



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Basic Bible Doctrine, Genesis 3:1-6

"Effects of the Fall, Part I- Fall of Man"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of Thy word again. We thank Thee for the teach which we receive from it. For the important things that are necessary for our daily life, and for our eternal life, and we pray that as we consider the fall of man tonight that our thoughts may be arranged after thy thoughts. May we begin to think divine truth as it is revealed in the word of God. Give us understanding. Enable us, Lord, through our lives to glorify Thee. We commit this hour to Thee. We pray Thy blessing upon each one present, in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Now our subject tonight, is as we are continuing our series in Basic Bible doctrine, is The Fall of Man, and the Nature of Sin, and we are turning naturally to Genesis chapter 3, and reading the first six verse for the Scriptural basis of what we're are going to be talking about tonight. Now, Moses writes in Genesis chapter 3, in verse 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? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 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. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 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."

Incidentally, that word God is Elohim, which is the plural form, but as we have been mentioning in some of our studies, it's certain at times, whether this shall be rendered as Gods plural or God singular. The context occasionally makes it very plain that it should be rendered as a plural Gods, but in other contexts such as this one. It would certainly seem that the singular rendering is correct, and so "ye shall be as God" would be correct.

"Knowing good and evil. 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."

The fall of man and nature of Sin, one of the profoundest philosophical and theological problems is the problem of evil. No serious student of philosophy, philosophy of religion or theology has managed to avoid it. If you were to take philosophy, one of the questions that would ultimately be brought up would be problem of evil, or if you studied the philosophy of religion, one of the signal problems of that particular discipline is the problem of the origin of evil, and of course in theology it occurs as the problem in many different areas of theological study, and so it is a problem that we cannot avoid. The reasons why this is such a problem are very clear. The power of evil is great and universal in mankind.

One only has to look at the TV screen for a few hours to see evidences of the problem of evil. One reads the newspapers, and from the first page to the last

there is usually some reference to evil and its consequences, or almost any book that we read is filled with the problem of evil. It is also a puzzling continuous blight on creation. We read in the Bible that when the creation was finished, that is the physical creation; God said it was very good, but yet the history of mankind indicates that it never reaches its heralded expectations. There is a promise implicit in creation but no fulfillment, and what we do see in creation is a kind of airy nothing. We look for that which is good. We do not find it. One of the commentators on the book of Genesis has pointed out that the Bible says that God looked at the creation and saw that it was very good, but things are not very good in the world now, and they are not very good in three realms. In the physical realm, everything tends to run down and wear out, and this is true, not only of those things that are intended to run down and wear out by those who make them, but everything in this universe tends to run down and wear out.

In the living world, each animal is engaged in a perpetual struggle with other animals and against disease, as well as the universal process of aging and death. If you have birds around your house, and everybody does, you discover that the realm of the birds is a realm of struggle with other animals. There are the cats, and if the cats are there the other types of animals are there to torment them. In every possible sphere of activity in the animal world there is struggle and conflict.

Culturally one civilization after another seems to rise for a time, then decline and die. That is characteristic of human cultures. In the spiritual and moral realm each individual invariably finds it easier to do wrong than right. Before we became Christians we recognize that. We discover that it's not so easy to do the things that our conscience may tell us ought to be done, and even after we have become Christians, we discover that it is not easy to do the will of God, even though we have been born again, and given the Holy Spirit to guide us, to empower us, and to motivate us. It's easier to drift downward, than it is to drift upward. If an individual, a Christian, stays as he is the

Christian life, or does not make any effort to advance, he always drifts lower. We don't drift higher.

The world is full of hatred, of crime, of war, of population, of selfishness, corruption, evil of every kind, and so something has evidentially gone wrong with God's perfect creation. It is a matter of our daily experience too. There are so many seemingly senseless tragedies that take place. There is the plane crash with the scientists who is just on the verge of some significant discovery that might benefit all of mankind, or the scholar who dies in an earthquake or the little child that is over taken by tragedy. All of these things are experiences that we all either know about personally or we know about from reading our newspapers or from the experiences of our friends. How often do you have people say, "Why did that happen to me?"

Now, one wonders why we keep repeating that. After everything that happens to us, people will say, "Why me?" It is a singular problem, evil in our universe. Now, so far as a solution to the problem of evil is concerned, we'll have to reserve that for a future time, and it will only be a discussion. Some who are outstanding theologians say, there is no solution for the problem of sin an evil. One leading theologian, one of the greatest of the 20th century, by all recognizing has said that we are of the opinion that an explanation for sin is truly impossible. It is difficult to understand the reason back of the sin of man, but so far as the entrance of evil into our world is concerned, the Bible is very plain and clear.

The Bible does not explain the origin of sin, but it does explain the entrance of sin into our human existence, and it says it very plainly here in Genesis chapter 3, and the Apostle Paul argues on the basis of this in Romans chapter 5, in verse 12, when he says, "For this cause, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, because all sinned!" And Paul in Romans 5:12 refers to this incident here, and he says that it is through the one man, that sin has come to exist in our society, in our human society, so the Bible is plain regarding the entrance of sin into the human

race, but the Bible does not explain to us the ultimate origin of sin. That is a matter of speculation based upon the putting together of some texts that are at least, to say the least difficult of interpretation.

Now, we do have however a clear revelation of the Fall of man, and so that's what we are looking at now. Let's turn to Genesis 3, and in verse 1 through verse 5, Moses writes of man's temptation. Now, you can remember the context here. Man has been placed in the Garden of Eden. There is Adam, and there is Eve. They have all that is necessary for fullness of life. They have fruit. They have work to keep them occupied. They have the animals. They have tree that is in the midst of the garden for moral training, and Adam has the woman for help, or at least for a challenge. [Laughter] So everything is there for the proper kind of life for him to have, fullness of life.

Now, let me say, at the beginning, this something I probably should said a moment ago. This story is historical so far as Moses is concerned. He does not present this as something mythological. The context so far as we can tell is a context of historical narrative. Furthermore the language of the Hebrew text does not suggest that this is figurative or mythological.

Now, there are places in the Old Testament Hebrew, in which we have poetic language. Many large sections in the Psalms, in the prophets and in certain places in others of the writing, but so far as Genesis is concerned here in the earlier chapters almost all of these verses, almost all of this account is in the style of historical narrative, and so if we were reading this in the Hebrew text, we would notice that the language suggests that this is history. The New Testament also treats the Old Testament passages here as if they were historical. The Old Testament does too. In Hosea, chapter 6, in verse 7, Hosea refers to the breaking of the covenant with man. And the reference is to, it seems, the covenant that God made with Adam in the Garden in Eden. In other places in the New Testament such as 1 Timothy 2:14, the apostle argues on the basis of the historicity of this account.

Sometimes men say, "Well, is it not true that in some of the other cultures of the Ancient East there are accounts that are similar to the Genesis account?" That is true. There are individual accounts in those ancient societies that are similar to the Genesis account. That is there is an account of an original kind of paradise. There is an account of an original kind of fall, and the results of it.

Now, all you have to do is to read them to see how different they are so far as the quality of them is concerned, but nevertheless they do have striking similarities to the Genesis account. The explanation of that is that they are memories of what actually transpired in the Garden of Eden. They are dependant upon this account, which we are reading here. Another thing that I want to mention before we look at the temptation itself, the serpent is a real animal, not a symbol of evil. It is possible that the serpent moved uprightly in the beginning. There is some question about that. In fact there is a great deal of speculation about it. Some think that the serpent originally did crawl, and perhaps the structure of the serpent's skeleton is such that some of the so-called vestigial limbs are related to the fact that he did move upon his belly. Others think that the serpent was upright, and that as a result of the judgment, he began to move as he moves now. The Bible doesn't say a whole lot about that, and we probably should leave that alone. He was a tool of a superior spirit. He was the tool of Satan. That is clear from Revelation chapter 12, verse 9, and 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 3, and also verse 14.

One point is clear right from the beginning. Sin is an intruder into human society. It is not good in the making. We are not to think of an evolutionary kind of growth in man's morality, as if man began evil, and we are gradually becoming better and better. Sin is an intruder into human society. Man's problem, it is also clear, is not his environment. Adam and Eve were the members of the original Great Society, and in spite of that perfect environment they sinned, so if we were to take this as our example, we would say that sin does not arise from our environment. It is not the result of physiological maladjustment. It is not the result of economic exploitation, as the Marxists

would have us believe, but rather man's problem is the result of the fall in the Garden of Eden.

Now, Moses describes the tempter in the opening part of verse 1. He says, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." Now, notice he is classified as a beast of the field. Now, you will pardon me as I just loosen my tie. This is a historic occasion. Do you realize that? [Laughter] I don't know whether I can even preach with my tie loosened, but anyway the weather in Texas, in case you are listening to the tape one of these days, it is hot down here in Texas, now don't reply, speak back to us. The text says he was more subtle than any beast of the field.

Now, here in this opening statement we have a description of the tempter, but notice this about him, we are inclined to cover him up with all kinds of human ideas, but he is so far as the text of Scripture is concerned, one of the beasts of the field. We gather that he was created by God, and thus very good, so that what we have is a beautiful pious believer in God.

Now, he is not unbeliever in God that is in the existence of God, but he is a beautiful pious believer in God. He is more pious than most preachers, and he certainly is more knowledgeable than most professors of the Old Testament. He knows biblical theology. He knows a great deal about. He doesn't come along and say, as someone has pointed out, "I am an ancient Madalyn Murray O'Hair, an atheistic monster, and I want you to listen to some of the things that I have to say." He rather comes along as a beautiful pious believer in God and says in effect, "Let's discuss religion. Let's have a seminar on God and truth, and just like Believer's Chapel let's don't charge anything for it either." So he says to the woman, "Ye hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden."

Now, the tempting, that is the act of tempting Eve and Adam, is very, very instructive, and it's very important, I think, that we understand what is really taking place. This is the most disastrous dialogue that has ever taken place in human history, and it is

initiated by the Devil, and the subject is God. Isn't that striking? The most disastrous dialogue in human history is a seminar on God conducted in the third person. Notice not in the first person, but in the third person about God. There is a danger in talking about God in the third person. You have to do it. The Bible does it, but it's important that we do have a relationship to the Lord personally. He talks about God in the third person.

Now, Paul speaks about the subtlety of the devil in 2 Corinthians chapter 11. Let's notice the steps in his subtlety. The first thing that he does is to question the word of God. "Ye, has God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." So like modernists, who approach the Bible with doubt, he comes with his questioning of Holy Scripture.

Now, he does not begin with point blank denials, he begins with questioning the word of God. That too is just like our contemporary liberal theologian. He doesn't write over his book, poison. I do not believe the Bible to be the word of God, that is something that emerges from his discussions of spiritual things. It's very rare for a man to say in his book, "Now, I don't except the Bible. I don't except the Bible as the word of God." That's what you learn by studying his writing, and that is what one finally deduces from the things that are said about the Scriptures, so he doesn't begin with a point blank denial. He aims his indeeds and his ifs at the Father's honor.

In effect, he says, "You are the creation of the Lord God. Is it true that he has actually withheld something from you." He begins to right from the beginning to plant some about in Eve's mind, but he begins by attacking the sanctity of God's word. "Has God said?" "Ye, hath God said." The woman said unto the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ye shall not eat of it, nether shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

Now, she waivers a little bit here, and I don't know whether we are to make too much of this, but you'll notice that clause in verse 3, "Neither shall ye touch it." Is not something that is said in Genesis chapter 2? All that God said was they were not to eat of the fruit of that tree. The probation is given in verse 16 and 17 of chapter 2. "And the

Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." So there is no prohibition of touching the tree, but in Eve's language, she has added that clause, "Neither shall ye touch it."

Now, I don't know how much we are to make of that I say, and I don't want to make too much of it, but I do think that you can notice from this that there is the danger of the altering of the word of God, implicit here as least. It's always dangerous to alter Holy Scripture. We can alter it by either adding to it. Modern cults often do this, or we can delete things from the Bible, modern liberals do that. God, who is omniscient, can always be trusted to say exactly and only what he means, and finite man is inexcusable when he seeks to change the word of God. Sometimes we do it unwittingly of course, but when we wittingly change the word of God, we are doing what Peter does, resting the Holy Scripture or torturing the Holy Scripture, making it say something it does not really say. It's very important when we interpret the Bible to interpret it also in the light of what it says, not in the light of some system of theology that we have already constructed.

Now, it's perfectly all right to construct a system of theology. I certainly think that's very important. I try to do that constantly, but our system is not to determine our interpretation. We should be very careful about that because if we are not careful about that we will force a text of Scripture to mean something harmonious with what we think the Bible teaches as a whole, so it's very important not to alter the word of God. Satan questions the word. That's his first step, and perhaps Eve has altered it, indicating a wavering in her trust in the word of God, but Satan doesn't stop with "Ye hath God said." He then states it the fourth verse, "Ye shall not surely die." So here is a contradiction. Here is the first lie in the Bible, incidentally. It's a direct assault on the word of God. What he says is it's not really a matter of life and death. You shall not surely die. The

Hebrew expression is very strong, and there is a great deal of stress upon it. "You shall not surely die."

Now, this of course is the blackest lie in all of history, and it was aimed at genocide, for as a result of it, the whole race falls. It's a denial incidentally of judgment. Isn't that interesting? We like to say, and even evangelicals fall into this occasionally. Well, the world likes to say, "He's a hell, fire, and brimstone preacher."

Now, that's supposed to be bad. In fact, that's the way the world regards it. He's usually regarded as a person who really cannot keep complete control of himself. I noticed that some of that type of language is used with certain political figures right at the present time. One man, who evidentially was a possibility for vice presidential nomination, was a man who was described as a person who preached in the style of a hell, fire and brimstone kind of preacher, and that was a negative blot in politics, but in the minds of our society to preach hell, fire and damnation is not really the proper way to preach the Bible. You'll find this in many of our theology seminaries, even those that are conservative. You will find that they do look down on preaching hell, fire and brimstone, but notice that the first contradiction. The first lie is a lie, with respect to divine judgment, and this denial of judgment you shall not surely die," ultimately will involve theocide, because it will involve the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, ultimately.

It's perfectly all right to preach, hell, fire and damnation. The greatest preacher of hell, fire, and damnation was the Lord Jesus Christ. All one has to do is to take a concordance, and look up hell, Gahenna, and see who used that term more than anybody else. It will surprise you the Lord Jesus Christ is the one who used it more than anyone else, and he didn't hesitate to cry with a loud voice too. There is nothing wrong with preaching hell, fire, and damnation. There is everything right about it because the Bible is full of it. Don't be apologizing for hell, fire, and damnation. A lot of people need hell, fire, and damnation preaching. I've even heard people say, "Well, that's the not the way to get someone saved." Well, personally I speak only as a Calvinist who likes to

evangelize. I believe that you ought to get people saved any way you can, by preaching the Bible, all parts of the Bible. Arminians may have some other viewpoint, but Calvinists, we believe you ought to preach the gospel, and get people saved through the preaching of the gospel.

You audience, you notice of course I am smiling. Those that are listening to me on tape, you can't see this beautiful smile on my face, [laughter] but I am thinking about the criticism that is often lodged against us Calvinists that because we believe in predestination and election, therefore we are not interested in people becoming Christians. That's another lie.

Now, the final statement of Satan, in the 5th verse is, "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof that your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God knowing good and evil." Now, notice that this particular kind of criticism, this third step in his subtlety it's not a questioning of the Word, it's not a contradiction of the Word it's a maligning of the author of the Word. For he says, "God doth know in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God knowing good and evil." And so he attacks the Lord God himself here. He questions his word, he contradicts the word, and then he attacks the author of the word. This is what Helmut Theilicke called a little well poisoning. That is, he goes right to the source of everything and seeks to seduce in Adam and Eve, specifically here Eve, mistrust in the Lord, and a kind of mistrust to the effect that he doesn't really love you. He really is trying to keep thing from you. He's afraid you might learn his tricks. If you learn his tricks, then you'll be like God himself, and you won't even need him. You'll retire him.

Now, this then is the direct attack on the Lord God. One might ask, "Why did Satan attack Eve? Why didn't he wait until Adam came around?" Well, the Bible doesn't give us any explanation and consequently, I am only going to infer. In the first place, Adam was the federal head, and being the federal head, he should have had a deeper sense of responsibility. When Eve sinned nothing happened, as we see. It's when Adam

sinned that all hell broke loose, because Adam was the federal head. It was with the one man that God dealt covenantally. That's why we read in the Bible, "For as through one man's sin entered into the world and death by sin." It's Adam who is the covenant head, and consequently, he might have been thought by Satan to be the harder person to attack, since he was the covenantal head, and would have had a sense of reasonability that she did not have, so the way to attack the man is to approach him through Eve, perhaps that's why. We don't know. The Bible does speak of Eve or the woman, as the weaker vessel, but whether that's involved in this or not, we cannot say, and I surely would not want to say anything about it.

Now, in verse 6 we have the fall described, and I want you to notice that his fall is a fall that is both inward and outward. The first sin is both an internal sin and an external sin. We read in verse 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."

Now, I say first of all that this sin was first of all internal, and that internal inclination is described in the first part of verse 6, "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, a tree to be desired to make one wise." Mesmerized by the serpent. Listening to the creature rather than the creator, following her impressions rather than instructions from the Lord God. Seeking self-fulfillment. We are full of that aren't we in our society? Seeking self-fulfillment, not to glory of God, Eve and then Adam inclined to evil, yet even after the fall both Adam and Eve are still religious. They are religious individuals. There's a whole lot of difference between being religious and being a Christian. As I've said so many times, a whole lot of difference between believing God and in the God who saves, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's not enough to be a theist. Khomeini is a theist but he is a far cry from believer in the biblical doctrine of God. He doesn't know God, doesn't know the true God at all.

He uses the term God, but he doesn't know who he is because he doesn't know, Father, Son and Spirit, and the relationship of these persons in the Godhead. So they inclined to evil, and yet they were both still religious. Eve looked at the tree, and to her the tree was good for food. That is, it was something that appealed to the physical, to the bodily appetites. It was pleasant to the eyes. It was something that appealed to the emotions, the aesthetic senses, and it was also, she thought, a tree to be desired to make one wise. That is, it appealed to the mind and the spirit, and to one's pride of knowledge and spiritual insight, so here are three pathways, by which she sinned.

Now, if you'll turn over in the Bible to 1 John, chapter 2, verse 16, there is an interesting verse, that bears on this particular temptation. 1 John chapter 2, in verse 16, the Apostle John writes in the 16th verse of this 2nd chapter of his first letter, and he must have this account in mind. He said, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world which lies in the evil one." So notice it, the lust of the flesh, why that's what Moses is speaking about when she saw that the tree was good for food. And then he says, that it was pleasant to the eyes. That is the lust of the eyes, and then a tree to be desired to make one wise. That's the pride of life.

Our Lord's temptation was very similar. He was the last Adam, and when he came Satan attacked him, and he attacked him by appealing to the lust of the flesh. He appealed to the lust of the eyes, and he appealed to the pride of life. If you'll go back and read Matthew chapter 4, you'll notice that he made the appeal to the physical with the bread, and then he referred to the possession of the world's to the aesthetic and emotional, and then finally to spiritual pride by the offer of worldwide recognition as the one of the highest eminence under the special protection of the angels, and so there was the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

This is the method by which Satan tests. You will find it in the tragic story of the fall of Achan. According to Joshua chapter 7, he saw among the spoils a beautiful

garment from Shinar and other precious objects, then he coveted them, and finally he took them, and then David, he gazed upon Bethsheba, and then he desired to meet her, and finally he took her, making the sin complete. The Holy Spirit is very careful to record these examples in order to admonish us and to help us when fall into testing, so sin began in the heart of Eve. In fact, when she began to desire, she was already falling. When tests came to the Lord Jesus he did not have that desire. The sin began in the desire, so sin began with the sinful inclination. In fact, sin has a three-fold movement. First there is the sinful inclination, and then there is the sinful volition. The choosing and then finally the sinful act, but the sin begins within. What finally takes place is just the outworking of what has already taken place. Even if Eve had never taken of the fruit, she would have sinned. She would have already have sinned. It was inevitable that she took of the fruit after she desired, and then had the sinful inclination.

Now, the volition is described in the remaining words of verse 6. We read, "She took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Here is the simple description of the acts, but how difficult of the undoing of these acts of Adam and Eve. Eve reasoned, when she should have followed the word of God. Adam acted emotionally, when he should have followed the word of God. Eve should have listened to Adam, first of all. Not first before the Lord God, but first before she sinned, but she did not. She reasoned independently. Adam, who was not supposed to act emotionally, that's supposed to belong to the women, he acted emotionally. They both acted in ways that were uncharacteristic of their own creation. Well, I read not long ago, it's been found that the so-called apple on the tree did not cause the trouble in the Garden of Eden. It was the pair on the ground. [Laughter] And that's right. That's merely to wake you up.

Now, I want you to notice that last part of this study. I want to say just a few words about the nature of sin. Now, in analyzing the nature of sin, it's important that we look at just a couple of texts, and we have five or six minutes, and so I think I can finish

this. I want you to turn with me first of all to 1 John chapter 3. 1 John chapter, and let me read verse 4. 1 John chapter 3, verse 4 says, "Whoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law. For sin is the transgression of the law."

Now, in the original text that statement's very simple. It's simply this. Sin is lawlessness, but now that means the transgression of the law, so characteristic of sin is the transgression of the law, the moral law of God. By transgression of law we refer to disobedience to the word of God, that is an act that is contrary to the expression of the word of God in the Bible, so that characteristic of sin externally is that it is the transgression of the law, but the Bible also says that the root of sin is unbelief. Let's turn to the gospel of John. John chapter 16 contains some words that the Lord Jesus spoke to the apostles in the upper room before he left them for the cross and resurrection and ultimate ascension to the right hand of the Father. He said that after he was gone, that the Holy Spirit would be given, and would come, and he would be their comforter. He would reprove the world of sin of righteousness, and of judgment.

And in the 9th verse of John chapter 16, the Lord Jesus said, that he will reprove the world of sin because they believe not on me. That's a striking statement. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin because they do not believe on Jesus Christ. You might have expected him say, the Holy Spirit will convince the world of sin because they commit sinful acts, but he says, no, because they believe not on me, and then will you turn to Romans chapter 14, and verse 23, Romans 14, verse 23. The Apostle Paul writes here in the midst of his discussion of neutral things, and how Christians should live in the light of them. He says in verse 23, the last verse of Romans 14, "And he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because eateth not of faith. For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." In other words, any act, any thought that does not arise out of trust in the Lord God is sinful. So essentially, the root of sin is unbelief. The inward root of sin is unbelief, and its outward effect is the transgression of the moral law of God, so I think to sum it up, sin is in its essential nature, unbelief. That leads to rebellion. That is rebellion

against the Lord God, and finally in lack of conformity to the moral law of God or lack of conformity to the word of God.

Now, you can see this in the book of Genesis. You can see Adam and Eve in unbelief. What they really did was to disbelieve the word. "In the day, thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In effect, they did not believe that, and in not believing it, not trusting in that statement they sinned.

Now, in that act of sin which was both internal and external they rebelled against the authority of the word of God, and in issues and lack of conformity to the word of God evidenced by their hiding when God came into the garden, and finally in their children when Cain rises up and slays Abel in the next chapter, so the progress of sin is unbelief as it's root, rebellion as it's result, and it's final issue is lack, of conformity or immorality, lack of conformity to the word of God. People often think that sin is simply immorality, and so we think of particularly evil acts that are sin, but the root of sin is unbelief. Individuals engage in acts of immortality because they don't believe the word of God. If they believe the word of God they would not be responsible for those acts, so always then sin is unbelief leading to rebellion and finally lack of conformity to the moral law of God or immorality.

The Fall of man, here is the explanation of the seemingly senseless tragedies about us. It is the explanation of the history of our society. It is also the explanation of the coming of the redeemer. It's the explanation for the divine program of God, which leads ultimately to the restoration of the paradise in the new heavens and the new earth. How wonderful it is to have an understanding of the nature of man in his sin, and of the plan and program of God to conquer sin through the redemptive sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only through him that we shall be recovered from sin, and have the immensely wonderful privilege of spending eternity in the presence of the triune God. Next week, we will talk about some of the effects of the fall. Let's close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful the Thee for the privilege of the study of Thy word, and we thank Thee for this wonderful illuminating chapter, which explains so much of human existence, of the existence of individuals in the church and of my own existence. We thank Thee for showing us what we are. And oh, God, thereby cause us to flee to Jesus Christ and the salvation he has provided from the evil of human sin, for Jesus' sake. Amen.