

# Talk It Over

The Story of Reality  
(Week 3)  
Reality Is Broken

## SMALL TALK

1. What food do you find especially tempting? Or When was the last time you played hide and seek games?

## VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Genesis 3:1-13** Who is the serpent? (see Revelation 12:9; 20:2) Why do you think the serpent mixes truth with lies? Did Jesus believe him to be a real creature or mythical parable? (Matthew 4:10; John 8:44; 12:31)
3. Which lie(s) of the serpent did Adam and Eve bite before biting the fruit?
4. Why did they cover themselves? (3:7) Why did they hide? (3:8, 10)
5. Why did God who knows everything ask “Where are you?” (3:9) Why did he ask, what he asked in 3:11 and 3:13?

## GETTING PERSONAL

6. What do you do when you find yourself “naked” (caught in a sin) before others?
7. What is your relationship with God like? Is it very personal and very close, or more second hand like knowing about someone? What might help move you closer?

## MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

8. How do you wish to respond to the choices that God is giving you? How are you most frequently tempted and what can you do about it?

November 13, 2023

## The Story of Reality (Week 3) Then Reality Was Broken

### REVIEW:

- Everyone observes REALITY and is trying to make sense of it.
- Everyone has formed or is forming their worldview.
- Everyone is trying to put the puzzle pieces together in an attempt to answer the hard questions we have like
  - **Is there a God?**
  - **How can I know?**
  - **If there is a God, why is the world so messed up?**

**OUR ADVANTAGE:** (puzzle video clip loop) We have an advantage piecing these puzzle pieces together because God gave us the box top picture in THE STORY OF REALITY revealed in history, and recorded and bound together in history.

The beginning of the story introduces the main characters, (like all great stories do). We've already learned from the beginning of the story that...

### I. God is a PERSONAL and RELATIONAL God

- God is not an impersonal "Force" for us to channel for our purposes.
- God created us for a relationship together with him for his purposes.

God designed human beings for an intimate face to face relationship with himself for the purpose of reflecting God's image (his character) to the rest of creation.

### QUESTION: If this was God's design, WHAT HAPPENED!?

1. (week 1) Reality Is puzzling
2. (week 2) Reality Was "Very Good"
3. **(THIS WEEK) THEN REALITY WAS BROKEN**

When we look at the world today, it's a strange puzzle to fit together. It looks like pile of contradictions:

People are wonderful. People are broken.  
People are noble. People are cruel.  
People have built-in worth. People are evil.

Some worldviews explain this by denying that there is such a thing as moral good and moral evil. We are all simply masses of matter evolving and surviving.

Most people bristle at this idea. Isn't it SELF-EVIDENT that we have choices? Isn't it SELF-EVIDENT that some choices are good and some choices are bad?

Every human culture has built within it the sense of ought, and ought not. Where does that come from if we are but a mass of highly evolved matter? We all feel like these choices matter beyond mere survival.

Besides...here is another odd thing! Everyone occasionally asks this question:

## II. What Is MY PROBLEM?!

- How is it possible that the very thing we don't want to do, we sometimes do? Haven't we all experienced this?
- Many worldviews have difficulty dealing with this one. But not our Story of Reality!

In our story, we were created in God's Image, and made to reign and rule in partnership with a HOLY GOD. And this God said, was "VERY GOOD".

But then that "Very GOOD" reality "Broke". This is that Story! In OUR STORY, the "PLOT THICKENS" early in the story!

*Genesis 2:15–17 (NIV) The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup>And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

None of the other creatures were given what we were given.

- A unique relationship with God
- The privileged imprinting of God's image on our souls ,
- A divine purpose,
- And freedom of choices,
- And with this freedom and privilege, great responsibility!

**God designed us so that we love life most when we love God to the utmost.**

This however, requires the ability to choose. Love is a choice. Loving God is a choice, not something God makes us do. If he made us do it, we would not be human, but robotic reactions to his program. That is not a love relationship.

God wants it to be *our choice* to respond with trust and love based on who he is and what he has done.

**GOD IS ALL-POWERFUL!** But what does that mean? It does not mean he has he is NOT ALL-POWERFUL if he limits his power to only HOLY and GOOD choices. God is Holy, and so his ALL-POWERFULNESS is only expressed within the character of HOLINESS. And similarly because he created us for relationship, he limits his ALL-POWERFULNESS to allow us as agents with a real capacity to evaluate and choose. He does not powerdown and make all the choices for us. In fact, from the beginning we already see a covenant between Him and Humanity in the Covenant with ADAM. Rule as I would rule. And in this covenant there are stipulations. And to test their covenant relationship, he set one boundary. One rule.

Only one rule was needed to test the relationship with Adam and Eve. Genesis 3 is that story.

FREEDOM means you are RESPONSE ABLE. Freedom also means you are responsible, and held responsible.

Today we look at how God's VERY GOOD world was broken, which sets up the rest of the story.

*Genesis 3:1 (NIV) Now the serpent ... said to the woman "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"*

- The serpent MISQUOTES God intentionally making God sound unreasonable. He already shows evil intent and he is clever.

*Genesis 3:2–3 (NIV) The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, **and you must not touch it**, or you will die.'*

- Eve also MISQUOTES God. She added the words that are highlighted.

- Why? Eve never actually heard God say this. In Genesis 2:16 remember “*The lord God commanded the man*” (2:16) before Eve was even created. I believe EVE is quoting what she learned from ADAM. “Don’t even touch it”!

**Genesis 3:4 (NIV)** *“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.*

- Here, the serpent directly contradicts what God said.
- He is speaking to EVE (but ADAM is there according to verse 6) and remains quiet.

**QUESTION: Why didn’t God whisper into Adam’s ear something like:**

*“Watch out ADAM this one is evil.”*

*“You are the King, Adam.”*

*“Don’t you see what you need to do here—he’s questioning and contradicting me”?*

**Why was God silent at that moment? God does not overpower our freedom.** God had already made the parameters perfectly clear!

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?**

Don’t passively wait for God to speak AGAIN before you do what you already know God wants you to do. We are designed to act as sub-rulers in covenant with God and act as he would act, according to his already stated will.

Some people pray about everything but do nothing. They keep waiting for God to do what God has called them to do and equipped them to do!

**Genesis 3:5(NIV)** *“For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

The serpent lies by using a half-truth! He failed to mention there is a **RIGHT WAY AND A WRONG WAY to know what is good and what is evil.**

- **THE RIGHT WAY:** is to agree with God and trust God’s revealed assessment.
- **THE WRONG WAY** is to decide for yourself what is GOOD and EVIL by trusting ANYTHING other than God.

**Genesis 3:6 (NIV)** *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took*

*some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

With only one rule, and one conversation, Adam and Eve crossed the line from TRUST to TREASON with catastrophic results.

- Adam and EVE learned the difference between good and evil [the wrong way, the serpent's way] by crossing God's boundary and TASTING EVIL.
- ADAM ANDEVE DID DIE that day! They died SPIRITUALLY!
  - Their human spirit died.
  - They were separated from God, Eden, and the Tree of Life.
  - Their spiritual senses no longer sensed the REALITIES in the spiritual dimension.
  - The serpent usurped humanity's rightful place of authority as sub-rulers of the world.
  - Rather than royal kings and queens we became slaves to sin and death.

**THE STORY OF REALITY** answers this question:

### III. If God is GOOD, where did EVIL come from?

The reality of evil is accounted for by the reality of free agency.

If this sounds like a BAD NEWS story, remember we are still at the beginning of the story. THE STORY OF REALITY IS THE GOOD NEWS (GOSPEL) story...and the good news was proclaimed from the beginning, and that's our topic for **Next week**: 4. His Story: Promises in History

**Because of Jesus, You ALSO have a choice in THE STORY OF REALITY.**

- **BECAUSE OF JESUS**, you can choose God's way with God's blessing, or you can choose to be without Jesus and stay with the catastrophic results of your own way.
- **If you want Jesus,**
  - **humble yourself,**
  - **agree with God's assessment,**
  - **and turn to our savior: The Lord Jesus Christ**
  - **Ask for his life, his Spirit, and his help.**
- **That's my story and I'm sticking with it!**