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Genesis  
Chapter 3 - God's Grace Questioned  
The Shame of Unbridled Indulgence (vs. 6-7)

**Genesis 3:6-7:** When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

As we now come into the Book of Genesis and follow through with what we've been learning in this marvelous book, the Book of Genesis is about beginnings. To come into the Book of Genesis and to realize that God is not just simply giving us the beginning of creation, but God has given us the beginnings of His grace, of His favor upon us. All of these things that He created, none of us deserved anything, and yet it was all for man. What a wonderful point throughout this book that we begin to see God giving. The description of God is in John 3:16, "For God so loved, He gave." And it is the description of a God that is benevolent, that is generous, that is alacritous in His giving; that He freely gave of himself for us. So, as you begin to see, the Book of Genesis is about the grace of God and the beginning of God's reconciliation because strangely enough, man will not embrace God's graciousness. He will reject it. Yet, throughout the Book of Genesis, we'll see God beginning to reconcile man to Himself. So, we've given this title for the Book of Genesis, "The Beginning of God's Grace and His Reconciliation."

As you begin in Chapter 1, what you see is God creating, and in His creation, you see His grace. At the very beginning of creation in Genesis 1:1, you see that God begins to describe the way that He creates. In the description of His creation, He is literally conveying the message of the gospel, in which without God the world is formless and void, empty and meaningless ("*tôû bôû*"). God then begins to move by His Spirit across the face of the waters. It is the Spirit of God that then endows us, and we begin to find that we have purpose in the things that God has given us, but more than that, in His breath that comes upon us. You begin to see as well, as Paul

will actually quote in Corinthians, that God will literally call light out of darkness. He had to create darkness to actually convey that message, but the wonderful picture of the gospel is that in the darkness and obscurity of man as he rejects God, God will call out light and He will declare, "You can see again." So, the wonderful message of the Gospels. Actually, through the pages of creation as well as what you see, the magnificence of the creation and the manifold abundance of the creation all really describing the great grace of God.

In Chapter 2, you see the grace of God specifically, then aimed at man. When you look at the very details of it, the intricate care of God, the loving care that He places in all of this, not only placing man in the very center of the garden and giving this wonderful garden to Him, but the way that He comes to him in that intimacy and that personal involvement and breathing in man. His concern for man that he would have observational skills so that he might have a relationship. So He has him name the animals. You need to observe what they're doing in order to name who they are, but it was a precursor to the relationship that he would have with his wife. I've often made mention of 1 Peter 3, and that Scripture tells us men that we need to live with our wives in an understanding way. Scripture does not say, "Wives, it's your job to live with your husband in an understanding way." Now, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't maybe try to understand a little bit, but it's not your responsibility. It is the man's responsibility to do that, and you begin to see God preparing man for that relationship. As He brings woman from his side, it is a wonderful picture of certainly not somebody that's going to be beneath him, not somebody that's going to be above him, but somebody that comes alongside to help him. God relates all these wonderful things through this marvelous creation as He begins to share with man, "I made you for a relationship." The relationship itself begins to convey that God has a greater relationship in store, which we know according to the cross of Jesus Christ, through His side being pierced, blood and water comes out and the cleansing of God as well as the sacrifice of God brought forth the bride of Christ, the church, and God demonstrates all the way through the Old Testament, His wonderful grace.

In those two chapters, what we're seeing is God's loving concern and our thought is we're literally inundated by all of these wonderful pictures and by the time you come to Chapter 3, it seems so bizarre that we would question that God loves us. How could we possibly think anything different? Yet, we do. So, you begin to see the subtlety of sin, and at the beginning of Chapter 3, we're introduced to a serpent, which is pretty interesting.

In this particular passage, it says in Genesis 3:1,

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field..."

It is to be emphasized within the passage that he's literally described by this description, "crafty." As you go on, it says that indeed, clearly, God made this serpent. The thought is that

maybe He made a mistake or obviously maybe some nefarious thing came into being, and God says, "No, I made him crafty for a particular reason." Now, if you hadn't had it underlined from Wednesday, I want you to underline the word today, and that is the word "crafty," because the emphasis of that particular word, "*ārûm*" is literally coming from a root word, which means "to be made bare" or "to be uncovered." Scripture is telling us the purpose of the serpent. The question oftentimes is, "Why have the serpent in the garden? It just ruins everything" and God says, "Well, I'm telling you what the purpose is. His purpose is to uncover things, to reveal things." It is to be noted if you'll mark that particular word there "crafty," and if you'll go a little bit further within the text in Genesis 3:7, when it begins to say and describe the fall of man.

(Genesis 3:7) "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked..."

"*Êrôm*," which is a type of "*ārûm*". The same word for "crafty" is the same word for "naked." It is that which exposes or makes bear; reveals. So, within this particular passage, what we see is, we would call him in our perception, "the great tempter." The perception is that the tempter is the culprit of this whole problem, and we're going to come into the text specifically in which, through subtlety, he begins to stir up ideas and thoughts. It is to be noted that one of the things that he states at the very beginning or just simply ask a question, "Did God say you couldn't eat from any tree?" It is an interesting point that just by mere exaggeration, you can begin to point to God's cruelty. I've had people ask me, "Is it true that you can't go to any parties? You can't have any fun?" And they bring these grand and great generalities. Once you begin to do that, then wow, God really looks mean, doesn't He? It is also tapping at the door of the woman, which is in this particular context, is the weakest link, of the woman's sense of, "Maybe I should be in charge." Maybe she was feeling these things in her heart. You say, "Well, that's impossible. If she was made perfect, why would she even think that?" That's an interesting question. Why would we think that? I mean, why, if given everything that is wonderful, given everything that is good, if loved tremendously, would we ever think about abandoning somebody? But we do, and it shows that the culprit is not the tempter, but the heart of man. God places these tempters, the tempter, to begin to reveal things in our lives. Things that maybe we would suppress. Things that we would not reveal ourselves. Scripture tells us that we actually deceive ourselves. Surprise, right? Galatians 6 tells us, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked" which is basically telling us that there's a real possibility that we could actually deceive ourselves. The necessity of one coming in and beginning to stir up thoughts that already exist is to be noted. Paul actually writes to Timothy and says, "You have lust as a youth? Run. Flee youthful lust." He'll say in 1 Timothy 6 as well, "Flee these things," and in this particular context he's talking about money and the love of money. He says, "Run from these things." You say, "Run? So, that's the answer?" Yeah, because running is you saying it's repulsive to me to embrace these things. I mean, if you run towards it, it's telling me that you love those things. If

you run away from it, you're saying, "I don't want to have anything to do with it." So, it really is that which describes the heart and the longings of your heart. What are you running to or running from? God begins to describe our hearts in that manner.

So, as we look at this passage, it starts off with simple questions. Sin is very subtle in that sense, but it's a stirring of pride and the subtlety as well of the serpent is literally making the woman the expert. "Has He said that you can't eat of any tree?" She goes, "No, no, no, no. He didn't say of any tree." Now, she's the one giving advice. That's pretty subtle, isn't it? "You're in power. You're in charge. Oh, I'm sorry. You're the one. You're the one that's bright. Go ahead. Tell me what He said." "Well, He said of this tree, and we can't even touch it." Now, she added that, but that emphasis really reveals that she had been thinking of the cruelty of God. "Why can't I have this one?" And you realize just how pride can easily come in. The questions have just merely stirred up and it's all they have done. As you look clearly in the Old Testament, from time to time, you see Satan pop up his ugly head and people say, "Are you saying he's not a bad guy?" No, the tempter is evil. That's true, but is he the one that is the culprit of our sin? No. Does he tempt? Yes, but only to reveal. Though he does that which is evil, we could easily resist if in fact we don't love those things, but it's the desires of our heart that draw us to him. I was thinking of in the Book of Job, it's just literally out of nowhere, that the Book of Job begins with Satan sort of popping up, so to speak, and God asked him the question. Actually, God, interestingly enough, points him to Job. Whereas Satan doesn't bring him up, but God brings up Job to Satan, "Have you seen my servant, Job? Certainly there's no one more righteous than this man." You say, "Why is He doing that? Why is He baiting Satan to come in?" Because Satan has a work, and his work is to expose the self-righteousness of Job. As you begin to see that through the pain and through the trials and the tribulations of Job, Job will come clean and say, "Do you know how righteous I am? God shouldn't be touching me because I'm so righteous." And ultimately, when he stands before the throne of God, there's a realization, "Maybe I'm not righteous after all." It is necessary for God to reveal the things that we have hidden and oftentimes suppressed, and we do well to cover up by virtue of our dress and our garb and by even sometimes the things that we do. As Jesus warned the disciples about the Pharisees, they're taken back and they go, "Well, who can be saved if these guys can't be saved?" Because they look the most righteous on the face of the earth, but Christ, being truth begins to reveal by virtue of His light the sins of man.

Angels have a role and their main role throughout has been to protect the integrity of the righteousness of God and to declare this to man. In fact, as Scripture tells us in Galatians 3:19, and we've read through it, as well as Acts 7:53, Stephen as well conveys this. He declares that through the angels the Law was ordained. Now, what we have is an interesting picture of angelic beings that are fundamentally prosecuting attorneys. As Satan himself will be called the great accuser of the brethren, and he has no problem doing it, and he does it very well and he

has every right to do it. It's one of the reasons why he has access to the throne, because the accusations are true.

We read in Zechariah 3 where Joshua, the high priest is standing before God. It's an interesting picture and Satan comes up and accuses him at his right hand. The text says that the high priest's robe was filthy. Now, Scripture is telling us that it was during a time in which God was calling the high priest as well as the governor to rebuild the city walls and to rebuild the temple, and something was holding them back. Scripture tells us that the sin that we have so easily besets us, right? It holds us back from doing things. We would be slow to admit certain sins. We would not want them uncovered. Our fear is that it's all over once it's all uncovered. Satan uncovers them for us, oftentimes. In this particular picture, as he begins to point to the filth of his robe, then Christ comes up in this wonderful picture, and he declares, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! For I've cleaned him." And he takes off his robe and he put on a clean one. It's a great picture, but the text is saying this man has to be clean in order to function as the priest that he was meant to be; in order to lead the people to begin to build the wall, he needs to be clean himself. If he's not, he's not going to have the confidence or the ability to come on. Those things that easily beset are necessary to be exposed in order for us to come clean. It is a necessary cleansing.

Peter, according to the Gospel of Luke in particular, had to deal with this. In Luke 22, Jesus says to Peter, "Satan has requested permission to sift you, and I've granted him that." What Peter had been saying all the way up to this point is, "I'm not going to leave You. Everybody else is going to leave You. I'm not going to leave You." You know what Peter needed to have exposed? He needed to have his fears, and his grandiosity exposed, though, in his pride he perceived himself able to handle all of these temptations.

Look at how bizarre this is, in particular, Matthew 26. If you come to the end of this chapter, it now plays out as Peter is sitting outside the courtyard and as he sits outside the courtyard. This grand and powerful man that promised he would never leave Christ, never abandon Him is accosted by a little servant girl, and she goes, "Aren't you the guy that was with the Christ?"

(Matthew 26:69) "Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean."

(Matthew 26:70) But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about."

(Matthew 26:71) When he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth."

(Matthew 26:72) And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man."

(Matthew 26:73) A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away."

(Matthew 26:74) Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" ..."

Ah, Peter. Maybe he had something hidden inside. It was revealed on that day. Peter needed to have that revealed in order to have the Spirit of God come upon him in the day of Pentecost, and what a wonderful day that was in which the Spirit of God revealed to him that it's not by his might. It's not by his power, which, by the way is in Zechariah, but by the Spirit of God. Peter didn't realize that this power could not come from him. He had no power. He had to come to confession that he was weak and not strong. But when he came to that point, God then endowed him with true strength. He stands up boldly at Pentecost, and in the same audience begins to proclaim fearlessly the wonderful message of the gospel of Christ. By the time you come to Acts 4, not only is he willing to go to prison, but he is also not afraid to go to prison or to die for Christ. Where does that strength and power come from? Only from God, but he would not realize that if in fact he continued to hold on to the self-deception that he had. The unveiling or the demonstration of who he truly was, as was necessary when Satan begins to reveal Judas and the heart of greed and avarice that was a part of who Judas was. He exposes who Judas truly was. All were literally taken back by his deception. Nobody could believe that it was Judas, but the revealer comes in and tempts and reveals. God begins to demonstrate in a very interesting way.

So, you come to Genesis 3, what we have is the woman coming to the serpent and the serpent beginning to ask the questions. I've often asked, why is she even hanging around that particular area? Why is she staring at the tree? I mean, it's obviously within visual appearance. Why is she there? As Scripture says, stay away from this. God said, don't eat of that tree. If He told you not to eat of it, why hang around it? Why not trust the God who has given you all these things and has demonstrated His love in so many wonderful and marvelous ways? Why not trust Him in this one area? It's just not within the heart of man to do that, is it? I would say this too, that part of the uncovering of motives actually comes from you and me having an abundance. By virtue of all the things that we possess, we are more tempted to feel entitled to more, and it's one of the great problems of having abundance. In fact, one of the statements that Moses makes when going into the promised land, he says, "You're going into the promised land. God's going to supply all of your needs. You're going to have so many wonderful things, but you're going to desert Him. You're not going to be faithful. After all of these things are given to you, you're going to perceive that you even deserve more." If you think about it, more and abundance is kind of a set up for pride and arrogance, and it is within the heart of men.

So, the passage begins to say within the text that the serpent begins to cry out, "You're not going to die." And she believes him.

(Genesis 3:5) “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

And you begin to feel that sense of embracing knowledge. Of course, Gnosticism becomes one of the great gods of humanity, doesn't it? “To know more; knowledge is power.” Wonderful pictures of that, but according to Paul,

(1 Corinthians 8:1) “... Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.”

I mean, if you have all knowledge but you don't have love, what good is that? But man always gravitates towards the things that are clearly not godly just to be different, perhaps.

There's a fish that they serve in Japan called fugu. From what I understand, it is a puffer fish that is there and it's a poisonous fish. I was reading what the New York Times article wrote about it and the point that they made within this particular article was that it seems as if the whole point of eating fugu seems to be the risk and fugu is a poisonous fish, and it's all in the way, the knowledge that you prepare the fish whether or not you die or you live. They say that the fish actually has more lethal poison in it than anthrax. That's pretty powerful when you consider, or even cyanide. So, it's a pretty risky thing, but hey, it's pretty popular too, because it's kind of a mysterious thing. “It appears to be lethal and maybe my life is at stake, but isn't this kind of fun?” I guess it's one of the reasons why we'd like to go on roller coasters, just to kind of feel that sense of, “I could die, but how fun it is to get close to it.” But you see this whole mentality of, “I see something that I don't have. I haven't tried this before and I want to jump in.” It's the experience and it's this kind of border between death and delight that begins to allure us.

So, as it comes to the passage in verse 6, we now see what the culprit of the sin is, and that is the woman; her thoughts, what she sees, what allures her. It is the woman being allured. The tempter only stirred up these thoughts to where she would be bold enough to begin to act upon them.

(Genesis 3:6) “When the woman saw that the tree was good...”

Once again, we've talked about this, but 1 John 2:16, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life. All three of these will come into play as she will see that the tree is good for food. That's the lust of the flesh. It's something that appeals to her senses.

There's an interesting verse in Psalm 73,

(Psalm 73:7) “Their eye bulges from fatness;  
The imaginations of their heart run riot.”

You begin to see certain things and it is an imagination. I mean, how could she see that the tree was good for food by looking at? The imagination runs riot, doesn't it? "Boy, that looks really good." How do you know? You haven't even tasted it yet.

"When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes..."

"Delight" - *"ta'ăvâ"* That is to say, it had a certain charm and beauty about it. There was something about it that was clearly alluring and something that seemed to entice by virtue of the beauty of the tree.

"... that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise..."

That's the boastful pride of life. "I'm going to be smarter. I'm going to be smarter than Adam." Of course, she ruined that by giving it to him, but the point is this sense of greatness. I mean, it's why people go to universities, they go to colleges, and I understand you have training on all these things, but man feels that the more he knows, the greater he is; by virtue of going to these places and becoming smarter, acquiring more information. I mean, we're just flooded with information, aren't we? We've got to be the smartest people that have ever existed on the planet. I read some of the writings of some of the antiquities people, and I'm going, "They seem a lot smarter than we do." So, it doesn't seem to be about information, does it?

Now, the point of the text is that she's being allured because of her desires, her eyes, her senses, and her sense of, "I'm going to be somebody." Boastful pride of life. She's drawn that way, and the passage is very abrupt,

"...she took from it..."

She just took it. You're going, "You don't want to think about this a little bit longer?" "Nope." All these things began to play, and she just grabs it. It is interesting that the word "took" here is the same word that is used for somebody coming together with a wife or marriage, where you take one together. So, it is an embracing. It's becoming a part of; she felt a love and embrace for this particular thing. The things of our cravings actually become a love to us. That's why Scripture says don't love the world, nor the things that are in the world. It actually becomes a relationship.

"... she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her..."

You mean he's been with her all this time, just sort of standing back? Just want to encourage you husbands, take a stand when you need to take a stand. You're supposed to be protecting. You're supposed to be covering. Unfortunately, oftentimes we're following rather than leading and that can be a problem.

"... and he ate."



I've oftentimes commented at how bizarre it is and how easily he is tempted. It's just the woman. She goes, "Eat." He goes, "Ok." And that's it. That's the end of the story. We're going, "No details here? No alluring?" No, that was it. We know that Solomon was pretty wise until it came to women and then that was it. In all fairness to him, it took a thousand of them, but it's just the nature of man. Woman is often tempted by the things that she sees. Man is often tempted by the woman that he has. So, the text begins to reveal once again the heart of man.

James 1 really clarifies all of this. If you'll turn there with me, you'll see the clarity of what Genesis is revealing to us within the text.

(James 1:12) "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial..."

Now, just do yourself a favor and underline the word "trial" there, because he says the same thing up in James 1:2,

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials."

This word is going to be repeated, but it's going to be translated in different ways throughout the text. The word that is used here, "*peirasmos*" is actually defined as "things that prove or test." It has a sense of proving things like fidelity, integrity. Like Peter says, "I'm going to stay with You, God. I'm not going to leave You. I'm not going to abandon You." And God says, "Let's test the integrity of that." So, the trials will come in, and they're oftentimes seen as afflictions, adversity that come into our lives. Part of the trials, troubles that come in our life, but what you're also going to see is they are also defined as temptations or allurements. So, the word covers the whole gamut of not only like trials and afflictions and pain and sorrow and troubles and all those things that come in for our proving, "I trust God." Then, something bad happens, "Why is God so mean?" You see how fast man begins to turn, and God says, "I thought you said you trusted Me?" So, these things begin to reveal our heart as well. One of the great themes of the Book of James is "the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God." Something happens that you don't like, you begin to get angry. That's not faith. Faith says, "Oh, good. God is doing wonderful things in my life." Consider it all joy when you have these tests, or you could put the word "temptations". Now, the thing that makes the temptation segue from testing to temptation is your heart. The word stays the same.

So, if you drop on down to verse 13 it states this,

(James 1:13) "Let no one say when he is tempted..."

"*Peirazō*" is basically the same word that is being used here for trial, but now it segues into tempting. Why? Because you're lured. There's no temptation if in fact you're not drawn to it. It's just a testing. According to Peter, if you come out as gold, well, it was just a test, but if you're tempted, and you give in to it as the woman gave in to it, she just took it. I mean, what's

the problem with just taking it? It is to be noted that the fruit of the Spirit is self-control. That is to say, able to resist things that you know are wrong. You're able to do this.

(James 1:12) "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

That small verse is actually telling you how you can beat temptation. You love God; you love God more than you love the world. If you love God more than the world, no contest. You see Jesus being tested, not tempted by Satan, and the only thing it revealed is Christ loved God more than He loved anything in the world. The same thing in the passage, if you love God, God will give you the crown of life.

(James 1:13) "Let no one say when he is tempted..."

Once again, the word is the same word for "trial." Now, it becomes a sense of temptation because I'm drawn to it.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God" ..."

God's not drawing you away. He's revealing your heart. "It's God's fault, all these trials, and He made me mad." You know how people like to blame God or blame the circumstances, "He made me hate people." God didn't do that. That was you.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."

(James 1:14) But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust."

Now, this was the perfect opportunity for God to put in here, "You sin because Satan tempted you." He didn't put it in there, did He? Why? Because it wasn't Satan that made you sin. It was your lust that made you sin. He just revealed your heart. He begins to pull on those things. It's necessary to have these things that come into our lives, these trials, these tribulations, that the evil one oftentimes brings in to reveal that which we've been lying to ourselves about. God begins to show us the very focus of our hearts.

What's also interesting in this passage, as you go back to Genesis 3, is not only do we see her heart being revealed and her acting in accordance with her own desires and cravings, but if you look in verse 7,

(Genesis 3:7) "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked..."

I'm not sure what exactly happened, but I can tell you this, that there seems to be this sense of the Law became stirred up within their hearts and they began to see. We have it actually

translated in Romans 2 that we have a conscience. And I don't think up to this point that conscience was necessary, but now conscious is actually seemingly ingested in the sense that you have a sense of right and wrong. You begin to see and feel the conviction of the heart that begins to point out you did something wrong. That's that old conscience, isn't it?

Scripture tells us that one of the purposes of the Law that was ordained by the Angels was to reveal sin. The way that it's put in Romans 3:20,

"... through the Law comes the knowledge of sin."

It's pretty interesting the way it's put in Romans 7:7,

"... I would not have come to know sin except through the Law."

So, as the law begins to reveal the things that are there, the conviction, the accusations, your own heart accusing you. As Paul will write in Romans 2, your own heart accusing you; you can feel the accuser come in. God came to set us free from that accusation.

Romans 7 really bounces off of this thought.

(Romans 7:7) "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET."

(Romans 7:8) But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.

(Romans 7:9) I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died;

(Romans 7:10) and this commandment, which was to result in life..."

Let me just say this, the purpose of the Law was to give life. The law at that time with Adam and Eve was, "Don't eat." That was the law. That was it. Not a complicated law. I know people say, "I can't remember all these laws." "Don't eat." That's it. The reason for the law was so you would live, because the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. "Don't eat." All you have to do is don't. I mean, it's going to take effort to actually eat. You're going to have to go to the tree, walk to that area, pass all these other trees, and you're going to have to pick one from this tree. That's going to take a little bit of effort and focus. "I'm going to that tree." Don't. That's all you have to do, and what will happen? You'll live. Life will come.

"And this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me."

Why? Because I didn't do what it said.

(Romans 7:11) “for sin, taking an opportunity...”

The word that he uses in the text is basically “incited;” incited by virtue of somebody telling me I couldn't do something. So, you tell me I can't do something, it incited in me a sense of wanting to do it.

“... through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.”

It is to be noted that Christ will reverse this, and by receiving Him. Now, remember the original law was “Do not receive, do not eat and that will save you.” But Christ reverses it and says, “By receiving Me, you will be saved.” Christ is asking us to long for Him as we would for sin. How bizarre is that? Man says, “I can't do that. That's too hard. I'm afraid of something new.” You weren't afraid of something new in the garden. You're not afraid of the figu. There are things out there that draw you. People don't mind jumping in. Christ says, “You don't mind jumping in? Then, jump in. Receive Me and you will be saved.” How wonderful that is and what a wonderful reversal within the passage.

So anyway, as you come back to Genesis 3:7, it says, “the eyes of both of them were opened.”

Ecclesiastes reminds us that not all knowledge is good knowledge, and unfortunately, when your eyes are open to bad things, the bad thing takes precedence, doesn't it? I mean, it's like you can't see anything good anymore. “To the pure, all things are pure; to the defiled, nothing is pure.” So, evil just literally consumes. It just does. You open up the newspaper, “Where's all that good news?” You're not looking for that. You're trying to find out everything terrible and horrible, and that's why we love the news.

“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked...”

They actually had perceived at this particular juncture of who they were and what they did. The sorrow within the passage is not only the fact that they had no clothing, but that they knew what they had done. Then, the way they began to deal with it is they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves covering. It's pretty interesting that we actually have a fig tree in the garden. As you actually read through the Old Testament, the fig tree seems to be a focus throughout. An interesting picture of man, I would say, wanting to commune with God. It seems to be a picture of man coming to commune with God.

There's a passage in Proverbs 27:18 where it actually equates taking care of the fig tree to taking care of your relationship with you and your master. So, you can't help but derive this parallel between the fig tree and maybe the communing with God under the fig tree, and one of the reasons why they use the fig leaves to begin to cover them.

It is to be noted that in John 2, there is a certain disciple studying under the fig tree and Jesus says, "I saw you." And he is amazed. Now, the passage is telling us that one of the reasons why Jesus was drawn to that particular disciple was because he was longing to have a relationship with God under the fig tree. So, it was not an unusual thing for this to be and to come into being. I would say this too, that one of the blessed hopes that we have as we begin to look at the days of Christ coming in Matthew 24 is the budding of the fig tree. So, it's a wonderful picture of the promise of God in which He's coming.

What man does immediately here within the passage, though, is he tries to handle his shame by virtue of his actions, his deeds. So, he sews together.

There's a there's a passage in Ezekiel. If you look with me in Ezekiel 13, obviously I'm not going to cover everything that I was going to cover, but in Ezekiel 13 this whole chapter is about Israel and they're falling for falsehood. Sound familiar? Falling for divination, listening to the wrong voices, going to the wrong sources, their own inspiration within themselves.

(Ezekiel 13:2) "... who prophesy from their own inspiration..."

(Ezekiel 13:3) "...following their own spirit and have seen nothing."

You conjure up thoughts. "I think God's mean." Where did you get that from? You know, it clearly wasn't from creation. So, where did you get this new knowledge? "Oh, it's a secret. Oh, I'm drawn to secrets. I can't touch that fish." Good.

(Ezekiel 13:6) "They see falsehood and lying divination who are saying, 'The LORD declares' ..."

You're putting words in God's mouth. God says, "I didn't say that."

(Ezekiel 13:7) "Did you not see a false vision and speak a lying divination..."

(Ezekiel 13:8) "Falsehood...lies..."

(Ezekiel 13:9) "...false visions... and lying divinations..."

(Ezekiel 13:10) "It is definitely because they have misled My people by saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace."

"It's ok. You won't die." "You mean, I can have my cake and eat it too? I can do my sin, and everything will be ok?" And we think that's a good thing. We actually think in our mind, "How wonderful sin is. It's just going to make me so happy." And God goes, "You can't do that. You can't lie to yourself that way."

It goes on down and it says this, and I want you to pick up a verse 17 and 18 in particular,

“Now you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who are prophesying from their own inspiration. Prophecy against them

(Ezekiel 13:18) and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Woe to the women who sew...”’

One of the few places that the word “sew” is actually used in Scripture. This, and in Genesis.

“... who sew magic bands on all wrists and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature...”

“Adapted to suit everybody!” I can just see the advertisements, “We have a veil for everybody, a wristband for everybody at a nominal cost!” They’ll hunt down the lives of people.

(Ezekiel 13:19) “For handfuls of barley and fragments of bread, you have profaned Me...”

In other words, for money, basically, like the harlot in Proverbs 6, you've reduced the man to a loaf of bread. You know, you're just trying to make money off of them. We read something like this, and we begin to realize that the text is actually talking about these that are seeresses. They actually called them like “seers,” but women. And they sew wreaths, and incantations actually in the bands in which fundamentally it's saying you're protected. Now the question is, within the text, what do you need to be protected from? The text is telling us, God. Let me say this, the shame that we have, we try to protect ourselves from the shame. So, what we do is we avoid church. I mean our solution is we have all kinds of ways to deal with issues on our own; defense mechanisms. We avoid, and we say, “Well, I'm now protected.” Somebody tells us this is what you do to be protected, or you take drugs or there's all kinds of ways that we do this. In this particular context, they would sew wristbands, and they would sew headbands. You know what they were doing? Do you remember Deuteronomy 6, where you’ll have the word of God on the frontals of your forehead and on your wrist? They were covering them so as to avoid the judgment of God, and they were saying, “We'll protect you. You can protect yourselves.” It's the mind of man that can begin to conjure up, “I'll protect myself against the shame that I've derived.” The bottom line is you can't protect yourself from that shame; only by coming clean, and God has revealed your heart. Just come clean, and Christ will take that which we have totally messed up and will give us a new heart and wash away all of our sins. How magnificent is that? How wonderful is that when you consider the grand and glorious work of our Creator, God who loves us?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today and we ask that You speak to our hearts as we are so prone to wander. Lord, we are so easily deceived, even within us, of the very things that are a part of

our lives. You graciously bring things into our lives to reveal and to unveil the hidden recesses of our hearts. You tell us in Your Word that the day is coming when You'll judge the secrets of men; things that we might not even know about ourselves. I am convinced that Peter had no idea that he would have really, truly failed You, but it was Your grace that unveiled it to him, and it is Your grace that begins to unveil in our lives through the difficulties and the trials and the tribulations of just where our trust really is. So, Lord speak to us today. We come before You in simplicity and realize that You're doing a wonderful work in our lives. Thank You for saving us, and thank You for providing a way of escape, and thank You for ultimately covering us with the blood of the lamb which will be slain for true covering.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, what we're asking you to do is not avoid your sin, ignore your sin, and do not pretend that it doesn't exist. We're asking you to confess your sins. For He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. The exposure of your weakness was a gift from God. In spite of the evil and its intent, God turned it for good.