

Series: Word's of Counsel of Correction

AS THE SERPENT BEGUILED EVE

2 CORINTHIANS 11

Text: 2 Corinthians 11:3

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³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Introduction:

In this chapter Paul continues the defense of his ministry and character against the many attacks of the enemy.

This chapter could be divided into four major parts as follows:

The Concern of Paul (vs. 1-4)

The Conduct of Paul (vs. 5-12)

The Critics of Paul (vs. 13-15)

The Commendations by Paul (vs. 16-33)

We will concentrate this evening on the Concern of Paul.

Paul is concerned about the believers in Corinth. Understand that these believers had a tendency to be carnal which was the result of their shallowness and lack of being grounded in sound doctrine.

Paul was concerned that these believers would be led astray by his critics, the false teachers.

Understand the critics' goal is to make them followers of their way of thinking.

Cults work this way with new converts and those who are not sound in doctrine.

Note:

1. THE PLEADING IN THE CONCERN (VS. 1)

2 Corinthians 11:1

¹ Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

Paul pleads with the Corinthians to "bear with me" (have patience and listen) while he expresses a great concern of his heart for the church in Corinth.

"My folly" is an expression of humility.

It applies to the fact of Paul defending himself and his ministry. Paul did not like to speak of himself by citing

his achievements but was forced to do so to defend his ministry, part of which was his concern as a true shepherd for those of his converts at Corinth.

2. THE PASSION IN THE CONCERN (VS. 2)

2 Corinthians 11:2

² For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

The language is very figurative here as Paul speaks of the conversion of the Corinthians from a standpoint of marriage.

The Jewish marriage practice is involved here in which the woman vows to marry a man after which is the betrothal period then the marriage.

The Corinthian believers are portrayed as being in the betrothal period waiting for the coming of the bridegroom.

Paul is jealous of them in regards to their disloyalty to Christ.

He desires that when Christ comes they would be faithful and loyal.

The application to us is that we want to be living for Jesus Christ all the time so when we die or are alive at His coming, we will not be ashamed to meet Him but will be found being obedient to Him.

We have briefly considered Paul's Pleading and Passion in Concern but consider in more detail:

3. THE PROCESS OF HIS CONCERN (VS. 3)

2 Corinthians 11:3

³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

I think it is important to see the process or steps of being beguiled.

Note: Genesis 3:1-7:

Genesis 3:1-7

¹ Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? ² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. ⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: ⁵ For God

doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. ⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. ⁷ And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

Notice:

A. The Conversation with the Woman

In this conversation:

- Satan Attacked God's Word

He did this by planting doubt.

Genesis 3:1-3

¹ Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? ² And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: ³ But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

The idea here is that Satan wished to change the wording of God's command.

Satan made it sound as though God was being unreasonably rigid. God had only forbidden the eating of the fruit of one tree, not "every tree," as Satan suggested.

The doubt that Satan wanted to instill in Eve's mind was actually threefold:

1. He wanted her to doubt the authorship of God's Word.

Eve had not been present when God gave Adam the command concerning the forbidden tree (Gen.2: 16, 17).

How could she really be sure that God had given the command at all?

2. He wanted her to doubt the accuracy of God's Word.

In other words, "How do you know that Adam accurately related God's true intent to you, Eve?"

3. He wanted her to doubt the acceptability of God's Word.

Why would God forbid her to have something that was so pleasing and desirable?

God's commandment was in conflict with Eve's desires, and therefore it wasn't acceptable.

Doubting the Word of God can lead us to faulty thinking, as well as some ridiculous assumptions.

Satan his beguiling process by planting doubt. He then shifts from doubt to:

Denial

Genesis 3:4

⁴ And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

This was a direct contradiction to what God had said in Genesis 2:17b:

Genesis 2:17

¹⁷ But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Application:

The whole matter now depended upon what Eve chose to believe.

This is exactly what happens in the mind of the lost sinner concerning salvation.

God has said, “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom.6: 23). But Satan says, “Thou shalt not surely die. After all, would God forbid you to live a life that is so pleasurable and desirable?”

Not only did Satan Attack God’s Word but also

- Satan Attacked God’s Wisdom

Genesis 3:5

⁵ For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

In verse four, Satan called God a liar.

In verse five, he says in essence, “Why Eve, not only will you not die by partaking of this beautiful fruit, but God knows that you will acquire a new perspective on life, and you and Adam will be like God Himself.”

This Conversation lead to:

B. The Committing of Sin

- Eve Looked

Genesis 3:6

⁶ **And when the woman saw** that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

We often think that there's no harm in looking.

But dear friend, it was a look that got the whole proverbial ball of wax rolling.

Too often a look turns into lust, which is exactly what happened in this case.

- Eve Lusted

Genesis 3:6

⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and **a tree to be desired to make one wise**, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Illustration:

Satan knows how to use our desires against us. And our sin nature can find endless ways of justifying our selfish and sinful cravings. However, just because we desire something doesn't mean it's good for us. One man accurately noted, "I've learned that if you give a pig and a boy everything they want, you'll get a good pig and a bad boy."

- Eve Looted

Genesis 3:6

⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, **she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.**

One terrible fact about sin is that it is infectious. Not only did Eve eat the forbidden fruit, but she gave it to Adam as well.

Note not only the

C. The Consciousness of the Sin

Genesis 3:7

⁷ *And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

- The Experienced A Consciousness of Their Condition

It was at this point that the lie of the devil became obvious.

He had implied that this new perception would be something wonderful, when in reality it was a traumatic experience.

Once they had known only innocence. But now they found themselves naked, empty, lonely, and defiled.

The appeal of sin can be extremely disarming and deceitful, as this story illustrates.

Adam and Eve did what many try to do even today when their sin is discovered—they tried to cover their shame.

- The Experienced a Change of Relationship With Their Creator

Genesis 3:8

⁸ And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

Adam and Eve's relationship with God was no longer one of openness and fellowship, but one of shame and fear.

Once they enjoyed the presence of God, but now as sinners, they hid themselves from His presence.

Unregenerate man has been trying to hide from God ever since.

Sin always brings separation between God and His creation (Isa.59: 1, 2).

Isaiah 59:1-2

¹ Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

² But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

How sad that where once there was oneness and fellowship, now there was separation and fear.

Sin had changed Adam and Eve's relationship with God.

This Committing of Sin led to:

D. The Confrontation of the Sinners

Genesis 3:9

⁹ And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

- Adam is Summoned

God did not ask this question because of any lack of knowledge on His part.

God wanted Adam to consider where he was now in relation to where he used to be.

Before he sinned, he did not hide from God; he sought God out.

Before he sinned, he did not fear God; he had fellowship with Him.

One cannot receive forgiveness of sin without adequately considering the fact that they have offended a holy God. There can be no forgiveness without an honest admission of one's sinful condition.

The Bible says:

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- Adam is Searched

Note Adam's Explanation of His Fear

Genesis 3:10

¹⁰ And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

Note Adam's Evasion of His Fault

Genesis 3:11-12

¹¹ And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? ¹² And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

God asked Adam a direct question: "Hast thou eaten of the tree?" But Adam immediately begins to hedge the issue.

Adam did not begin his response to God's question with an admission of his personal guilt and sin, but began by saying, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me..." This is commonly called "blame-shifting."

Adam tried to shift the blame for his sin in two directions:

He Tried to Blame Eve

He Tried to Blame God – Since He was the One who had given him her to him.

The whole point of Adam's argument was, "God, it's not really my fault. I'm not really to blame." This blame-shifting did not fool God for a moment, as we will see in verses 17-19.

Genesis 3:17-19

¹⁷ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Close:

Paul was concerned that the believers would be beguiled like Eve.

2 Corinthians 11:3

³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

May we heed this warning for ourselves, understanding that even in a perfect environment we too can be beguiled and corrupted in the truth.