

Genesis: Genesis 3 – The Fall: Process of Surrender, Initial Results

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Abstract

This lecture by Robert Vannoy focuses on Genesis 3, analyzing the detailed progression of the fall into sin and its immediate, sudden consequences. Vannoy outlines the temptation as a six-step "process of surrender" by which Eve and Adam are led to violate God's command and claim autonomy. Following this gradual descent, the lecture explores the sudden and profound impact of their sin, particularly the introduction of nakedness and shame. Ultimately, this shame is discussed both as a reflection of a marred and alienating human relationship and as a protective blessing provided by God in a fallen world.

Outline

I. Introduction to Genesis 3 (The Fall into Sin)

- A. Part of a larger discussion on the details of the Fall
- B. Transition from the nature of the test and the serpent to the process of surrender

II. The Process of Surrender (Genesis 3:1-6)

- A. Step 1: Injection of Doubt (Genesis 3:1)
 - 1. Serpent characterized as more crafty than other wild animals
 - 2. Question raised: "Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?"
 - 3. Implication that God is not loving and good; insinuation of restrictiveness
- B. Step 2: Sharpening the Prohibition (Genesis 3:2-3)
 - 1. Eve responds in defense but adds/exaggerates the command: "you must not touch it or you will die"
 - 2. Addition of "not touching" does not appear in the original command of Genesis 2:17
 - 3. May betray an attitude of irritation or resentment at being restricted
- C. Step 3: Accusation / Direct Attack on God (Genesis 3:4)
 - 1. Serpent flatly accuses God of falsehood: "You will not surely die"
 - 2. Direct attack on God's veracity and integrity

D. Step 4: Mixing Truth and Falsehood (Genesis 3:5)

1. Serpent's claim: "your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"
2. True in the sense of Genesis 3:22, but misleading as it implies a desirable status
3. Promotes Adam and Eve's usurping of God's role as the determiner of values

E. Step 5: Becoming Autonomous / Violating the Command (Genesis 3:6)

1. Human reasoning based on Satan's arguments leads to sin
2. Set herself up as the norm determining good and evil, claiming autonomy
3. Visual, physical, and intellectual aspects correspond to 1 John 2:16:
 - a. Lust of the flesh / bodily appetite ("good for food")
 - b. Lust of the eyes / aesthetic aspect ("pleasing to the eye")
 - c. Pride of life / intellectual aspect ("desirable for gaining wisdom")

F. Step 6: Eve Gives the Fruit to Adam (Genesis 3:6)

1. "She also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it"
2. Discussion on Adam's responsibility and the role of Eve in leading him to sin
3. Discussion on the exact timing of sin: John Murray's theory that sin occurred when Eve first sympathetically entertained the serpent's suggestions (rather than solely at the physical act)

III. The Suddenness of the Result (Genesis 3:7)

A. Contrast between the gradual process of surrender and the suddenness of the result

B. The shame of nakedness: "their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked"

C. Misconceptions and meaning of nakedness:

1. Not the origin of sexual consciousness or sexuality itself
2. Sexuality and sexual consciousness are pre-fall and not inherently sinful (Genesis 1:28, "be fruitful and multiply")
3. Reflects a marred, distorted relationship and alienation between Adam and Eve, and ultimately all human relationships

D. The nature and function of shame:

1. A psychological reflex or feeling arising from a consciousness of guilt
2. Linked to the fallen human nature's tendency to exploit others, particularly in sexual relationships
3. Serves as a blessing and positive function protecting from moral danger and exploitation (shamelessness encourages exploitation)
4. Clothing provided by God as a means of keeping proper relationships between the sexes in a fallen world
5. Potential to approach pre-fall condition (Genesis 2:25) within a biblical, godly marriage where true love and obedience rule, though never perfectly realized in a fallen world