

Small Group Curriculum • Genesis • Unalone

LOVE REQUIRES A CHOICE • WEEK 2 • Genesis 2-3

This year we have been going through the book of Genesis to solidify our Biblical foundation as well as to reflect on the character of God, the nature of human condition, and how everything fits into God's ultimate plan for our lives.

This week we delve into the famous story of the two trees in the garden and humanity's response to the choices given. "In the middle of the garden, God placed two trees. One offered life; the other, the illusion of control. The story of these trees reveals the foundation for every relationship — including our relationship with God. Love can't exist without choice."¹

REMINDERS

- A reminder to invite a friend, coworker or family member to our Easter services on April 20 at either 9:30 or 11:15!
- We'd love to celebrate your baptism during our services on April 27. To be baptized go to awakeningchurch.com/baptisms
- Our café team is in need of volunteers. Would you be willing to serve once a month to offer care and hospitality to our guests and church family? Email bailey@awakeningchurch.com for more information.

Past Session Check-In:

- Take a moment and review the application from your last discussion. Ask the group where they were challenged, if they made any commitment for change and/or action, and if they followed through with their decision.

ICEBREAKER

If your small group is already open and vulnerable in sharing:

What is a life decision you've made that seemed good at that time but later regretted?

Or if you would like to keep it more casual:

If you were stuck with listening to just one song on repeat on a long road trip, what song would you pick?

INTRODUCTION

In the first couple of chapters of Genesis, you may notice that there are two versions of the creation story. The first creation account starts with "In the beginning," and ends with God resting on the seventh day (Gen 1:1 - 2:3). Genesis 2:4 starts off a second creation account with the opening line, "This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created."

¹ "Love Requires a Choice...", Awakening Church Newsletter, Issue (March 20, 2025), [<https://awakeningchurch.com/newsletter/love-requires-a-choice/>].

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This second account, covered in Gen 2:4 - 25, is often seen as “a detailed review of the creation story as it relates to humanity.”²

QUESTION: “Why are we given a close look at how people fit into the creation account?”³ What makes humans unique compared to the rest of creation?

Transition: Today we’ll read selected verses in Genesis 2 and 3 from the sermon covering the story of the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. We will reflect on the consequence of Adam and Eve’s disobedience, its impact on our lives, and God’s plan for restoration.

DISCUSSION

READ: Genesis 2:8-9; 2:15-17

QUESTIONS

1. What kind of trees did God create in the garden according to verse 9? What image pops into your mind as you picture the garden described in 8-9?
2. Why did God put Adam in the garden in verse 15? (Sometimes we associate work as a result of the Fall, but this is a good reminder that God has always intended for us to work in stewarding His kingdom; work does become more difficult, however, as we’ll read in today’s passage)
3. God placed two trees in the middle of the garden — the *tree of life* and the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. Why do you think God commanded Adam to not eat from the second tree?

Kidner describes this prohibition as something that is uniquely given to humans, in contrast to the rest of the creation who has “no such capacity and no such charge.”⁴ In giving Adam a choice, he is given the freedom to obey – out of love and loyalty – or disobey – by “the pride of independence.”⁵ Do you view God’s prohibition as freedom? Why or why not?

READ: Genesis 3:1-6; 3:14-19

QUESTIONS

4. What does the serpent say to the woman (Eve) about the tree? What is true about serpent’s assertion and what is false?
5. What are some of the consequences of Adam and Eve’s disobedience found in verses 16 – 19? Which of these have you felt recently in your own life or of those around you?

² *Serendipity Bible for Groups: New International Version*, (Littleton, CO: Serendipity House, 1989), 42.

³ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 1, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 66.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

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6. Verse 15 is commonly referred as *protoevangelium*, which means “first gospel”⁶ in Latin. Here the woman’s offspring is Jesus, who will later crush the head of the serpent’s offspring, Satan. What does this redemption plan reveal about the nature and heart of God? How does this bring you comfort when you disobey God?

RESPONSE

1. In our daily life, how can we better be aware when confronted with choices we must make?
2. What is a practical way we can encourage ourselves or others who may be discouraged by the consequence or perpetuity of our sin?

Transition: Though the consequence of sin is heavy and pervasive, God is gracious in giving a way for us to restore our severed relationship with Him. Let us pray to give thanks to God and to ask for His help in making choices that please Him.

PRAYER

Pray as the Spirit leads the group as a result of this discussion. If time allows, open up the prayer time to take personal requests and pray for them as a group.

⁶ John D. Barry et al., eds., “Protevangelium,” in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

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"*Love Requires a Choice...*", Awakening Church Newsletter, Issue March 20, 2025.
[<https://awakeningchurch.com/newsletter/love-requires-a-choice/>].

Serendipity Bible for Groups: New International Version. Littleton, CO: Serendipity House, 1989.

PASSAGES**Genesis 2:8-9**

⁸ Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2:15-17

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

Genesis 3:1-6

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:14-19

¹⁴ So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

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“Cursed are you above all livestock
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring^[a] and hers;
he will crush^[b] your head,
and you will strike his heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labor you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you.”

¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I
commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”