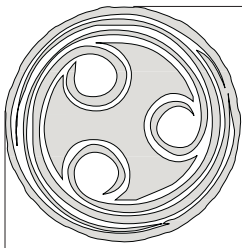


Consequences of Human Wisdom : Genesis 3:7-14



sermonnotes

Introduction

The Creation is subject to sin (**Romans 8:20**). Calamity, war, hatred, broken relationships, death and anything that clearly can make this earth a living hell is a stark reminder of this fact. Sin destroys and contributes to every horror this earth can perpetrate. No matter how much God graciously and lovingly warns, man remains collectively at war with God and refuses to repent in arrogant defiance (**Revelation 16:9**). Because of this, God at times chooses to allow evil for His purposes. Man or Satan may be the proximate cause of evil, but God is the ultimate cause (**Isaiah 45:7**; cf. **Acts 27-28**), since He is in control of everything (including nature [**Mark 4:39**; **Psalms 89:8-9**; **Luke 8:24**]). He sometimes chooses not to avert disaster for His ultimate purpose, which is to warn mankind of a greater danger and calamity (**Luke 13:4-5**), and to “produce in His children an eternal weight of glory (**2 Corinthians 4:17**).” When God uses evil it is with righteous purposes (**Genesis 50:20**). When man uses evil it is always with tainted and evil purposes—bringing on more destruction and calamity motivated by malice, hatred, slander, and avarice. As we saw last week, Adam and Eve acted as “free” moral agents under the sovereign watch of God and decided in their wisdom that making themselves the arbiters of truth and knowledge could enhance the life they had walking with God.

From The Head...

In the first two chapters we see God creating mankind and everything in it needed for life. He has provided mankind with food and sustenance, beauty, sexual pleasure. Also companionship that demonstrates His goodness to His creation, a vocation that provides meaning for our existence, and a prohibition that provides safety for His creation. Man ignored that by falling into the crafty logic of Satan (the serpent is Satan according to **Revelation 12:9**; **20:2**, Who is our enemy and a real being; see **Isaiah 14**), and adding our own moral interpretations to the prohibition (**3:3**). The craftiness of this plan begins in Satan questioning the word of God (**3:4**) as He does with Jesus in **Matthew 4:11ff**. Instead of rebuking Satan like Christ did, she entertains his lies and is deluded into wrong beliefs (**2 Corinthians 11:3**; **1 Timothy 2:14**). All of this was done in a way that perverted the intended pleasure that we would have by enjoying God and the creation as He made it (see **2:9**). The results of this act are incalculable. There is no way to quantify evil, and all the moralism and moral preaching found in many religious contexts isn't going to re-right the ship. The result is not a matter of moral cleanup; it's a matter of complete disaster that has brought extreme consequences to all of creation. The very foundation of our thinking is damaged, and the image of God is marred. In the wisdom of man at that time it seemed prudent to choose what they chose. And there is no one here that can rightfully say that they would have done otherwise. Our minds can, and are, deceived on a regular basis and this fact remains even truer today than it was then. We may be increasing in knowledge due to the fact that time allows us to do that, but humans aren't necessarily increasing in wisdom. The idea of total depravity of mankind doesn't mean that man is as depraved as they can be, or that they can't act in morally good categories—it simply means that the fall of man has affected every aspect of their being and making choices toward God that glorify Him is impossible without an act of God in reality.

Consequences of Sin: The Diminishing Relationship (**Genesis 3:7-8**) Verses seven and eight remind us that sin begets guilt and shame. Our relationships are no longer naked and not ashamed. This is a real loss of self, and a desire to hide who we are to others including God. It is ironic that we think we can hide from God, but that is exactly what we try to do. Jonah tried to do the same by traveling away from Nineveh, but the reality is we can't run from God when He's pursuing us. Many of us have experienced the “hound from heaven,” as one theologian called Him, as He lovingly pursues His people. It is a terrifying thing to be part of, but one that many of us can testify to. Sin

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destroys relationships. All of the hatred, wars, divorces, slanders, and rejections of God are based on sin and our inability to understand one another and the will of God.

The Diminishing Self (Genesis 3:9-11)

"Where are you?" In some contexts the diminishing self would be a good thing, but in this context it is a woeful disaster, because it is mankind as he was intended that is diminishing. Not only is our relationship destroyed with one another and with God but our understanding of ourselves is seriously marred. Psychology and social biology are pandering to a mind that is already depraved and hiding itself from God. Skeptics may say that we are denying reality by believing in God, but the bible tells us that it is the atheist/agnostic who knows the truth and is "suppressing the truth in unrighteousness" (see **Romans 1:18ff**). What once was good and natural is now messed up and perverse. We turn the beauty of the sexual act into a self-centered pleasure that begins to see sexual contact as purely self-gratifying. It is here we begin to see that self-centeredness is the heart of the human condition. No matter what religion, political affiliation, or human ideology is placed before us, we are stuck with this one problem: we are self centered and selfish. And ultimately we are looking out for the betterment of our own survival. Darwin's "Survival of the fittest" is an apt observation of nature (and the human race in particular) since the fall into sin. Our genes, our brains, our will, our bodies, and the nature that surrounds us are completely corrupt and can bring forth heartache in this present world. It is fallen and in deep need of a savior.

The Diminishing Responsibility (Genesis 3:12-13)

Not only does sin cause us to do heinous things to one another, it causes us to shirk our own responsibility and blame it on other things. We have a culture that tries to heal our hurts by displacing blame to anything but ourselves. We are a society of victims whether it is poor parenting, bad genes, or environmental inequity. Where all of these systems may contribute to our own delinquency, it is ultimately free moral agents that sin, and sin willfully. We can create all kinds of psychological labels for sin and call it a malady or disease, but the fact is, it is hard to deny that real evil exists and we are all tainted with a propensity to exact it on someone or something.

The only response to evil and our understanding of evil in our own hearts is repentance. We sometimes believe that evil exists in those that do evil things, but it is never believed to exist in the hearts of many "good" people who never give thanks to God for His common grace, or who live comfortably in their own world, while 70 percent of the world lives in abject poverty. Don't get me wrong, it's not that our hearts are so evil we cannot love or care about the poor, but when push comes to shove we are desperately about our self and our own comfort in this fallen world. We don't love God we accuse him. We don't give Him thanks we malign Him for not giving us enough. We don't care to thank Him for the grace that persuades us to spare our wretched souls but we can blame Him for the calamities that speak to the fallenness of this planet. I pray you don't view sin as merely acts of what you do, but you see it as a condition that needs a cure, and we'll see next week that the cure is found in the promises that Genesis brings forth in the midst of judgment. A promise of the destruction of the evil that has usurped this earth from the hands of a righteous and loving God, and made us to think grossly about His name and His glory!

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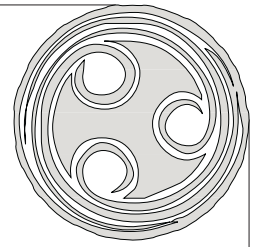
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... To The Heart