

## A Fresh Look at an Old Problem

Shelley Salthouse, March 2014, (used with permission.)  
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### ***A Fresh Look at an Old Problem***

-We are living in dangerous times, both physically and spiritually.

-We live as Lot did, in a secular culture that is in rebellion to everything God has spoken, a culture that has pulled down every moral protection, and challenged every traditional value that built our families and defended our faith.

***-There are non negotiable truths for which we must contend!***

Genesis 2:8-9, 16-17 and 3:1-7

This passage is pre-history, and yet the content is as new as today's newspaper!

Let's take a fresh look in the context of the then... and the now!

Some see this passage as literal, some view it as metaphorical.....

**Chapter 3:1-7      We read here 3 statements that changed the world forever!**

Man moved from	image – bearing, innocence before God, and intimacy with God.
To	pain, separation from God, and death.

- 1) 3:1 **A QUESTION**                      that challenged God's Word,
- 2) 3:4 **ALIE**                                that challenged God sovereignty
- 3) 3:5 **AN ACCUSATION**                that challenged God's character

#### ***1. A Question that challenged the absolute authority of God's Word.***

**'Did God really say?'**

"There are no absolutes, no one unchanging reference point of truth. The suggestion was that God never meant it, that truth is as you determine for yourself."

When Satan hears Eve's uncertain and inaccurate answer, he boldly moves to an outright lie.

#### ***2 A lie that challenged God's absolute sovereignty....***

**'You will not die...'**

"There will be no consequences... make your own decisions. Be free."

(and while it was true Eve was free to make her choice, she could not choose the consequences. )

Satan filled her head with the *lie of delusional freedom, and away from the cost she would pay.*

And yet the truth was they lost ***everything*** – (because that is always the plan!)

The truth is we are not master of our own destiny, and denying God's sovereignty is like saying gravity doesn't exist, and then jumping off Mt. Everest!!

#### ***3. An accusation that challenged God's character .***

**"for God knows that when you eat of that tree, your eyes will be opened, and you shall be as gods..."**

'He does not love you, he wants to keep control over you. He is denying you what you deserve. You can do better on your own.

"Throw away restraint... licence is liberty!!"

**This passage is important for us to get a hold of, for just as God never changes, neither does the plans of the enemy! And today the age old lie continues to do its evil destructive work in the hearts of men.**

*Solomon said, there is nothing new under the sun... Ecclesiastes 1:9.*

**We understand that we live in a post Christian world.** A world that:

- Sanctions sin,
- Calls evil good and good evil,
- Does not tolerate restraint or denial.
- A world that has rejected God.

We understand that when man rejects God, he rejects the belief of absolute truth, and accepts that truth is subjective, cultural and generational.

*Every man doing that which is right in his own eyes....Judges 21:25. (Judges- Israel had no king..)*

**A world that has evicted the sacred!**

**But today we are seeing even God's people being deceived.**

**Derek Prince** once said 'it is fine if the boat is in the water, but beware when the water gets into the boat.'!  
When the church allows the sin of disbelief into the boat of faith, it will sink!

1. The western church preaches a '**me-centred**' gospel, when the truth is, the life of a Christian must be God centred.

*Life is no longer about us!!*

Whatever happened to *Galatians 2:20* '**It is no longer I that lives, but Christ.....?**'

*1 Corinthians 6:20* '**We are not our own, we have been redeemed, bought with precious blood of Christ,**'

We belong to a different kingdom, we obey a different king, and yet we see all around us within the body of Christ confusion, and compromise because we have like Eve, been uncertain of what God has said, accepting the concept of self determination.

We are not free to change the apostle's doctrine, to suit human comfort, or appeal to a secular world in the name of 'relevance'!

2. **The Word has been taken out** of the pulpit and replaced with good ideas.

*Yet Paul instructs Timothy to devote himself to teaching the Word, and the study of the gospel.2Timothy 4:1-5.*

*The Bible is the LIVING WORD of a loving God, 2 Timothy 3:16 all scripture is God breathed, .....*

Tozer said a man is not called to fill the church, but to fill the pulpit!

3. **Christian morality** often looks alarmingly like the world's morality.

*Yet Paul warns us in Romans 12, 'Do not be conformed to the image of this world, but .....*

*Accommodating compromise that is so often made in an effort to be relevant, leads to sin !*

*Call it what it is, It will lead to death!*

**And the non-negotiable truths** of the Christian faith are being re-examined, negotiated and redefined. (eg. The reality of heaven and hell). Paul's letters to Timothy are full of such warnings.

- 2 Tim 4: 2-4 "Preach the Word... The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..."
- 2 Tim 2:15, 2Corinthians 4:2 Paul warns us not to handle the Word of God deceitfully...
- 2 Timothy 3:16 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching....'

Whatever happened to 'Immortal, invisible, God only wise!!!' 1Timothy 1:17

**The Truth is, when man disagrees with God, he is always wrong!** John 14:6, John 16:13, John 17:17, 1John 5:6.

### So why is this?

Let's look again at the text...Genesis 3.....

- 1- We **do not know what the Word says!** We do not search the scriptures for ourselves, with diligence.

We too easily accept the opinion of others. "Search the Scriptures daily to see if it is true." Acts 17:11.

- 2- We have **lost the sense of God's sovereign love and holiness.** Like Lot, our conscience can become seared.

- 3- We are **tempted to believe that boundaries are bondages**, and fail to understand that God is protecting us from consequences.

**THE PROVISION WAS THERE ALL THE TIME!! 2:9, cf 3:6** Fullness of life was to be found within Eden, not outside. Everything we need to live fully functioning, totally fulfilled in every area, socially, intellectually mentally, physically was provided in the trees already planted!

Wisdom was found in relationship with the only wise God and all was possible without moral independence, and the unspeakable cost they would pay.

We have seen **3 accusations of the enemy to destroy.**

Let's now look at **3 truths of God to restore.**

- 1) **We can indeed utterly depend on the absolute truth of God's Word!** John 17:17.

- In Matthew chapter 4 we read how Jesus dealt with the temptation of the enemy ...

'It is written, it is written, it is written.....' there was **no negotiating** with Satan.

If it was good enough for Jesus it is good enough for us!

As the last Adam, and the second Man, 1Corinthians 15:45,47, He took back what the first Adam had lost....that was why the temptation happened. It wasn't about Jesus, it was about us!

He was the perfect expression of God.

-John 14:6 '**I am the way and the truth and the life.** '

-John 1:1-3 **Jesus is the Word of God, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.**

God's absolute truth is unchanging, because He is unchanging! Malachi 3:6.

- 2) **God is indeed sovereign!**

'I am the Alpha and the Omega'. Revelation 1:11.

Isaiah 43:13 ... 'I am the Lord, above me there is no other, and when I act, who can reverse it?'

-There is blessing in obedience, and death in disobedience.

**He is the 'I am ..'** Exodus 3:14.

3) ***God is indeed good!***

-His character is revealed in the OT names that He revealed Himself to be, to the Israelites, eg *Genesis 22:14, Judges 6:24*, and revealed to us in Christ in the NT. *John 14:9 'He who has seen me has seen the Father'*

We can know him intimately and confidently, *John 17:3*.

He is all--love, all-mercy, all-faithful, all-justice, all-wise and his plans for his creation are blessing, abundant life and goodness.

***HIS CHARACTER AND HIS WORD are our GPS, our God Positioning System, and the starting point of all journeying to find truth.***

**-We may have to challenge some misbelieving** we have held, but we never need to change the truth!.....

**-We cannot return to the pre-fallen state, we are no longer innocent**, we have changed.

-But God has not, ***Hebrews 13:8***, He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

-In Christ we have been restored to intimacy, through the Holy Spirit. *John 15:7-11*.

-Called once again to bear his image . What a privilege !! *Romans 8:29, 2Corinthians 3:18, 2Corinthians 5:17*.

**How can a dying world know there is a living God unless they see Him in His Body?-**

**In this age of confusion and doubt in both the world and the church**, may we be people that

- 1 Know the Word
- 2 Trust his sovereignty
- 3 Know his character