

# THE223 Christian Narrative 1 Creation and Fall

## Unit 5c Sin's Impact on Humanity

Presented by the



For Use by the

**Blue Letter Bible Institute**

[Web: Study.Bible](http://Study.Bible)

A Ministry of the

**Blue Letter Bible**

[Web: BlueLetterBible.org](http://BlueLetterBible.org)

Hello and welcome back to Session C of Unit 5. Today we're going to look at sin's impact on humanity. So far in this unit, we've been looking at the fall (Genesis 3) and we've been trying to understand all of the implications that come with this fall, this introduction of sin in the life of humanity. In our first lesson, we looked at the act of sin and how man and woman willfully chose to vandalize the *shalom* that God had created around them, that the *shalom* they shared with God was really marred by their choice to sin. So we started at the beginning of Genesis 3 and understood that moment. Then in our last session, we looked at how God's holiness required him to judge the sin of humanity. And so we went from the beginning of Genesis 3 to the end of Genesis 3, understanding God's judgment. And it's a threefold nature: the judgment of the serpent, the judgment of woman, and the judgment of man. And we noticed that in both came curse, but also the promise of hope. Today, as we complete our discussion about this initial act, I want us to look at how sin has impacted all aspects of humanity. And so here we'll look at the heart of Genesis 3, the middle portion of Genesis 3, in an effort to better understand all that's going on and how sin has truly changed the way we relate to all things as human beings.

So in front of you, you have Genesis 3:8-11. I'll read just a little bit past that so that we can understand the context as to what is going on. Again, we pick up the story right after Adam and Eve have chosen to violate God's command. They've transgressed the boundary. And this is what we read. "And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'"

So here we have the story of how sin has impacted, how sin has changed the way that humanity relates to everything. And I want to unpack this for us as we continue to look at this. The first thing that we need to see is that sin has actually alienated us from God. Now, this is why I have Genesis 3:8-11 up for you. You see, and we talked about it in our last lesson, that we lived in perfect *shalom* with God. So the norm for Adam and Eve was to walk with God in the garden. And yet the moment that sin is introduced, look what happens. The man and the wife hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. What does this mean for us? Well, it simply means that sin has destroyed the relationship we shared with God. Rather than seeking God and enjoying God, we no longer do that. We no longer seek and enjoy the presence of God. And as humanity, we're actually engaged in the worship now of false gods. I listed three, and we could come up with a countless list of other things. Money, sex, power. We've replaced God (big G) with gods (little G). And as we look through Scripture, what we discover is that the Bible talks about the fact that no one in humanity seeks God any longer.

Psalms 14:1-3. "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one." Psalm 53:1-3. "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good. God looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12. "As it is written: 'None are righteous, no, not even one; no one understands; no

one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.” There’s such a powerful picture that’s going on here in this story where man and woman enjoyed relationship with God, but the moment they sin now, they hide from the presence of God. Sin has alienated us from God.

Now, we also see the impact of sin in that sin has alienated us from ourselves. We as the self, have been impacted in the way that we relate to ourselves. So here we read verse 7 and verse 13 of Genesis 3. I’m going to read these together because I want us to grasp how sin has impacted our relationship with our self. “The eyes of both [Adam and Eve] were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths... Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this that you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

Now, both of these verses are important, but notice here that after they hide from God, they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves because they were naked. So in a very real way, sin introduces the presence of shame and guilt into our life, which now permeate our life.

Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” There is a natural shame and guilt that comes. And so the first act, hide from God, get away from his presence. The second act, cover ourselves because there is shame and guilt in our life, and we must hide it. We must cover it. We must deal with this feeling in our life that was never there before. You see that humanity’s choice to sin violated the *shalom* they shared with God, but it violated their own sense of *shalom* amongst themselves. There is now a fight amongst themselves, this feeling that they don’t want but cannot get rid of: shame and guilt. So sin alienates us from God. Sin alienates us from ourselves. Sin also alienates us from one another.

Here is verse 12 and verse 16. “The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’” So then, “To the woman he said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.’” Two verses that talk about the breakdown of human relationship. God said, “What did you do?” Adam, being a typical man, said, “It’s not my fault. It’s my wife’s fault.” He places the blame for sin at the feet of the woman, even though he himself is perfectly culpable for it. Verse 16, “Eve, your desire will be to usurp the position of your husband, but he will rule over you.” You see these two places, in a very real way, have created friction and conflict and a lack of *shalom* not just between us and God, not just amongst our own self, but between each other. And so humanity has made the other person a commodity to be used, not a person to be respected. Vices replace virtues. Lust replaces love. Envy replaces righteous indignation. And we see this throughout. In fact, just one chapter later in Genesis 4, we have the story of Cain and Abel. And I’ll read that to you because we see how humanity becomes alienated from each other to the point where murder takes place in Genesis 4. Starting in verse 3 of chapter 4, it says, “In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at your door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.’” Sin is crouching at your door, an unhealthy desire, anger towards your brother. And of course, we read on a little bit later that he goes out and murders Abel.

The presence of sin, even though it was done together, even Adam, actually destroyed the relationship that they shared with one another. They went from being in perfect union to being in perfect disunion, fighting against one another. So sin has alienated us from God. It's alienated us from our self. It's alienated us from each other. And finally, we read that it's even alienated us from nature. "And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you...' This comes a little bit later, right? In verses 17 and 18. "...the tree of which I commanded you 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field."

So here we see it. "Cursed is the ground because of you. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you." Humanity's decision to sin negatively impacted nature. It impacted nature in an inanimate and an animate way as well. In Genesis, we see Adam naming. In Genesis 1 and 2, we see him naming all of the creatures. And yet now there seems to be a natural fear amongst creation when it relates to man. So we've got to see that sin alienates us from nature. And in fact, we read in Romans 8:19-20 that "creation waits with an eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope." Sin impacts every aspect of us as human beings. We're alienated from God, alienated from our self, alienated from nature. We're alienated from each other.

So let's visualize what we've just discussed and kind of lay out for us how humanity related to God, others, self, and nature before the fall or before sin, and then how that has been changed because of sin. So here are the four ways that we relate it. Before sin, man loved God. He was in perfect relationship with God. I use that phrase man generally speaking of humanity. Humanity loved God. He was in relationship, perfect *shalom*. Before sin, man was at peace with himself. Not only did he have *shalom* with God, but he had *shalom* within himself. He lived in unity. Before sin, man related to others. Man related to woman. There was interrelatedness amongst them, perfect union in their relationship. Before sin, man tended nature and cared for God's creation as vice-regent. He stewarded the things of God. Yet when sin was introduced, it impacted all of these areas of our life. And so after sin, man feared God. How interesting that so many people feel that God is distant from them, which may be true, but the way that they describe it is that God has left them, when in truth, theology teaches us that God never left us. It is we who have run from God. When we reorient our vision of what God's word says, we begin to discover that even in the presence of sin, God pursued mankind. This is opposite to what our culture understands about the God of the Bible, that God knew what Adam and Eve had done, but he still sought them out. It was man who ran away.

Coming to the New Testament, the story of the prodigal son. It's not the father who runs from the son. It's the son who leaves the father. The story of humanity is that we fear God and have now left him because of sin in our life. Before sin, man was at peace with himself. But after sin, man loathes himself. Why do so many people struggle with shame and guilt? Why, when people look into the mirror, do they see their inadequacies and not the beauty of God's creation? It's because sin has so impacted the way we look at ourselves that we're driven by shame and guilt. Before sin, man related to others well. But after sin, man seeks to rule over others in an unhealthy way. There's a constant friction between people in all sorts of relationships, between countries, between individuals, between couples. We see the constant desire for people to rule over other people and assert their rule over other people, whether people want that or not.

Before creation, man tended nature. But after creation, now man toils with nature. He seeks to make nature his slave. He wrestles to bring forth the good things from the earth. And so we see throughout our world the overpopulation, the raping of land. We see all of this occurring. And while it's not the best place for us to end, we need to see that sin has really impacted everything. There's no aspect of what it means to be human that hasn't been touched by that one single decision to sin. Sin truly has impacted all aspects of humanity. One single act willfully chosen by humanity, which required judgment upon God, which has impacted all aspects of humanity. The fall truly was just that.