

The Fall

Thesis: Our attempt to live a part from God as our own god results in chaos and disorder, as we sin against God and each other.

Big Question: How did God's good creation turn into a place of chaos and disorder?

Scripture: Genesis 2-11

Introduction

Albert Mohler, who is the President of Southern Seminary, puts out a daily podcast — The Briefing.

- In each **podcast** he takes 2 or 3 topics from the top newspapers in the country with the goal of helping you think about those stories from a Christian worldview.
 - He does an excellent job.
 - If you haven't listened to his podcast, I would certainly encourage you to do that, and I'll put a link on our Facebook page this week to help remind you.

It has been a few years now, but in one episode, he covered an **article** from **Alexandra DeSanctis in the National Review**. **The person of interest for the article was actress Lena Dunham.**

- **She had produced** a podcast about a recent trip to Texas.
 - On her podcast, she told a story about how she was visiting a **Planned Parenthood clinic here in Texas.**
 - While she was there a young girl came up and asked her if she'd like to be a part of a project she was doing in which women, who had had abortions shared their stories.
 - She says that when she heard that she "sort of jumped" because she hadn't had an abortion herself.
 - She had always been a big proponent for a women's right to choose, but she had never had an abortion.

But then, and here comes the really troubling part, after telling of her encounter with this girl on her podcast, she **takes it a step further and says that even though she hadn't had an abortion**, she wishes that she had, so that she **wouldn't be unblemished in that department and had a story to tell.**

If you think about it, that is an **appalling statement.**

- She wishes that she had had an abortion so that she could be the type of person who expresses herself as having had an one.¹

¹<http://www.albertmohler.com/2017/01/09/briefing-01-09-17/>

As **conservative evangelicals**, we naturally **recoil** at Dunham's statement.

- It is a clear violation of God's created order.
 - We are made in the image of God.
 - That doesn't mean we look like God — God is Spirit.
 - Instead, it means we are meant to be **His representatives**.
 - **Remember last week, we are to be kingly priests who administer God's kingly rule over the earth.**
- **As the big "K" King.**
 - As the all sovereign ruler of the created order, God has **decreed that murder is wrong** — That is the sixth of the Ten Commandments.
 - **Murder**, which is exactly what **abortion** is, is a clear violation of God's rule.
 - We are quick to call it for what it is.
 - But what about that **white lie** you told the other day to cover something up at work?
 - Or the **pornographic website** you visited recently when you couldn't sleep?
 - What about the **hatred** you have for **another race or culture**?
- What about **divorce**?
 - **Did you know that Christians have a divorce rate around 50%, it is 70% if you include Catholics?**
 - **Evangelicals fair much better at 28%.**
 - But when you compare even the evangelical rate of divorce to that of **non-Christian religions**, we are woefully behind.
 - They divorce at a rate of only **5%**.²
 - Admittedly, these statistics don't take into account what is considered a biblical right to divorce — that being adultery and a non-believing spouse leaving because their spouse became a believer.
 - Regardless the rate is high.
 - And we accept it as if it is just another part of life.
 - Now that doesn't mean there isn't forgiveness for those who have been divorced.
 - It doesn't mean that divorcee's are to be put on a shelf and they can never do ministry.
 - I know many divorcee's who are repentant and are being used by God.
 - Divorce is not the unforgivable sin.
 - But, a part from the two biblical reasons for divorce, it is a violation of God's good design for marriage.

² <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/marital-status/divorcedseparated/>

We can keep going down the list of ways in which we rebel against God, but hopefully you get the point.

• **Rebellion against God and His right to rule exists in this world.**

- In big ways and small ways, we cast off what we have been created to do — **to act as kingly priests who worship God as His representatives, administering His Kingly rule over this world as little “k” kings, while faithfully serving God in accordance with His Word.**

How did we get to this place?

- To a place where a young actress says she wishes she had had an abortion.
- To a place where we openly and cavalierly reject the purpose for which we have been created?

Transition: When we turn to the Bible, we find that:

I. It Started with a Tree and a Lie (vs. 2:15-17, 25; 3)

If you remember from last week, after God created Adam He:

“...took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.” (Ge 2:15)

At this time, Eve hadn't been created.

- But

A. GOD PLACES ADAM IN THE GARDEN AND HE TELLS HIM TO “WORK IT AND KEEP IT”.

- In other words, God wants him bring the garden and the world under his **dominion**, so as to take it somewhere.
 - As well as he wants him to worship Him by **servicing** according to His wisdom.
 - That's Adam's job.
 - That is what God wants him to do.

Transition: Placing him in the garden, this beautiful paradise,

God gave him one restriction.

Verses 16 and 17,

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”” (Ge 2:16-17)

Adam could enjoy everything in the garden, but one tree.

- He wasn't to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- If he did, he would surely die.

God didn't give him this restriction to punish him.

- Instead, God gave it to protect him.
 - He wanted Adam to flourish and enjoy His good creation.
 - He knew if he ate from that tree, Adam wouldn't be able to enjoy His good creation.
 - It would all disappear.

Transition: But:

God not only wanted to protect Adam, He was also testing him.

- God wanted to know if Adam would recognize that He was the one in charge.
 - That He was living in God's kingdom.
 - In God's kingdom, it is God that gets to set the rules and terms.
 - It is God that gets to define what is good and evil.
 - Would Adam allow God to do these things, recognizing his rightful place as a little "k" king?
 - Or would Adam usurp God's throne, seeking to take it for Himself?
 - Would Adam seek to define good and evil and setup his own kingdom?

With this one command, Adam sets about working and keeping it in God's good kingdom.

- But after a while God realizes Adam is all alone.
 - It is not good for man to be alone, so He says,

"I will make him a helper fit for him." (Ge 2:18)

Transition: He does just that.

B. GOD CREATES EVE TO BE ADAM'S WIFE AND HELPER.

For a while after Eve was created, everything was going well.

- At the end of chapter 2 we are told that,

"...the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." (Ge 2:25)

In other words, their relationship with God and one another was perfect.

That's how chapter 2 ends, which leaves you to wonder, just how long things are going to stay that way.

Transition: Well you don't have to wonder too long because as chapter 3 begins we learn that:

C. EVE ENCOUNTERS A CRAFTY SERPENT

Chapter 3 begins with these words,

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made." (Ge 3:1a)

Right off the bat we're introduced to the serpent and we are told that he is "crafty" — that he is skilled in the art of deception.

- The first thing this crafty character does is challenge God's Word.
- With a well placed question.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" (Ge 3:1b)

Instead of ignoring the serpent, instead of walking away to get Adam, Eve entertains the serpent's question.

- In verse 2,

"...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.' " (Ge 3:2–3)

With that the serpent knew he had her hooked.

- In verse 4, he starts reeling her in.

"But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Ge 3:4–5)

The serpent not only challenges God's Word but His character as well.

- **He tells Eve that God is a liar.**
- **That He is holding them back.**
- **That they could be so much more without God, and their true potential was yet to be reached — they could be kings of their own kingdom.**

The irony in all this is that they were already like God and at the pinnacle of their potential.

- They were created in the image of God and given dominion over all the earth.

But Eve didn't recognize what she had.

- I guess the grass is always greener on the other side, even in the garden of Eden.
- Not recognizing what she had, the crafty serpent convinced Eve that God was holding out on her.
- That He was keeping something from them.

- Something that they needed in order to be whole and complete.
- And the remedy to their sickness, to their blindness, was the forbidden fruit, which ultimately represented rebellion against God's authority.

D. WHAT'S EVE'S RESPONSE?

Look at verse 6,

"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." (Ge 3:6)

So Eve gave into the serpent's temptation.

- She ate the fruit.
- Then she led her husband to do the same.

E. WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THEIR ACTIONS?

Verse 7

"Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths." (Ge 3:7)

Just as the serpent said, their eyes were opened and they didn't immediately die.

While that was true:

(1) Their relationship with one another and God changed.

- Instead of living in a healthy and productive relationship with one another, their relationships changed.

(2) They experienced shame.

- Shame before God and one another.
 - They felt their rebellion.
 - They knew they had transgressed the line.
 - For the first time they felt vulnerable and closed off to both God and each other.

Transition: But

Adam and Eve's loss didn't end with shame.

Let's pick back up in verse 8

"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?" (Ge 3:8-11)

Not only did they feel shame but:

(3) They experienced fear

- Instead of their regular meeting with God in the garden, they hid themselves from Him for fear of His punishment.
- Adam and Eve knew they deserved punishment for what they had done.
 - Eating that fruit amounted to them storming God's throne room in an effort to remove Him as King.
 - They knew that was wrong.
 - They felt shame for their actions and feared the punishment that would result.

APPLICATION: Our society feels this as well.

- That is why there is such a drive to rid this nation of Christianity.
 - If you aren't confronted with the things of God, then you don't have to deal with the fear of punishment and shame for your actions.

Transition: Not only did Adam and Eve experience shame, fear, and a breakdown in their relationship with God,

(4) They suffered a breakdown in their relationship with each other

In answer to God's question:

"The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." (Ge 3:12)

"It is your fault God. You gave me this woman, she is broken, and she deceived me!"

- Not only is Adam blaming God, he also shifts the blame to his wife, Eve.
 - It was all her.

Eve does the same.

- Instead of admitting her guilt, she shifts the blame to the serpent.

“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.” (Ge 3:13)

While it’s true the serpent did deceive her, she was still morally culpable.

- She was still to blame.
- She broke God’s command and even led her husband to do the same.

Deceived by the serpent, they not only experienced shame, but they also experienced a broken relationship with God and each other, which led to fear and blame shifting.

Transition: On top of all that,

(5) Adam and Eve experienced a curse

In verse 14 God curses the serpent, and then in verse 15 He starts in with the woman saying,

“...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.” (Ge 3:15-16)

To the **woman**, the curse brought pain and relational fights.

Transition: But Eve wasn’t the only one who experienced the curse.

Adam was culpable, not only because he failed to trust God, but he also failed to lead his wife to do the same.

- So God turns to Adam and,

“...he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of 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. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”” (Ge 3:17–19)

While women have Eve to thank for painful childbirth and fights with their husband, men, we have Adam to thank for our work being difficult and burdensome.

Transition: As if that wasn’t bad enough,

(6) God kicks them out of the garden.

We learn in verse 23 that:

“...the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.”
(Ge 3:23–24)

Now, if you ask me, Adam and Eve experienced a pretty big loss for what they perceived to be gain.

APPLICATION: But that is always what sin does — it lets us down.

- It promises us satisfaction and fulfillment.
- It promises us freedom and identity.
 - But the promise of sin is empty.
 - It can't deliver on it's promises

Transition: Just as Adam and Eve experienced a loss because they believed the lie,

F. WE EXPERIENCE A LOSS TOO.

- When we seek wisdom and insight apart from God.
- When we fail to act as God's kingly and priestly representatives, rejecting His reign and rule over our lives, believing that we can and should be able to determine what's right and wrong on our own, operating as big “K” kings instead of little “k” kings.
- When we do that, we are believing a lie.

A lie that results in:

- Shame
- Fear
- Severed relationships
- The breakdown of the family
- Pain
- Sweat
- Toil
- And ultimately eternal death, resulting in us suffering God's punishment in hell.

Transition: And

We all have inherited this same curse.

- **Because of the fall of Adam, God's image on us is marred.**
 - **We receive corrupted and sinful natures.**

Paul talks about this in **Romans 5:12** when he says,

"Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—" (Ro 5:12)

Then down in **verse 14** (I didn't include a slide)

"Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." (Ro 5:14)

Then down in **verses 18-19** (I didn't include a slide)

"Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous." (Ro 5:18-19)

We are fallen.

- Dead in sin.
 - Separated from God.
 - We now wear Adam's fallen nature.

As a result, Adam's guilt is imputed to us.

- It is attributed to us.
 - It is as if we did it.
 - We all experience "*condemnation*" because of Adam.
 - We "*were made sinners*" and we have "*all sinned*"

In Adam's fall, God judged Adam guilty and passed His guilty verdict on to all humanity born after Adam.

- We don't even have to sin in order for this to take place.
 - We are born guilty.
 - We are born with Adam's sin credited to our account.
 - **That's because Adam is not just the natural head of the human race, but he is also our federal representative.**
 - Adam's guilt and condemnation before and against God is passed on to us because he represents us all.
 - So we are regarded as having sinned in Adam, which means we all deserve the same punishment.

Because of our sinful nature we continue in rebellion to God and because of Adam we experience the curse.

The experience of the curse should drive us to the end of ourselves.

- It should humble us and cause us to submit to God's wise leadership.
 - But that's usually not the case.
 - Instead man continues to press forward in defiance to God's rightful rule as King.
 - Man continues to seek God's throne, and to define what is good himself.

Transition: But:

II. Our desire to be big "K" kings and define what is good only serves to create more chaos and disorder (vs. Gen 4-11)

Continuing through the Genesis narrative reveals that to be true.

Transition: After Adam and Eve are driven out of the garden, they have two sons

A. CAIN AND ABEL.

In the course of time, Cain kills Abel because God accepted Abel's sacrifice over Cain's.

- Cain reveals the outworking of what happens when we live according to our rule and seek our own definition of good — we kill those that get in our way.

Transition: After Cain we encounter

B. LAMECH,

Lamech continues to show us what happens when we take things into our own hands.

- Women become property and punishment ends up being disproportionate to the crime (Gen 4:23-24).

Transition: By the time we get to

C. NOAH

We see that man reigning and ruling according to his own definition of goodness has produced nothing but wickedness and evil, so much so that God regretted creating man.

- He determines to erase them along with the animals from the face of the earth (Gen 6:5-7).
- And He does just that, except for one man, his family, and some of each kind of animal.
 - In an ark, God preserves Noah's life.
 - And after the flood subsides, He restarts the world with Noah, his family, and the animals that entered the ark.

While God starts over with Noah and his family, they aren't able to escape the curse.

- That's because sin has polluted this world and everything in it, including Noah, his family, and the animals.
- That's why not too long after Noah begins again, he is found in his tent drunk on the wine the Lord has given him to enjoy.
- And his son Ham seeks to exploit his father's shame for his own gain (Gen 9:20-27).

Transition: While Noah and his family are corrupted by the Fall, they aren't the last.

- The world grows even more sinful as the population increases and continues to rule as big "K" kings and operate according to their own definition of goodness.
- The pinnacle of man's effort to rule and to determine what is right and wrong in his own eyes is:

D. THE TOWER OF BABEL

- Instead of operating according to God's creation mandate — to be fruitful and multiple, to exercise dominion and subdue the earth for God, man begins to build a city and tower on the plain of Shinar so that they can make a name for themselves and avoid having to scatter throughout the earth.
- But God in His providence foils their plan, confusing their language, so that they have to scatter from one another.

Transition: So we see that:

***Our attempt to usurp God's rule and live according to our own definition of good doesn't result in the good life, instead it results in chaos and disorder as we rebel against God and sin against one another.

- Which tells us that God's good creation has turned into a place of disorder and chaos because we have rebelled against God.
- We have rejected His reign and rule, His wisdom and direction, His definition of what is good and just and we have replaced it with our own.***

Because we have forgotten that we live in God's kingdom and have sought to rule as if we are kings according to our own definition of what is good and right, we live in a world where sin runs rampant and is celebrated.

Conclusion

We live in a broken world, a world that cries out for redemption, a world that needs to be fixed.

And as chapter 11 ends, we are left wondering:

- How is this world going to be fixed; how is it going to be redeemed?

If Genesis 3-11 reveals anything to you, it should be that we aren't the answer.

- We aren't capable of fixing ourselves or the world in which we live because we are the problem.
- We need something, really someone else to make things right.
 - Someone who is completely different than us.
 - Someone who is not affected by the Fall.
 - We need the perfect King and Priest who lives according to the Father's will.
 - We need Jesus, who suffers the curse of death for us, so that we might be brought back into God's kingdom, not as captured enemies, but as sons and daughters who once again recognize their rightful place as little "k" kings and priests who are to represent God, exercise dominion, and serve according to God's wisdom for God's glory.

Jesus is our hope.

- He is the One to which the story of the Bible points.
- He is the One who gave all for you.
 - And you can experience hope this morning if you are willing to repent of your sins and turn to Jesus as your Lord and Savior.
 - Don't experience shame, fear, and relational breakdown any longer.
 - Turn to Jesus.
 - Don't seek your identity in the things of this world.
 - Turn to Jesus.
 - Seek Him and experience true forgiveness and a true identity.

If you are a believer here this morning, continue to rest in the Lord.

- Practice daily repentance and seek God's face.
 - The crafty serpent is trying to deceive you as well.
 - To throw off the identity you have in Christ.
 - To seek to be big "K" kings instead of little "k" kings.
 - The Fall has affected us. But as we will see, Christ has redeemed us from the Fall.
 - As believers, we can live out our purpose, so let's do that.

Time of Response

We will not have our normal time of response where we open the altar due to COVID-19, but if you have questions, if you want to know more about the gospel, I'll be available after the service today.

- Come see me, I'd love to tell you more about God's plan of redemption.
 - A plan we will begin to look at more in-depth next week.

But for now let's go to the Lord in prayer.