

# (Genesis) - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of building a strong and healthy marriage relationship, and the need to guard against the devil's tactics to destroy God's work.*

**Duration:** 1:01:54

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:21

**Topics:** "Christian Marriage", "Spiritual Warfare"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of understanding marriage as God intended it to be. He emphasizes that marriage is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and the church. The preacher also warns about the presence of the devil in relationships and the need to guard against his influence. He cautions against seeking power and authority over others, reminding believers to instead serve and treat one another as brothers and sisters.

---

## Transcript

Let's turn back now to Genesis chapter 2, where we were looking at those last few verses of the chapter in our last study. We see here that, in verse 21, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept. And we saw that this was a picture of that deep sleep of death that God himself caused to fall upon Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins.

And from his side, like from Adam's side, God took up a rib and made a woman. From the side of Christ, he has formed a church. But it is also, in its original setting, a picture of the relationship between man and woman in marriage.

And all who are married must never forget these important verses from 21 to 25. I believe these are very, very important verses for married people, because here in the Bible are the only verses in the whole Bible of the description of man and woman in a world without sin. Once you enter chapter 3, you see quite a different relationship.

But here you see marriage as God intended it to be. And that is a tremendous example for all of us who are married, and a challenge for us to consider it carefully. And here God was trying to teach for all generations that a man must consider his wife as someone taken out from his side.

Bone of his bone, that's what he said in verse 23, and flesh of his flesh. It's very important to see that. He was taken out of Adam's side, from near his heart, so that he would always place her in his heart.

And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which he had taken from the man and brought her to the man. And there is something that also we can learn concerning the first steps in marriage. We can say that verses for unmarried people, that it was God who saw Adam's need for a partner.

And it was God who made a woman that was exactly suited for Adam. And if you can have, if you have faith to believe this, which I am going to say, then it is a tremendous thing. That God made only one woman and brought her to Adam.

He did not make sense and ask Adam, which one would you like? He made only one and brought her to Adam and said, this is your wife. And there is a tremendous lesson there for unmarried people. If you can have faith that God, first of all that God is concerned about your need for a partner.

And second, that God has already begun to prepare her somewhere on the earth already. And that really in God's perfect will, there is only one person whom he has chosen for you. Of course, everybody in the world never bothers about God's perfect will.

And even among believers, my guess is that the vast majority, I think more than 90%, do not consider God's perfect will in marriage. And it's not that God forsakes them. God cares for them, loves them.

We learned that from the Israelites in the wilderness, that even when they chose God's second best, he still cared for them. But it's a pity. It's a pity if we miss God's best.

And there's a lesson for all young people to receive their partner from God. Not by grabbing, not by thinking that I must grab as soon as I have a chance, but to wait in rest. For Adam's sleeping is a picture of rest.

And then he could wake up and receive his wife from God. This was a marriage that God arranged, that God planned, and that God conducted. And it's a wonderful thing if we can have a marriage like that, planned and arranged and conducted by the Lord.

But then we have to really have faith that God loves us at least as much as he loved Adam. The Word of God says in John 17 that he loves us as much as he loved Jesus. It must be easy for us to believe that he loves us at least as much as he loved Adam.

And if God cares for Adam's needs, surely he cares for the needs of every child of his in this area. It's a tremendous thing, my brothers and sisters, to have faith in this. And I believe that those who live by faith in this fact, that somewhere in the world God has prepared a person for me, and nobody can take, get him or her if I live in God's perfect will.

That's a tremendous thing for us to believe. And here is where reason can ask so many questions. Clever people have so many questions concerning these things.

We leave the clever people aside, because God, the things of the Holy Spirit are foolishness to clever people. These are hidden from the clever and the intelligent. So we learn here that we must receive our wife from God, receive your husband from God.

And God conducted that marriage, and the man said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. That woman means that she is a part of man.

Now this is a very interesting thing. It is because of this. See, many people know this verse, that a man shall leave his father and mother.

It's here quoted in verse 24. But verse 24 doesn't just say, a man shall leave his father and mother and flee to his wife. It says, for this reason, that's how it begins.

For this reason, that until you understand the reason, we will not leave father and mother. See, we see that in a lot of marriages in India particularly. It is very rare in this country to find a husband who has emotionally detached himself from his father and mother, and who is now emotionally attached to his wife primarily.

Likewise, it's very difficult to find a wife who is emotionally detached from her parents, and who considers her husband as first. Very difficult. That's because they haven't seen this reason.

For this reason shall a man leave father and mother. Now it's very interesting that that verse comes there, even when Adam had no father and no mother. There was no question of his leaving anybody.

It was very easy for Adam and Eve. They didn't have any parents. They were like orphans, humanly speaking.

They had no human parents. And yet, here at their marriage, it says about leaving father and mother. It didn't mean that Adam had to leave father and mother.

No, because he didn't have any father and mother. What's the meaning of this verse coming there then? We know that the book of Genesis was written by Moses, as far as we know. It was written maybe 2,500 years after Adam was created.

And here the Holy Spirit inspires Moses to write this verse and say, Do you know why I'm saying that a man must leave father and mother? This is the reason. That the woman was taken out of the man. And therefore, she's a part of the man himself.

And there's a sense in which she's a part of the man in which the father and mother are not a part of that man. If only a man can see that. If only a wife can see that, that she's a part of her husband now in such a way that she is not to her earthly parents.

If our eyes are open to see this, it can make a tremendous difference in marriage relationships. And we will not be so attached to our parents as we are to our marriage partners. And I believe that when we seek to build a church where we speak about a new and living way, it must be a new and living way in this area also.

That we have families where husbands and wives love one another more than they love their parents. And if after all these years of hearing this, it is still not true in our lives, my brothers and sisters, I just want to say, you are just not wholehearted to obey God's word. This is a very serious matter.

And I believe that each husband and each wife must judge himself and herself to cleanse themselves from this human attachment to their own parents. Because they have not seen that they are now part of their

marriage partner for this reason. Later on in Psalm 45, 10, it tells the wife also, forget your father's house.

Forget it. Very difficult. How many parents are there, who when their daughter gets married, will tell their daughter, my dear daughter, let me give you an exhortation from God's word from Psalm 45, forget your father's house.

I think it's almost unheard of in this country. So that is a new and living way. But we are so attached and attached to parents, parents, parents.

And that's why so many marriages don't have a proper foundation. That emotional leaving is very important. Sometimes in cases of poverty and difficult financial circumstances, it may not be possible to geographically leave the parents.

There are many cases where they have to live with their parents in the same home because of financial circumstances. But emotionally, there must be a leaving, definitely, without a doubt. This God shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and that cleaving is dependent on the leaving.

If the leaving is imperfect, the cleaving will also be imperfect. And the more imperfect the leaving, the more imperfect the cleaving. And if there is an imperfect cleaving between you and your marriage partner, it's good for you to ask yourself whether the leaving has been perfect.

Here is where God looks at those who tremble at His word. This is not a suggestion. It is a command.

A man must do it. And no brother can say that he fears God if he doesn't obey this command. He's a humbug if he says that he fears God and he does not obey this command to leave his father and mother.

And no woman can say that she fears God and trembles at His word if she disregards this fundamental principle of leaving parents and being attached to her husband. And they shall become one flesh. They shall become one.

That is God's will for man and woman. This is the first place in the Bible where we read of two becoming one. We see it later on fulfilled in the body of Christ in the New Covenant.

We read of it as the mystery. And here is the seed of that mystery. Two becoming one.

Two who are so different becoming one. And we know that now it is possible only through the cross. Only through the cross.

There must be a cleaving. There must be a leaving, sorry, first. A cleaving.

And then there will be oneness. Otherwise, even after many years, there will be no oneness. For this reason.

Because the woman is closer to the man than his own parents. And verse twenty-five, And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Before sin came into the world, they didn't have any physical clothing.

We don't know whether the glory of God covered them in some way. But they didn't need any physical clothing. Where there is no sin, there is no sense of shame.

Shame comes with sin. And we can also say that this is a picture of that openness. That there should be between husband and wife.

It is not just a question of physical nakedness, that the husband and wife are not ashamed, but that inner soul. So many husbands and wives, there is so much of concealing and hiding. So many things hidden.

Just like Adam and Eve, their soul is covered with fig leaves from each other. That's what happens when sin comes. But before that, they were naked, open to one another.

And they were not ashamed. Think of having such a relationship, where we can be known by one another as marriage partners, by your marriage partner particularly, that you can be known your fears and your struggles and your trials and your problems. Naked and not ashamed.

Wonderful. And we see here in verse fifteen that the Lord took the man and put him into the garden of Eden. What to do what? To cultivate it and to guard it.

And we can say that God gave Adam two gardens. One was that physical garden of Eden and the other was a spiritual garden of his relationship with his wife. His relationship with his wife was also a garden and his responsibility was to cultivate that relationship and to guard that relationship.

We know that if you go by a street and you see a person's home garden beautifully arranged with flowers and free from weeds and thorns, we know that that didn't happen automatically. We know that that man must have labored, watered, pulled out the weeds, pulled out the thorns, watered, cared for it, and that's why you see a beautiful garden. And you see over the compound in the next neighbor's garden and it's all chaos and weeds and thorns and you know that both are the same type of soil.

Only this man took some pain over his garden and that man just neglected his garden. And that's how it is when you see two marriages, one which is like a beautiful garden and the other like a wilderness. Actually, that didn't happen automatically.

See, just one man just neglected his relationship with his wife. The other person did something about it, pulled out the weeds. Whenever there was a little attitude that came into his heart towards his wife, which he felt was untrustworthy, he pulled out that weed and thorn and threw it away.

And the end result is that in his heart anyway, it's like a beautiful garden that God sees, his relationship with his wife. Because he has cultivated it and guarded it from the attacks of Satan. So there is a passage, verses 21 to 25, which all married people should take seriously and meditate upon because this is how marriage was intended by God before sin came into the world.

That becoming one flesh speaks of a physical relationship in marriage in which there is nothing sinful. God himself ordained it. He desires that they become one flesh.

There's a beauty in that relationship and we need to see that again. And we see here the very next thing, chapter 3, verse 1, the very next thing. As soon as God has made something which he says is very good, as soon as God has conducted a marriage, as soon as God desires that a husband and wife become one, as soon as God desires that a church be built or two brothers become one, the very next thing that happens is the devil comes in to the scene.

That's why you have to guard it. That's why you have to guard this garden. Whether the garden is our relationship with our marriage partner or our home or our personal life or the church, we have to guard it because the devil is there.

And we can say that God has allowed the devil to be there. This is a big question that comes up in many people's minds. Why did not God destroy Satan? If Satan had been destroyed in Genesis chapter 3, there would have been no Satan to come through the serpent to tempt Adam and Eve.

And do you know what Adam and Eve would have been like? Do you know that Adam and Eve, when they were created, were not holy? They were not holy. They were not perfect. They were innocent.

And it's very difficult to understand what they were like because all of us have been so corrupted by sin that we don't know what unfallen Adam was like. But I believe that the nearest that we can think of unfallen Adam on this earth is a little baby. You think of a little three-month-old baby.

Innocent. Not knowing good or evil. That's how babies are and that's how Adam was.

He had not eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And that's how a baby is. And Adam was a full-grown man, maybe six foot tall, but he was like a little baby.

Now, there are a lot of good things in little babies. They're innocent. But also, there's an immaturity in that innocence.

And there was an immaturity in Adam. He was innocent. Not holy, not perfect.

And if there was no devil to tempt him, even after living for 900 years, he'd have been still like a little baby. Innocent, not holy, not perfect, not mature. He would have been like a retarded man.

Innocent, but no maturity, no perfection. And God wanted Adam to be holy. And there can be no holiness without man making a choice and saying, I choose God against my own desires.

That is holiness. And that is why Adam had to be tempted. And that's why God placed in that garden a tree through which Adam could be tempted.

And that's why God allowed the devil to exist. And that's why God allowed the devil to enter the garden of Eden. Do you think God did not know when the devil came into the garden? Do you think God did not know when the devil got into that serpent? Do you think God was not watching when the serpent came near that tree and spoke to Eve? He was watching it all.

He was watching it, and He was saying, now they need to face that shit. They need to face it, otherwise they'll never be holy. And it's good for us to remember that when we are also tempted.

God knows all about it. Like Job said in Job 23:10, He knows every detail of what is happening to me. He knows everything.

So we must bear that in mind when we come to chapter 3 verse 1. The serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, and we know that that was the devil, and we know that evil spirits can enter animals, because in the time of Jesus, we saw that the man possessed with a legion of spirits, those spirits left him and entered the pig. We know that evil spirits, therefore, can enter animals.

And here is the first case of that. Satan entering a snake. We must remember that the snake in those days was not the slimy, crawling on the ground type of creature that it is today.

It wasn't a repulsive, fearful thing. Today when we see a snake, we'd like to run away, but that's because of God's curse on it. We don't know exactly what the shape of the snake was then, but it was certainly not repulsive.

I think it would have been so attractive, like a little kitten. Like to stroke a little kitten. He would have felt like stroking this lovely animal, the snake.

That's how it was then. And Satan got into that one, attractive, and spoke through that animal. And this is what Satan said.

Very interesting to notice one word here. The serpent was more crafty. The word crafty has got to do with reason.

And it's very interesting to notice that the devil looked around at all the animals that God had made and chose the cleverest and said, I'll get him through that one. Because cleverness is Satan's strong point. That's why when you get time, you read 1 Corinthians chapter 3. It tells us there what all our human cleverness is worth in God's eyes.

1 Corinthians 3.18 says, If you really want to be wise, then be a fool first. Because sin came through the cleverest of all the animals that God had made. That's very important to notice that point.

Human cleverness is foolishness in God's eyes, but not in Satan's eyes. Satan makes much of human cleverness. In the world, they make much of human cleverness.

When you make much of the cleverness in your children, you are an agent of Satan. You are an agent of Satan when you make much of the cleverness of your children. God doesn't do it.

Some of God's greatest saints have not been the cleverest people in the world. The cleverer a person is, the more difficult it is for him to enter into God's kingdom, because these truths are hidden from the wise and the intelligent, and they are revealed to faith. A clever person has a tremendous battle to be able to become spiritual.

The devil came through the cleverest of the animals, and today, he comes through the cleverest of the people. It's the cleverest people in the church who are the dangerous in the church. The cleverest, the richest, the most influential, these are the number one dangers for the building of Christ's body.

And yet, I want to ask you, how many churches believe that? Very few. The serpent was more clever than all the other crafties, more than cleverness. It's a shrewdness.

Jesus said, Be shrewd as a serpent. As far as these earthly things are concerned, we have to be. But at the same time, be harmless as doves.

It's a shrewdness in the devil's nature, which he found in the serpent. He didn't come through a donkey. He came through a serpent.

And where he finds a shrewd person, even if he calls himself a believer, in your living way type of believer, but he's a shrewd type. You've got to be careful, brother. Be careful, sister.

Because the devil's got an eye on you. He can use your shrewdness to destroy God's work. He can use your shrewdness to make you fool other people that you're spiritual, and thereby destroy your life.

Shrewd people. That's why Jesus said about Nathaniel, There is a man in whom there's no guile. He's not the clever shrewd type trying to fool others.

Transparent. That's what we should work towards. And the devil said to the woman.

And there we see something, that the devil knew whom to try his tricks on first. The woman was deceived. And that's one reason we are told in 1 Timothy chapter 2, that a woman should not be a Bible teacher in the church.

It's written there in 1 Timothy chapter 2, that because the woman was deceived. 1 Timothy chapter 2, let me read that verse. I do not allow a woman to teach, verse 12, or to exercise authority over a man, because of two reasons.

Number one reason, creation. Adam was first created, then Eve. Number two reason, the fall.

Eve fell first, and then Adam. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived. Notice that point.

Adam was not deceived. And therefore, in a sense, his sin was more serious. He went into sin with his eyes wide open.

But the woman, she was deceived. Therefore, Paul says, I do not allow a woman to be a Bible teacher. When a woman begins to teach doctrines, she will again be deceived by the devil.

Look at all these cults. And you see, many of them were founded by women. Christian science, Seventh-day Adventism, their great leaders were women.

Deceived. Some Pentecostal group, the four-square church, founded by a woman. Women pastors.

The woman was deceived. Never forget that. The devil knew whom to come through, and he went, whom to go to first, and he went to the woman.

And then the other thing I want you to notice here, the first thing that the devil says, recorded in the Word of God is, a question about the Word of God. That's where he always begins. He knows that if he can get a believer away from God's Word, just slightly away from God's Word, he's won the first battle.

Gradually, he'll win the war. You know the difference between battle and war? War is the big thing, which takes many months to finish. Battle is the many little, little things which finish in one day.

One thousand battles make one war. And if the devil wants to win the war, he wants to win the first battle. And the first battle is to get a person to doubt the Word of God.

To move away from the foundation of God's Word. To get saved. You know, it looks such an innocent little tradition added on to God's Word.

Such a nice thing. There's no foundation in scripture. And he's got churches that have gone completely off the track today through this method.

That's why I say we've got to fight tradition. Why do you think I fight Christmas and Easter so much? You think there's no reason for it? It's because of this. What foundation does it have in the New Testament? Get off that word a little and you don't know where you'll finally end up.

Or for that matter, any other tradition which doesn't have a foundation in God's Word. That's where the devil comes. Has God said this? The Word of God.

That you shall not eat from any tree of the garden. You see, the devil's clever. He knows that he's got to shift her from that solid foundation.

God's Word is like a rock. Let me get her off that foundation a little bit. At least one leg off.

And then I'll make her house sink. But I can't touch her as long as she's solidly established on that rock. If only we can learn a lesson from that.

The devil can't touch us as long as we are solidly established on the Word. That's why we must know the Word of God. That's why we have Bible studies.

So that when the devil comes and says Has God said? You know what God has said. That's the main reason why we have Bible studies in the church. So that we know what God has said.

And that we are not in doubt about it. Verse 2 And the woman said to the serpent Verse 2 and 3 From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat. 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 lest you die.

And the serpent said to the woman You surely shall not die. Notice what Eve says. And you will see two things.

First of all She added something to God's Word. God has said You shall not eat it. He said that very clearly in chapter 2 and verse 17.

But he never said anything about not touching it. But Eve decided to add a little tradition to God's Word. This is the origin of tradition.

The origin of tradition is in our mother Eve. You shall not eat is God's Word. And she adds a nice little tradition which looks so nice.

You shall not also touch it. That's the first thing. And the second thing God said in chapter 2 verse 17 You shall surely die.

And the woman modifies it a little and says in verse 3 the last part Lest you die. In other words God has told us Don't eat of this because you might die. You know.

You know, it's like This may be poisonous. Be careful. I mean it's stoned it down tremendously.

You will surely die is different from You might die. And that is subtracting from God's Word. And that's why in the last page of the Bible there is a warning in Revelation 22.

In the last paragraph of the Bible If anybody adds to the words of the prophecy of this book or takes away from the words of the prophecy of this book that applies to Revelation but because it's at the end of the Bible it applies to the whole Bible as well. God will add to him the plagues and take away from him his

portion of the tree of life. It's a serious thing to add to God's Word or to subtract from God's Word.

When God says you shall surely die it means you shall surely die. And this is where the devil managed to get into Eve's reason and got her to modify the Word of God. We find multitudes of Christian churches have modified the Word of God to, in little little things little little things modify God's Word.

Adapt it to 20th century circumstances. Adapt it to the present situation. It all began there in Genesis chapter 3. It began to have light on it.

Paul says we are not ignorant of Satan's wiles. How will we get light on Satan's wiles if we don't see how he came? And he begins with God's Word. And I trust we shall learn a lesson from that that will help us in our life.

To be careful with our reason. That's why the Bible says in Proverbs 3 verse 5 and 6 trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In other words faith versus reason.

You know we've seen some of these battles. We've seen in James 2.13 the battle in our heart of judgment versus mercy. And it says mercy should triumph over judgment.

In Proverbs 3.5 we read another battle. Faith versus reason. And may faith triumph over reason always.

Trust in the Lord. That means if God has said something even if your reason can't understand it can't explain it can't understand how it will work out trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't lean to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and do what He says and He will direct your path.

So there we see the beginning of man going away from God's Word and leaning upon reason. Modifying the Word of God. Modifying the Word of God.

The sin that has beset the church through 20 centuries. And that's why you see all these denominations today. Because they have modified God's Word.

Modified God's Word. How many of you find who will say we will accept everything that's written in God's Word? No. It's so difficult.

Some people won't accept water baptism. Some people won't accept baptism in the Holy Spirit. Some people won't accept the gifts of the Spirit.

Some people won't believe that the secret of godliness is Christ manifest in the flesh. How many people are there who will say we will accept everything written in God's Word? Do you see how the devil has done such a fantastic work in Christendom? In the same way that he did it through Eve. Has God really said that this is such an important thing? Can't we just forget about water baptism? Can't we just forget about the baptism in the Holy Spirit? These are not the main things.

Has God really said that you should not wear any gold? Has God really said it? For those who can read, those who are literate, they can read it in 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Peter 3. But God, Satan says, yes, but we've got to modify it to our circumstances. Yeah. That's how he's deceived Eve then and he's deceived women in so many things like that even today.

And many men too. And once she had modified God's Word, I can imagine that Satan was just delighting. He doesn't have hands, but if he had, he would have rubbed his hands in delight.

He says, now I've got her. I've got her. He knew he had won the victory already.

He says, I've got her off from God's Word. And now there's no hope for her. And that's exactly how God looks at lots of believers today.

He's got them to just modify God's Word a little. He says, I've got them. I've got them.

And the serpent said, next step. He's now pressing the thing home. You shall not die.

You shall, surely shall not die. You see, this is the devil's surely. It's like, verily, verily, I say to you, you will not die.

Even though God said, verily, verily, I say to you, you will surely die. The devil says, you will not die. Imagine such a direct opposition to God's Word.

He couldn't begin like that. He had to begin with a slight, get her to move, deviate slightly and then take her right off. Now, we can turn to Romans 8.13 where there is a similar statement by the Lord saying, you shall surely die.

It says in Romans 8.13, if you live according to the flesh, you shall surely die. And whom is He writing to? That is very clear in verse 12. Brethren.

Brethren are not the heathen. Brethren are not the unbelievers. My dear brethren, if you, Paul doesn't say, if we.

There are places he says, if we, but not here. Here he says, if you. In verse 17 he says, if we suffer with him.

Paul was suffering, was willing to suffer with Jesus, but when it comes to living according to the flesh, Paul knew that he himself would never live according to the flesh. That's why he didn't include his own name there. He says, I'm not going to live according to the flesh.

That's out of the question. But you in Rome, you believers in Rome, if you, who haven't got light on this, if you live according to the flesh, you will surely die, even though you're a believer. Die means not physically.

Everybody dies physically. Even Jesus died physically. It is a question of spiritually.

It's a question of going to hell. And yet, against that clear statement of the Lord, what does the devil say today? Verily, verily, I say unto you, if you are a believer, you will not die, because you have accepted Christ. Think of such a direct statement against Romans 8, 12 and 13, and do you know, there are millions of believers who believe that.

Can't you say they all descended from Eve? That is the clearest proof, that they all descended from Eve. With the same gene to be deceived by the devil. And with such stupidity, I think Eve, at least if she had a Bible with so many pages in it, she may have had some warning.

She didn't have that. But think, believers today, with all this written there, they still go and swallow this lie. And the Bible says, in 2 Thessalonians 2, 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, and I want to read this from the margin.

It speaks about the coming of the Antichrist. Verse 10, with all the deception of wickedness. It says, Satan will come with all power.

Last part, verse 9, with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all the deception of wickedness, for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, so as to be saved, and for this reason, because they did not love the truth, God will send upon them a deluding influence, so that they might believe, what does the margin say? The lying. So that they might believe the lie, not a lie, but the lie.

What is the lie? A lie, a lie, we can understand. So many people tell lies every day in the world. But the lie is different from a lie.

The lie is the first lie that Satan spoke. And you know what that is? You will not go to hell. You will not be lost eternally.

You will not die spiritually. I want to say to every believer sitting here, if there is a single habit in your life, which is fleshly, and you are indulging in it, I don't mean that you fell into it, but you are indulging in it, indulging in it, indulging in it, indulging in it, I want to tell you the truth, according to the word of God, you shall surely die. And the devil may be right next to you to tell you right now, you shall not die.

And now you have a choice, just like Eve, to either believe God, God's word, or believe the devil. If you live according to the flesh, you shall surely die, even if you speak about the new and living way, even if you sit in CFC, even if you sit in the most spiritual assembly in the whole world. You shall surely die.

We are not ignorant of Satan's devices. Take it seriously, and let the fear of God come upon us, so that we hate sin, and fight this battle against the flesh, with the power of the Holy Spirit. Don't take it lightly, my brothers and sisters.

There's a spirit in Christendom today, which is the spirit of the harlot, and that spirit of the harlot is characterized by the lie, and that lie is, you shall not die. And it's easy for that spirit to come into some of us, but as long as you come to this church, you'll keep on hearing, so that one day, if God forbid it, but if somebody's sitting here for ten years, is finally lost eternally, sitting in CFC, secretly living after the flesh, secretly telling lies, secretly indulging in bad habits, sitting here like a pious believer, finally, in the day of judgment, lost, exposed as a hypocrite, at least he will know, she will know, that they heard the truth. They can't blame the ministry in the church here, for not having heard the truth.

They heard it, and they continue to live in their hypocrisy. May God put a fear in us, that we take sin more seriously. Take it seriously, my brothers and sisters.

Don't take it lightly. Don't think those, for example, the Bible says in Galatians 5, outbursts of anger. Let's turn to that verse.

Galatians 5, verse 19, the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger. You take that lightly? When you have outbursts of anger against your husband, against your wife, that nobody in CFC knows anything about, I forewarn you, verse 21, just as I forewarned you already, I've said this to you before, but I'm saying it again, those who practice such things shall not, shall not, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Impossible! And the devil says, you will.

That is the lie. That is the thing that builds the harlot. That teaching is what builds the harlot.

We are determined not to build the harlot. We are determined to fight this lie. I believe that the church is called to fight this lie more than anything else in our battle for the truth.

This lie that you can live according to the flesh and you will still be saved. You can live according to the flesh and Jesus will still forgive your sins and take you to heaven. I want all of you to know that that is the lie of the devil.

You cannot enter the kingdom of God if you live according to the flesh. You've got to hate it, repent and turn from it and God has got to see your heart to see that you've really turned. May God help us to know that and take it seriously.

We turn back to Genesis 3 now. Once he's got her to disbelieve the seriousness of God, I think the devil must have put into his mind, God is so loving, he is so kind. Remember God is love.

He won't send you to hell. All these, we have heard these stories so many times. God is love.

Wasn't God loved 6,000 years ago when he made Adam? He was loved. But he still cast him out of the garden of Eden and Adam died. The same loving God.

God didn't change his nature. His nature is just the same today as it was millions of years ago. God doesn't change.

He's not more loving in the New Testament than he was in the Old Testament. Those are for people who don't know God and don't know the scriptures who think like that. God was just as loving in the Old Testament as he is today.

He's not more loving. He cannot be. He has not changed.

He's the same. And that's where the devil fools people. The Bible says, look at the kindness and then look at the severity of God.

The severity and the kindness of God, both. And there we see after he has taken her mind away from the severity of God. You know that verse, Romans 11.

Two things we are told to look at carefully. Romans chapter 11, verse 22. Behold then the kindness and the severity of God.

That means the love of God and his severity, his strictness. Behold means look carefully. Don't just glance at it and forget it.

Focus your microscope on the kindness of God. And then focus your microscope on the severity of God. Get a good view of both and be a balanced Christian.

And the devil got ease to forget about God's severity. Saying, you shall not die. That's the spirit of the harlot.

After he had got her to forget about God's severity, then he made her doubt God's kindness and love also. He's got to get us away from both. Both the severity and the love of God.

And some misunderstanding of God's love is left. Because he says to Eve, in Genesis 3, 5, God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and God doesn't want your eyes to be opened. And you will be like God.

And God is a bit jealous that you might be like Him. Can you think of such a stupid thing like that? To believe such a stupid thing that God is a bit jealous that you might be like Him. And that's why He doesn't want you to eat that.

I can't imagine how anybody would fall for such a stupid argument. And yet she fell. But there are more stupid arguments for which believers fall into sin today.

When they want to do something, they think of some justification for it. And who do you think is giving them all the reasons for their justification? Of course the devil. And they've got some justification to do something which their spirit and their conscience is keeping on telling them, it's wrong, it's wrong, it's wrong.

But their reason, helped by the devil, thinks up some nice justification to do something which they want to do. Yeah. And then God allows them to go that way.

What a stupid reason He gave. And she ate. It's very interesting to see here that the temptation that came to, that was given to Eve was you will be like God.

Think of that phrase. You will be like God. Doesn't have a good sounding flavor about it.

Sounds nice. You will be like God. We say in the church, we want to be like God.

We want to be like Jesus. What is the difference between you will be like God when the devil says it and you will be like God when we preach it in the church? There is where we need to see the difference. There's a fundamental difference.

Right from Eve's day, man has wanted to be like God. In what area? In power. In authority.

In position. Not in character. That is the difference.

In the church, when we preach that you must be like God, be holy as I am holy. Doesn't say be powerful like I am powerful. There's no word like that.

Man wants to be like God in power. Jesus wants us to be like God in purity. That is the difference between the harlot and the bride.

And that's why you see man in the church taking titles like reverend so-and-so, pastor so-and-so, right reverend so-and-so, father so-and-so. Jesus said, don't call anybody father on this earth. Don't be called rabbi.

Psalms 111 verse 9 says, God is reverend. How in the world can a human being take that title? Because of this sin, you will be like God. And where did Eve get that poison from? How did the devil become like the devil? How did the devil become the devil? When he was a pure angel, Lucifer, he wanted to be like God.

That's how he became the devil. And he said, I'll put this poison into Adam and Eve also. You will be like God.

The same sin. Actually, they were tempted by the same sin that Lucifer also fell into. You will be like God.

He thought, oh, I'm going to be like God. It is wonderful. In what? In character? In purity? No, no, no.

In power. In knowledge. You will know.

In knowledge, you will know good and evil. That's what man wants. Knowledge of all things and power and authority and position.

Beware of it. Beware of it, my brothers and sisters. When we seek to have power over other people, you are falling for the same sin.

To be like a mini-God to another person. We are not to be mini-Gods to other people. Jesus said, you are all brothers and be servants.

That's all. Be a servant and be a brother. That's all.

Nothing more than that. Beware of it because there is this poison in our flesh of wanting to be like God to somebody else. Wanting to have authority over somebody else.

Wanting to draw away disciples after us. The Bible speaks about that in Acts 20, about those who draw disciples after them. Do you think that such a thing can never be found in the midst of CST? Why not? You can be a brother wanting to draw, get admirers.

You can be a sister wanting to get admirers among the other sisters. What spirit is that? What spirit is that when you want people to admire you? That is the spirit of Lucifer. That is the spirit of you to be like God.

You draw a company of your admirers around you. Be careful, my brothers and sisters. There are so many little children out of this big mother serpent called you'll be like God.

Small little things. Wanting to be like God to somebody else. Be a brother.

Be an ordinary brother, an ordinary sister and a servant all your life. And then you're safe. You will be like God.

And then it says the woman saw that the tree was good for food. It's interesting to see that temptation began with the eye and with food, with earthly things. Temptation didn't come to Eve through some fantastic spiritual thing first.

No, it came through some ordinary desire of the body. Food. Food.

Some desire of the body. Can be food, it can be sex, it can be anything. It was a delight to the eyes.

The lust of the eyes. Good for food. The lust of the flesh.

And desirable to make one wise. The pride of life. These are the three things that John lists in 1 John 2, 16.

He says all the things that are in the world, what are they? Can be summed up in the three headings, he says, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. That's what we see here. The lust of the flesh, good for food, the lust of the eyes, delight to the eyes and the pride of life, desire to make one wise.

See, these are the avenues through which temptation comes to us. What we see, what a delight to my eyes. That's the first step towards sin.

Admiring a beauty which has got some potential dangers in it. God is not... You can say, what's wrong in looking at this tree? I'm not going to eat anything from it, I'm just looking. It's dangerous.

To admire something God has forbidden. And of course, the best thing would have been if Eve had never gone anywhere near that tree. The Bible says, run away from temptation.

Flee from youthful lust. You can't hang around close by to a youthful lust and then say, oh, the pull is so strong. Why are you hanging around so close to that tree then? You should be far away from it.

Think if Eve was one mile away from that tree, then the devil couldn't have got her. What was she doing hanging around that tree when she had no business to be there? God has forbidden it. There's a lesson there.

Temptation becomes strong when we put ourselves in that place. God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability, but we can put ourselves in places where we are tempted beyond our ability. Because we go and put ourselves there.

We don't flee from youthful lust. And what she should have done as soon as she heard the suggestion of this tree, she should have run away. Even then she didn't run away.

She saw, and it says here, she took and she ate. Notice that the devil could not force her to do that. The devil cannot force anyone to sin.

He'll make you do it yourself. That's a comfort to us. You know the devil can't force you to sin? He can't take that fruit and shove it down our throat and say, take it.

No. He can't do it. God has not allowed him to do that.

You sin yourself. He'll tempt you. He says, come, come, come, come.

It's nice here. Come. Nothing so serious here.

Come. And we go and take it ourselves. It's a great comfort for us to know that the devil has got certain limitations.

He's got a boundary too. And he can't take that fruit and shove it down my throat. He can only tempt me to pluck it off myself and eat it.

You know, let's learn a lesson from that. And then she gave it to her husband. Who was? What does it say here? With her.

He was standing there all the time. Like some dumb husband watching their wife go astray and stand there like a dope, watch the wife go completely astray, say nothing, all this conversation going on and he doesn't even say one word. And then she says, take it.

He says, yes darling. And he eats it. He ate.

No wonder God said to Adam, because you listen to the voice of your wife, you ruined your home. To how many people God has to say that today? Because you listen to the voice of your wife, your home is ruined. Be careful.

Don't let the wife take the leadership in the home.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/13/SID13384.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/genesis-part-4/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**