

## Discussion Notes

*Beginnings: What went wrong? Genesis 3*

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How does our story start? The beginning of a story makes sense of the rest. Genesis 1-3 sheds light on our God-given nature and purpose. Here we begin again, rediscovering the origin of our humanity and hope. This nine-week series will ask questions like: Who made us? Who are we? Why are we here?

### **Sin: Definition**

- The Greek word for sin used in the New Testament is *hamartia*.
- *Hamartia* means missing the mark. The image is of an archer firing an arrow off target.
- We have all struggled with the desire to do wrong, even when we are taught right.

### **The Snake—Gen. 3.1**

- The presence of the snake in the Garden does not mean that God has created evil.
- Snake is a creature gone bad. God gave choice to his creation.
- Choice gives us the ability to do evil. But, on the other hand, without choice love could not be genuine.

### **The Conversation—Gen. 3.1-5**

- Snake purposefully misquotes God to emphasize restriction rather than freedom. He sows the seeds of doubt.
- Eve's response also tampers with God's commandment. She makes it sound more restrictive than it really is.
- Adding or subtracting to the Word of God is a serious matter.
- Snake finished by offering a "tempting vision of grandeur" and directly contradicting God.

### **The Choice—Gen. 3.6-8**

- Many blame Eve for this action. But Adam was present and made no effort to stop what was happening. Silence is no defense.
- Sin has strength in numbers. Often the more people engaged in a sinful activity, the easier it is to join in.
- Immediate consequence of sin is shame and guilt.
- Second consequence was separation from the Lord, they hid from the only Father they knew.

### **The Judgment—Gen. 3. 9-21**

- Upon being found out, the woman and man do not accept responsibility for their actions.
- Taking responsibility takes courage and humility. The truth may bring consequences but it is the first step toward healing.

- Sin must be punished to avoid repetition.
- Serpent, man, and woman are all cursed. Life on earth gets more difficult and is given an ending.
- But with that consequence, God also gives grace. Eve will bear children. God weaves clothes for them to cover their shame.

### **Today**

- We are broken by sin, but incredibly and unconditionally loved by God.
- If sin has been left unresolved, there is hope.
- God gives us a way forward.

### **Discussion Questions**

- What are some of your sincere doubts?
- How have you experienced a connection between doubt and temptation?
- Was there a time you took responsibility for something you did wrong? How did it feel? Did it help towards healing?
- How can judgment and consequence be of benefit? In what ways have you experienced this?