

Eve in Eden

By Pastor Kelly Sensenig

In March, 1989, an asteroid a half mile in diameter, moving at the speed of 44,000 miles per hour, shot across the very path that the earth travels, missing us by only six hours. Most people do not worry about dangers such as these. Did you know that every day twenty tons of material from space enters our atmosphere? Most of the space debris is the size of grains of sand but some is as large as golf balls. Once again most people do not worry about dangers like this. In a similar way many Christians are not alarmed with the devil's temptations that come before their lives. They live as though there is no real danger lurking around them. But the Bible tells us that we face daily temptations and spiritual danger because of the work and wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

You can be sure that the devil is at work ("the wiles of the devil"). Our problem is this. We are often ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11) and don't even realize what he is trying to do in our minds, hearts, and with our personal lives. In the first garden called Eden (Gen. 2:8) the first woman called Eve (Gen. 3:20) encountered the first temptation of the human race (Gen. 3:1). This is why I have entitled this study "Eve in Eden." In the Garden of Eden we find how Satan tempted Eve and brought her to the place of sin. In this study I want to examine what happened to Eve in Eden and use this as a way to help women and mothers to see how Satan tempts them and tries to defeat them in their Christian lives. Ladies, Satan's tactics have not changed. He is still the same Serpent that tries to tempt you in very subtle and manipulative ways.

Someone has said:

"Our adversary is a master strategist, forever fogging up our minds with smokescreens."

Genesis 3:1 says:

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made...”

His appearance as a serpent speaks of Satan’s craftiness and trickery. Ladies, the Evil One comes to you as a serpent in order to try and fool you and get you to sin. He is very subtle and knows what he is doing.

2 Corinthians 11:3 is a complementary verse to our study in Genesis chapter three. It says: “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”

The Bible says the Serpent “beguiled” or seduced Eve into sin. How did he do it? It was through his trickery that he got Eve to the place of sin. This verse verifies that the appearance of Satan as a serpent denotes his “subtilty” (craftiness, trickery, cunningness). This is how he came to Eve and often appears to us today. He does not come as a roaring lion every time he wants to tempt us (1 Pet. 5:8) but as the serpent (2 Cor. 11:3) that is full of craftiness and trickery. This is how Satan appeared to Eve and is the reason why Eve was beguiled or seduced into sinning.

Many times it’s through Satan’s serpent appearances that he gets us to sin. Satan does not always come with red flashing lights, blowing horns, and waving banners! He often secretly slithers into our lives and begins to work in a subtle way. Ladies, beware of the serpent’s subtle tricks that are designed to bring you to the place of spiritual defeat. Satan tries to deceive you by appearing as a good messenger. He comes to you as an ice-cream man wearing a white shirt carrying an ice-cream cone!

This reminds me of the story of the little boy. Alexander was trying to save all the pennies he could in order to buy a baseball bat. But he had a hard struggle. One night when he was saying his prayers, his mother heard him say fervently: “O Lord, please help me save my money for a baseball bat. And, God, don’t let the ice cream man come down this street!”

Satan can appear as an ice-cream man or as the Bible says, a messenger of goodness and light (2 Cor. 11:13-14). This is his serpent tactics. Today Satan, through false teachers, appears to be giving us the truth, but in reality he is seeking to deceive us through their manipulative methods and teachings. False teachers come to our doors with magazines, tapes, books, religious propaganda, and clever speeches that appear as light (truth, righteousness, and wisdom) but behind their presentations is Satan. I'm telling you the way it is in this study. Satan is behind false teaching that rejects the deity of Christ, the virgin birth of Christ, and the blood of Jesus Christ as the only way to Heaven.

Yes, Satan appears to us as a messenger of light through the presence of false teachers. But it's equally true that Satan himself appears to us in this way ("as an angel of light – 2 Cor. 11:14) through many of his temptations. We must remember that Satan is a deceptive being who many times tries to imitate God since he wants to be like God (Isaiah 14:14). For this reason, many of his temptations appear as something that is godly, righteous, and even sanctified! Satan gradually gets us to make *perverted priorities* or *choices* and eventually this breaks us down spiritually. He comes to us as "an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14) disguising himself and the sin which he wants us to imbibe. He wants us to view sin as the sanctified path to take, the right thing to do, and the choice that will benefit our lives in some way.

Ladies, beware of the old "angel of light" routine. It's been around for a long time. It's been around since the days of Eden. Eve in Eden gave in to the serpent's messenger of light routine. The serpent that is full of craftiness and trickery comes to us as a messenger of light, attempting to disguise sin, or the steps that lead to sin, as something that is light, or something that is actually good to do, and which is an acceptable path to take. Satan knows how to dress up and look like a little boy going to church in his Sunday-go-meeting clothing. We say, "How cute, he looks like a little angel." Well, Satan knows how to appear as an angel or messenger of light and goodness. The serpent knows how to dress up and appear outwardly good to us so that he can veil his darkness and deception.

Charles Spurgeon said:

"It is notable that nearly all the poisonous fungi are scarlet or speckled and the wholesome ones brown or grey, as if to show us that things rising out of darkness and decay are always most deadly when they are well dressed."

Satan appeals to our minds ("so your minds should be corrupted" – 2 Cor. 11:3) and deceives our minds by making sin look like a bright light. *The mind is the devil's workshop!* He makes sin look like God's path for our lives. Satan lights up the path of sin and makes sin appear as something that is right to do and acceptable before God. He often makes sin appear as the colors of the rainbow.

E. M. Bounds once said this of the devil:

"He has access to the minds of men from which he ought forever to be barred. But he has so much of diabolical trickery that he clothes the meanest act with fairest guise, and conceals a world of infamy with beautiful rainbow colourings."

Satan disguises the evil so it cannot be seen! He makes the dark seem light. The devil calls "evil good, and good evil" and puts "darkness for light, and light for darkness" and puts the "bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20). How utterly diabolical and deceptive he is! This is why the believer must be on guard. As Peter warned, "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober ..." (1 Pet. 1:13).

Now ladies, there is no such thing as sanctified sinning! You might be thinking: "I have the right to disobey my husband. I have a good reason to possess a bad attitude toward a particular person, or hold a personal grudge against someone who has hurt me. It's okay to spread a little gossip or rumor about an individual who has fallen into sin." You might conclude, "I need to make this decision because it's best for me. I'm going to make this decision because it feels right to me. I must do this because I have a certain need that must be met."

Ladies, Satan makes the darkness of sin appear as light and something that is actually right to do and sanctioned by God. Beware how Satan sets you up to do what is wrong. Satan wants to keep you from staying devoted to Christ and walking on the right path. He wants to keep you from the "simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

The word “simplicity” refers to simple devotion to Christ and His will. It refers to possessing a single aim or purpose in life, which is to live for Christ free from hypocrisy. The believer is to have a simple faith in the Lord, a simple love for the Lord, and a simple obedience toward God’s Word and doing what is right. The Christian life is simple! Just do what God wants you to do. Satan wants to complicate our lives by leading us away from what God wants for our lives. The old serpent wants to keep us from living a simple life of devotion and commitment to Jesus Christ.

How does he do this? In short, Satan camouflages sin. The crafty serpent makes the path of sin look like a bright light that needs to be followed and the only sensible thing to do. Beware of this. Satan places thoughts in our minds (2 Cor. 11:3), which we think are developed by sanctified reasoning. However, these thoughts really come from Satan. Let me convey something of utmost importance. *Confusing the voice of God with the voice of Satan is a terrible blunder.* Many times people talk about God’s leading when in reality it’s Satan’s leading. God never leads you to do wrong and make choices that are detrimental to your spiritual health.

Satan comes along and says to us, “You don’t need to go to church today. It’s not that important to pray and read the Bible every day. You are too tired and incapable of attending church. Take five months off from church commitment. You deserve a break today. Retire for a while. You can always come back later.” These thoughts appear as light, sanctified reasoning, and the right thing to do, but they actually come from Satan and are designed to keep us from our devotion or commitment to Christ and God’s work. We must confront these thoughts and demolish them with the truth (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Satan comes along and says, “It’s okay to live the old life just a little bit. You can serve God and get away with some of your old ways. Indulge but do it moderately and you will be okay.” Satan appears as the angel of light and says, “It can’t be wrong if it feels right, no one will know, God made me this way, a little bit is permissible, it won’t hurt you, a little trash TV or romance novels won’t make you fall, you can stretch the truth in a small way, a little contemporary music won’t harm you, everybody is doing it.” Have you ever listened to statements like this when they were racing across your mind? It’s

amazing how Satan lights up the path of sin and makes it appear as the acceptable path for our Christian lives. Let me tell you. God has a different story. He declares that “All unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17). God always wants us to do right. Ladies, the Biblical narrative of Eve in Eden is the constant reminder to you that Satan is a foe of trickery who tries to defeat you in the area of your mind.

Martin Luther wrote:

“For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.”

What Satan originally did to Eve is what he is doing to women today. Ladies, if you learn how the Evil One operates then you will no longer be ignorant of the devil’s devices (2 Cor. 2:11 – “ignorant of his devices” and Eph. 6:11 – “the wiles of the devil”). The old Serpent is full of scheming plans and crafty techniques designed to bring down women and all of God’s children. Dear friend, you will be able to win the battle over Satan’s temptations when you understand how he works. Eve and Eden are very up-to-date. They inform every woman, and really every individual Christian, how Satan tempts us and tries to destroy our lives from a spiritual perspective.

How did Satan tempt Eve in the Garden Eden?

1. Satan brought suspicion before Eve’s mind.

The suspicion of Eden was very real. *Satan’s kingdom is built on lies, doubt, suspicion, and speculation.* In Eden he came to Eve in order to cast suspicion or doubt upon God’s truth, character, and His will for Eve’s life.

- a. Suspicion about God’s Word

Satan brings suspicion upon God’s Word in three ways:

1. Satan doubts God’s Word.

Let us be aware how the serpent craftily brings this suspicion and doubt into our minds concerning truth. Satan doubts God's truth ("Yea, hath God said"- Gen. 3:1). *The devil puts a question mark where God puts a period.* He asks, "Is God's Word really true after all? Did God really say what He said? Did God really mean what He said? Did you misunderstand Him? Did you misinterpret what He said? Did you really hear Him properly?" The devil casts doubt on the absolute standard of God's truth. Many times he does this in a subtle way. He sends a message across our mind which goes something like this: "God's word can't be right in this specific area. He must be wrong about this one thing." The Serpent tempts us by saying, "God's Word does not apply to my specific situation in life. God's standard does not apply to the kind of friends I should have or to the kind of music I listen to. God's Word can't offer me any help for the situation that I'm facing." Satan casts doubt on God's Word and the application of God's Word to our lives.

Ladies, you can't afford to react on your feelings instead of the absolute truth of God's Word. You can't react on what you think is right. You must believe the standard of truth that is set forth in God's Word and react on what you know is right based upon God's infallible guide book – the Bible. Beware that you don't allow the Serpent of Eden to deceive you as he deceived Eve. Satan casts doubt on God's Word and then tries to lead you astray from the absolute standard. This is what he did to Eve.

You might be asking yourself these questions: "Does God's Word really apply to my personal situation in life? Is God really commanding me to do this? Is what God said really correct in this particular area? Must I really be submissive or faithful to my husband? Does God expect me to witness to my neighbor? Must I attend church faithfully? Is it really wrong to listen to this type of music, read this type of literature, have these friends, watch off-color TV shows and movies, or go to this particular place? Does God really condemn my personal habit of using tobacco or my practice of social drinking? Does God really view my decision to dress this way as immodesty?"

In the back of your mind Satan wants you to challenge the truth, or the divine standard, so you can sanctify yourself and sin and find

approval for your wrongdoing. Satan wants you to doubt God's Word, so in the end, you can be lead away from the truth, and what the Lord wants for your life, and even the life of your family.

2. Satan denies God's Word.

Satan said "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). This was a lie. God said that they would die if they ate the forbidden fruit (Gen. 2:17). After Satan casts doubt on God's Word he normally gets you to deny it. God can have it written down in black and white terms, but it's amazing how Satan can get you away from seeing the absolute standard of truth, and cause you to actually deny it for the sake of your feelings, friends, desires, and personal wishes. Let us never forget that the Serpent of Eden communicated a revelation that was supposedly superior to the revelation of God ("Ye shall not surely die") and Eve accepted the mental suggestion of the Serpent. Ladies, you can do the same thing if you are not careful. You can allow Satan to deceive your mind to the point that you are directed away from God's absolute standard and truth. Satan can get you to the place where you live by feelings instead of facts, tears instead of truth, and whimsical notions instead of the Word of God.

3. Satan distorts God's Word.

Satan distorted God's truth by editing God's mind and adding to God's Word. This has always been one of his manipulative ploys (Rev. 22:18-19).

Satan said in Genesis 3:5:

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Satan claimed that God had forgotten to tell Eve something. God knew something that He did not convey to her. So Satan was speaking for God at this point. In essence, the Serpent said that God should have told you the whole story, but since He didn't, let me fill you in on the rest of the story! So Satan proceeds to distort the truth by adding something to God's Word – something God never said nor intended to say. God never said that Eve would become like a god if she ate the forbidden fruit and that she would become as

knowledgeable as God Himself. Satan added to God's Word. Today Satan attempts to do the same thing in our minds. He distorts what God says through addition to God's truth.

Ladies, the old Serpent wants to distort the truth, or change the truth, in order to get you sidetracked and walking down a different path. Beware when the devil starts editing God's truth! There are no additions to the completed manual. The blueprint cannot be changed for sake of personal gain and living. You must be willing to place yourself under the authority of what God's Word says and not allow Satan to edit God's Word in your own mind and heart. Just believe what God says, agree with it, repent of your sin, and follow God from this day forward. Don't allow the devil to give you his own rendition of God's Word. When you fall for his lies (John 8:44) you will find yourself moving away from the absolute standard found in God's Word. You must stick to what God has clearly said and revealed. As a result, you will not be led astray. Cling to the Book and the clear road markers. Stand on the promises.

"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet,
A light to my path always,
To guide and to save me from sin,
And show me the heav'nly way."

Satan wants to show you another way!

b. Suspicion about God's character.

Satan also wants us to change our thinking about God's goodness, justice, and His motives. He casts suspicion upon God's righteous actions and conclusions. In short, Satan casts doubt upon God. He does this by presenting something before Eve's mind that would cause her to have second thoughts about God's goodness and justice. Since God did not allow Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit, He must be holding out on her, and keeping something from her life that she really needed and deserved. The Evil One loves suspicion and doubt. This is especially true in relationship to God and His character.

Satan questions God's character in two ways:

1. Satan questions God's goodness.

In the garden Satan questioned the character of God's goodness. This is very clear to see in the episode of Eden.

Genesis 3:1

"Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

Let us never forget the suspicion of Eden. Satan wants us to become suspicious of God's goodness, truth, wisdom, and plan for our lives. He begins to attack God's character and Word since his main ambition or objective is to dethrone God and magnify himself (Matt. 4:9). Satan wanted Eve to think that God was no longer good to her. Satan asked, "Why didn't God allow you to eat from all the trees?"

We hear similar devilish delusions today: "Why doesn't God allow you to listen to contemporary Christian music? Why has God told you to not cooperate with ecumenical practices? Did God say you should give your money to church every week? Why can't you drink socially? Why are you forbidden to dress provocatively, tattoo yourself, and live like everyone else in society? Why has God said you cannot marry this unbeliever? Has God commanded you to abstain from all kinds of dancing and forms of gambling? Did God say you cannot attend that rock concert? Why did God say you can't engage in youthful lusts? Why did God command you to not watch certain images on the Internet and TV?" Satan is a slimy, slithering, and seducing Serpent that wants us to doubt God's goodness. He wants us to think that we are missing out on something that is good, exciting, and beneficial for our lives.

Instead of focusing on the abundance of trees God said she could have and enjoy, Satan tried to get Eve to focus on the one tree that she was forbidden to partake of. This is what Satan does to us as well. He wants to cast doubt on God's goodness and imply that God is holding out on us. He wants us to focus on the one thing we can't have and forget about the multitudes of blessings we do have and enjoy. The Evil One wants us to view God's command as something that is negative instead of something that is good for our lives. He wants us to lose sight of the good things that God has given to us (James 1:17). Satan's aim is to get us to think that God is withholding

something beneficial from our lives or that God has shortchanged us in some way. It's amazing how the Serpent gets us to lose sight of God's goodness and His blessings by focusing our mind on the one thing we are forbidden to have.

I remember seeing a jar full of jelly beans. I happened to notice there was only one black jelly bean in the jar. That one jelly bean stuck out like a sore thumb. Your eyes always focused on that one jelly bean when looking at the jar. In a similar way, Satan got Eve to focus on the one tree that she could not have. She could have all the other trees that a good and gracious God provided for her. But instead of focusing on all the other trees Satan got Eve's attention on the one tree she could not have. The following remarks of Eve will tell us that she bought into Satan's plan which was to cast suspicion upon God's goodness.

Genesis 3:2-3

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

Satan is a scam artist. He tries to manipulative our thinking about God and His goodness by getting us to focus on the very thing that God has withheld from us. The danger of listening to the voice of the Tempter, and the subtlety by which he accomplishes his wiles, is illustrated by R. Spencer Stanhope, in a picture in the Manchester Art Gallery, entitled "Eve." In it he represents the Serpent whispering in her ear while she, listening, plays with the sin within her mind. At the same time, unseen by her, he bends a branch of the tree with a coil of his body, and lo! as she dallies with the sin in her mind, an apple drops into her open hand. When the temptation has once been permitted to enter, the means of gratifying it is at hand.

James 1:14

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

We must understand that the number one desire of Satan is to slander God. Satan comes to us and says, "Is God really that good

since He will not let you eat of “every tree” in the garden? Is God really a good God when He won’t allow you to live it up a little bit? Is God really fair when He says you can’t listen to certain types of music, watch certain things on TV, or dress in a certain manner? He’s keeping you from something that is for your own profit and pleasure. You deserve better. You deserve an alcoholic drink now and then, a little fun with the girls or guys, and a little more flexibility in your church attendance. Is God just when He allows you to suffer pain and hardships? Is God loving when He allows people to starve in other lands? Is God fair when He chooses to allow your child to be inflicted with a certain disease and defect? This is part of the suspicion of Eden. God is holding out on you. God isn’t so good after all. Let me say just one thing at this point. Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). It’s Satan who is not good. And I don’t care what the devil whispers in my ear. I know that God is always good!

Psalm 34:8

“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

God is good in the sunshine and the rain. He is good in the ups and downs of life. God is intrinsically good and right in all that He does. I remember going to a teen fellowship following a church service in Michigan. Several of the young ladies played a song on the piano and did a masterful job. Then a little girl wanted to take her turn at the piano. She sat down and began to play with her two little fingers that old familiar chorus that we all know.

“God is so good,
God is so good,
God is so good,
He’s so good to me.”

Satan’s strategy is to blur our vision of God and His sovereign authority over our lives. He paints God as a mean, unloving, and uncaring God. God is a killjoy. He wants us to think that God is overbearing and overruling. “God never lets you do anything!” And throughout this whole process Satan gets us to think about ourselves more than God! He sows the seeds of discontentment and ungratefulness and begins moving us in a wrong direction. He does

this to draw us away from the blessings of God and His will. Satan wants us to focus on the alleged hindrances, obstacles, and deficiencies of God.

Dwight L. Moody said that one of the happiest men he ever knew was a man in Dundee, Scotland, who had fallen and broken his back when a boy of fifteen. He had lain on his bed for forty years and could not be moved without a good deal of pain. Probably not a day had passed in all those years without acute suffering. But day after day the grace of God had been granted him, and when Mr. Moody was in his room it seemed as if he was as near heaven as he could get on earth. When Mr. Moody saw him, he thought he must be beyond the reach of the tempter, and he asked him, "Doesn't Satan ever tempt you to doubt God and to think that He is a hard master?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "he does try to tempt me. I lie here and see my old schoolmates driving along, and Satan says, 'If God is so good, why has He kept you here all these years? You might have been a rich man, riding in your carriage.' Then I see a man, who was young when I was, walk by in perfect health, and Satan whispers, 'If God loved you, couldn't He have kept you from breaking your back?' " "And what do you do when Satan tempts you?" "Ah, I just take him to Calvary, and I show him Christ, and I point out those wounds in His hands and feet and side, and say, 'Doesn't He love me?' The fact is Satan got such a scare there nineteen hundred years ago that he cannot stand it; he leaves me every time." This bedridden saint of God did not have much trouble with doubts; he was too full of the grace and goodness of God.

2. Satan questions God's motives.

Satan also questioned God's motives. Satan gets us to think that God's motives are wrong and for this reason His character should be questioned. This is what He did to Eve with his serpent-like suggestion.

Genesis 3:5

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

In other words, Satan was suggesting that God was holding out on Eve for the simple reason that God didn't want her to become like Him in godlike knowledge and wisdom ("For God doth know"). Satan was implying that God's motives for Eve were not pure. He was only keeping Eve from the fruit so that He could still be in charge and remain the only God of the universe. The devil wants us to believe that our obedience to God is best for God but it's not best for our own personal lives and agenda.

One again Satan attacks the character of God by questioning His motives. The believer must never allow Satan to con him into thinking that God's way for him is not the best way. Satan always wants to challenge and reshape our thinking about God's personal character and motives and His ability to make wise choices for our lives. This is because the devil's wisdom is always pitted "against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:5 – the knowledge about God's true character, motives, wisdom, and authority). Instead, the believer must be "increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10) so he will not be fooled regarding God's eternal character, wisdom, and motives behind what He says and does.

When we are fooled about the personal character of God's goodness, justice, wisdom, and motives we will become jealous, rebellious, disobedient, possess selfish ambitions, and express discontentment in life. These are satanic qualities or devil-oriented characteristics which were placed in Eve's mind in the original temptation and they all stem from believing Satan's lies about God.

Ladies, beware of demonic wisdom (James 3:15) operating in your minds, which skews your thinking about God and what is right and true. Demonic wisdom can run our lives. The strategy of Satan is to replace "the wisdom that is from above" (James 3:16) with the so-called wisdom that is "earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15) or that which originates from demons. Satan's wisdom can be present and operating in our lives, and we may not even know it, if we are not saturating our minds in the truth of Scripture, and what it says about God's character, wisdom, and motives. When we begin to think that God has shortchanged us in some way, or made a mistake in His plan for our lives, we can know that Satan is winning out in the realm of our thought life. We must exchange these "devilish" thoughts for

right thoughts and reshape our thinking about God and His perfect wisdom and plan for our lives (Rom. 8:28). Beware of the intruding thoughts of Satan and the demonic wisdom that is seeking to control our minds.

Billy Bray, the Cornish miner, whose rugged piety has been a blessing to many, says that one year his crop of potatoes turned out so poorly that, when he was digging them, Satan, at his elbow, said, "There, Billy, isn't that poor pay for serving your Father the way you have all the year? Just see those small potatoes!" He stopped digging and replied, "Ah, Satan, at it again; talking against my Father, bless His name! Why, when I served you, I did not get any potatoes at all! What are you talking about?" And on he went digging and praising the Lord for small potatoes. God has not shortchanged us in any way and His motives are always pure and holy.

Second Corinthians 10:5 reminds us that every believer must bring all his thoughts under Christ's rule and authority ("bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ") which involves thinking as Christ would think, desiring what He desires, dwelling upon what is pleasing to Him, and bringing our thoughts under His lordship and authority (2 Cor. 10:4-5). The believer needs to think as Christ thinks or to put it in another way "arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Pet. 4:1). A deception occurs in our lives when our minds and emotions believe something that is not true about God or what God has said. The Scripture talks about "vain imaginations" (Rom. 1:26) which is a malfunctioned imagination in relationship to who God is and what God says.

Satan places suggestions (perceptions and thoughts) in our minds to stimulate our imaginations or thinking processes ("Hath God said"; "Ye shall be as gods..."; "Ye shall not surely die"). The Bible talks about "wicked imaginations" (Prov. 6:16, 18) that can rule our thoughts. When our thinking process is skewed we develop what the Bible calls an "evil" (Heb. 10:22), "defiled" (Titus 1:5) and even "seared" (1 Tim. 4:2) conscience. The ethical judgment of our conscience can become defiled and malfunction because of impure thinking. From this point the "vile affections" and distorted feelings begin to master the lives of people (Rom. 1:26, 31; 2 Tim. 3:2-3).

In daily living believers must come to the place where they immediately say, "I give no consent to this thought" and go on with their victorious living. We must decisively reject the wrong thoughts and agree with God's Word and thoughts on any given subject (Eph. 6:17). This is how we bring our thoughts under Christ's "captivity" or rule and "every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). We must by God's power refuse to dwell on those things that are lustful, evil, wicked, and wrong. 2 Corinthians 10:5 is a verse of action. *The goal is to submit our minds to the right Commander!* Let us remember that we can give ground to the enemy by allowing wrong thoughts and sin to control or master our lives, such as the sins of unforgiveness (2 Cor. 2:7-10) or anger (Eph. 4:26-27). Satan is directly connected with these sins.

The point is this. When we give ground to Satan (Eph. 4:27 – "Neither give place to the devil") through an unforgiving spirit, lusts, anger, bitterness, rock music, haunting fears of the past, guilt, and such like, we give the Evil One room to work, and eventually we become spiritually vulnerable in other areas of our lives. 2 Corinthians 2:11 states it this way, "Lest Satan should get an advantage (a greater part, portion, or share of our life) of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Martin Luther was often very graphic in his description of the activities of the Devil. Asked one time how he overcame the Devil, he replied, "Well, when he comes knocking upon the door of my heart, and asks 'Who lives here?' the dear Lord Jesus goes to the door and says, 'Martin Luther used to live here but he has moved out. Now I live here.' The Devil seeing the nail-prints in the hands, and the pierced sides, takes flight immediately." We must remember who lives within us (1 John 4:4) and surrender our thoughts to the lordship of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), while at the same time rely upon His power, strength, and victory in the time of temptation (Eph. 6:10).

c. Suspicion about God's will.

As we have already seen, the desire of Satan is to slander God. Added to this scheme would be his plan to cast suspicion upon God's purpose and will for our lives. Satan slanders God to ultimately move us away from God's perfect and holy will for our lives (Rom. 12:2).

Satan comes to us and says, “Is God really that good since He will not let us eat of every tree in the garden?” (Gen. 3:1). This is part of the suspicion of Eden, which Satan plants in our minds, so we might stray from God’s will and purpose. God is holding out on you. He’s keeping you from something that is for your own profit. You deserve better. You’re not getting what you’re really worth. You’ll never reach your full potential to “be as gods” (Gen. 3:5) if you stay with the Divine limitations that God has set. There’s no future for you in God’s will. Therefore, you must step out and make something of your life.

The satanic conclusion of Genesis 3:5 was this. True satisfaction and enrichment in life is found outside the boundaries of God’s will. We can move outside the realm of God’s prescribed plan and find greater fulfillment in life and still be spiritual in doing it! We can be disobedient and still be right. This has been Satan’s lie since the days of Eden. There is something better for us outside the stated parameters of God’s will. In a subtle way He gets us to focus on our *false need* (we need something outside of God’s will) and then we take the bait and step outside the boundary of God’s will and what is best for our lives. This is exactly what Eve did. Ladies, don’t fall for this old trick. Don’t allow the devil to rake you over the coals.

Satan comes along and says, “You need something better. You need a new husband that will really meet your needs. You need to change your manner of dress in order to draw more attention from men. You need to start using tobacco again to help calm your nerves. You need to drink sociably to feel accepted and find some relief from life’s pressures. You need to get involved with some of the old friends to help you lighten the load. You need to listen to some of the old music to give you an escape from life’s demands. You need to stay away from church and find more rest, relaxation, and down time.” It goes on and on. Satan is continually trying to create *false needs* in your heart so that you will act upon them and leave the parameters and safety of God’s will.

We all need to be on guard. Let us not be ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan wants to create *false needs* in our hearts. He then wants us to react to these false needs, follow them, and stray outside God’s boundaries. When Satan gets us to the place where we actually believe true enrichment and enjoyment of life, cannot be

reached within the parameters of God's prescribed will and purpose, it's then that we become vulnerable and defeated. We will attempt to step outside the boundaries and find a world of make-believe and fairytales. The believer must never allow Satan to con him into thinking that God's way for him is not the best way. God's way is always the right way and the best way. All other ways lead to endless confusion and heartache.

A little boy learned a lesson from the family dog. His father used to put a bit of meat or biscuit on the floor near the dog and say, "No!" and the dog knew he must not touch it. But he never looked at the meat or biscuit. He seemed to feel that if he did so, the temptation to disobey would be too great, so he looked steadily at my father's face. There is a lesson we can learn from this dog. Always look up to the Master's face ("looking unto Jesus" – Heb. 12:2). When we see God in all of His holiness, righteousness, goodness, love, grace, and fairness, we won't want to step outside His boundaries. We will be encouraged and satisfied to stay within the parameters of His perfect will.

2. Satan brought lies before Eve's mind.

Jesus said that the devil "is a liar and the father of it" (John 8:44) for he was the originator of lies in the Garden of Eden. The Bible reveals that Satan attempted to deceive Eve through her mind ("so your minds should be corrupted" - 2 Cor. 11:3). This is exactly how Satan works with us. He attempts to deceive us in the realm of our thinking. He wants to corrupt our spiritual perspective.

There are four main lies that Satan brought before Eve's mind.

a. You have needs God cannot meet.

This lie reiterates what we have already learned. Because of its importance we must recap just how Satan seeks to defeat us. Satan eventually got Eve to think that she needed something more than what God in His goodness had given to her and promised in His Word (Gen. 3:1-6). Satan created a *false need* in Eve's heart that was totally contrary to God's will. He is a master at doing this. In Genesis 3:1-5 Satan convinced Eve that she needed the forbidden

fruit so she could be elevated to a godhood status. Then, in Genesis 3:6, he sets the hook by appealing to her sight and senses.

“And when the woman saw (lust of the eyes) that the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh), and that it was pleasant to the eyes (lust of the eyes), and a tree to be desired (lust of the flesh) to make one wise (pride of life), she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

Of course, Eve had the potential for sin in her heart before she ever took the fruit. She tasted the fruit in her mouth before it ever got to her taste buds. 1 John 2:16 speaks about these same temptation tricks when referring to “the lust of the eyes” (sins of possessions - covetousness), “the lust of the flesh” (sins of passions – indulgence), and “the pride of life” (sins of position - status). Eve “saw that the tree was good for food ... and pleasant to the eyes” (lust of the eyes). The Bible then says it was “a tree to be desired” (lust of the flesh). Finally, it was “to make one wise” and which would allow them “to be as gods” (pride of life).

When the devil tempted Jesus (Matt. 4) he wanted Jesus to “command that these stones be made bread” (vs. 3 - lust of the flesh). The devil also showed Christ “all the kingdoms of the world” (lust of the eyes) “and the glory of them” (pride of life). The devil also told the Son of God to “cast thyself down” from the pinnacle of the temple (pride of life). Satan’s system has not changed. We should be aware of the Serpent’s tactics and schemes that he uses to take us down. Satan’s methods really have not changed.

Dwight Moody used to speak of a miserly farmer recently converted, to whom a neighbor in distress appealed for help. The miser decided to prove the genuineness of his conversion by giving him a ham. On his way to get it the tempter whispered, "Give him the smallest one you have." A struggle ensued and finally the miser took down the largest ham he had. "You are a fool," the devil said. And the farmer replied, "Devil, if you don't keep still, I'll give him every ham in the smokehouse!"

It’s important to see by the Genesis account that Satan wanted Eve to create a *false need* in her heart that God and His Word could not

conceivably meet. Afterward Satan tempted Eve to fulfill this false need. Eve eventually came to the place where she said, "I have a need (this fruit) that God does not intend to meet. Therefore, I must take matters into my own hands. I must eat this fruit and become wise, as a god, in order to try and meet this felt-need." Of course, Eve did not need the fruit. However, Satan got Eve to think she needed the fruit by getting her to doubt God's goodness and motives. The devil then used the fruit to appeal to her senses and sight.

The serpent does the same thing to us today. He wants us to think that God is not meeting some need in our lives and that God does not intend to meet it. Of course, this is not a true need but an imaginary one (straw man need) that has been created by not trusting in God's goodness, plan, and provision for our lives. But we allow Satan to convince us that we have a need that cannot be satisfied unless we take action and try to meet that need on our own terms. At this point Satan is ready to show us the forbidden fruit and we take the bait and are "drawn away" by our own lust (James 1:14).

For you the fruit may be choosing a wrong path or plan (Prov. 4:14). It may be making wrong choices in relationship to places (1 Cor. 10:20), positions (Prov. 16:18), people (1 Cor. 15:33), or seeking out your own particular solution (Prov. 14:12) for a problem that you face. It may involve imbibing or absorbing the culture in some way (Rom. 12:2). Satan convinces us that we have a need and then tempts us to act upon this *false need* through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. We then bite into the fruit and discover a worm on the inside of the fruit!

The point is this. When we erect *false needs* in our hearts and lives we make decisions that are contrary to God's revealed will and purpose for our lives. This is what Eve did. Satan sowed a *false need* in her heart (she needs the forbidden fruit) and then she reacts to Satan's temptation to fulfill the false need. What a set up! I call this the incredible hoax. Satan does this to us over and over again if we are not careful. We create a false need that God cannot meet and then take the initiative to meet that false need by making wrong choices and sinning against God's will for our lives. *Let us never forget that Satan is the master of confusing wants and needs.* He is an expert at confusing God's people so that they cannot distinguish

between their *greed's* and *needs* or between a *false* need and a *true* need.

Satan gets God's people to focus on themselves by saying, "I feel empty and I am in need of something." As a result of this satanic reasoning we become convinced that we *need* something more, or something else that God has failed to provide, or told us about in His spoken Word. We reason, "I *need* to taste of the fruit so I can excel and meet my full potential in life. I *need* something other than God's truth to get me to a different level in life. Since God is not altogether good and since His Word is not full of complete revelation and wisdom, I *need* to discover truth on my own and find out what is right for me." As a result, we allow sin to control us and overcome our lives.

Ladies, Satan tries to erect false needs in your hearts that God cannot meet. As a result, something else must attempt to meet this need – our own will and plan - which runs contrary to God's goodness, provision, and truth. By doing this Satan effectively sows in our hearts and minds discontentment and dissatisfaction with the will of God. Satan effectively gets us to focus our attention on self and our created self-needs instead of the final authority of the Word of God. Satan wants to lure us to the place of ignorance and indifference to the Word of God.

Like Eve, the old serpent gets us to the place where we worship our imaginary needs and feelings. We bow to the altar of felt-needs. We think that we need something that God has not provided through His simple Word and goodness. Our needs become more important than God's truth and goodness. So we reach out for the forbidden fruit and enter the forbidden zone, all because we have erected a need, and have tried to meet this need on our own terms. Ladies, let me say that God has promised to meet all of your true needs, which line up with the absolute standard of His Word, and which are not fueled by your selfish ambitions and wants.

Philippians 4:19 says:

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Dear friend, we don't need anything else other than God! He is truly all we need in life (Psalm 46:1-2). Satan wants us to think that we need something else in order to find fulfillment and blessing in life but this is one of his major lies. The songwriter wrote:

“You're all I need! You're the Lord of everything.
All I need. This is why I humbly sing.
Your strength is sustaining
And your grace has made me free.
You're my heart's lone desire, You're all I need.
More than enough, You're all I need.
You are all I will ever need.”

b. Sin does not have consequences.

“Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). This was the lie of the ages. And it's still Satan's number one lie today. It's also the lie behind reincarnation. Satan wants us to think that sin has no consequences when God has clearly said that sin always has consequences (Gen. 2:17 – “thou shalt surely die” and Numb. 32:23 – “be sure your sin will find you out”). The New Testament counterpart is Galatians 6:7 which says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Satan wants us to believe what he brought Eve to believe. He wants us to believe that God takes sin lightly, God won't follow through on His Word, and God won't judge sin, even if He said He would. This is a critical point in the strategy of Satan. Before he leads us into sin he wants to diminish or dismiss the consequences of sin in our lives. *Satan denies one of the basic facts of life: God punishes sin!* Satan wants to redefine God as a God who does not judge sin (Rom. 1:23, 25) and when he can effectively do this people will take his bait. Many today, even Christians, believe that God is only a God of love and because of this sin will not bring any real or lasting judgment in their lives. God is defined with only those attributes that make people feel comfortable.

One writer has said:

“How often do you hear sermons about God's judgment these days? Instead, sermons just overflow with sentimental ideas about God's

love. God has been recast as Santa Claus – an updated Santa Claus who never leaves coal in a naughty boy’s stocking.”

We live in a “no-fault” and “guilt-free” society that has redefined God to make Him fit into our own mold of living. This is becoming increasingly true in the arena of the church. God is almost viewed as accommodating a life of sin and selfishness and as someone who understands that we all make mistakes in life. God knows that deep down we mean well. Furthermore, God exists to help us *feel better* and *accepts* us the way we are in spite of our shortcomings. Satan tries to play down the serious nature of sin by claiming that God understands about our sin and we need to accept ourselves as we are and improve our self-worth and self-concept. Today Christians are told to understand about sin instead of hate sin. Let me say just one thing at this point. God hates sin (Prov. 6:16-19). We don’t want to deal with sin today but sin is what wrecks our lives, our families, and is something God despises with a holy hatred.

Habakkuk 1:13

“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity ...”

Isaiah 59:2 adds:

“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

Yes, sin does have consequences! God hates sin and despises any sin that comes between Him and His people. Sin is a barrier to fellowship with God and enjoying His presence and power in your life. Sin brings God’s chastisement upon our lives (Heb. 12:6-7). Satan gets us to sin but sends the bill later! Sin always costs us something – broken fellowship with God, heartaches, emptiness, lost opportunities, personal problems related to our disobedience.

Coupled with the lie that sin does not have consequences is the redefining of sin. The “struggle theologians” of today are saying that all Christians (our born-again buddies) struggle with sin. Therefore, we should not be too hard on sin. We need to look at sin as a part of the everyday struggle of life and realize that we all blow it in life. We don’t want other Christians to think that we are better than others

("holier than thou") when we emphasize sin. Christians aren't perfect. We all have our weaknesses. Don't be so hard on yourself. If you sin, all you have to do is confess to God, and everything will be all right again. Other people do things worse than you. God expects us to fail now and then.

The Serpent then comes along and adds, "God wouldn't have given you such strong desires if He didn't expect you to fulfill them. You need to have some fun and excitement in your life. You're too hard on yourself! God does not expect us to live by rules. Lots of Christians out there are doing it and don't think that it's wrong. Don't be so narrow-minded. You must relate to the real world and you can only do this when you get out there and experience what they experience. After all, you are free in Christ. Nothing in moderation is wrong. Just don't get caught doing it all the time. A few times won't hurt anybody."

Ladies, it's in these ways that Satan gets you to rationalize away your sin, or at least water down sin, and not remember the true consequences that are associated with sin. Somebody captured the modern way that man views sin and placed it alongside the way God views sin. There is a vast difference between man's view of sin and God's view of sin.

"Man calls it an accident; God calls it an abomination.

Man calls it a blunder; God calls it blindness.

Man calls it a defect; God calls it a disease.

Man calls it a chance; God calls it a choice.

Man calls it an error; God calls it an enmity.

Man calls it a fascination; God calls it a fatality.

Man calls it an infirmity; God calls it an iniquity.

Man calls it a luxury; God calls it a leprosy.

Man calls it a liberty; God calls it lawlessness.

Man calls it a trifle; God calls it a tragedy.

Man calls it a mistake; God calls it a madness.

Man calls it a weakness; God calls it willfulness."

Satan does not want us to see the true nature and consequences of sin today so he can lead God's people into the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. 11:25). Satan downplays the severity of sin and keeps Christians from seeing that sin always has a price tag attached to it

(Heb. 12:5-6 – “And ye have forgotten the exhortation ... My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord ... For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth”). Don’t believe Satan’s lie that sin does not have any consequences. If you start talking, drinking, dancing, thinking, and living like he world, then there will be consequences. Today sin is no longer a disgusting transgression in God’s sight (Ps. 51:1-5) but a disease caused by poor self-esteem, genetic deficiencies, and outside environmental influences. Sin is softened and downplayed today in every way. We are accountable to God for our sin and we can be sure that it will catch up with us (Numb. 32:23).

The late Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman used to tell of a Methodist preacher who often spoke on the subject of sin. He minced no words, but defined sin as “that abominable thing that God hates.” A leader in his congregation came to him on one occasion and urged him to cease using the ugly word. Said he: “Dr. Blank, we wish you would not speak so plainly about sin. Our young people, hearing you, will be more likely to indulge in sin. Call it something else, as “inhibition,” or “error” or a “mistake,” or even “a twist in our nature”.”

“I understand what you mean,” the preacher remarked and going to his desk brought out a little bottle. “This bottle,” he said, “contains strychnine. You will see that the red label here reads ‘Poison.’ Would you suggest that I change the label, and paste one on that says, ‘Wintergreen?’ The more harmless the name the more dangerous the dose will be.”

We must be ready to call sin - “sin.” We must see it as an ugly monster that wrecks our lives and something which God hates. God hates sin. He hates everything that is not godly and right and so should we as His followers (“Hate the evil” – Amos 5:15). The Bible says that God’s people do not prosper when they cover their sin (Prov. 28:13). Sin always has a certain amount of judgment and heartache attached to it (Ps. 32:10; Prov. 6:32-33; 1 Tim. 6:10; Heb. 12:16-17).

Satan says, “Go ahead and do it” but the bill always comes later. God does not sweep sin under the carpet. We can be sure of this one thing. Sin does catch up with us! Don’t let Satan deceive you into

thinking that God allows sin to go unchecked and unpunished. This is why the world is increasingly plummeting into moral degradation and why God's people are dabbling in sinful and carnal practices today. Satan effectively sells the lie that sin does not have any consequences. "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4).

The Serpent wants us to believe that we can cover our sin and prosper at the same time. This is the lie of Eden. It's impossible to prosper from a spiritual perspective when we are playing around with sin. Ladies, sin keeps you from God's true blessing and best for your lives. Don't think you can dabble with sin and get away with it. This is not reality. It's the land of make-believe. Some of you may be living like "Alice in Wonderland." Satan wants us to think everything will be okay if we disobey God. The fact of the matter is this. Everything will eventually collapse when you disobey God. It may look good at the beginning. We may see the fruit shining and glistening in the sunlight but after we eat it we must face the consequences of our sin.

Genesis 3:7

"And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

Sin always has consequences. Adam and Eve found this out after they ate the forbidden fruit. They were immediately made aware of their physical nakedness. Their sin caused them to be ashamed of their nakedness. In fact, their physical nakedness became a constant reminder of their transgression before God. Their shame would be a continual reminder and consequence of their sin. All sin does have consequences and this is why we need to face sin today and deal with it in our lives. We don't need to understand it. We need to forsake it. We don't need to candy-coat it. We need to condemn it.

Isaiah 55:7

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Billy Sunday wrote:

"I'm against sin," he said. "I'll kick it as long as I've got a foot, and I'll

fight it as long as I've got a fist. I'll butt it as long as I've got a head. I'll bite it as long as I've got a tooth. When I'm old and fistless and footless and toothless, I'll gum it till I go home to Glory and it goes home to perdition."

c. You can govern your own life.

This was a key lie Satan promoted under the disguise of "ye shall be as gods" (Gen. 3:5). We have dealt with this already so I will only briefly deal with it in this point. Satan told Eve that she could reach the same position as God and become the leader and governor of her own life. Satan was primarily saying this to Eve. "You can be the leader of your own life and fate. Take matters into your own hands." Satan wanted to remove Eve from the authority and control of God. He wanted Eve to be removed from the realm of God's authority so she could be free to create her own agenda in life.

Ladies, Satan always tempts you to live independent from God's authority. He doesn't want you to remain under God's authority and rule. He makes the grass look greener on the other side and says you can run your own life and do as you please. This is what Satan told Eve when he said, "ye shall be as gods" (Gen. 3:5). A god is someone who runs his own life and is capable of living according to his own plans and wishes. This is exactly what Satan wanted Eve to focus upon. He wanted Eve to focus on herself, her selfish goals and ambitions, and create her own life apart from God's will.

James 4:7

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

When we are tempted by Satan to remove ourselves from God's authority we must make the instant decision to submit ourselves to God. The word "submit" is a military term which speaks of submission and subordination to God. It means to place ourselves under God's authority. When we are tempted to remove ourselves from God's authority we must say, "I will follow God instead of Satan." If we are going to have victory, we must be willing and ready to yield to God (Rom. 6:13) and place ourselves under His authority. Living victoriously is an authority issue. Either we will become the god and

leader of our own life, or we will allow God to be our Leader, and the only authority figure in our life. It can't be God and you. It must only be God!

Is God the absolute ruler and undisputed leader of your life today? Maybe there are some things that Satan has been tempting you with and they are slowly taking you away from God's authority and control over your life. They are creating an independent godhood spirit in your life, where you are seeking to make yourself the authority, and where you are seeking to live your life independent of God's will. Eve in the Garden of Eden allowed this independent spirit to capture her heart. She wanted to become her own god and leader instead of allowing God to lead her life.

Satan knows how to get us away from the realm of God's authority. He knows how to tempt us and take us away from the rule of God in our hearts and lives. Ladies, Jesus should be Lord of your lives today – not sin and Satan. There is an all-out-war going on today that centers on the issue of who is going to control your life – God or Satan. What is going to run your life – the new nature or the old nature (Gal. 5:17). It's as simple as this. Either sin will master you or God will master you. We know what Satan wants and what God wants. Now what do you want? You can't be neutral.

“All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live.

All to Jesus I surrender,
Humbly at His feet I bow;
Worldly pleasures all forsaken,
Take me, Jesus, take me now.

I surrender all,
I surrender all;
All to Thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.”

d. You can become the family leader.

The Bible says that “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” (Gen. 3:6). It’s very clear that part of the tragedy of Eden was when Eve led or directed Adam instead of allowing Adam to lead and direct her. Satan convinced Eve that she could be the leader of the family unit instead of Adam. If she could be her own god, as Satan said, then it should also mean that Adam would no longer possess any authority over her life. This is why she went ahead without Adam’s approval and gave him the fruit to eat. Now Adam should have stopped her and said, “Honey, back up the horse. This is not right. God doesn’t want us to do this or go this way.” Someone humorously wrote:

“When Eve upon the first of men
The apple pressed, with specious cant,
Oh! what a thousand pities then
That Adam was not Adamant!”

In another study entitled “Adam in Eden” we can discover how Adam failed to take the initiative, as the leader, when Eve brought the luscious fruit to him. The Bible is very clear that God created Adam to be the leader of the family unit. His priority in creation (Gen. 2:7; 1 Tim. 2:12-13), the fact that Eve was Adam’s helper (Gen. 2:8), and headship (1 Cor. 11:3) all point to male leadership and authority over the woman. I have devoted an entire study to this subject (“Was Male Headship and Female Submission Created by God?”).

Eve knew that Adam was her leader, but instead of allowing Adam to lead, she took matters into her own hands and sought to lead her husband. Now ladies, it’s always wrong and sinful when you attempt to become the spiritual leader in your home. God wants your husband to be the spiritual leader in the home. The wife is to learn the lesson of submissiveness as men become strong, capable, spiritual leaders in the home (Josh. 24:15). A woman is also expected to submit to her unsaved husband and display a godly testimony that might bring him to Christ (1 Pet. 3:1-2).

This teaching is out-of-date with our society but it’s not out-of-date with the Bible. Ladies, your home is not God’s home when you are the leader! Furthermore, someday you will have to stand before God and be responsible for your domineering and bossy attitudes in the

home (2 Cor. 5:10). Some ladies possess bitter spirits, bad attitudes, and become bossy wives in the home atmosphere. When this happens the entire home unit becomes a den of misery and woe. Ladies, if you think you can have the true blessing of God upon your home and marriage, when you seek to be the spiritual leader over your husband, then you are fooled by Satan.

1 Timothy 2:12-14 says:

“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

I say this with a pastor’s heart. Don’t allow the devil to sell you a bill of goods. Don’t allow Satan to think that you can become your own god and live independent from your husband’s leadership and direction. God wants you to learn the joy, fulfillment, and blessing that comes from being a woman who is following God’s design and purpose for her life. The Evil One wants you to rise up and take the lead over your husband. This has been his plan from the very beginning and is part of the curse related to the Genesis Fall (Gen. 3:16 – “and thy desire shall be to thy husband”).

Satan wants to destroy the God-ordained order of the home. More specifically, Satan wants you to bring some fruit to your husband and say, “Let’s go this way.” By the way ladies, what kind of fruit have you brought to your husband this week? Was it the fruit of a bad attitude or bitter spirit? Was it the fruit of rebellion? Was it the fruit of anger and rage? Was it the fruit of a nagging spirit? God wants you to produce the “fruit of righteousness” (Heb. 12:11; Jam. 3:18) and not the fruit of sinful living.

What the Serpent did to Eve he wants to do to you. The Evil One wants to offer you a type of sinful fruit that can potentially harm your own life and the life of your family for years to come? What kind of fruit has Satan been offering you these days? He knows how to make the tree look good! He knows how to make the forbidden fruit glisten like the golden sun. He knows how to spit-shine his fruit. But remember this. All of Satan’s apples have worms! We don’t know what kind of fruit Eve was tempted with. Hollywood wants us to think

that it was an apple. We don't know. All we know is this. *Whatever Satan promises and promotes can never be of God!* Ladies, may God and His Word help you detect Satan's shining fruit. Furthermore, may you by God's power (Eph. 6:10), turn away from the temptation to rise up and become independent of God and your husband. There is no blessing in the fruit of rebellion.

1 Samuel 15:23 is the age-old reminder that says:

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry..."

A well-to-do man advertised for a chauffeur. Three applicants came. His first question was, "How close to the edge of a cliff can you drive without going over?" One man said, "A yard." Another said, "A foot." The third said, "I always try to keep as far away as possible." The third man got the job. The lesson for every mother and woman today is this. Don't see how close you can get to sin. Don't take yourself to the edge of sin. Sin is nothing to play around with. It has the strength to defeat you, as a woman, if you get too close to it.

The person who underestimates the strength of an enemy is in danger of defeat. If the devil has you intently looking at the fruit, then you are only one step away from taking it. Ladies, learn the lesson of "Eve in Eden" and become a victor instead of a victim of Satan's ploys. You must learn the secret of turning yourself over to the Lord and not becoming a victim of Satan's traps and tricks?

The lesson of Eve in Eden is very simple. Be satisfied with God and His perfect will for your life. Keep your eyes on Him instead of the fruit that Satan is putting before you. Be content in the will of God and don't allow Satan to deceive your mind from "the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). Keep your life devoted or committed to the Lord by staying focused on His goodness, righteousness, truth, and holy will. *You will live right when you think right.* Finally, satisfaction is always found within the parameters of God's will. The Psalmist declared that "we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Ps. 65:4).

Proverbs 19:23

“The fear of the Lord tendeth to life: and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.”

Anthony T. Evans wrote:

"I know a bit about wrestling because my brother, Arthur, was the Maryland state wrestling champion in his weight class. At his championship match my brother weighed in at about 230 pounds and was going up against the three-time Maryland state champion who outweighed him by 35 pounds. Before the match, a reporter asked, 'Who is the toughest wrestler in this room?'

"My brother, humble fellow that he is, said, 'You are looking at him!' "The reporter looked at him and asked, 'What makes you think you are so tough? You are about to fight the man who has won the state championship three times in a row.' "My brother replied with a very insightful comment, 'I know he is bigger and perhaps stronger than I am, but I know his methods.'"

We are in a similar fight against Satan. Just as this brother needed to learn his opponent's moves, so every woman needs to understand Satan's moves. As a woman you need to know how Satan operates, so “that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Eph 6:13). No place in Scripture reveals Satan's schemes better than Genesis chapter three, which records Satan's initial contact with Eve in Eden. Satan's strategy is to ruin women by leading them away from God’s absolute standard.

As a woman you must ask yourself this question. Am I going to allow Satan to deceive me or am I going to wise up and follow God’s path and purpose for my life? There is no reason to live in defeat and despair. Instead, you can live victoriously and enjoy all the trees of the garden, which God has already given for your satisfaction and enjoyment. Instead of focusing on what you can't have focus on what you already have been given by God (Eph. 1:3) and thank Him for His loving kindness and generosity. God is good.

“The Lord is good, tell it wherever you go.
The Lord is good, tell it that others may know.
Tell of His blessings and tell of His love,

Tell how He's coming from Heaven above.
The Lord is good, tell it wherever you go."