant death.

3:7-8 As the serpent had indicated, the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew, but instead of producing godlike power, the knowledge brought only a sense of human inadequacy, fear, and shame.