

Bill Sanchez - The Serpent of Old

If you have your Bibles go ahead and be turning to Genesis chapter three, we're going to be there in just a second. As always, it's a blessing to be here. I think, my fourth, fifth or sixth time I've been here, more than one time, I know. I'm always excited to be able to be here. I think the last few times I came; I came alone. I think the first time I came here; Heather was with me. And then for different reasons she couldn't come. The last time I came was during the lectureship with Bill Hall and Ralph Walker. And we had Matthias we were pregnant with Lucas, but Matthias was sick, and Heather was also sick. So, they weren't able to come, but I'm always happy to the whole family gets to be here. And so, you kind of get to see like this is these are the cool part of the Sanchez. And then I'm, I'm also a part of the group. And then want to mention something really quickly that is for you guys, I guess especially. So I was just in Spain, I spent about a little over three weeks in Spain. And you may not care about that piece of information, except that you kind of helped with the trip. So recently, you guys began to support Wendell, who's going to start preaching up in New York, the West Harlem Church, which is the church that I used to worship in before I moved down to Atlanta to be with a group at Embry Hills. And he actually came with me, and so we spent about three weeks, he's supposed to send you guys a report, I don't know if he's done that or not. If he hasn't, I'll get to him, but we spent about three weeks with about six different churches while we were out there. And it was just an absolute blessing to have him working with me there. He was a huge encouragement, not just to me, but also to the brethren out there. And so, thank you for helping him being able to take that trip. And in doing that, again, supporting the work out there. I'll say this just quickly. It's possible that there are more Christians in this room that there are in the country of Spain, which, in some ways embarrassed me while I was out there, because people would ask, so tell me about where you worship. And I shouldn't be embarrassed, by the way. But there's something in that when you're in a group of 10 people, and they're like, well, tell me about where you're at. And you're like, well, we have more elders than you have members. But again, as I thank God for the members where I worship, but it's a reminder that God's word needs to go out to all places. And sometimes you can't go out and do those things. But you can help people who do that. And so, though you didn't go out there, and though you didn't meet those people, they were encouraged in part because of you. And so, so thank you for all if there's a kid screaming up here, this one's mine. Don't worry about it. But thank you all for that, again, I after being with them, appreciate it, I appreciate your labor in that. So, I wanted to say that kind of before I got into the lesson.

So again, we're going to be in Genesis three in just a second, we're going to be in Genesis for the majority of the lesson. But in Ephesians, chapter six, and I went the wrong way that turned me upside down. In Ephesians, chapter six. At the end of Paul's letter, Paul writes, and starting in verse 11, he'll say, "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil for our struggle, is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the powers against the world forces of this darkness against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." That in Ephesians, chapter six, as Paul wraps up his letter, maybe three ideas to have in mind is that Paul says that there is a battle that is raging on whether you want to be a part of this battle or not, is irrelevant. You are a part of it. Everybody's a part of this battle. People who are out in the world and lost are a part

of this battle. People who are in here trying to serve God are a part of this battle. That all of us are fighting a battle. And Paul would say that the battle isn't won on a physical plane, like we oftentimes think of battles. We think of war, and we think about people going out in masses and, and a very public and see that's not how this battle works. That this battle is actually a battle that happens inside of you, all the time, every moment, right now. And that the way in which you actually lose this battle is by giving in. It's actually that simple. The way in which the Bible is lost for you is by you deciding I'm not going to fight anymore. And in Ephesians, six, as Paul wraps up his letter, what he actually says and, and maybe something I hadn't always appreciated is that God thinks that you can win. I don't know if you've appreciated this idea or not. Just think about this for a second. The fact that he says to put on the full armor of God, the fact that God is willing to equip you with his armor means something. First of all, it means he thinks you can use it. And he thinks that if you put on this armor like he says that you will be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. Now look, I've got two sons, my older one loves cars. We've got a few cars. And I love Matthias but just because I love him does not mean I give him the keys to my car to let him drive. You get what I'm saying. Because though I love him, he is ill equipped to use it. Now there may be some people out in the world who can drive cars, but because I don't know them, I'm not giving them the keys to my car, you also get that picture. That as you think about God and His armor, God both loves you enough to give you the armor. And he also thinks that you are well enough equipped to use it. So, there is a battle that you're in. And the battle was lost by you giving in. But again, God believes that you can win the battle.

And so, what I would like to do with this lesson is to think a little bit about not so much the battle but think about the enemy that we're fighting. Here's a few details that the scriptures give us about the enemy. The scriptures would say, in First John chapter three and verse eight, that he has sinned from the beginning. And the beginning, I believe, isn't Genesis chapter three. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And there are things obviously, that we are not privy to here on the, on the earthly plane, but there is clearly some cosmic battle that happened before the foundation of the world, and that the enemy sinned. We don't know when he was created, but the enemy was created. He is not God. And I think sometimes we think that the devil and God are kind of like on equal playing fields, and they're like the ying and yang of good and evil and, you know, that's not the case. He was created like everything else, like everyone else, just like you were created. He was created a different sort of being, but he was absolutely created. And we know in Genesis chapter one, that everything that God makes is good. The enemy was created good. He wasn't created evil. He was created good with freewill. And he chose to rebel against God. Second Peter chapter two, verse four, Jude, verse six, First Timothy, chapter three, verse six, all give mention of some angels who rebel against God. And if you actually kind of compiled those verses, and you try to see maybe like you try to combine those and try to see a picture of it. You don't have to take this home if you don't want to. But the picture seems to be that there were some angels who were not satisfied with the position given to them. And being conceded, if you take the first Timothy, three passage, where he's talking about elders, being conceded, they fell into condemnation. And so again, we don't know what happened. What we do know is that the devil, or the serpent of old, or Lucifer, however you want to think about it, whatever, but the devil, the enemy, was created, he was created good. And he did not accept the position that he had. And so, he rebelled against God. We know Job chapter one, that he is not on equal forces with God. He can't just do whatever he feels like doing whenever he feels like doing it. He's not. He's not limitless as far as power is concerned. We know that he is the father of lies. In John chapter eight, Jesus himself says that about

him. He says, you follow your father, your father, the devil, and that's why you lie, because he is the father of lies. And we know that he is a lion seeking to devour anyone. That like this is who he is. Now look, I may be wrong about some of these things. Possibly, I don't know. Even if I am, we know that Satan exists. And that Satan is wicked. And that nothing in the scripture has given us any reason to believe that he has changed at all. That his person is different, that his character is different, that he's seeking to operate in any different ways. Let me just say, the character we're going to see in Genesis chapter three is still the character that's operating today. And if he's a lion who's seeking anything or anyone to devour - do you think by the way that a lion sees a cub? And it's like, well, that's a baby cub, maybe not this one, I'll look for somebody my size, and that's who I'll devour. You think a lion thinks that way? Does a lion see a deer and is like Well, that's a sick deer. So maybe not like the sick deer, because that'd be unfair to them. You think a lion thinks that way? Lions don't care. They're predators, and they don't play fair. And if you think that the devil is going to play fair with you, because of your condition, or because of what's gone on in your life, or because of some hardship that you've had, you're mistaken, he doesn't care. He does not care about you. And he has no need to play over some set of rules where I'm going to try to make an equal for you and for me, and let's make sure that everybody's fine.

Again, but I do believe that the scriptures gives us some shadows, or lets us learn about the ways in which he operates. And so I want us to spend some time on the serpent of old idea that really comes from Revelation, but I want us to spend some time looking at Genesis chapter three, looking at the text that we've already read in verses one through eight. And just seeing what does he do in this interaction that he has with Eve? How does he get them to fall? And maybe kind of see in our lives, ways in which we have fallen, so that we can better guard ourselves with God's armor to not fall against those schemes anymore. Now, before we begin, I do think it's appropriate to consider the world where the first sin was committed. In Genesis chapters one and two, we are told that God creates everything, and that everything that God made was good. In fact, God took a world that was empty, a world that was in darkness, a world that was shapeless, and he gave it shape. Well, he gave it light first, then he gives it shape, then he fills it up. And it's not just that he fills it up with kind of like some sort of mediocre things, but then the like, but then that one tree was a good tree. We're told that everything that God made was good. We're told, in fact, in Genesis chapter two, that every tree was pleasing to the sight, and every tree was good for food. I think we sometimes read Genesis chapter three and think it was just that one tree that was good. And the rest of them were kind of like garbage trees. All the trees were great. We're told in Genesis chapter one that man was made in God's image, this is going to be important whenever we get to chapter three in just a second. That at the end of chapter two, or really halfway through chapter two, the God's creation was complete, that it was very good, it was done. That God was able to rest with his creation. And that again, God put man in the garden where every tree was pleasing to the sight and was good for food. And in fact, God then tells man, you can freely eat from any of the trees in the garden, save one.

That's the world we're Genesis Chapter Three occurs. So the world that they were in was good and perfect. "And now the serpent was more crafty, than any of the beasts of the field, which the Lord had made. And he said to the woman, indeed has God said, you shall not eat from any of the trees of the garden? The woman said to the serpent, from the fruit of the trees of the garden, We may eat, but from the fruit of the tree, which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat for it from it or

touch it or you will die. The serpent said to the woman, you will surely not die for God knows that in the day that you eat from it, your eyes will be open, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Alright, so here's some ideas, some lessons for us to consider about what happens in Genesis chapter three. The first thing that I think it's important to think about is that the serpent will exploit anything in your life to get you to fall. Have you ever thought to yourself that if your situation were a little bit different, that you wouldn't be struggling with the sense that you struggle with? Maybe you haven't. But I wasn't raised in a home where people serve God. I have a sister who in the last year, I thank God for this, came to Jesus Christ. But like, for the most part, for most of my Christianity, I've been the only Christian in my family. And there have been times when I have done some really dumb things. And then my excuse to myself as well, if I grew up in a different environment with better parents who didn't teach me how to behave like this, then I wouldn't have done those things. Let me tell you something that the devil will use, exploit, anything in your life to get you to fall. Oftentimes, we think if my life were just a little bit better, I wouldn't have done this thing. What like, what, how much better than Adam and Eve's world needs to be for them to not fall? Because they were in a literal paradise and still fell. If you think you're certain, like your circumstances, being a little bit better is going to guard you from falling into sin, that's a lie that you're allowing yourself to believe. Because Adam and Eve, they live again in perfection, and still fell. But have you ever thought that to yourself that if your parents weren't prone to anger, their parents were in yellors all the time, that you wouldn't be so prone to being angry all the time. That it maybe if you were raised in a home that didn't have so many so much unbiblical sexuality, that you wouldn't be so prone to promiscuity. That if your financial resources were a little bit better, that you wouldn't be tempted to forsake the assembly for work. Like I think we're so often to think to ourselves, if my circumstances were better then I would be better. Let me tell you, the serpent will exploit the good in your life as well. If you think the devil only works through the bad that happens in your life, you're a fool. Because he'll look at the good that goes on in your life. You've got some riches? Great. Be content. Be happy. You don't have to do anything. You're talented? Phenomenal. Why work? Why put any real effort into anything? It's okay to be a little bit lazy because you can skirt by. You're unbelievably talented. You're beautiful, that's great. Whatever it is, you fill in the blank, you're intelligent, that's great. Like God has blessed you with things but you have to be very aware that the devil will use those things. You have an abundance of resources? Phenomenal be a glutton, now. Any good in your life can be used for sin. The serpent can also use your bad. Your financial issues, your health issues, your heartbreaks. The devil, again, does not play fair. If the devil was able to get people to put Jesus to death, the literal Son of God, who do you think you are? Are you any better than that? Don't you think he'll go for you as well?

You have to understand that the appeals of the devil are, if you notice, in Genesis three, they're physical. They're very clearly physical. They're a gut issue. They're also emotional. There's an emotional aspect to these things. And it's also intellectual. Because every temptation has one of those three appeals, it's either physical, intellectual, or emotional, but what it never is spiritual. Never got to get them any closer to God. You fill in the blank on what that is, whatever the temptation is, and I'm speaking generically on purpose because you know you. And you know the thing that that God has commanded you not to do that you struggle with, and you want to go and partake in often. But those appeals are going to always be physical, intellectual or emotional, but they will never get you closer to God.

Notice another thing that the serpent does here. So, he approaches the woman, and he says, "indeed, has God said, you shall not eat from any of the tree of the garden." Now. There's a simple point to be made, obviously, like he operates in questions. He doesn't, like did the serpent take the fruit and say, all right, open your mouth, Eve. And I don't know if the serpent had arms or not, because he says, you're going to crawl on your belly, but like, forces her to chomp like, is that what happens? Because if that had happened, and she didn't sin, He forced her to do it. You know what I'm saying? He has to appeal or it's just a question. Did God really say? Did God really say? Indeed, has God said that you can't do this thing? Again, it's not that complicated. But what he's doing is placing doubt of God's intention in your life. I mean, oftentimes, here's how I think conversations between Christians and non-Christians operate. So, you can't do this. Ah, you can't do that. Ah, you can't, so you can't go to these places. You can't talk like this. Ah, you can't do that. Like, the serpent doesn't say, oh, that God will say you couldn't eat from all these beautiful trees. That's not what he does. He tries to focus on the one thing you can't do. Because if you can place doubt in somebody's good intention for you that you doubt everything they tell you. If you think, you know this to be true, if you think that somebody does not have your best interests in mind, do you listen to them? Maybe you do. I struggle with that. Because I think what are you trying to get over on me? What are you really trying to do? And again, I think that's what he's doing here. So, he puts, he places this doubt. You know, God is really holding something back from your life that if you were out of here, think about all the things you could accomplish on a Sunday, you didn't have to be here. Think about what you can really accomplish at work. If you didn't have the scruples you had to live by, where you have to live like a Christian, whatever that means. I mean, you could really get by in the world and God is just holding you back. Those Christians, they're just I mean, that's why religion exists in the first place is to subdue you, you're just fools that are, like, that's how the world thinks. Because the world doubts God's good intention that's there under the power of the evil. And that's what the devil wants you to think about God. That God does not have your best intention in mind. If you notice as the serpent continues to talk to her so she responds and he says, in Verse four, "you will surely not die for God knows and the day that you eat from it your eyes will be open and you will be like God knowing good and evil." Alright so we're going to do a little head exercise here. I know you won't talk. Did the devil lie or not? Did he say a true thing or not though? Was everything he said false? Did they become like God? Some people are like you're not going to get me right now. Never move my head.

Here's the thing to picture. There's half-truths, which by the way, are still just lies. I don't know. Like a half truth is not truth. The half-truth is a lie. But he says some things that sound true. For a lie to sound believable, it has to kind of, it has to implement parts of the truth. Because no one believes. If I told you that a week ago, I had beautiful long, luscious hair. You'd be like, That's ridiculous. You did not. Because you're clearly male pattern baldness. Like it's clearly a thing. Like, you wouldn't believe. You get what I'm saying? But for you to believe a lie it has to carry some semblance of truth. That's what the serpent does here. He's going to say things that are untrue. But he blends in some truth in them. They will learn the knowledge of good and evil, which they did not know before, but they won't be like God, they were already made in God's image in Genesis chapter one, we already know that. They won't be like God, I mean, their eyes will be open the text literally says, and their eyes were open. That part was true. But when he says you will surely not die. Do they die? Yes or no? Oh, hang on a second, though, because they ate. Eyes were opened. Both of their eyes were open. They knew that they were naked. It seems like they're still alive there. Verse six, they heard the sound of the Lord. It seems like they're still

alive. They're even in chapter four, the man had relations with his wife. It seems like still alive there. So, what are you talking about they died, they they're still alive. Obviously, you know the answer, like, they died first of all in the truest way. And that they were cut off from God from the source of life himself, not even the tree. They were cut off from God Himself. So, they were cut off and in committing that sin from the sources of life himself. We'll find that in Genesis chapter five, Adam will physically die later on. Like this will begin the chain of events that will lead to death but the in bringing sin into their lives they ended up bringing the spiritual death. Have you ever thought about this? Like for Israel being banished from the camp was a separation from life. That's how it's described in the law. If being banished from the camp of Israel was a sort of death, how much more so being banished from the Garden of Eden? You know what I mean? The shock that that would have been to them. The serpent uses half-truths in your life.

You ever thought to yourself, I can handle this sin? I'm not like them. Like the rest of y'all. Y'all fall into that, but I'm different. I'm special. You know what I mean? I've got control over what I'm doing. It doesn't affect me like it affects everybody else. I'm not like the rest of you, I can do these things. Because I can stop whenever I want to stop. By the way, if you have not stopped just because you're not in control, you think that you are but you're being foolish. People were overreacting about how bad this thing is, I get that it's a little bad. But you're overreacting about how bad you fill in the blank, how bad this thing is. Or you're overreacting about how much God actually cares about this thing. Maybe God doesn't care as much as you think he does. I can stop whenever I want to stop. You know what the, you know, the devil would love for you to feel that way. The devil wasn't done. He doesn't want you to think that he's in control. Because as soon as you think he's in control, you want to leave. He wants you to think that you're in control. That you're behind the driver's seat. Yeah, you're in sin. But you get to you get to do whatever it is you feel like doing. And it's an absolute deception. If you look at what the serpent tells the woman, the serpent will minimize the consequences of sin, while maximizing its reward. You notice, by the way, he says you will surely not die, but then immediately starts to talk about how good it will be, you will surely not die, but your eyes are going to be open, you're going to be like God, you'll know good and evil. Like how little time he spent talking about the bad and how much time you spent talking about the good. And the sin you commit, that's how it works. We spend very little time thinking about how bad the consequences are, we spend a lot more time thinking about the perceived good of the sin. God knows you're going to be like him. The serpent, by the way, makes the bad seem less dangerous, while making the good seem a lot more appealing. And every sin I think, again, works that way. Every sin seems harmless. It's a little lie. What's the big deal? This isn't affecting anyone; it's just affecting me. It's a little lust, it's not going to lead to anything worse. It's a little laziness is not like whenever you start doing the whole, it's not a big fill in the blank is not a big deal. You have failed to see just how serious sin is. Because any big sin that you think exists only exists because you allow those concessions with the little ones first. And what they fail to realize was how short the pleasure that sin was going to last. And how long the consequence was going to last.

Look, we don't know because the text doesn't tell us. Pure supposition here. How long do you think that fruit tasted good for them for? Let's I mean, let's imagine this like, some phenomenal like, it's like an hour later, they're still they still have the remnants of the taste. But it says pretty quickly their eyes were open. It says pretty quickly. They know they're naked. It says pretty quickly that they're hiding from each other. They're blaming each other. See how like it was in an instant they ate. And I'm assuming

just if it's like food like we've had, the taste is gone. Like you enjoy that lasts forever. I don't even know what I had for breakfast. That's not true. I do remember now. But the taste is gone. That's true for anything, the consequences last a little longer.

Here's the fifth idea here. The serpent will devalue the Word of God so that you will listen to him. Maybe this is one that I'm like, you can think of this as a stretch if you want to. But the serpent actually goes to the woman who says, "indeed did God say." Let me tell you, God did not "say." God commanded. In chapter two, it'll say he commanded. And then in fact, in chapter three and verse seven, and in verse 11, whenever God talks about the fruit, he doesn't say, hey, did you eat of the fruit of knowledge of good and evil? He could have called it that if he wanted to. But notice what he says in chapter three. And sorry, I lied to you, not verse seven. In chapter three and in verse 11, he says, "Who told you that you were naked?" And then he says, have you eaten from the tree, not of knowledge of good and evil, but have you eaten from the tree, which I commanded you not to eat? God's words are not sayings. God's words are commands. And now even if they were sayings, you need to listen to him, because he's God. But here's, here's what I think we allow ourselves, like, we allow ourselves to be deceived in and think we allow ourselves to think well, this is just "God's says". Jesus's words are Take it or leave it, if you want to do it, do it. If you don't want to do it, don't do it. It's up to you. And we have all these voices telling us all these things you have already all these scientists and all these fills in the blank and all these professors who will, you know, God says some things and that's fine. If you want to live a better life, that's okay. You don't have to do those things. Let me tell you something. If you are a servant of Jesus Christ, you absolutely do. Because there are commands, they're not suggestions. Anything Jesus says, are absolute commands that he's telling us to do. And whenever we allow ourselves to take God's words and take his commands and put them into sayings, like there's some Facebook posts, or like, there's some little Instagram quote, and you can kind of see and it's cute and you posted up for a day, like, you are devaluing God's word. Because he's not saying do this if you want to do it, he is telling you to absolutely do it. God's words are take or leave it.

And then here's maybe the biggest thing with what the serpent does here in Genesis three is the serpent actually offers them something he does not have to give them. If you notice, in the text, these three things he says, you'll have. He says in chapter three, and in verse five, "God knows the day that you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, you will be like God, knowing good and knowing evil." Three things, you'll be like God, knowing good and knowing evil. Again, you know, the text, you know the story. So simple basic math here, be like God knowing good and evil. Except in chapter one, the text says in chapter one, verse 27, that they were made in the image of God. So, you couldn't have offered them that because they already had that. In chapter one, it also says over and over again, and God saw that it was good. And God saw that it was good. And God saw that it was good. So, he couldn't offer them the knowledge of good because they already had that as well. So just like very simple math, three things he offers them to things they already had, he actually offers them how many things one thing. And the thing, the only thing that Satan has to offer them in Genesis, chapter three is the knowledge of evil. Because you can't offer them any good. And if you ever think that sin is offering you some good you are, again, allowing yourself to be deceived, because all good according to James, chapter one comes from God. So whatever you think the sin is, whatever good you think it's offering you, that's an absolute lie. Like, Satan cannot offer you good because he does not possess it. He's only wicked. It's not a good thing. There is no goodness in him, for him to give you. You can't give

somebody something you don't have. And whenever we are tempted to fall into some sin, we think that there is some good that's being offered. Sin entices us with an offer it can't make good on. It has never made good on. Sexual immorality, promises you intimacy and connection. And how does it leave you? Empty and unbroken. Lying promises you this idea that you're going to get away with not telling the truth. And in fact, what it actually leaves you with is afraid that you're going to be constantly found out and it leaves you like in constant doubt of everybody else's word. Because if you're lying to people, then you think that everybody else is also lying to you. You see, it doesn't actually leave you the good that you thought it was going to give you in the first place. Anger pretends to offer you some semblance of power. But in fact, whenever you give yourself too anger, everybody else controls you. Because they can do things that affect your emotions, and they can do things that affect your mood. You think that sin has some good to offer you? And it doesn't. Because again, every good and perfect good gift is from above. It comes from the Father of Lies. What the serpent actually did do to Adam and Eve is that he drastically ruined their quality of life.

We talked about maybe how long the taste of the fruit lasted. How good do you think that fruit would have tasted? Maybe a better question. How good would it have needed to taste for everything that to come afterwards? You ever thought about that? Again, like I don't know what your favorite thing to eat is. I don't know what the pleasure in life that you would like. If there's some pleasure that you're like, this is just the best pleasure in the world whatever you fill in that blank. But what would needed to happen to have made it worth it? When you think about they went from being like God, only knowing good to now knowing evil being like just again, I don't know, when they got kicked out of the garden, you think you think the fruit was still worth it? When Adam was laboring in the heat of the day, to provide for his family. You think he thought man that tree? I'm so glad I ate that. When Eve was giving birth and going through the pains of childbirth. You think she was thinking yes, I'm like God right now and I know good and evil when everything is great. When Cain takes Able's life. When Cain then gets marked and has to be sent off. You don't think they thought about that fruit. And even if it was good in that moment, how bitter was it for the rest of their lives? Because that's what sin does to your life. You fill in the blank for whatever you think the sin is that you think it's offering you some good in that moment and I promise you all it actually does is embitters the rest of your days. Because that's what it did to Adam and Eve.

So, you are in this fight. But in your fight, I want you to remember a few things. And Kenny mentioned the first one during his Lord's supper talk, so I won't spend too much time on it. But in your fight remember that in that day, there was a day that came, where Satan, I think, thought he was doing, again, when he did in Genesis chapter three. That he was enticing man to rebel against God, and thinking, Ah-ha, I have foiled God again. But in that day, Jesus disarmed all the powers of the devil. And I think that we believe that the powers of the devil is death. But it's greater than that. Because I believe in Jesus and trusting himself to the Father to live perfectly father and following the Father's will. He shows you that not just that he can conquer death, but he shows you how to live life conquering the devil, and the schemes of the devil and the temptations of the devil. And the way that you're going to conquer it is going to be through a cross, like your Lord did. I think we need to remember that the serpent is not all powerful. He cannot force you to do anything. He never has, by the way, which is encouraging, but then it's also kind of convicting. Because any sin that you've committed, you've

committed. And it's easier to blame it on the devil. He made me do it. He did not. I did it, because I wanted to do it. That's James chapter one.

You have to know that the serpent has been a loser. Like, that's what he is. He's a loser. And he has always been a loser. And he will always be a loser. And you read Revelation, you know what one of the big themes is in the book? Satan loses. What do you think is going to happen on the final day, when the Lord returns? You didn't say He's going to mass some army and really try - God is going to say, this is done. It's done-zo. And see, God will win for forever, and Satan will lose. We're not talking about figuring out what the winning side is. We're talking about aligning ourselves with the one who's already won. God has won. And I think about this periodically, you know why God wants you. I mean, the scriptures are very clear about the love that God has for you. The relationship that he wants to have with you, all the sacrifices he's made, because he wants you and you know why God wants you. Why does the Devil want you? He doesn't love you. So that can't be it. Like, why does he want you to sin? What does he gain in you falling? You need to think about it.

We've been talking a lot about Psalm 19 this weekend, and I feel like. And I think that the solution to Genesis chapter three is actually found in that text in Psalm 19, that we're going to sing in a moment. Because the psalm begins talking about the creations praising God. And the creation is talking about the goodness of God, but then it actually transitions in Psalm 19. In verse seven. The psalmist says, there's not just that the creation is perfect, and the creation does all that it's supposed to do, but that "the law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The judgments of the Lord are true. They are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold. Yes, then much fine gold. Sweeter also than honey, and the drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them, your servant is warned and in keeping them there is great reward." If you can, if you think about Genesis chapter three and read Psalm 19 in light of it. What Psalm 19 actually tells us is that where Adam and he failed, there wasn't so much in the tree, they failed in not listening and not valuing God's Word and God's command. And Psalm 19 will tell you that the law of the Lord is perfect, that the testimony of God is sure, that the precepts of God are right, that His commandments are pure, that fearing him is clean, that his judgments are true. And notice what they offer. What they offer is restoration. What Adam and Eve lost, God offers it again, through the same word that they disobeyed. They wanted to be wise. They wanted to be like God and be wise. That God offers you that today. But he does it in his testimony that even simple people get to be wise. That instead of the fear and the shame that they live with. That God's precepts, offer you joy. That they wanted their eyes to be enlightened and to be open. That God's commandments are pure, and that's what enlightens your eyes. That where they got kicked out and they ended up dying, fearing God is what allows you, where they didn't fear God, fearing God is what allows you to live forever. And that God's judgments are true and they're always going to be righteous. And in following them, there is great reward. Eve thought that the fruit was good for food. And maybe it was. And you might be dealing with some temptation that is, tastes good, whether it's physically or emotionally or intellectually, because every sin, again, has one of those appeals. My prayer, my hope is that you will learn to desire God's Word and God's will far more than any of that. That you would learn to see that it is sweeter than anything that this world is going to offer you. And then keeping God's word, there is great reward. If you're not a Christian this morning, you are, whether you acknowledge it

or not. Kind of like, again, you are under the power of the evil one. Just like all of us were. And on your own, you've got zero power to fight against them. You will always lose that battle. And you kind of already know. Like we've already mentioned multiple times Jesus of Nazareth came being God the Son. And He disarmed him. He disarmed the devil, He disarmed his power, He disarmed whatever power he thought he had at the cross, when He died. And he claimed victory. And then he rose three days later, to offer you that victory as well. And what he says you have to do now is be willing to die. Be willing to die to yourself. That the wages of your sin have only produced the fruit of death. But if you decide to live in Jesus Christ, to be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, to die with him to be raised. Then God's free gift to you, is eternal life. We can help you in any way please come forward as we stand and as we sing,