

# AUTHORITY NOT ADVICE

## GENESIS 3:1-6

### CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – JANUARY 19, 2025

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#### SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 3:1-6

*The Fall*

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” 2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 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.’” 4 But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 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.*

#### ICE BREAKER QUESTION

When someone or something is described as an ‘authority,’ what is your instinctive reaction?

#### SERMON RECAP

The Scriptures are not just religious literature – they are the divinely inspired, authoritative Word of God. God’s Word is an extension of God Himself. And yet, even as Christians, we can undermine the authority of God’s Word in our lives in these ways:

- We neglect what God has spoken.
- We doubt what God has revealed.
- We ignore what God has commanded.
- We affirm what God has condemned.
- We prohibit what God has allowed.
- We apologize for what God has designed.
- We minimize what God has done.

And yet, we were made to live under God’s authority (John 6:66-69, Romans 11:36).

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Observation: What does the passage say?**

1. Read Genesis 3:1-6 aloud as a group. Before interpreting or applying the passage, share observations about it.
  - Who is involved in today’s passage?
  - In the preceding context, —
    - What does the text say about man and woman? (Genesis 1:26)
    - What did the Lord do to/for them? (Genesis 1:27-28a, 29-30)
    - What relationship did the Lord command them to have with the earth, the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, and every living thing that moved on the earth? (Genesis 1:28)
    - What specific command did the Lord give them in Genesis 2:15-17?
    - How did the Lord view His work? (Genesis 1:28a, 31)
  - In today’s passage, —
    - What did the serpent ask the woman? (Genesis 3:1b)
    - What were the responses of the woman and her husband? (Genesis 3:2-6)
  - Compare and contrast the first woman and man’s response to Satan in Genesis 3:1-6 to the commands God gave them in the preceding context (Genesis 1:28, 2:15-17)

2. How would you explain or summarize today's passage in your own words?

**Interpretation: What does the passage mean?**

1. What do today's passage and its context convey about the first woman and her husband (and, by extension, the world)? (cf., Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:21a, 22a)
2. What do the passage and its context convey about Satan?
3. What do the passage and its context convey about God?

**Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?**

1. O1. In our lives, we receive input from many sources (e.g., science, church tradition, political figures, human reason, personal experience). From what sources do you receive input? Of these sources, which ones hold authority over your life? Among those authorities, which one holds the highest authority in your heart, and why?
2. In Genesis 3:1-6, Satan attacked the authority of God's Word, effectively asking the following questions:
  - "Did God actually say?"
  - "Is God's Word actually best?"

When you consider the Word of God, which of the above questions most undermines your trust in and surrender to God's Word as your highest authority? Why?

3. Read John 17:14-17. Consider the following affirmation by Jonathan Leeman:

*"God's Word is an extension of God Himself. To hear His words that comprise the whole Bible is to hear Him. To obey His words is to obey Him. To ignore His words is to ignore Him...God so identifies Himself with His words that our response to His words is our response to Him...You can measure a person's opinion of God by his or her opinion of God's Word."*

The Scriptures are not just religious literature – they are the very Word of God. What is the significance of this distinction? For example, –

- How might this distinction affect your personal perspective on the Scriptures?
  - How might this distinction affect your approach (e.g., the heart-posture you bring) to reading these Scriptures?
  - How might this distinction affect the strength of the authority of these Scriptures over your life?
4. Refer to the Sermon Recap section above. For each of the seven ways, or patterns, in which we can undermine the authority of God's Word over our lives, consider the following questions:
    - In what ways does this pattern manifest itself? What might it look like in one's life?
    - Why are we tempted to undermine the authority of God's Word in this way?
    - What are some approaches to resisting this pattern? (cf. James 4:7, Ephesians 6:10-18)
  5. We were made to live under God's authority. What area(s) of your life do you need to further submit to the authority of God's Word? Share these areas with your group members. Spend time praying about them with the group.

## LEADER NOTES

**NIGHT TO SHINE** | On February 7 from 5:00-10:00 PM, MBC is hosting Night to Shine 2025! Night to Shine in an unforgettable prom night experience, centered on God's love for people with special needs, ages 14 and older. To make it all happen, we need 100 more volunteers! We need hairdressers, makeup artists, food servers, and most importantly, buddies for our amazing guests. Contact [caleb.barnhardt@mcleanbible.org](mailto:caleb.barnhardt@mcleanbible.org) to sign up to serve.

**21 DAYS OF PRAYER** | Over three weeks, from February 2-22, we are taking extra time to dedicate this year to the Lord. We want to begin 2025 by focusing on Jesus and making ourselves available for whatever He wants to do in and through us. We would love for you to join us! For more information, please visit [mcleanbible.org/21daysofprayer](http://mcleanbible.org/21daysofprayer).