



**SIN IS A CHOICE** By: David W. Lankford

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We want to take our Scripture text from **Genesis 3:6-8**, " **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. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees in the garden**".

The question must be asked, what is it in human nature, a nature which God created-that makes us temptable or vulnerable to sin? Adam and Eve were divinely created apart from sin, and without the need to sin, yet some characteristics in their makeup allowed sin to enter into their lives. So what was that characteristic? Scripture offers two answers to this question. For Eve, the choice to believe a lie was the doorway through which sin entered into her life. Satan is the greatest liar that has ever existed since his fall. The entirety of his whole makeup is one of lies and lying. Jesus spoke adamantly against Satan regarding his lying disposition here in **John 8:44**, "**Ye are of your father the devil, and the lust of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh on**

**his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it**". The nature that both Adam and Eve possessed was one of free moral agency, the ability to choose: in other words they had the ability to obey or to disobey. After God confronted both Adam and Eve, we see that Eve placed the blame on the serpent in his deceptive presentation: **Gen. 3:13**, " **And the Lord said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat**". Eve admitted Satan had beguiled her. The word beguiled in the Hebrew #5377 means to lead astray, to mentally delude one's thinking, or to be seduced, or deceived. Paul the apostle gave us a dire warning concerning Eve and her disobedience found in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:3**, " **But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ**". This is how Satan leads the church astray, in advocating and appropriating false doctrine, that is carried about by his demons through his inspired ministers. It doesn't matter how Satan causes one to sin, his goal is to deceive and cause one to break fellowship with God by making the wrong choice. Certainly making the wrong choice has profound consequences as we witnessed with Adam and Eve. The Bible is clear in that Eve made an evil choice through deception, but Adam by transgression; Adam knew the truth. We read in **1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 2:14**, " **And Adam was**

**not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression**". It is been said by certain theologians, that Adam willfully partook of the fruit knowing he was being disobedient because he did not want Eve to die alone, which is total conjecture. The fact is, they both made an evil choice which was passed on to every living creature from that point onward. In looking back it is evident that Adam chose to ignore God's word of authority found here in **Genesis. 3:17**, " **And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life**". Let me say again, evil choices damn the soul without repentance. One other point of interest is that we never see where Adam and Eve ever repented of their sin of disobedience. Fundamentally the two choices they made were self will and self deception, which are actually two sides of the same coin. Both remain complicating realities in our lives to this day. Allowing sin to take root and bear its deadly fruit continues until Christ enters into our lives and breaks the bonds and power of sin, thus empowering us to resist evil. Without the empowerment of God's presence in these earthen vessels we have no power to resist sin and temptation. With the flesh having been inundated and saturated with the sin nature, it is impossible for men to resist sin and evil unless God's presence resides within their lives. The flesh is truly unbelievably

weak and impotent. Peter was also another example of a man who thought he would never deny the Lord Jesus Christ, but in his hour of trial and temptation he succumbed to sin. This is why we are admonished in **James 4:7-8**, **"Submit of yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded"**. Double minded people never obtain absolute victory because they are continually bound by the flesh and self will. James says to us in **James 1:8**, **"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways"**. Temptation is merely sins call to our basic needs and desires to be satisfied in a self-serving and perverted way. Everything that God ever blessed man with, the devil came along very quickly to pervert it. God said it was not good that man should be alone, thus he gave him a help mate. Now Satan comes along and perverts marriage through fornication, adultery, and sodomy, in trying to meet that self-serving way through a perverted and godless means. Thus, we are admonished by Paul the apostle that every man should have his own wife and every wife should have her own husband: we find that verse in **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:2**. **"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband"**. Any other means of trying to meet the fleshly desires out of the confines of marriage is sinful and perverted. Temptation is also a means to practice self deception, finding ways to justify doing as we please, even though we know in our heart it is wrong. We are warned by the beloved John in **1<sup>st</sup> John 3:20-21**, **"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, who knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then**

**we have confidence toward God"**. As a young man and minister, it was hard for me to fathom that by making a simple vow before God on my wedding day that, that night there would be no guilt or condemnation in the consummation of my marriage. Knowing any time prior to that, it was sinful and evil. By the way, I did not have relations with my wife until I married her. But as a man I was some what baffled, in that a simple vow to God and my spouse would remove all guilt and condemnation. For that reason we rejoice in **Romans 8:1**, **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walked out after the flesh, but after the spirit"**. In doing things the right way, there will never be any guilt or condemnation in one's life. The Scriptures frequently speak of blindness as a willful act in which we choose to practice rebellion and self deception. Rebellion is a terrible sin in the eyes of God Almighty, for we read in **1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 15:23**, **" For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry"**. Blindness and hardness of heart is always synonymous in the New Testament. We read in **Ephesians 4:18**, **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness (or hardness) of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness"**. This is the end results of sin. Thank God, when Christ enters into our heart, He regenerates the heart and sets a person free to choose what is true and righteous. Again, it boils down to a simple choice. Even when Jesus was tempted in Matthew chapter four he chose each time to quote the Word of God to defend himself against

temptation. If you, my friend, will choose the Word of God, you too can resist the devil in the time of temptation. Don't ever think you can habitually sin and there be no consequences. Again, the greatest sin of all is blatant disobedience to God and His Word when we know the truth. For that very reason we see where the man of God, Joshua, gave Israel an open choice as to whom they would follow found here in **Joshua 24:15**, **"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"**. I assure you Joshua did not turn to Junior and ask him: who do you want to serve while living under my roof? Joshua chose for himself and his family, and I encourage you to do the same today. Thank you so very much for your continued love and support for the ministry here at The Voice of Evangelism. My wife and I work untiringly to minister to you the Word of God in every way that we possibly can. Through this newsletter, radio programs, and youtube videos, it's our desire to preach an uncompromising message. We both are very grateful and thankful for your love and support for the ministry. We are humbled by the blessing you have been to us throughout the years. Until next month, keep your lamps trimmed and burning ever so brightly. Jesus Christ will come again, thus we are determined to endure until the end of all things.

Serving With You All,

Pastor David W. Lankford