

PP The Two Towers: A Fractured Picture, 5

10/11/2009

Text Genesis 3:1

Illus My '69 Beetle through the barb-wired fence...quarter stick of dynamite fracturing the windshield into thousands of pieces

Honeymoon bubbles always pop sooner or later
We aren't told how long Adam and Eve were married before the temptation came
But they woke that day, I'm sure, never dreaming of what was about to happen
Absolutely in love with each other, at perfect peace with God, in harmony with creation,
clearly knowing their place in the world
And all of sudden, it all fractured into a million poorly reflective pieces of their former glory
What on earth happened and why is this important to marriages today?
That fateful day introduced a self-orientation called sin that every human being since
Adam and Eve inherited at conception
It was an event that still reaches out and affects every married couple today
It is the reason that husbands and wives so often become two towers in their marriages,
warring against one another in the battle of the sexes
And it all started with a mysterious creature called a serpent

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made."3:1

Genesis 3 introduces a serpent, a snake, a ***'beast of the field'***
Snakes were not in themselves evil having been created by God and declared good
But this snake is possessed by Satan, and it comes to deceive Eve

PP Revelation 12:9 refers to him: ***"that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world"***

Satan was a created angel of God, who led a group of angels to rebel against God

PP Ezekiel 28:15 says: ***"You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you."***

PP Isaiah 14 tells us what that unrighteousness was that was found in him
Five times in verses 13-14, Satan says ***'I will'***

Pride motivated him to elevated himself above any other, to be like God: ***'make myself like the most high'*** (14)

PP Genesis 14:19 uses this title for God and describes Him as the ***'possessor of heaven and earth'***
Satan didn't want to share the throne with God, he wanted God off it so he could possess heaven and earth for himself

So God cast rebellious Satan to the very place he would never be able to have, and we first find him breaking into the scene of human history in the Garden of Eden

And the serpent was ***'more crafty than any other'***

'Crafty' means shrewd, cunning or subtle and can be used for either good or evil

Satan hates humanity, precisely because we are so loved by God, and are made in His

image

His target, the image of God in men, his objective, to ruin and spoil relationship on every level

And if successful, he will completely disrupt and fracture how we were created to image God

Illus In the historical book That Day Alone, Nazi troops captured a Rabbi, forced him to strip naked even taking his wedding ring off. Then they beat him with a leather strap and cut off the left side of his beard. The troopers, ringed around him, laughing at him, then told him they had burned down his synagogue and since he no longer had a congregation, to go ahead and preach the sermon he was preparing, to them. Rabbi Jacob Warner asked for his hat, and shivering, naked with his hat on his head, he began his sermon by reading his chosen text from Scripture: "God created man in His image and likeness"

PP How did sin affect the image of God in us?

PP 1 The image of God in marriage roles

Satan first appeared in the bible in the form of a serpent and notice who he spoke to: "*He said to the woman...*"

In fact, Satan never did speak to Adam

Is it because she is the weaker, or more emotional of the two? Susceptible to Satan?

Was it because she was the only one around at the time?

I think there is a primary reason why Satan comes to Eve instead of Adam

While men and women both image God, and are created absolutely equal in personhood, worth and honor, we do have different roles within marriage

As we saw last week, Adam and husbands down through every generation are to take the lead in leaving their parents and take the lead in holding fast to their wives

Leading his wife in strength, love and grace, and she is to respond in willing, gracious submission as his helpmate, his counterpart, providing what is lacking

But today the word submission has been redefined to mean powerless, voiceless or less important

Yet the Bible lifts up loving leadership AND glad submission as ways that marriages image God...how?

The Persons of the Trinity-Father, Son and Holy Spirit-are equal in essence but each have different roles

God has always been the Father, Jesus the Son and the Spirit the Helper

All three are equal in power, essence and worth, yet the Father has a greater authority

He has a leadership role that the Son and Spirit do not have

In creation, the Father initiated, and the Son carried it out and the Spirit actively hovered over the waters

In redemption, the Father sent the Son into the world, the Son was obedient to the Father and died for our sins, and the Holy Spirit came to equip, empower the church

The Father did not die for our sins, nor was the Son poured out in the church at Pentecost

So while completely equal in deity, glory, and importance, they each have distinct roles and authority

The same is true in marriage with men and women, as they each have unique roles

PP Paul makes this clear in **1 Corinthians 11:3**: "*Now I want you to realize that the*

head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

Gracious, loving courageous leadership and willing, glad submission images God
When husbands lovingly lead and wives gladly follow them, Satan sees the tri-une God
and despises us

So he whispered his lies to Eve, not Adam, for if he can lead her into sin, and then she
lead her husband into sin, the divinely created marital order will be fractured into a distorted image of
it's former glory

Men, do you know where Adam was when Satan began to draw Eve away toward sin?
“she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her,
and he ate.” 3:6b

Men, when we do not lead graciously and courageously, we allow our marriages to be
susceptible to the enemies that all Christians have-Satan, the world and our flesh
He was silent, and rather than break into Eve's descent into deception to rescue her, he
did nothing, forfeiting his God-given place of leadership

Men, do we lead your families with strength, courage and love?

We are our family's first line of defense against our enemies who seek to destroy us

PP 2-The Image of God in dominion

PP “Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

1:26

PP Did you notice that the word ‘over’ occurred 5 times in that verse?

Men and women (***‘men’***) were both given the job of *ruling over* the earth and it preserves
that we are created distinct from and over the rest of the earth

Sin would destroy the sure dominion of men and women over creation was destroyed,
especially for Adam as the ground would now be cursed, getting food from it becoming hard toil

The partnership of work in **Genesis 1:26**, would now become the solitary labor of man

But there is another important point to notice with Satan's attack on Eve and how it
disrupts-*not our rulership over the earth*-but our being ruled over by God

In 3:1, we have the first question recorded in Scripture?

PP “He [serpent] said to the woman, “Did God [Elohim] actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

What's interesting here is that in chapter one, the name for God is *Elohim*, which
revealed Him as the Tri-une Creator

In chapters 2-4, now that mankind have been created, God's preferred name was *Yahweh-*
Elohim, His covenant redeemer Tri-une Creator (seen in 3:1)

That name combines God's love for His people with His powerful love within the trinity

But Satan, throughout Genesis 3:1-5, dropped Yahweh and kept Elohim

Purposefully neglected mentioning the God Who is fiercely and eternally loyal,
sovereign, good and loving God, keeping the powerful God Who loves Himself

And slowly, a crack began to remerge in Eve's confidence as she followed the serpent's
lead and she too dropped the covenant name of God from her lips

Does Elohim really have my best in mind? Is Elohim truly a good ruler over me?

Why has he told me not to eat from this tree?

And that is an interesting question for us to ask for ourselves?

Why did God forbid Adam and Eve from eating from the Tree of knowledge of good and evil?

Did God not want Adam and Eve to know good from evil?

PP One important reason is explained by James Boice: *“So long as that one tree stands in the garden as a symbol of my creaturehood, so long as it is there to remind me that I am not God, that I am not perfectly autonomous—so long as it is there, I hate it! So I will eat of it and die.”*

The forbidden tree served to remind them that they are the creature and He is the Creator, He is God and they are always dependent on Him

The taking of that forbidden fruit was at that moment a throwing off of the shackles of being ruled by God, and the rebellious reach to be like Him, equal to Him?

You don't like the way your spouse is, then live in a godly manner that will reflect the love of God without reaching for the fruit of threats, anger, manipulation and criticism

God loves you and wants to help you honor your marriage vows

PP 3-The Image of God in Communication

Illus It was March, 1990 and Denise and I were in beautiful Cancun, Mexico on our honeymoon...having our first marital conflict. Earlier that day we had talked about going out for lunch, but I had changed my mind. Being the frugal man that I am (an endearing way to say cheap), I thought peanut butter and jelly on soft white bread sounded both cost-effective and appetizing. My wife didn't agree. Her stomach, a bit upset, didn't want peanut butter and jelly on soft white bread. Her stomach wanted real food at a real restaurant. And before we knew what hit us, we were upset with and closed off from each other.

When we come to Genesis 1:28 we see that God created men and women and the scriptures says, *“And God blessed them. And God said to them...”*

God spoke to humanity out of His blessings

His communication was a means to speak His blessings to His people

And out of His blessings He spoke into men and women purpose and identity

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

And then we see Adam imaging the beauty of communication as all the animals were brought before him, *“And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.” (2:19)*

He spoke into the creatures of the world their identities

And then God fashioned Eve out of Adam's rib and when Adam lays eyes on her he sings of her with joy and gladness and satisfaction

Wives who are married to husbands who speak blessings into them know how confident their hearts are from this

PP And Adam names her *‘woman’* (Hebrew *isha*); *‘man’* (Hebrew *ish*)

Adam called her by a name that inextricably woven with his, recognizing their similarity and anticipating their deepest intimacy

PP The root meaning of *‘woman’* is soft, for she was fashioned to be a soft man (Dean Wildasin)

But when the man and woman fell into sin, their communication changed

PP Now, as **Proverbs 18:21** tells us: *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue”*

“And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done? ”The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Genesis 3:11-13

Where communication was used before for blessing (God to man and woman, man to woman) here it was used for selfish exaltation

Both Adam and Eve shifted away the blame, trying in vain to justify their sin

Husbands and wives, do you use your communication, verbal and nonverbal, to build up the other or are you trapped in patterns of criticism,

Men, do you speak love into the heart of your wives?

Ladies, do your mouths speak of your highest respect into the hearts of your husbands?

PP Application

Together, away from distractions, **discuss where each of you struggle with pride in your marriage.** It is helpful if you each volunteer information concerning *yourself* unless your spouse has asked for your observation! How are your three enemies (Satan, the World, and our Flesh) at work in your marriage? **What are the lies they are using to twist and distort**

Truth? Regarding marriage roles, authority and communication, where do you struggle (I.e.-*We are unable to talk through our struggles without getting defensive and blaming each other. Or, We don't partner in our marriage well, we tend to make decisions independently from each other*).

Finally, **how do you see God at work these areas?** Be as specific as you can. Remember, *general answers are generally unhelpful!*.