

## 97-10-26b Genesis Custom

Okay, we're back now from our break. And we had mentioned in connection with our Scripture reading this morning over in 1 John chapter 3 that the references there to eternal life are not necessarily references to salvation in the absolute sense. And I made reference to a verse that I did not give you the reference, the address for.

But it's John chapter 17 and verse 3. You may remember that John 17 records the prayer of Jesus Christ to His Father on the night before He was crucified. And John, who wrote the Gospel of John, heard this prayer and recorded it because Jesus spoke it out loud. And so in John 17, 1, Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven and said, another indication that you don't necessarily have to close your eyes to pray, but He said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You. As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And then in verse 3, you have the definition of eternal life.

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. What does it mean to know God? By faith in Christ, we acknowledge God, we come to a knowledge of God in the sense of who He is. We acknowledge Him, we trust Him for our salvation.

And that salvation takes place on that basis. But to experience the benefit of that, the result of that, we develop our knowledge of God beyond that point. And like many other things that God says, there is a fuller, greater meaning than simple faith in Christ for salvation that is being indicated here.

And to have eternal life, to experience eternal life, is more than just having your get out of jail free card for the lake of fire. It is to know God and to know His Son, Jesus Christ, in a real and personal way, in a way that changes your life, in a way that makes a difference. Jesus calls that eternal life.

And so when we see scripture verses like 1 John chapter 3 and others that talk about inheriting eternal life, possessing eternal life, enjoying eternal life, this is often the idea that is in view. And bearing fruit unto eternal life has the same idea. So John 17.3 is an important reference and I wanted to be sure to give you that as you think about the things we read in the first session.

Now we're back in Genesis chapter 3. We have seen the serpent that was more cunning, more ingenious, an admirable little animal. It was probably the favorite. It has even been suggested that maybe this particular serpent was a pet for Eve.

It's possible. I don't know that that was the case. But it was admirable and liked

apparently by Adam and Eve in the same way that we are impressed and enjoy animals that show unusual characteristics like this.

But then he speaks and he says to the woman, Now the very fact that this animal is speaking is strange and unusual. Why would Eve take this as a matter of course? Why would she just simply respond? She doesn't say, how is it that you are able to speak? The woman simply replies in verse 2. The woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die. Then the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die.

And actually a much better translation of this would be, you will surely not die. The emphasis in the Hebrew is all on the word not. For God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, or like gods, knowing good and evil.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. It is my opinion, and I label it as such because I can't prove it, but I believe that the reason Eve is able to take the serpent speaking as a matter of course, is that the serpent, this clever, ingenious, admirable little animal that is probably their favorite in the garden, is sitting in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and has a partially eaten fruit in its little paws.

And part of the convincing that takes place in Eve's mind is, look at what the fruit did for the serpent. The serpent ate this fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and he has jumped up a level. Because that's the nature of the serpent's argument, isn't it? If you eat of this fruit, you'll jump up a level.

You'll go from the human level to the God level. And opinion is evenly divided there in verse 5 as to whether it's God with a capital G or gods with a small g. It's Elohim. It says, you will be like Elohim, and that word is used often for God.

In this context, I lean toward God as the translation, but you will find English translations that have gods with a small g. Elohim, of course, is plural in form, but generally singular in meaning. It takes a singular verb when it refers to God himself. But in either way you want to take it, the idea is the same.

If you eat of this fruit, God knows that you're going to jump a level. If you ever took chemistry in high school, and they talked about the Bohr model of the atom, and you've got the nucleus there with the protons and the neutrons, and then you've got the electrons, and they're out there in shells, a little different radius of a circle outside the nucleus. And the valence electrons are the ones that are on the outside.

They're the ones that let an atom combine with another atom to make a molecule. And they talk about how an atom can absorb energy, and the little electrons will jump to a higher level. They'll be out there, and that makes new combinations possible.

That's why sometimes to get things to combine, you have to act on them with some outside agency to get their electrons to jump up to another level so that they can do new things. And I have no idea why that particular illustration popped into my mind, but the idea here is that this fruit is like a catalyst. It's something that's going to enable you to jump to the next level, to have a new level of consciousness, a new level of ability.

And I believe that the serpent here is sort of showing off as an example. When Satan indwells this serpent and enables it to speak, Eve looks and thinks this is a consequence of eating the fruit. And my goodness, this fruit really does have some power that God hasn't told us about.

Otherwise, it's difficult to explain why she's not just astonished and dumbfounded that the serpent is speaking at this point. But he, without any prelude or any other warning, jumps right to the heart of the issue. Has God said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Now, what is it that God really did say? If you go back to chapter 2, verse 16.

The Lord God commanded the man, this is pre-Eve. You'd have to say in the history of the garden, this is B.E., before Eve. God commands the man.

And all of this is in the singular, by the way. All of these commands are addressed directly to Adam and everything is singular. He says, of every tree of the garden you may freely eat.

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. What is the stress that God puts on this situation when He gives the command? He says, look, you can eat of every tree in the garden except one. But the stress is on the fact that all of the trees are here for you.

You may freely eat of any tree of the garden except one. What does Satan's presentation here focus on? Has God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden? God has denied you something? Has God really denied you something in the garden? God focused on the freedom and the availability of every tree but one. Satan says, you mean God has not said you can eat of all of the trees? God has limited you? God has denied you something? His focus is all on the prohibition, not on the provision.

And so He takes that one... And this is the common thing when temptation comes into our life. That's why people are always talking about you need to count your blessings. You need to concentrate on the good things.

Because we tend to look at the carpet in the living room and we don't see the 99.99% of it that's clean. We see the one speck that's dirty. We see the one stain left there by a

careless guest or whatever.

By the way, that hasn't happened here, so I'm not drawing that from real life. But we tend to see the fly in the ointment. You know, over in Proverbs, that's where the fly in the ointment comes from.

He says, you know, you can have a great jug of perfume but one dead fly spoils the whole thing. And, you know, you can think of many illustrations where you can have a large quantity of something and one small flaw renders the whole thing completely unappetizing or unsatisfactory. You can have a situation in life.

This one that I mentioned Friday night where someone was talking to me about their employment. Wonderful job. Wonderful benefits.

Good, reasonable pay. Terrific environment and so forth. But there's somebody over here that's got something I don't have.

And that's all this person can think about. Why is it that they got this and I didn't? Why do they, you know... And that's the lever, that's the little end of the crowbar that gets underneath our peace and our contentment and our joy and pries it loose. And that's exactly what Satan does here.

You mean God has denied you something? God has not said that you can eat from all of the trees? What is this? God has denied you one of the trees? And so, when he quotes God, he says, So, did God say you shall not eat of every tree in the garden? That's not what God said over there. God didn't say you shall not eat of every tree in the garden. God said you are free to eat of every tree in the garden.

God specifically said of every tree of the garden you may freely eat. So, he misquotes God even before Eve is going to. Is this what God said? Now, there's a second feature here that goes to the singular and the plural because this conversation between the serpent and the woman, all of these verbs and things about eating and not eating and so on are all in the plural.

Well, when God spoke these things, they were in the singular. Why is that? Who was the original recipient of this information and this prohibition and this knowledge that all of the trees were good for food except one? It was Adam. So, how did Eve get her information? Well, second hand.

Following the pattern that goes all the way through Scripture that the husband is to be the spiritual head of the household. He is to teach his wife at home, the New Testament says. Paul emphasizes that point.

The responsibility for passing this information along. God did not come back and make an encore appearance and give all of this information again, did he? Adam instructed his

wife on what God had said. And so, there is an implication of responsibility here for Adam that his wife doesn't know this information any better than she does.

It's not an excuse, but it raises the question, just how well did Adam cover this material that Eve isn't real clear on exactly what God said. She's going to misquote God badly in verse 3 and it's been pointed out by virtually every observer that God had not said anything about touching or not touching the fruit, but Eve makes that point. This comes up and I will confess that this is probably one of my keys or personality quirks or whatever, but when it comes to the memorization of Scripture, I think it ought to be word for word.

If you can manage to pick another English version and memorize from that, that's fine. I like to stick with the same version of the Bible and memorize from that and memorize exactly, memorize each and every word. Don't leave out an and, don't leave out a begotten or any word that's a part of Scripture because every single word is important and it's important to memorize verbatim and not just have the gist of a verse.

We can speak of the gist of a verse, but we ought to have it memorized by heart. It's important. Every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God is important and you can make big mistakes.

Lots of arguments have gone on for hours in conversation where people are talking to each other and they're actually misquoting the Scripture and if they had just memorized or if they'd go look it up, the question and the issue of argument would disappear because it's imperfect knowledge of the Scripture, it's imperfect knowledge of the principles even more so that leads us into problems. So Satan finds a weak spot here and I'm not talking about Eve, I'm talking about the lack of exact knowledge of what God has and has not said. And that leads to an even greater problem because what is the implication in this question? Has God said, you shall not eat of every tree? The implication here is, well, he's kind of mean.

He hasn't really taken good care of you here. And this is a reflection on God's love and the point of attack in the mind of the woman is God's love. He is going to open up and explore the possibility that God is not as loving as she has assumed Him to be.

And I say assumed to be because her first-hand knowledge of God does not kick in here and prevent her from having these thoughts and acting on these thoughts. And so because it is an assumption rather than a knowledge, she has assumed that God is loving, nothing has ever really brought it into question, but when it is questioned, she doesn't have the knowledge to turn away that suggestion. So the serpent says, has God said you shall not eat of every tree? God is not as benevolent and loving and compassionate and all-providing as we have assumed, is He? He's denying you something.

So the woman says in verse 2, notice what she says and what she does not say. The woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. She doesn't quote God accurately here either.

God says of every tree in the garden you may freely eat. She doesn't say every and she doesn't say freely. It's a very loose quote of God.

God said freely. God said every except one. And all of this is getting obscured in these tiny imperfections, these tiny omissions.

This is where the problem starts. Ideally, Eve would have been able to quote God verbatim and you'd have another copy of Genesis 2, 16 and 17. But her knowledge is a little sketchy.

She hasn't really thought about it lately. Adam may or may not have really emphasized this point. Adam may have thought, well, you know, I'll just stick with you and we won't really have to worry about this.

They may have been walking by the tree one day and Eve said, well, what about some of this fruit? Adam said, oh no, don't even touch that tree. God has said some of this could have been Adam's fault in the way that he presented it because she got her information from Adam. And why is it that Adam bears the responsibility for the fall and not Eve? Well, because he bears the responsibility.

He is responsible. And the fact that she was deceivable falls on Adam's head. So this has application.

It's not just observation of what went wrong in Eve's situation. This is what can go wrong in our situation. First of all, look at who is raising the question.

It's someone admirable. It is this creature that is admired and cute, brings a smile to your face. It's not from some dark, sinister cave.

There wasn't a voice that issued out of a hole in the ground. As God said. This is a very warm, beautiful day.

The creature is out there and it seems very innocuous. And the question is raised in a very harmless looking way. But the question is raised and in this small thing, in this conversation, things are lacking.

Certain knowledge of God's Word, certain knowledge of God's character is missing. Eve doesn't have absolute confidence and absolute faith in the love of God. Or this question wouldn't have made a dent.

She doesn't have absolute, letter-perfect knowledge of the Word of God. Or this question would not have made a dent. But there is this weakness.

And notice, this is imperfection. There has been no sin committed yet. So these omissions are not classified as sins.

It isn't a sin that she didn't know the Word verbatim. And it isn't a sin that she didn't have a certain experience and knowledge of the love of God. It is a weakness.

It is a lack that Satan exploits here. The woman said to the servant, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden. She doesn't call it by its name, which God does in verse 17 of chapter 2. She says, Well, it's the tree in the middle of the garden.

She has forgotten what that tree signifies, what it symbolizes and what it stands for. And we have to be aware and sensitive to the symbolic value of things, to what things stand for and what things mean. Look, for example, at this particular situation.

What did God establish by way of hierarchy, by way of authority and delegated authority on the earth and in the garden? God has all authority over the creatures which He has made, right? We're reminded of that in chapter 3 verse 1. Of all of the beasts which God had made, they're His creatures. He made them. He has authority over them.

And what did He do? He delegated authority over the creatures to man, to mankind, to the man and the woman. He said, You have dominion over them. You make sure they get fed and so forth.

So you have God, man, animal kingdom in that order. And within the category of mankind, who is the authority and who is the one that is responsible and is looking out for the other? It's Adam. Adam has been given the commands.

God spoke it to Adam. Adam passes it on to Eve. And even in perfection, although there is much less by way of what you would call submission or whatever, there is still an order, just like there's an order in the Godhead, in the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

It would be blasphemy to think that Jesus Christ is somehow inferior to the Father or that the Holy Spirit is inferior to the Father and to the Son or somehow less than equal. They're absolutely equal. And we shouldn't, just because of the political sensitivities of the time, we shouldn't shy away from noticing that even in perfection God established an order which does not reflect quality.

It doesn't mean that because God made the man the head of the woman that she is somehow inferior or of lesser quality. It is a functional arrangement, just like you see in any organization that has officers and employees, any military entity that has officers and enlisted. In my general experience, you have a higher quality of people in the enlisted ranks than you do in the officer ranks in many cases.

It's just an individual thing. But to say that someone is enlisted is not to say that they are inherently of less quality. And the same thing is true of saying that they're an officer.

You talk to enlisted people and you call somebody an officer and they say, well, he's inherently of less quality than we are. The station that you're assigned doesn't reflect on your quality or your value. And so that's what we find here.

In perfection, God assigned an order. Adam gets things first. He exercises the naming authority even over Eve.

And that implies something. He is responsible for her. He is accountable for her.

And yet they are equal in quality and equal in value in the eyes of God. But what is happening here? God issued statements of truth. God issued statements of policy.

He issued commands about the trees in the garden, which came to the man, which then came to the woman. And underneath all of that, you have the animal creation. But now the order is being reversed, isn't it? Ideas are coming in the form of a beast of the field, the serpent, to the woman, to the man.

Everything is backwards. Everything is the reverse of the divine design. And this is, it reflects something.

It signifies something. I will never forget, and this has happened more than once, but one occasion in particular, I was approached about an opportunity to candidate as pastor for a group, for a church. And regardless of the, before any of the other details of the opportunity came up, the fact that this was a woman in that group, who came to my wife and asked Patricia, do you think that Sam would come and candidate at our church, immediately waved a big red flag about that whole possibility.

Why is it that it's, and it was actually a group of women in this church who were initiating the invitations via the wives of the candidates to come. And, you know, there's no terrible, evil, malicious intent involved, but it says something. It means something.

It illustrates something when the order is reversed. Where are the men who are supposed to be leaders in the church? How come the men in the church aren't approaching the men who are supposed to be candidates? Why is this all coming in the back door through the women? That says something about the group. It says something about their understanding of scripture and of the divine order.

And that's not how it's done. And you can step into a problem very quickly by ignoring the nature of the structure in an organization or in a group in that way. And later history proved out the fact that that was a very problem-ridden group, and it persisted for quite a period of time.

But these are things to watch for. There are patterns like that throughout our life as human beings. The family structure.

People say, well, you know, having homosexual relationships and having two men or two women, why can't we raise children? We love each other, and we're not malicious. We function. We're productive members of society.

Why should I be kicked out of the military when I do my job? Look at my commendation medals on the wall. The fact that I have violated this pattern over here and that I don't conform to the established norm for human relationships, why should I be discriminated against for what goes on behind my household doors? Well, it is ignorance of this principle that if you stray from the divine design, something is wrong. There is a fundamental flaw.

People make this argument. Why shouldn't a lesbian or a homosexual man be a teacher in a school? Because we're not teaching gay. We're just teaching math or teaching geometry or something.

And we're a good teacher. Before we came out, before people found out that we were perverse, we were admired and teacher of the year and so forth. So why shouldn't we continue? Why should this fact of our personal life make a difference? The difference is that, first of all, especially when someone makes that an issue, now it is an issue to be dealt with.

But secondly, if you come to knowledge that someone has got this area of aberration, that means that there is a wrinkle in the soul. There is a flaw. There is a weakness there that is an inherent problem.

A rebellious woman who is not submissive to her husband, she may still be a great wife and may get all the things done and may be admirable in every area of life. It doesn't matter. The Scripture says that when you rebel against the divine design, there is a problem in the soul and it will reflect.

It will come out. And we don't support things that go against the divine design. Paul said in the New Testament, bad company corrupts good morals.

So why is it that we have to make choices about who we associate with? Well, they're not doing the wrong thing at the time. We're just sitting down and having a meal or we're just spending a few hours in some innocuous activity. It's a principle.

If you know that here is someone that's got an aberration that they embrace and that they have no desire to change and you endorse or fail to separate from that thing, that thing is going to drag you down. It is going to have a bad effect sooner or later. One of the things that Eve, if she had been doing everything absolutely right, and of course none of us would have passed this test either, but hindsight is great.

In hindsight, a pattern is being broken. Ideas and suggestions of truth are going the wrong way up the chain here. Here's a creature suggesting to the woman who is now going to suggest to the man that they take a different course of action than what came down from God through the man to the woman.

And that's a warning flag. That's something to watch out for. If you see a business that is all... They have this big thing now where if you want federal support and federal contracts, you have to do business with women-owned business.

They call them W.O.B.s, women-owned business. And you'll find this in the prospectus or in the proposals that come back from businesses. We are a women-owned business or we comply with the federal standards.

Well, you have to watch out because if you have organizations where the men are all weak and the women are all in charge, it isn't a matter of value and it isn't a matter of quality. It's a matter of order. It violates the divine order.

And the divine order doesn't say men are in charge because they're better. History has reflected how well we've done being in charge. Look at the tragedies of human history.

I'm not sure I'd want to... If I was a woman, I wouldn't want to be in charge and then start taking the blame for everything going wrong, which men do now. We have nobody to blame but ourselves because we've been in charge. But it's the divine order.

That's the way God says it should be. And for those of us who love God and want to please Him, that's enough. And we don't lose self-esteem because we find ourselves in submission any more than if we sit under the ministry of someone who has a teaching gift or if we're in a local church and during the operation of that church function under the pastoral authority that the pastor has or you're in school and you function under the authority of the teacher or you're in a job and you function under the authority of the employer.

There's no reflection of this quality. I've saluted many people that I didn't have any respect for their quality as a human being, but they have the rank. And you flip up the best salute and you give them the same salute you'd give Chesty Puller or the Commandant of the Marine Corps because you're respecting the rank and you're respecting the order.

It has nothing to do with quality or intrinsic value of the person, but there is an order that has to be followed. And when you see something violating that order, that's a warning flag. People that say, well, I can't figure out God's will.

This is one of the clues. Look for the pattern, for the divine order involved. The woman misses that.

So here she's getting this stuff flowing. It's like back flushing the sewer system here. It's going the wrong direction.

Verse 4, the serpent said to the woman, you will surely not die. And this is so ironic because the woman did not quote God accurately. God used the doubled construction that has the infinitive with the verb back in 217.

Mot tamut is what God says. It's been translated, dying thou shalt surely die. It's a doubling of the verb.

And when you double something in Hebrew, it's emphasis. And so God says, Mot, M-O-T, Tamut, T-A-M-U-T, in 217. Dying thou shalt die, or thou shalt surely die.

Puts the infinitive with it to emphasize the fact of death. The woman, when she quotes God, she says, you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, in verse 3, lest you die. And she doesn't double the verb.

God didn't say anything about, don't eat the fruit, you might die, or the consequence may be that you die. She, her quote, makes it sound like it's a consequence. The consequence of eating the fruit is that you'll die.

So don't eat the fruit, lest you die. God's statement in 216 and 217 is, this is not a consequence, this is a sentence. This is a legal result.

This is a punishment from God. It's not just sort of, well, this is what will happen. This is the penalty.

It's a penalty, not a consequence, when God says it. But the thing about a penalty is, when you have a penalty, you have the entity behind that penalty. If someone's going to pay a price, that's the United States government, or that's the state government, or that's, there is a force of law and a force of authority behind it.

When you inflict a penalty on someone, you look at the top of the page and read the letterhead. There's somebody behind that. If you get orders to go someplace as a military person, you look up at the top and it's got commandant of the Marine Corps up there under the seal.

And so when there is a penalty inflicted, it immediately makes you think of who is it that's inflicting this penalty. A consequence, you can just describe, well, gosh, you eat the fruit, you'll die. It could be poison, it could be electrical shock, who knows what might happen, chemical, toxic shock, some kind of way, you eat the fruit and you'll die.

What's missing in Eve's restatement of the prohibition? God isn't present in her view. When she says, God has said, you shall not eat it nor shall you touch it lest you die. The idea is, there's something in the action that's going to result in death.

It doesn't emphasize that it's God that prohibits and it is God who will inflict the penalty of death. Now, there's a second thing involved here and this is probably a good time to cover it. The serpent says, you will surely not die.

By the way, I am taking it for granted. I'm not going to try to go in and justify the fact that the serpent is in fact Satan. It doesn't explicitly say Lucifer or Satan.

I hope that we don't really need to go prove that. It seems fairly obvious, especially when you get to the statement of sentence, the curses that are pronounced by God after this, that Satan is indwelling this serpent. It is an assumption.

There are people who try to argue, oh no, this is just some hapless animal. It ceases to make sense to me if you subtract Satan out of this view. So, just as a side note, I don't feel the need to justify that.

That has been the common understanding of virtually anybody that's come to Genesis until the last hundred years. And quite a lot of what has come up in the last hundred years isn't worth the paper it's written on. So, we're taking that for granted.

But the serpent says, you will surely not die. Now, recognizing that this is Satan, let's think about his situation. He has already fallen.

He is already at enmity with God. He is already the adversary and the antagonist. We know from other places in Scripture that he has already fallen.

He has already come under condemnation. The lake of fire has already been prepared. He has not yet been put in it.

He has rebelled against God. He has sinned. And he did not surely die at that point, did he? It is a true fact that on the day that Satan said, I will, five times, he did not die.

And he figures, God being consistent, isn't going to immediately... What if Eve, at the point that she reached out and took this fruit, whatever it was, I think it was probably an avocado myself. She reaches out and takes this fruit and at the point that she takes it and sinks her teeth into it, she has accomplished the act of eating. God said, in the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die.

Therefore, in a literal sense, before the sun sets on that day, she ought to be cold, dead corpse. Does that happen? No. Is there some sense in which what Satan says then is true? You shall not surely die.

There is an element of truth in this that makes us go back to God's original statement. How come she doesn't die? How come Adam and Eve are not two cold, stiff corpses at the end of this particular day? When God said, in the day that you eat thereof, you will surely die. This makes us go back and reflect a little bit on how God communicates with

us and the nature of His statements, the nature of His thinking behind the statements that He makes.

Did God plan for them to die and it just didn't happen? The little dying mechanism didn't go off like it was supposed to? Or they quickly grabbed a piece of the fruit of the tree of life and it didn't happen the way God... Obviously not. And this has been one of the big causes, big sources of misunderstanding in biblical interpretation. If you go to almost any commentary, especially recent commentaries, on Proverbs, think about the Proverbs.

You can almost crack the Bible anywhere in Proverbs and you'll find statements and you'll say, well, gosh, it doesn't seem like this is always true. I just cracked it at random. Proverbs 25, 15.

By long forbearance, a ruler is persuaded and a gentle tongue breaks a bone. Does that always happen every single time? If you just persevere long with the ruler, he'll eventually be persuaded. You keep going back to the government saying I really don't owe this tax, they'll eventually be persuaded.

And people say, you know, my practical experience is that this isn't true. And so, in all the commentaries, I looked it up in the Bible Knowledge commentary from Dallas Seminary this morning. You look at the introduction to Proverbs and it says these are maxims.

The reason they're called Proverbs is that they are generally true, but they're not always true. For the first time I heard that, I had a problem with it. You mean my Bible has got a whole book of stuff that's true sometimes.

But then sometimes it's not true. So, at least in Proverbs, I can't always bank on what it says. That really bothers me.

Are there other parts of the Word of God that, well, you know, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved? Well, that's true most of the time. But, you know, you can commit a certain kind of mistake and it's not true anymore. The Bible is either true and totally true and always true, or it's not.

Well, then this gets you back to the original conundrum there. Well, then how come it says, by long forbearance, the ruler is persuaded? And I've foreborn and suffered long with the ruler and he wasn't persuaded. So, where is the truth of this statement? Well, this is the issue in what God says in Genesis about in the day that you eat thereof you will surely die.

What did we talk about in the first session? Perspective. Are you looking in the short term? Are you looking in the long term? It's easy. It's our nature to look at the short term.

I've been working with this ruler for X number of months trying to get my garage built or trying to get my project approved so that the city will let me rewire my guest room or whatever it might be. And I've foreborn long and it hasn't prevailed. They haven't been persuaded that I'm in the right.

I've carried my case from court to court to court to court and appealed and appealed and appealed and I keep getting the same answer. You can go to any of these that talk about if you're a righteous man you'll live long and prosper in the land. Well, here's this righteous man that got speared to death by the Akha Indians back in the 50's.

It's Jim Elliot and his associates. And it says if you honor your father and mother your days will be long. And here's someone that just knocked himself out for his father and mother and died young.

Where is the truth? Short term perspective. What do you think in God's mind is going to happen to someone who is faithful, who perseveres, who seeks after righteousness day after day after day? In the eternal perspective in God's eyes is that person going to prevail? Are they going to live long in the land in the millennial kingdom? Every single one of these Proverbs is literally true. It may not look like it's true in the short term but it is literally true because God said it and it's a part of His Word.

And one yod or one corner of a letter will not pass away until it's all fulfilled. If it didn't get fulfilled in this life then it will get fulfilled in the next life. But there is not a proverb in the book of Proverbs.

There is not a statement in the Word of God that is not absolutely true from God's perspective in God's plan and in God's purpose and in God's way. And His ways are higher than our ways. Why? What happens when you get higher? This is one of the things I learned at the Naval Academy about how far you can see to the horizon when you're out in the middle of the ocean.

If you're down on the weather decks there, you're down on the focsal and the prow of the ship, the bow where the anchor chains come out and you look around how far can you see? You can see about 7 miles if you're just a few feet above the surface of the water, the curvature of the earth and so forth. If you get up 35 feet to the bridge of a destroyer, how far can you see? I forget now, 34 miles, 37 miles, something like that. The higher you get, the further you can see.

It's like a law of optics. The higher you get, the further you can see. That's why they've got the Hubble telescope up there so high.

It can see a lot further. God's ways are higher than our ways. He's up higher and He can see a lot further than we can.

And it's our goal by immersing ourselves in His Word to be able to see things the way

that He sees. When God looks in Adam and Eve and they're partaking of the fruit on that day, what has happened? Their death is certain. It is absolute.

It is inevitable. There's nothing that can change the fact. The point that they sink their front teeth into that fruit, as far as God's concerned, they're dead.

And they're dead in a lot of ways. They will immediately start to die physically. They are dead in terms of production.

They are now separated from God by sin. They can bear no fruit. They can enjoy no fellowship.

The light that has surrounded them is gone. This is death from God's point of view. And we think, oh, death is when your cells stop dividing.

Death is when you don't see anything on the ECG or the EKG. God looks at death in an entirely and fundamentally different way. And when God says, you will surely die, that's exactly what happened on that day.

They died. The fact that their physical existence continued is partly a result of salvation and partly a result of the fact that death doesn't only limit itself to the physical sense. And that's an important thing.

We have to come to an understanding of things the way that God sees them and presents them. And it's not enough to go to the book of Ecclesiastes and say, eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die. Well, this part of Ecclesiastes must be human viewpoint.

We misunderstand because we're short-sighted and we don't look at these statements and these principles the way that God does. And that was Eve's mistake. And the serpent plays on that here.

You will surely not die. And he seizes on a detail of the fact that their physical existence will continue. God could have no plan if at the moment they take that fruit and bite it, they keel over dead.

Well, where's the plan of God? Where's salvation? Where's the human race? Satan has figured that much out. He knows they're not going to literally physically die at that instant. And so he presents that as the whole truth.

That's why in courts they say the whole truth and nothing but the truth. You can give a little bit of the truth and completely deceive. And that's what Satan does here.

God knows, and here's where he weaves in the lie with the truth. There's nothing better to get a lie across than to sugarcoat it and intermingle it with truth. You validate the lie with the little bit of truth that's in it.

You hide the lie and give a little bit of truth and you sneak the lie under the gate. God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be like God knowing good and evil. How much of this is truth? Will they know good and evil? Yes.

Will they be like God? Well, wait a minute. I thought back here in chapter 1, verse 26, let us make man in our image after our likeness. They're already like God, aren't they? But now Satan is suggesting you're not really like God.

There's something lacking. You'll be more like God after you eat this fruit. And in a tragic sense, they will be.

God knows good and evil. What's the difference between God knowing good and evil and Adam and Eve knowing good and evil?