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GENESIS 3:1-7

Series: Understanding Your Roots

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you for your great love for us. Lord, we need your grace, we need your love. We need to understand how to follow you more. So I ask that in this session now, this session of looking at your word that you will reveal yourself and empower us with an understanding of what that looks like we ask. Teach us, Father. We need you. In Jesus' name, amen.

I'm really glad that you are here, either online or here, because it makes a statement about you that you are interested in growing spiritually. That's something we have in common. That we want to grow spiritually. That's what Calvary Chapel is about. You know the value of learning. We never stop learning. We never stop growing spiritually. We need that. We need to understand more about God, more about His word. As we come together and do that it empowers us for our lives.

I spend hours each week studying the Bible and then thinking about what does God want to say to me and then what He wants to say to you. And then I try to live it in the course of a week. What does this look like? How can I experience this? Because I know when I stand up here on Sunday morning, it's an opportunity for God to speak to you. Yes, I'm sharing a message. But there's something about what God has done inside of me that's going to pass through whether I stumble or stutter or whatever. It's God's word that's being shared and it's so empowering for us and powerful for our hearts.

Today I'm going to share something that all of us need if we're disciples in Christ. We must understand this idea and it will be very powerful and it will speak to your heart. Because I'm going to look at the story of Eve and her discussion with the snake. And the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. And the story of Peter when he was tempted and ended up lying three times, disowning Christ. I'll share out of those three stories. Mainly we'll be in Genesis 3, but I'll share with you things about temptation. Because I'm convinced that we have a misunderstanding. We think that Satan likes to take untruths, lies and that's how he changes us or tempts us. But I'm convinced more and more that he uses the truth to mess with our heads. I'll show you what that looks like. I think it will better prepare you to handle your week this week, to maybe see some of those temptations before they come at you and you'll be able to address those in a way that will help you to be able to move forward more effectively in your life.

Now to start that I want to look at the story about Peter. Remember in Peter's life, what he did was he lied three times. He was tempted. Peter's life was like that. He was an impulsive guy. But what happened in Peter's life when he got a little bit further along in what was going on as he

wrote these words to us in 1 Peter 5:8 to warn us. He wants everybody to know this. He says – *Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour*, someone to tear apart, someone to mess with. And you're not going to see it. He says it's like a lion, you don't even see him till he pounces on you. You're going to miss this if you're not careful. Be alert. Be sober minded. We need to take that warning today. We're going to look at how Satan tempted Eve and we're going to see that she wasn't ready for it. She didn't understand. It came at her from a blindside. We've got to get that idea.

When Jesus was describing the work of the devil, He said this: *The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full*. He comes to steal our joy, our vitality. He comes to kill relationships. He wants to do that. He wants to kill them. He wants to destroy our hearts. That is his objective and he does it in a sneaky way. We have to have a plan. We have to understand what that looks like. We have to recognize this and be ready for it because sometimes we don't even see it coming and we have to know what that looks like. So let me show you.

Let's go to the first verse in Genesis 3. It starts this way. *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"*

The first thing I want to point out is this. He uses these words and he talks about this serpent being the crafty one. Very crafty. The word *crafty* means deceptive, tricky is the idea there. But I want you to know that this serpent was created by God. Read the rest of the verse. It says he was *more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made*. This is a God-created crafty serpent. And when God looked at all His creation He said *this is good*. So point number one we must understand when it comes to temptation is that Satan uses good things to start the conversation, good things to get us into trouble. So Satan says, "Okay, I'm going to pick the snake, something that's good, in order to get into the conversation with Eve." Very important to understand that Satan has the ability to parade himself with something good.

I like to ask young people, if we take a bar here and this first part is black, the second one is gray, and the third one is white and they're all connected, how far can Satan go? We would all agree that he can go all the way into the black. Right? "How far into the gray can he go?" I say to children elementary age. How far can he go into the gray. "Oh maybe halfway," they'll say. Then we think about it and we realize maybe he can go all the way through the gray up to the light. And that's when I say, "Do you think he could go into the light?" "Oh no that's God's place." But 2 Corinthians tells us that Satan masquerades himself as an angel of light. Which means he likes to take good things that are right around us and he wants to twist them so they get us off track, so we get sucked in. Pleasure is a good thing. But if we make that our goal, we become addicted. Money is a good thing. But if we allow that to define our security we get ourselves into trouble. So what Satan likes to do is he likes to take good things and start the conversation with us.

Now you must be asking yourself this question. What is this woman doing having a conversation with a talking snake? I mean isn't that a little weird? I mean if a snake started talking to you, would you start talking to the snake? Probably not. In fact anyone looking at this picture and

seeing this woman talking to this talking snake would say, “Uh uh. She’s in trouble. Something’s wrong right there. You don’t talk to talking snakes.” Don’t you feel like that sometimes? You see someone over there doing the wrong thing, hanging out with the wrong people, investing their time too much in something that isn’t good, working too hard, whatever it might be. And they start doing that more and more. And what takes place? You start looking at them and you say, “Something’s wrong there. I know something’s wrong.”

I would suggest that the older you get you generally get more wisdom. Sometimes young people don’t realize they’re talking to a talking snake before they get themselves into serious trouble. Mom will say, “No, we’re not doing that.”

So what happens is daughter says, “Oh hey look, there’s a party. I want to go to this party.”

“Are the parents going to be home?”

“No, no. They’re on a trip. They’re having a party at the house and the parents are on a trip.”

Mom’s saying, “I don’t think we’re going to go to that party.”

“What’s wrong with it? There’s nothing wrong with the party. They’re just going to have fun.”

Because mom knows that her daughter is starting a conversation with a talking snake. And the daughter doesn’t realize it. She’s just having a conversation with a talking snake. Doesn’t think anything is wrong with it.

I just think sometimes other people can see that. That’s why it’s so important for us to have other people who are going to say, “Wait a minute. I think you’re crossing the line. Red flag going up here. Watch out. I think you might be in danger here.” We need that in our lives so we don’t end up talking to a talking snake. It’s dangerous. It gets us into trouble and bad things happen because the snake is tricky. Satan is tricky. He wants to devour us. He wants to wreak havoc in our lives.

So the first thing I’m suggesting is that we have this particular issue with the crafty snake and recognize that Satan uses good things to start the conversation. You want to ask yourself this question: What does Satan use in my life to start the conversation? How does he start getting me on track? Because I don’t think as committed believers it’s usually bad things. It’s usually something good. There’s something good going on and you say, “I think that’s okay. There’s nothing wrong with that. I think I’m going to go in that direction,” and we start moving that way and we find ourselves into some kind of a problem.

I’ll just give you an illustration of a young lady, a conversation from this week. A twenty-one-year-old girl telling this story about how now she’s heavily involved with marijuana. It started at sixteen for her because at sixteen years old she realized that marijuana has a lot of good benefits for people, not only CBD oil has a lot of medicinal benefits but even smoking it does some good things to people. So she said well what’s wrong with it? So she tried it and it gave her a good feeling. She liked the good feeling that it gave her. So she decided that she would do it more often because it gave her a good feeling. She liked the feeling. And then she realized... This is what she’s saying. “Then I realized this good feeling helped me deal with the pressures of life. You know when things are feeling bad I could smoke some marijuana and I could feel better about it.”

Well when she got to be eighteen, nineteen, twenty, she was out of her home, she’s involved with this guy, bad things are starting to happen and she starts smoking more. And now she’s

twenty-one, she's living in her home back with her mom who is a Christian. She doesn't want this marijuana in her house. It stinks. She doesn't want it in her house. So her daughter goes outside to smoke it now and her daughter says, "I have to smoke it every night in order to go to sleep."

You see what's happened in her life now? I realize this. Here's what takes place with something...I'm not evaluating whether marijuana is good or bad. But it wasn't evil when it started for her. What took place is it became something that now controls her. She does not have the strength to deal with stresses in life. So I would say this. Every time you participate in a substance as a way for dealing with your stress, you weaken yourself. Every time. It's weakening you a little bit more.

Now she's interested in cocaine because cocaine has a whole different effect on a person. What cocaine does is it give you energy, it gets you excited, you have more energy. So that's why people would like cocaine. So now she can kind of play with these things and that's what she's interested in. I said, "You better stop right now because this is a big problem for you. Yeah, you might have more energy, you might get more done for a while. But then it becomes this weight on you, this addiction, this problem that creates major challenges for your life. You do not want to be involved in this." That's the dialogue we're having.

One of the shows I like to watch occasionally is that one *America's Got Talent* or *Britain's Got Talent*. I like watching that because you see someone who doesn't look like they have anything to them, but then their voice comes out in such a beautiful way. I mean I cry when I see that. It's so impressive to see what happens in those moments. But one thing I don't like about *America's Got Talent* is when they put on the magicians or the illusionists. They are so good. I mean the guy's in the box and he's supposed to have all the knives go into him and all of a sudden he pops up over here. I'm going that is so bizarre. I have no idea how... And I don't like it I think because I don't understand how he did it. So I'm not amazed by it. I'm irritated by it. Maybe because I like control, I like to know how things work.

But I just found something a couple of weeks ago. There are some YouTube videos who debunk all these things or show you how they do it. I had never seen that before! Now I kind of like them. Because I can see what this guy does and how he does the close magic or illusions or how he does the big things. I'm fascinated by it because he's always doing something like this – "oh look over here" while this hand he's doing something else and this is where the real activity is happening. But he shows you something and you're paying attention over here while this is happening continually it looks like. That's what Satan does. I'm going to show you something shiny! Something that looks good! Crafty. And when he does that he's doing something over here and he's bringing out the bad stuff doesn't come till later. You do not get to see the bad stuff when the temptation comes. It's all designed so all you get to see is the good stuff. But it looks good. Oh this looks great. And then later it eats at you, it captivates you in some ways that are challenging. Well he's crafty.

Let's go to the second point in this passage. Notice it says – *He said to the woman, "Did God actually say..."* But a word's missing there. Do you see the word that's missing? It says *that the LORD God had made*. But then he said – *Did God actually say*. The word that's missing is the

word *LORD*. Now I made a point of this when we were in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. In Genesis 1 we have the word *God* used over thirty times by itself. Just that because it's God Almighty spoke and things came into being. *And God said* and so on. So God. It's all about God with that word because it means God Almighty, He's powerful. But in Genesis 2:4 to the end of chapter 2 there's a big switch. The word *God* is not used by itself. It's always used *LORD God* because *LORD* is God's personal name. It's about God forming like a potter the man. It's about God taking the rib and building it. *LORD God*. There's this personal relationship that exists there. The *LORD God* made these things.

But Satan doesn't want the relationship, he wants you to just think about the religion. Take the relationship out and we can talk about God. Notice the first conversation that the serpent has with Eve is about God. Satan loves to talk about God. As long as we don't talk about relationship we're fine. Satan loves it that you come to church...as long as you don't have a relationship with God. Satan loves it that you're religious and do all kinds of religious...as long as you don't have a relationship with God. It's the relationship that keeps us close. Satan would love to get us off track. He'd love to have us talk about it. Let's question God.

What does he say there? He says – *Did God actually say this?* In fact let's look at that whole statement that he makes there. "*Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?*" What Satan does is he turns the commands of God into questions so that we start saying, "Well I wonder. Is that really true? I wonder if that's going to be something that's important. I wonder. Did God really say that?" I think it's important that we understand how powerful God's word is and that God sets limits for us for certain reasons and He empowers us to follow Him. He's given us His word and Satan wants to distort that. He wants to ask questions. He wants to get us off track.

What is that going to look like in your life? How is he going to mislead you? Because it's probably not going to be some evil thing showing up at your door. It's probably going to be some good thing that shows up in your mail or something.

I don't know how you handle this, but I'm kind of amused or maybe even irritated now, but I know these things must work. Okay. I get a piece of mail from the credit card company. It comes into my house and right on the front of the envelope it says "congratulations." And I go oh good. I must have either won something or earned something. Congratulations. I don't even open it up now, but if I do open it up it says "congratulations you have earned \$5,000." Do you know how much \$5,000 is? That's a lot of money for me. \$5,000? I go whoa. That is pretty cool. And I've earned it! That is great. "We're going to give you an increase in your credit limit of \$5,000." \$5,000 is a lot of money. I go whoa, that is really cool. "And we've enrolled you into an exclusive group, the platinum club." The platinum club. Wow. Exclusive. I am honored. I feel special. Not only do I get \$5,000 more, I also now get to carry around a special credit card. My credit card is green and blue. Man, some people have the silver one. Some people have the gold one. And then the real people, they have the platinum one. I can feel really special when someone says, "How would you like to pay for it?" "Oh I'd like to pay for that with my platinum card." So I can imagine myself being really fancy here. This is great. That's the shiny stuff out here.

But what's going on behind the scenes? Do you know what happens when you get into debt financially? It is such a difficult experience. It takes so much time to get out of debt. Do you ever see what the interest rate is on the credit card that they're giving you \$5,000 for? Do you know how long it takes to pay off 19% when you pay it off in monthly installments? It's financial bondage is what it's called. Then you don't have the money to give generously when there's a need or to buy something you'd really like because now you're in financial bondage because of it. That's what Satan does. Puts something shiny out there to try to captivate us, to try to get us sucked in. To say I deserve my anger. It helps me feel like I'm getting some form of justice back on that other person because of all the things they did. The person really is wrong. And yes they are. But to hold onto anger makes a person emotionally stunted and hinders their ability to have relationships with other people because of the hurt and the anger that they hold onto. God has a whole different way of dealing with these things. But Satan wants you to grab onto something that looks good. He wants to question God.

Well let's go on and see actually when he says did God really say that, what does Eve say? *And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"*

Now the *neither shall you touch it* is actually adding to God's word. God didn't say you can't touch it. That's the temptation also as we kind of add to God's word. But the point is there's a no and there's a bunch of yeses. As long as you abide by the limits then you can enjoy the freedom of all the yeses. That's not just in the Garden of Eden. That's in our lives. There's a lot of freedoms that we can enjoy when we lose those when we disobey God and go outside the limits. When we can't accept no as an answer.

This is why it is so important to teach children to accept no as an answer. The four-year-old who comes in and says, "Mommy, can I have a snack?" "No. We're going to eat in thirty minutes." The seven-year-old who says, "Can I just one more video? Just a little bit longer." "No. We're not going to do that right now. You need to find something else. Go out and play for a little bit." The twelve-year-old who says, "I want to go over to my friend's house. There's some fun things we do over there." Mom says, "I don't think so. We're going to say no to that." The seventeen-year-old who says, "I just want to have my cell phone. My friends are on at night. I want to stay up late at night and be on my..." Mom or Dad says, "No. We're going to park the cell phone."

The point is why do we say no to children? Here's why. You've got to understand this. The reason we say no to children because it teaches them how to handle disappointment when they're young. See there's a whole view of parenting that goes like this. Don't say no to your kids because you want them to be happy in life because if they're happy then they will be well adjusted and they will be happy as adults. Well that is a bunch of bolognas. Okay? What we need to do is learn how to live within limits. So saying no to a child is very important to teach them how to handle disappointment.

Disappointment is essentially grieving over a loss. You've heard of the stages of grief that people go through often when they're grieving. Just imagine the four-year-old or the seven-year-old.

This is how it works. The seven-year-old says, "Can I just watch another show? I just want to watch another show, Mom."

Mom says, "No."

And the seven-year-old says, "What?! You're saying no? Why are you saying no? There's nothing wrong with it." So the first stage of grief is denial.

The second stage is anger. "You're the worst mom in the whole world. I can't believe... Nobody else does this to their parents."

And then comes bargaining. Okay. That's the next stage of grief. "I'll tell you what. If you let me watch a show then I'll..." Right?

Then comes depression. That's the next stage. "This is so terrible. I can't watch a show." And moping around. Until the child comes around to the last stage which is acceptance.

We take children intentionally through that process at four years old, at seven years old, at twelve years old, at sixteen years old. We do that because we're bringing them to the place where they can accept no as an answer. And here's why. If you can learn to live within limits, you can have contentment. If you can't live within limits, you have to go outside the limits to find two things. And this is what happens in young people. They go outside of the limits to find pleasure and they go outside of the limits to find identity. Outside of the limits and then they find themselves in all kinds of problems because they don't see that they're talking to a talking snake. And they find themselves in problems that they never realized they're going to be in. It's so important for us to help children accept no as an answer.

That's what's happening in the passage here because what's taking place is that Eve is saying there is a no and there is a lot of yeses. God says no to certain things even though we don't understand them because He wants us to enjoy a lot of yeses in our lives. The freedom to enjoy all of the fruit of all of those trees, but there's one that you cannot partake in. The answer is no. Can we accept no as an answer?

That's so important for us to understand what that looks like. See I don't think we realize the consequences of our actions. We don't realize how dangerous it's going to be and how damaging it is.

So you look at sex for example and a young person says I don't understand this. Sex is pleasurable, it's a lot of fun. I don't understand why I can't have sex with whomever I want and just enjoy that. God says no. You need to keep sex within marriage. When you do, several things happen. Certainly it makes your marriage sexual experience much better when you're able to keep it within marriage. But also it does something to your own spirit to allow your spirit to be more healthy and not corrupted and messed up. God puts noes in life in order to allow us to experience yeses and the freedom comes in the contentment. Freedom comes in the contentment that we can have in our lives.

But what happens is that Satan puts out this little shiny thing here and hides the consequences back here so we don't see what's going on. And we think oh that's so good. I want to take advantage of it. I want that.

I love the story of the biker. Young guy. Burly biker guy. And one of the things he likes to do is duck hunting. So he straps his gun on and he goes out on his bike, pulls over to the side of the road on this country road, sees some duck flying over. He shoots this duck, duck lands on the property next over there and he's going, "Yes, I've got myself a duck."

So he walks over to the duck and there's a farmer standing there and the duck's right here. And the guy says, "I came over to get my duck."

And the farmer says, "It's not your duck. It's my duck."

The biker says, "Look. I shot the duck. The duck is mine."

The farmer says, "The duck's on my property. It belongs to me."

The biker says, "Look. He was flying in free airspace when he went over and I shot him."

And the farmer says, "He landed in my yard, my property. I own it. It's mine."

They argue back and forth a little bit until the farmer says, "Okay. I think I know how we can solve this. Let's have a punching contest and see who wins."

The biker says, "Okay. That looks good." You old farmer and I'm this young burly guy. "What does that mean?"

The farmer says, "Here's what we do. I'm going to punch you as hard as I can and then you can punch me as hard as you can and whoever complains the least gets the duck."

The guys says, "This is a no-brainer. I'm going to take this one on."

He says, "Okay."

So the farmer takes off his coat, sets it down, winds up as strong as he could, burly guy standing there and he punches this guy in the stomach. The guy knocks over, he's winded a little bit, tries to groan just a little bit. Not much, but he's groaning. He says, "Okay." He gets up and the farmer is going over to get his jacket. The guy says, "Wait. It's my turn now." The farmer says, "You can keep the duck."

You see what's happening is you can keep the duck, but he got his punches in. And that's what Satan does with us. He says you can keep the duck, but I'm going to punch you on the other side. Satan tricks us into recognizing or getting involved in things that are wrong and we get stuck. We have to be able to live within limits in order to experience contentment. And whenever you're tempted to go outside of the limits with dishonesty or emotions or with materialism or anything, when you're tempted to go outside there's a lie that's hidden in there. You have to be careful with that.

So if we go on it says this: *But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. There's no consequences here. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."* Wouldn't you like to be like God? I mean we all want to be like God. That's great. "You won't die," he says. "There's no consequence that's really here. God is withholding something from you. He's not good like you think He is. He doesn't love you like you think He does or He would allow you to experience all kinds of good things.

You won't surely die." So we don't get to see the consequences. When the temptation is flashed out here for us to see, we don't get to see the consequences at that point. We're just attracted to what's out there.

I want to tell you a story about my son Josh. Now Josh is a great man. He is pastoring a church in Baltimore in the inner city and people are watching what he's doing because he's doing such a good job. They're taking notes and learning how to do inner city ministry and church planting. I take notes when I listen to him. He's a brilliant guy. Just as an example, just a few weeks ago Amazon Prime gave him and the church \$100,000 worth of food to give away to the poor from Whole Foods. For whatever reason they gave him \$100,000 worth of food that they distribute to the poor in the name of Jesus. So he's really working with this. Every week he has big trucks that go get food and he distributes it to the poor inner city in Baltimore. Fascinating to watch. I'd encourage you to check it out. A great ministry that he has in Baltimore.

But I'm going to tell you a story of when he wasn't so wise. He was only fourteen years old at this time. He was complaining, man. In our family he was complaining. "I'm not going to wear those shoes you bought. I don't like those shoes." So in our family we buy \$30 shoes. This was twenty-five years ago. \$30 shoes. That's what we buy in our house. \$30 shoes. "I don't want those. I want the brand name shoes." But those are \$125. "That's okay. That's what I want." So we're having this wrestling match with him all the time about him complaining about the shoes. And then the clothes. We don't buy our clothes at brand name places. We just buy clothes, regular clothes. So he's complaining. He wants the brand name clothes. We don't buy brand name clothes. It's not only those things. It's the shampoo. We buy CVS brand shampoo. I just have to admit, that's what we do. We buy the CVS brand generic shampoo. It's only shampoo. But he's got to have the brand name shampoo. This is ridiculous!

So my wife and I got tired of this complaining so here was our plan. "Here's what we're going to do, son. We've added up how much money we spend on clothes, shoes, and toiletries for you. We're going to give you the money. Every quarter we're going to give you \$250 for you to spend because that's what we spend on you. We're giving that to you." \$250 a quarter? He was thrilled. This is going to be great. I said, "But here's the deal. If you spend it all on brand name shoes and you don't have enough money for a coat, you've got a problem. Because you're going to wear a blanket to school. Because we're not buying you a coat. We'll give you a blanket. But we're not buying you a coat. So you need to manage your money well." \$250 a quarter.

So it was fascinating to see what happened with Josh. He started shopping. He started comparing prices. But the real fun thing is his sister. Because his sister is the Goodwill queen. I mean his sister is amazing. Melissa can go into a Goodwill store, she can find two or three things that go together and put them on, and she looks like she shops at a brand name place. In fact some of the clothes are actually brand name clothes, but she buys them for ten bucks. She gets a whole outfit. And she's just so proud of that. She look so good. You know what Josh says? "Hey Dad, did you know they sell brand name shoes at Goodwill?" Oh they do? It was fascinating to see a change. And you know why he made that change? Because he realized that the consequences of his choices.

I just think we do not see the consequences because Satan is up here saying, “Oh you’re not going to die.” But back here we’ve got all the stuff going on. “There’s not going to be any consequences. Go ahead. Try it. Oh you can handle it. Just do it one time and see how good it is. One time won’t hurt. What’s wrong with it.” So there’s all these kinds of things that are going on up here and back here we’ve got all this stuff that’s going to remove us from the vitality that God wants us to enjoy. “Your eyes will be opened. You will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

So this is what happened. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Now next week I’m going to talk to you about not only the consequences for their lives but the consequences for many more other people. Don’t think that your sin and the consequences for you are only limited to you. They affect so many other people. More on that next week.

But I want you to see why. It tells us right in the passage why. What was the lie? What did she buy into? What did she say in the conversation? The conversation she had with the serpent was really a conversation that she was also having inside of her own heart and she talked herself into this or the serpent talked her into this. Here’s the three reasons. It lists them right in the passage.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food... In other words God created all of these trees. They’re all good for food. He said one you can’t eat but it’s still good for food. So she says well what’s wrong with it? It’s good. It’s good for food. So by saying what’s wrong with it she finds herself going into a path she shouldn’t be going into.

Secondly, *that it was a delight to the eyes.* Oh it is such a good-looking fruit. Oh such a good-looking tree. Oh God just want me to be happy. You hear this all the time. Sometimes someone will say, “Oh it’s important. Just do what makes you feel good.” Or “happiness is what you really want in life. Make the choices that are going to help you get toward happiness.” If you do that you’re in trouble because you look at something and you say, “Ooh that’s going to make me happy,” and then you find yourself in significant issues going on.

And then thirdly – *and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.* In other words there’s something out there that you don’t have now and you will get it if you do this particular thing. If you get sucked into this lie, you don’t know it’s a lie right now. It just looks like a piece of mail. It came in the mail. But when you start getting involved in this, you’re going to have something you don’t have now. You’ll have 5,000 more dollars. You’ll have revenge on this person inside of your heart. Justice. You’ll finally get justice. Justice isn’t going to happen in the world. It may as well happen in your heart. You’ll have sexual pleasure. Whatever it is that you’re looking at, you say there’s something out there, I’m going to have more of if I partake in this. So that’s where we get sucked in. That’s where danger happens and bad things happen inside of our hearts.

I think one of the things we need to realize is this last verse in Proverbs 14:12. It says this: *There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.* There's a way that appears to be right. This looks like the right thing to do. This looks like a good idea. But in the end it is death. That's why we must listen to parents. This is why we must have counselors in our lives. This is why we must pay attention to guidelines, rules, and so on that are set up for us. We always think we have the better way to go. We must be careful in this area of our lives. There is a way that appears right, but in the end leads to death. Death is so close we don't even realize it. Because we think this thing looks good and delightful to the eyes. We must be careful. I just think we need a high amount of humility in our lives in order to enjoy what God would have for us. Humility is very important for us to experience what God has.

It reminds me of the story of Muhammad Ali. He was a boxer, for those of you who are younger. He was a boxer and what he's known for primarily is not only was he a great boxer, but he was a boaster. Remember he was already telling everybody how great he was. And he would say that all the time, even when he was fighting someone, how great he was. He would taunt people in the ring. He was great.

Well the story's told of Mohammad Ali that he boarded a plane and sat in the seat and the flight attendant came by and said, "You need to fasten your seatbelt."

He says, "Do you know who I am?"

She says, "Yeah. I know you're Muhammad Ali."

He says, "I don't need a seatbelt. If this plane crashes, I'm not going to get hurt."

So she just left him and went on. And then she came back and she said, "Mr. Ali, you need to fasten your seatbelt."

He said, "Lady, I'm superman. I don't need to fasten my seatbelt."

And she says to him, "If you were superman, you wouldn't need a plane. Now fasten your seatbelt."

I think that his boasting and his arrogance is a demonstration of what gets us into trouble many times. We must recognize we are not superman. We are in danger. The temptations are right around us. We need to be careful of those. We need the Lord's help and guidance and, as Peter reminds us, be careful of the danger that's out there. We must be able to trust Him for what He wants to do in our lives.

I trust God will use that in your heart to protect you, prepare you for the enemy because you don't know where he is. He might be around that next good thing that comes into your life.

Would you stand with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you for your great love for us and that you want to protect us, you want to give us freedom, you want us to enjoy life in some great ways. We realize that we are weak and temptation is right there and we need you. Help us, Lord. Use your people in our lives, use family in our lives. Give us wisdom to follow you and to trust you even in challenging times. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.