

## Introduction

The name of our church is the Connection Church. Our vision is to connect people to God and to one another. Why is there a need for that vision? In 2 Corinthians 5, Jesus gave us the ministry of reconciliation. Why is there a need for reconciliation? Why did Jesus give us that ministry? Why did God make us His ambassadors? Albert Einstein is recognized as one of the greatest problem solvers ever. He is quoted as saying, *“If I were given one hour to save the planet, I would spend 59 minutes defining the problem and one minute resolving it.”*<sup>1</sup> Today’s message is about defining the problem. It is about the Great Disconnect. It is the reason that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation. It is the reason that God has called us to connect people to Him and to one another.

(2 Corinthians 5:18-20) “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, {19} namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. {20} Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

In a message on November 26, called Created To Be Connected, I shared four different problem solving methods. There was the Insight Method that uses past experiences and makes some assumptions to find a quick answer. There is the Heuristic Method that uses rules of thumb. There is the Trial and Error Method. Finally, there is the Algorithm Method, which takes longer, but the solutions are very accurate. I shared the five steps to the Algorithm Method in that message. The first step is to identify the problem. In our message today, we will identify the problem. The fifth and final step of the Algorithm Method is to document the lessons learned. In our message today, we will look at the lessons learned so that we do not repeat some of the errors that Adam and Eve made.

This week we move into Genesis 3, and I am calling it the great disconnect. Up until now, other than Adam being alone, everything has been going great. I believe his “aloneness” was there intentionally to let us know the need and importance of relationships with one another. Adam has fellowship with God, and now he has a wife and companion to fellowship with. Things are going great. And then we come to chapter three, and sin enters the world and causes a great disconnect. Isaiah prophesied that our iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. Sin disconnected or separated us from God. Not only did Adam’s sin separate him from God, the sin nature was passed down through Adam’s seed to all generations. Therefore, Paul writes in Romans 3, “for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” The reason that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin was that he did not have the sin nature passed down through the seed of man. There was a great disconnect and that is what we are looking at today. There are five parts to our chapter today. First, we will look at the temptation. Second, we will look at the fall. Third, we will look at the various responses. Fourth, we will look at the consequences. Finally, we will look at God’s Provision.

(Isaiah 59:2) “But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.”

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<sup>1</sup> <https://meetmaestro.com/resources/blog/the-abcs-the-einstein-method-to-problem-and-needs-identification>

## I. The Temptation

First, lets read the first five verses and look at the temptation.

(Genesis 3:1-5) “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" {2} The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; {3} but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" {4} The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! {5} "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

### A. Two Sources of Temptations

When God placed Adam in the garden, He gave him specific instructions. He set boundaries. *“The Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘from any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.’”*<sup>2</sup> The fact that God placed something in the garden that Adam was not allowed to eat does not mean that God tempted them. James tells us that when we are tempted, we are not to blame God. God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. We are tempted and enticed by our own lusts, desires, or passions. These are internal temptations. In 1 John 2:16, John identifies three internal sources of temptations: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life.

(James 1:13-15) “Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. {14} But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. {15} Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

(1 John 2:16) “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

The second source of temptations is external. In our passage, it is Satan that tempts Eve. When Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for forty days, He was tempted by the devil. Satan is well aware of our desires, and uses those to tempt us. He tried to tempt Jesus with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. So, when we are tempted, we have to be aware of both of these sources.

(Luke 4:1-2) “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness {2} for forty days, being tempted by the devil.”

### B. We Choose to Obey or to Sin

God set boundaries, and He also gave Adam and Eve a free will. They were not puppets on a string. They had the ability to make choices in life. They could choose to obey God or they could choose to disobey. God said there were going to be consequences if they disobeyed. He said, “for

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<sup>2</sup> Genesis 2:16-17

in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” When we sin, we cannot blame others for our sins. We chose to do what we did. Quite frequently, particularly in counseling, that people will say that he made me do it or she made me do it. I tell them no, it was not the other person that made you do it. You chose to do it. Even if someone else does something wrong to you, you do not have to sin. Someone may put you down, but that does not mean that you have to yell at them or do something back at them. Their sin is their sin, but our sin is our sin.

The conversation that takes place is between Eve and the serpent. We have to ask the question, where is Adam in all of this? God gave the commandment to Adam, and he should have been there, but he was not. We need to be able to stand up to temptations on our own. It is nice to have someone there with us, but we need to be able to overcome temptations.

### **C. Sin and Temptation are Usually Progressive**

We see in James that temptation and sin are progressive. James uses the analogy of childbirth. There is an initial temptation or conception. Second, there is a gestation period where the temptation is enticed by our lusts and grows. Finally, the temptation gives birth to sin. James does not stop there; he says when sin is accomplished it brings forth death.

(James 1:14-15) “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. {15} Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

### **D. Overcoming Temptations**

In our passage the initial temptation was introduced to Eve by the serpent. The serpent asks Eve a question. “Indeed, has God said, ‘you shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” Many temptations are going to start with a thought like this. Satan gets people to question what God has said. He tries to create doubt. The best response here would be to stand on God’s word and stop the conversation with the devil. James tells us that if we submit to God, and resist the devil, he will flee from us. Eve should have submitted to God’s commandment to them, and resisted the devil. According to the word, the devil would have fled if she had submitted and resisted. But Eve answered and kept the conversation going.

(James 4:7) “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

Next, the serpent replied by saying, “you surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” He contradicted the word of the Lord. First, he asked questions to create doubt. Now, he contradicts what God said. Part of our resisting the devil is to stand on God’s word. When a thought comes that contradicts the word of God, we must cast it out. In 2 Corinthians 10:5, Paul tells us to destroy speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. This thought that they would not die was against the knowledge of God. Eve should have destroyed that thought. She should have taken it captive and destroyed it.

(2 Cor 10:5) “We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,”

Why is it that Eve did not do this? Why is it that many Christians do not destroy speculations and thoughts that are against the knowledge of God? I think there are several reasons. First, many people are ignorant about the spiritual battle. Adam and Eve were sinless until now, but that does not mean that they knew all things. They were made in the likeness of God, but they were not God and did not know all things. I believe that Eve was ignorant about the schemes of the devil. I believe she was ignorant of how to deal with the devil. I also believe that many Christians today are losing battles because of ignorance. They don't know how to fight the battles. Rule One in warfare is submit to God. Rule Two is to resist the devil. Then, we need to know how to resist. We resist by standing firm on God's word. We resist by taking those thoughts captive and destroying anything that contradicts God's word.

I believe that Eve did have one thing going for her. She obviously knew what God had commanded them about eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Unfortunately, many believers do not know what God's word has to say about many things. As believers, we need to have a good reading program, so that we become familiar with the Bible. Second, we need a good study program. When we study God's word, we gain more knowledge and understanding. We need to meditate on God's word. It is through meditation that we gain even more understanding and insights. Many personal applications of the word come as we meditate on Scripture. We also need to memorize Scripture.

When Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, there are three things that stand out. First, He was led around by the Spirit in that time of temptation. Paul said in Galatians that if we are led by the Spirit we will not carry out the deeds of the flesh. It is important to be led by the Spirit. We need the leading of the Holy Spirit in times of temptation. To be led by the Spirit you must set your mind on things above.

(Luke 4:1-2) "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness {2} for forty days, being tempted by the devil."

(Galatians 5:16-17) "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. {17} For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

Second, Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days. Fasting and prayer are two very important weapons in spiritual warfare. Fasting is an excellent way of focusing on the Lord. Our spiritual senses are more in tune with God. Many people today fast for physical reasons, like cleansing their body of toxins. But, the real value in fasting is not physical; it is spiritual.

Third, Jesus quoted Scripture back to the devil. He had memorized Scripture and knew Scripture. He was prepared for the battle that took place in the wilderness. Many Christians are just not ready, and so it is difficult to destroy speculations and thoughts that are against God's word if you do not know God's word. We must know God's word in order to do spiritual battle.

(Luke 4:3-4) "And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." {4} And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"

Today, we have a definite advantage over Eve. We have the Word of God given to us. We have the principles of the Word of God. We can know God's ways, and we can also know how to overcome temptation. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul gives us a great Scripture to help us in time of temptation. He said, "*No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.*"

There are several things to learn from that one verse. First, any temptation that we face is common to man. We are not the only one that has faced it or will face it. Second, God is faithful and He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able. We have a great God who watches over us and protects us. Third, God will provide a way of escape. We need to be looking for the way of escape when we are facing temptation. Eve should have been looking for a way of escape.

Let's look at another example. When temptation was in front of Joseph, he ran. Scripture tells us to flee from immorality<sup>3</sup>, and that is what Joseph did when Potiphar's wife tempted him.<sup>4</sup> He did not entertain the thought and let it entice him; he fled. He made no provision for the flesh. This corresponds to what Paul wrote in Romans 13:14, "*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.*" When tempted, we should not hang around make provision for the flesh. We should not entertain the temptations and be enticed by the lusts. We need to remove the temptation or remove ourselves from the situation. Another example is in the area of alcoholism, Solomon gives us the way of escape from wine. He said not to linger over it or look on it.<sup>5</sup>

Sometimes the way of escape is to avoid compromising situations. In Proverbs 7:25, Solomon said not to take the way of the adulterous woman. Keep away from her. If you find you are in one, flee at once. Billy Graham has lived his life with integrity, and he avoided compromising situations. He even avoided any opportunity that the enemy might have to accuse him of any wrongdoing. For example, if he was the only one on an elevator and a woman got in with him, he would get out and wait for the next elevator. He was very careful, avoiding compromising situations.

In 1 Peter 5:8-9, we are warned that our adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. We are told to resist him, firm in our faith..." We should not be surprised about temptations. The devil is looking for an opportune time to try and devour us. We must be alert and sober. And, we must resist him, being firm in our faith. We need to use the weapons that God has given us to fight these battles.

(1 Peter 5:8-9) "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. {9} But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

## II. The Fall

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<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor 6:18

<sup>4</sup> Gen 39:12

<sup>5</sup> Proverbs 23:30-31

In Genesis 3:6, the fall takes place. First, the woman saw that the tree was good for food. That was never the issue. It may have been good organic certified food, but Adam and Eve were commanded not to eat that particular food. It was off limits. But, Eve chose to eat the forbidden food. Adam had a choice when Eve gave him the forbidden fruit, and he chose to disobey God and eat the fruit.

(Genesis 3:6) “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.”

Second, she saw that it was a delight to the eyes. Again, the fact that it was delightful was not the issue. The issue was obedience and God had commanded them not to eat, even if it was a delight to the eyes. Sin is usually a delight to the eyes. It entices. It always looks good.

The beer commercials always make it look like people are having a good time. They don't show all the accidents from drunk driving. They don't show the divorces and marital problems from drugs and alcohol. They don't show the spouse abuse from alcohol. They don't show all the people in prisons across the country. Ninety-five percent of people incarcerated are there for drug and alcohol related charges. But, it did not start that way. It started as a delight to the eyes. It looked fun, sociable, and pleasurable.

Eve also bought into the lie that it would make her wise. Real wisdom is turning away from evil, not partaking of it. Real wisdom is pure and peaceable. Real wisdom is fearing the Lord. When Eve bought into the lies that this was delightful and would make her wise like God, she abandoned any fear of the Lord that she had and sinned.

Notice something else that she did; she gave it to her husband with her and he ate. Sin has a way of spreading. As a father, I want my children to walk in freedom. The Scriptures teach that the sins of the father are passed down to the third and fourth generation. I don't want my sins passed down. Therefore, I repent of my sins and put a stop in those generational sins and curses. Solomon taught that “*a righteous man who walks in in his integrity, how blessed are his sons after him.*”<sup>6</sup> I want my sons and daughters blessed, so I try to walk in integrity. Eve was not thinking about her descendants. Sin usually thinks only of self.

### III. The Responses

Next, we will look at the responses. Adam and Eve tried to cover up. Next, they tried to hide. Then, they tried to shift the blame away from themselves.

(Genesis 3:7-13) “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. {9} Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" {10} He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." {11} And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the

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<sup>6</sup> Proverbs 20:7

tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" {12} The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." {13} Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

#### **A. Cover Up**

The first thing that happened when they sinned was their eyes were opened. They knew that they were naked. If you remember Genesis 2, they were naked and unashamed. Now, they are naked and very ashamed. They were clothed with the glory and righteousness of God in Genesis 2. Now, they were not clothed in His glory and righteousness. They had sinned and nakedness here refers to a sinful condition. When they saw that they were naked, the first thing that they did was to try and cover up. They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. The natural thing for us to do is to try and cover our sins so that others cannot see our nakedness. When David sinned with Bathsheba, he brought in Uriah the Hittite and tried to have him go home to be with his wife. He was trying to cover up his sin. That is the fleshly response to sin.

#### **B. Hide from God**

The second response was to try and hide. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden and they hid themselves from God. Guess what, they could not hide from God, and we cannot hide from Him either. God sees and knows everything. There is no way to hide from God.

#### **C. Blame Others**

Notice that God confronts Adam first. Even though it was Eve that first ate the forbidden fruit, God confronts Adam. He was the spiritual leader and had spiritual responsibility for his family. The buck stops here. He should have taken responsibility for what they did. Good leaders accept responsibility for their actions and the actions of those under their authority. When God confronted Adam, he did not take responsibility. Instead, he blamed God and Eve. He said, "*the woman You gave to be with me...*" After blaming God, then he said, "*she gave me from the tree, and I ate.*" Our fleshly response is to cover up, hide, and blame others.

Next, God confronts Eve about eating the forbidden fruit. Notice her response is essentially the same as Adam's. She said, "*The serpent deceived me, and I ate.*" The serpent did deceive her, but it was not the serpent who ate the forbidden fruit. It was Eve who chose to sin. We have to take responsibility for our actions.

### **IV. The Consequences**

#### **A. Consequences for the serpent**

(Genesis 3:14-15) "The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; {15} And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

The first consequence given out were for the serpent. God said to the serpent, “cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field. He made the serpent go on his belly and to eat dust all the days of his life. Second, He also put enmity between him and the woman, and her seed and his seed. Out of this enmity or hostility, the snake would bruise men, and men would bruise the snake.

## **B. Consequences for Eve**

(Genesis 3:16) “To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you.”

Next, God gave the consequences to Eve. First, He said that He would greatly multiply her pain in childbirth. Second, He said that her desire would be for her husband and that he would rule over her. These consequences are in addition to the spiritual death or separation that took place, and the physical death that would also follow. These are in addition to the burden of guilt and shame.

## **C. Consequences for Adam**

(Genesis 3:17-19) “Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. {18} "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; {19} By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

Then, God turned to Adam, and gave the consequences for him. He said, “Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you...by the sweat of your face you will eat bread.” Then, He said, “till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” In addition to hard labor, God says that Adam will return to dust from which he was made. God had promised Adam that if they ate, they would die, and not God is giving the consequences He had warned them of earlier.

## **V. God’s Provision**

God is a righteous and holy God. He could not allow sin to remain in His presence. He could not ignore sin; He had to deal with it. But, there is another side of God; He is loving and compassionate. God made a temporary provision for their sin, and He also made a permanent provision for sin.

### **A. God’s temporary provision for their sin**

When God saw that they had sinned and were naked and ashamed, He made garments of skin for them. The man-made efforts to cover their sins were ineffective. Only God can cover our sins,

and He covered them with blood. He sacrificed an animal and made garments of skin for Adam and Eve and clothed them.

(Genesis 3:20-21) “Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. {21} The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.”

The animal sacrifices were a covering for sin, but they were not a permanent covering. The sacrificial lambs that were offered were a foreshadow of Lamb of God that ultimately cover the sins of men. John identified Jesus as the Lamb of God. He said, “*Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*”<sup>7</sup> In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he wrote, “*for Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.*”<sup>8</sup> The garments of skin were a foreshadow of the permanent sacrifice that Jesus the Messiah would eventually make as a permanent covering of sin.

This was all part of God's plan. The garments of skin were a temporary covering; the permanent covering would come later on. It was all part of God's plan. In Acts 2 Peter preached that Jesus was delivered over and crucified according to the predetermined plan of God<sup>9</sup>

When Adam died, he would go to a place called Sheol, which is the place of the dead. In the New Testament, which was written in Greek, the dead went to a place called Hades. They could not go into heaven as there was not a permanent covering or provision for their sins. They were in a place of waiting until the permanent provision for sin was made. When Jesus died, He went to Hades, the place of the dead. David had prophesied in Psalm 16:10 that God would not abandon the Messiah in Sheol, or allow His bones to decay. In Peter's sermon at Pentecost, he quotes Peter and said that Jesus was not abandoned in Hades and His bones did not decay. God had raised Him from the dead.<sup>10</sup>

## **B. God's permanent provision for sin**

(Genesis 3:22-24) “Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— {23} therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. {24} So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.”

God could not allow a sinful man to live forever. God's plan was to remove the sins of men and then allow them to live eternally with Him. So, God removed Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden and stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life. When Jesus was on the cross, He said, “It is finished.”<sup>11</sup> He had paid for the sins of man. “*He who knew no sin was made sin our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in*

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<sup>7</sup> John 1:29

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:7

<sup>9</sup> Acts 2:23

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:27, 2:31

<sup>11</sup> John 19:30

*Him.*"<sup>12</sup> In Jesus, we are the righteousness of God and we can live eternally with Him. Jesus is the tree of life that we partake of and live eternally.

One final thing, when Adam sinned, men could not go into God's presence and glory. When they built the tabernacle, there was an inner court where only the priest could go in once a year. However, when Jesus was crucified and the payment of sin had been made, the veil was ripped from the top down. God had removed the veil, which meant that man could now go into His presence. We have free access to the Father at all times because of Christ's payment for our sins. Our sins separated or disconnected us from fellowship with God. Christ's payment for our sins restored the connection and the fellowship.

Let's pray.

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<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21