



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Eph. 6:11; Genesis 3:1-7

- “Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil.” (Eph. 6:11; CSB)
- Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You can’t eat from any tree in the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. 3 But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, ‘You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.’” 4 “No! You will certainly not die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (Genesis 3:1-7 CSB)
- “*The devil wants you to ignore* the spiritual reality behind physical [realities], because as long as you’re focused on what you can see with your physical eyes, he can continue to run rampant underneath the surface. The more you disregard him, the more damage he is free to do. The enemy may be invisible, but he is not fictional.” [Priscilla Shirer, *Armor of God*, p. 11]

I. Who Is The Devil? Who Is Satan? (Matt. 6:13; 13:19)

- “Pray like this: ‘Our Father in heaven...do not bring us into temptation, but *deliver us from the evil one.*’” (Matt. 6:9, 13)
- “Evil is real & powerful...What is more, ‘evil’ is more than the sum total of all evil impulses & actions...[These] forces of destruction & malevolence...[have been] personified [under] the name of Satan, the Accuser. “The Satan,” “the Evil One,” is not equal & opposite to God; but “he,” or “it,” is a potent force, opposed to God’s good creation, & particularly to the human

beings whom God wishes to put in authority over his world. If all this were not so, the final petition in the Lord's Prayer [–“*deliver us from evil,*” or “*from the evil one,*”–] would be an unnecessary anti-climax.”

- “But Jesus’ victory over evil is also real & powerful. It, too, is not only “out there,” a fact of history 2,000 years ago, but it is available here & now for each of us. Where human beings turn from idolatry and worship the God they see revealed on Calvary, they are turning from darkness to light, from the Strong Man to the one who has bound the Strong Man. To pray “deliver us from evil,” or “from the evil one,” is to inhale the victory of the cross, and thereby to hold the line for another moment, another hour, another day, against the forces of destruction within ourselves & the world.”—N. T. Wright

A. God’s enemy & opposer of God’s good purposes – “*The enemy...is the devil...*” (Matt. 13:39)

B. The devil (the slanderer)

– “The devil (Greek) & Satan (Heb.) describe a legal opponent, an accuser at law.” ‘The devil *Diabolos* (Gk.) (‘slanderer, accuser’) [Often] with the definite article indicating the one who tempts/accuses. Greek (*diabolos*) commonly translates Hebrew *satan* (“Satan”) in the [Greek OT]. He is God’s supreme adversary [ESV]

– “The devil is an intelligent, powerful spirit-being that is thoroughly evil & directly involved in perpetrating evil in the lives of individuals as well as on a larger scale. He’s not an abstraction, either as a personification of the inner corrupt self or...a symbolic representation of organized evil.” [Clinton Arnold, 3...*Questions About Spiritual Warfare*, p. 35]

C. The satan (the adversary)

– “Jesus specifically stated that the devil has nothing to do with the truth because there is no truth in him, & he is a liar & the father of lies (John 8:44). In fact, John identifies the devil as Satan who...deceives the whole world (Rev. 12:9; 20:2). Due to this, one must always be cognizant that *the schemes of the devil are based on lies & are designed to deceive believers.*” [Harold Hoehner, *Ephesians*, p. 824]

II. Why Do We Need To Be Aware? (Eph. 6:11; 2 Cor. 2:11)

- “Put on the full armor of God, so that you may be able to [successfully] stand up against *all the schemes* [the strategies, the deceits] of the devil.” (Eph. 6:11; Amplified) Note: The Greek word for ‘schemes’ is ‘*methodia*’ It signifies *snare*s laid ...treacheries that surprise...the word signifies *an ambush*...Such snares are set to catch one in one’s road...
- “So that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan. For we are *not ignorant of his schemes.*” (2 Cor. 2:11)

A. Schemes (Greek: ‘methodia’)

B. Not being ignorant to his schemes (2 Cor. 2:11)

– “Don’t believe for one second that the false ideologies of the culture (obsession with appearance, perceptions of worth, the redefinition of the family...)...developed by chance. The evil temptations that appeal to your specific desires are not accidental. The discord & disharmony that...threaten...your most valuable relationships are not coincidental. The temptations that tug at

you [in] your weakest moments are...calculated...they are the devil's deceptive tactics... specifically designed & personalized to keep you from experiencing Abundant Life." [Priscilla Shirer, *Armor Of God*, p. 18]

– “Truth of every kind makes free, while lies bind up in bonds. Ignorance also binds up, because it gives ground to Satan. *Man's ignorance is a primary & essential condition for deception by evil spirits. The ignorance of the people of God concerning the powers of darkness, has made it easy for the devil to carry out his work as deceiver...* The devil's great purpose, & for which he fights, is to *keep the world in ignorance of himself, his ways, & his colleagues, & the Church is taking sides with him when siding with ignorance about him.*" [Jessie Penn-Lewis, *War on the Saints*, p.]

III. Four Satanic Schemes in Genesis 3 (Gen. 3:1-6, 13)

A: **Device #1: Disguise** (Gen. 3:1; Rev. 12:9; Matt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 2:14; 11:14)

– “Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals...” (Gen. 3:1)

– **Note:** Although the serpent is eventually portrayed as God's enemy, the initial introduction is full of ambiguity regarding its true nature...The serpent's initial question...sounded quite innocent, although it deliberately misquotes God...Did the serpent merely misunderstand what God had said? In these ways the subtlety of the serpent's approach to the woman is captured by the narrator...Although his initial words appear deceptively innocent, his subsequent contradiction of God leaves no doubt about the serpent's motive & purpose. [ESV]

– “...the ancient serpent, who is called the devil & Satan, the one who deceives the whole world.” (Rev. 12:9)

– “Be on your guard against false prophets...in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves.” (Mt. 7:15)

– “False apostles...disguise[e] themselves as Christ's apostles 14 No wonder! For *Satan disguises himself as an angel of light*. 15 So it's no great surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. (2 Cor. 11:13-15)

– “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in Christ's triumphal procession...” (2 Cor. 2:14)

– **Disguise Painting sin with virtue's colors** – “*Satan knows that if he would present sin in its own nature and dress, the soul would rather fly from it than yield to it, and therefore he presents it unto us not in its own proper colors, but painted and gilded over with the name and show of virtue.*” **Pride:** He presents...under the...notion of neatness and cleanliness, **Covetousness:** he presents as good business. **Drunkennes:** he presents as good fellowship. – Remedy: *Sin is never any less filthy, vile, and abominable by its being colored and painted with virtue's colors. A poisonous pill is not any less poisonous because it is gilded over with gold* [Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, p.]

B: **Device #2: Deception** (Jn. 8:44; Gen. 3:1-6, 13)

– “The devil...was a murderer from the beginning & does not stand in the truth, because there's no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar & the father of lies” (Jn. 8:44)

– **Note:** The Devil was a murderer from the beginning: i.e., the Devil incited Cain to kill Abel (Gen 4). He does not stand in the truth, that is, it is not the realm that he lives & acts & thinks in. He is the '*father of lies*': at the Fall, the Devil blatantly contradicted God's word (Gen. 3:3-4) [ESV]

– “The woman [Eve] said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’.” (Gen. 3:13b)

– **Deception By lessening the seriousness of sin** – “*Ah! says Satan, it is but a little pride, a little worldliness, a little uncleanness, a little drunkenness, etc... You may commit it without any danger to your soul.*” – **Remedy:** *those sins that we are apt to call small, have brought upon men the greatest wrath of God and giving way to a lesser [sin] makes way for a greater sin.* [Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, p.]

– **Deception:** To **present God as [only] being full of mercy** – *Oh! Says Satan, you need not make such a matter of sin, you need not be fearful of sin, not so unwilling to sin; for God is a God of mercy.* – **Remedy:** *It is the greatest judgment in the world to be left to sin (Hos. 4:17; Psa. 81:12; Rom. 1:24, 26, 28). Oh unhappy man! when God leaves you to yourself and does not resist you and your sins. God is JUST, as he is merciful (Gen. 3:24).* [Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, p.]

C. **Device #3: Sowing Doubt (Gen. 3:2-6)**

1. Sowing doubt in God's word—“The serpent said, ‘Did God really say...?’” (Gen. 3:1b)

– *Satan knows that he cannot destroy you.* Too late for that. The best he can do (& he intends to make full use of it) is to make your time on earth *futile and unproductive*, to *suffocate* you with sin, *insecurity, fear*, and *discouragement* until you are unable to live freely and fully. He can't ‘unseat’ you, but he can *intimidate* you & render you *ineffective* and *paralyzed*.” [Priscilla Shirer, *The Armor of God*, p. 20]

2. Sowing doubt in God's motive

3. **Note:** The serpent directly contradicts what God said, [and also] presents the tree's fruit as something worth obtaining: [asserting that] by eating it, the couple will be like God...The irony... [is that] the couple is made in God's image of God (1:26-27). In this way they are already like God. [ESV]

D. **Device #4: The Devil's device to ‘present the bait & hide the hook’**

– “Present the ‘golden cup’ & hide the ‘poison’...by this device [Satan] deceived Adam & Eve (Gen. 3:4-5) Here's the ‘bait, the sweet, the pleasure’...But he hides the ‘hook,’—shame, Wrath, & loss that would certainly follow.”

– **Remedy:** keep far away from sin; don't play with the...‘bait’ which Satan holds forth to catch you (Rom. 12:9)

E. The natural consequences (Gen. 3:7)

– “The eyes of both [Adam & Eve] were opened, and they knew they were naked...” (Gen. 3:7)

– **Note:** Eating the fruit transforms the couple, but not for the better. Now ashamed of their nakedness, they attempt to clothe themselves. Conscious of the Lord God's presence, they hide. When confronted by God regarding the tree of the knowledge...the man blames the woman, who in turn blames the serpent. [ESV]

