



In Genesis 1 and 2 we are introduced to a God who speaks and the stars are formed. At his command they fall into place. He hovers over the earth and the waters settle into position. Dry land appears and our tiny planet teems with life. He created us in His image and placed us in an idyllic setting, to live and thrive under his gracious rule as faithful stewards of all his hands had made.

We lived in complete harmony with God, with each other and with all of creation, but all of that comes to a screeching halt in the opening verses of chapter three. The one creature that had the most to lose, lost it all. We rejected God's rule in order to establish our own and as a result we live as a broken people in a fallen world, subject to the judgment of a righteous God. Paul describes the tragic consequences in Romans 5:12.

Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

QUESTIONING GOD'S COMMAND (vv. 1-3)

1. Read Genesis 2:15-17 and then compare it to Genesis 3:1.
 - a. How does the serpent distort God's initial command?
 - b. What is the net effect of the distortion?
 - c. What are some similar distortions that we hear today?

2. Read Genesis 3:2. While it is a bit more subtle, Eve also distorts God's command.
 - a. How does Eve distort God's command?
 - b. Why do you think Eve added her little rule to God's command?
 - c. What are some rules we tend to add to God's commands?
 - d. What is the benefit to some of these rules?
 - e. What is the danger of adding our own rules?
 - f. How do we play into the enemies hands when we make up our own rules?

QUESTIONING GOD'S CHARACTER (vv. 4-5)

1. Ironically, Adam and Eve already had a working knowledge of good and evil. They knew that it was good for them to work and take care of the garden and that it was wrong for them to disobey God's command.
 - a. What kind of knowledge of good and evil was the serpent offering them?
 - b. How is this different from the knowledge of good and evil we gain through God's word?
 - c. Why were they better off not having the kind of knowledge of good and evil the serpent offered them?
2. In another twist of irony, they were also like God. They had been created in His image. In effect the serpent was offering them the opportunity to usurp the role of God and to rule their own lives.
 - a. What are some ways we usurp God's role as the rightful ruler of our lives?
 - b. What happens when we do?

AN IMPULSIVE RESPONSE (v. 6)

1. Read 1 John 2:15-17 and compare it to Genesis 3:6. How does Eve's response mirror the temptations that John warns us against?
2. How do these same temptations show up in our daily lives?
3. How did Jesus respond to similar temptations?
4. How should we respond?

THE TENDENCY TO COVER AND HIDE (vv. 7-8)

1. What are some things we tend to hide from one another?
2. What are some things we even have trouble admitting to God?
3. How does the gospel enable us to come out of hiding and relate to God and each other differently?