

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



Lessons Learned in the Garden of Eden

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 1:26-31 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Genesis 2:15-18; 3:4, 8, 24
Numbers 32:23 | Romans 6:23 | Hebrews 9:27

► SUMMARY

The Bible is an amazing book given to us by God because He wants us to know how to live, who He is, and why we desperately need Him in order to deal with our sin and find peace and joy.

Genesis, the first book in the Bible, gives a foundation for everything else in God's Word. Within the first three chapters are vital lessons God wants us to learn.

► SERMON POINTS

Genesis 1:26-31 records the account of the creation of mankind. Human beings are separate from everything else God created because we have been made in the image of Him. There are three qualities that describe how we bear God's image.

- **Personality.** God is a person, and each of us likewise has a personality.
- **Morality.** We also have an inner understanding regarding right and wrong.
- **Spirituality.** We can relate to God in a spiritual way.

Lessons Learned in the Garden of Eden

The first three chapters of Genesis teach us valuable principles about God and tell us of His warnings regarding the consequences of sin.

- **The Lord is a God of love, creativity, beauty, and generosity.** All these characteristics are displayed by His creation and His care and provision for us.

■ **God intends for us to be productive in our work.**

According to Genesis 2:15, Adam's job was to cultivate and keep the Garden of Eden. God also said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him" (v. 18), and He created Eve. Together they were to complete what the Lord had intended for them to accomplish, and this is still God's will for us today.

■ **God is protective.** The Garden of Eden was filled with fruitful trees from which Adam and Eve could freely eat, but there was one tree in the middle of the Garden, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," from which they were forbidden to eat (2:16-17). God gave them a choice to love and obey Him, and because He loved them, He also warned them of the disastrous consequences of disobedience—"In the day that you eat from it you shall surely die" (v. 17).

■ **Listening to Satan is always costly.** God gives us principles by which to live, but if, like the first couple, we listen to the devil, we'll pay a terrible price.

■ **Satan is a deceitful and cunning liar.** He directly contradicted God's warning to Adam and Eve by saying, "You surely shall not die!" (Gen. 3:4). Although thousands of years have passed since this event, the devil has not changed. He is still a liar who contradicts what the Lord says.

■ **God always keeps His Word.** He had warned Adam that death would result from disobedience, and He kept His Word. Although Adam and Eve didn't die right away, an internal spiritual death took place when they ate the forbidden fruit. God's Word will prove true in our lives as well. When we choose to disobey Him, our desire for Him and dependence on Him begins to die.

■ **We cannot hide from God.** After Adam and Eve sinned, they tried to hide among the trees when they heard the

sound of the Lord walking in the Garden (Gen. 3:8).

However, no one can hide from God because He is present everywhere and sees everything. Sin produces shame and a desire to hide, but God loved us enough to send His Son to die for our sins so we could be forgiven.

■ **Disobedience always carries with it pain and disappointment.** The devil told Eve that eating from the forbidden tree would make her become like God, but she soon discovered that she didn't gain anything except shame and disappointment. Now she and Adam were separated from the Lord and would experience the pain and suffering of sin. She learned that sin never truly satisfies because without the Lord, no one can ultimately be happy.

■ **Regret does not erase the penalty of sin.** Immediately after they disobeyed God, Adam and Eve regretted their choice. First they felt shame and tried to cover themselves with fig leaves, but that didn't fix the problem. There was nothing they could do to erase the penalty for their sin, no matter how sorry they were or what they did to try to make amends.

■ **There are often surprising consequences for sin.** Adam and Eve had only known a perfect environment and the satisfaction of all their desires and needs. But after they disobeyed the Lord, their lives changed dramatically in unexpected ways. Although they didn't immediately die, they lost their innocence and were driven out of the Garden by God. Even though we may not experience God's judgment at the time of our sin, it will come, and sometimes it will be in surprising ways.

■ **The penalty for sin cannot be avoided by blaming others.** When Adam and Eve were confronted by God, Adam blamed Eve, and she blamed the serpent. However, God holds us each responsible for our own sin no matter what the other person's role may have been.

■ **The desire to please others can be painfully costly.** Adam's desire to please Eve by eating the forbidden fruit plunged him and the entire human race into sin and cost him the loss of his home in the Garden. When we're tempted to disobey God to please another person, we must remember that we will one day stand before Him to give

an account of our lives.

■ **Sin is costly.** As a loving Father who doesn't want His children to wreck their lives, the Lord warned Adam and Eve of the consequences of disobedience. But after they sinned, the God whom they'd only known as their good Creator and Provider drove them out of the Garden and stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3:24). Their choice to sin cost them everything, and all of humanity has suffered as a result.

Sin always has consequences. Adam and Eve felt the immediate effects of sin, but God allowed Adam to live past the age of nine hundred. He never stopped loving them, and He doesn't stop loving us either. He sent His Son into the world to die on the cross to atone for mankind's sin—all the way from Adam and Eve's first sin to those that are yet future. When we believe in Christ, we can have the forgiveness of sins and a changed life.

► RESPONSE

- How has God loved and protected you with warnings regarding sin? Have you ever ignored His warnings? What happened as a result?
- What has sin cost you? How have you dealt with your sin? Have you turned to Jesus in faith and received full and complete forgiveness?

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