

Our Bible Sisters:

Eve—Experiencing God's Forgiveness

Leader's Guide

This Bible study was written by Marilyn Miller, a staff minister at Abiding Word Lutheran Church in Houston, TX. The theological content was reviewed by Professor-emeritus Joel Gerlach.

Our Bible Sisters is a series of one-hour studies that may be used separately or in any combination. Each looks at a different woman of the Bible, highlighting God's faithfulness in her life, with applications to the lives of all Christian women today.

Eve—Experiencing God’s Forgiveness

Opening Prayer

Read Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:18-25

1. What do we know about how and why Eve came into the world?

She was created on the 6th day, in God’s image—perfect: knowing, wanting to do and able to do what pleases God, having an intimate and personal relationship with God.

She was not created as other creatures—especially engineered (2:21-22), the Hebrew words mean much like a potter fashions a special piece of pottery. She was desired by Adam and was provided to Adam by God (not something Adam chose on his own).

She was created because it was not good (same word as was used through chapter 1 for end of each day—“God saw that it was good”) for Adam to be alone—he was incomplete (2:18). Man needed a partner to carry out his ministry—ruling over all creatures and working the garden, procreating. He needed a special type of companionship that other men couldn’t provide. Only after Eve was made does God say “and it was very good” (1:31).

Read Genesis 3:1-6

2. What do we learn about:

- Satan’s approach from 3:1?

His opening question was one designed to question God’s command, was designed to drag Eve into a conversation, was crafty

- Eve’s response in 3:2-3?

She subtly changed God’s command. She minimized the freedom and liberties to eat from all but one tree, and maximized the restrictions by adding “or touch it.” She ignored the fact that it is associated with evil. She downplayed God’s warning—the certainty and immediacy of death.

- Satan’s enticement to sin in 3:4-6?

1) He focused on self/ego rather than God’s will. He wanted her to think God just wanted to keep her under his thumb (as if this is a bad thing), that she’d be on the same level as God if she did this (must be a wonderful thing when in effect knowing evil is not at all a good thing).

2) He cast doubt on God’s good intentions as well as his promises.

3) He focused on self-indulgent pleasure—this forbidden thing is good, pleasing and desirable—with no thought for the consequences. Satan follows the same pattern today because it still works!

- Adam's role in this first sin?

He was right there beside her and let her disobey, despite his leadership role, and then participated in the sin.

3. From these verses, what 4 or 5 lessons can we apply to our own lives today?

- 1) *They were perfect and yet they fell, how much more are we vulnerable*
- 2) *Study God's will and pray for strength to keep it foremost in mind*
- 3) *Reach out and keep others from sinning in their moment of weakness*
- 4) *Know that Satan will come to us in the most crafty ways with thoughts that make sense, create doubt, create desire, appear innocent*
- 5) *Understand that our "little sin" can affect us and many other people for many generations*
- 6) *God forgives!*

Compare Genesis 3:6 with 1 John 2:16

4. What parallels do we see in Satan's temptations?

Satan comes to us in very human ways. He seeks to fulfill our human craving and makes things look as if they are good for food, a delight for the eyes, creates greed, makes us feel as if we are wise.

5. Compare this also to Jesus' temptation in the wilderness in Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus withstand Satan's temptations?

Jesus stayed focused on God's Word and used it to expose the lies. Just as we are told at the end of Ephesians (6:10ff): our defensive weapons come from being in God's Word and our offensive weapon is God's Word itself.

Read Genesis 3:7-8

6. What was Adam and Eve's response to their sin?

They hid from each other, hid from God, and tried to shift the blame.

7. Why is hiding the worst thing we could do when we sin?

We alienate ourselves from God and forfeit his forgiveness. We alienate ourselves from other Christians who could remind us of God's forgiveness and help us put the sin behind us. We cause division and weakness within the family and the church.

Read Genesis 3:9-11

8. How does God confront us when we sin?

1) *He comes to us, personally—"where are you?"*

- 2) *He gives an invitation to repent*
- 3) *He gives us a chance to reflect on what we've done by waiting until "the cool of the day"*
- 4) *He demands accountability and doesn't accept the excuses*

9. What is God's response when we confess our sins?

- 1) *He shows mercy*
- 2) *Puts the sins and the demand for justice on our Savior's shoulders*
- 3) *But still allows us to suffer the consequence of those sins so that we are drawn closer to him*

10. What is our response to be?

- 1) *He gives us the opportunity to live lives of service in gratitude for his love and mercy*
- 2) *We ask for help to put that sin/temptation behind us*

Read Genesis 3:14-19

11. What was the consequence of sin:

- for the serpent?

Crawl on the dust, cursed

- for Satan?

Man would hate (have enmity) him. An example of this is the hostility between believing Christians and the unbelieving world yet today. Christ would eventually destroy him.

- for the woman?

Pain in childbirth, subjection to a husband

- for Adam?

Hard labor just to survive, physical death, expulsion from the Garden, separation from God

- for nature?

Thorns and thistles, imperfections, death (Romans 8:22)

- for all of mankind?

Separation from God and the need for a Savior to bring us back into his favor—Gen 3:15 is the first promise of a Savior, known as Protevangel

12. What are some of the ways we are tempted to doubt God's words and the goodness of his motives?

God couldn't want me to suffer in this relationship, if God is really good how could he let this happen, God can never forgive me...

13. God drove Adam and Eve out of the perfect garden; he made life physically very difficult for them; there must have been emotional pain in their lives as they saw one son kill his brother and then leave home to wander. Doesn't this lead us to question the goodness of God's motives toward them?

Look at Genesis 3:22: now that man knew sin, God practiced tough love and ensured that they couldn't eat of the tree of life and live forever in their fallen state. Once we are in heaven, we once again can eat of this tree (Rev. 2:7). Life is no longer a paradise but a time of grace, a time for man to find his way back to God through Jesus. Men and women have been given appropriate disciplines to help remind them of the need for a Savior. The rest of the Bible tells us over and over again how much God loves us and how he controls all of history so that those who believe in him will spend eternity with him in heaven. No one can doubt his motives.

14. What have you learned about Eve that you will carry away from this study?

Closing Prayer/Meditation

I Will Sing My Maker's Praises CW 253 vs. 1

*I will sing my Maker's praises
And in him most joyful be,
For in all things I see traces
Of his tender love for me.
Nothing else than love could move him
With such deep and tender care
Evermore to raise and bear
All who try to serve and love him.
All things else have but their day;
God's great love abides for aye.*

References:

Jeske, John C., *The People's Bible – Genesis*
Lange, Lyle W. *God So Loved the World – a Study of Christian Doctrine*
Barber/Rasnake/Shepherd, *Life Principles from the Women of the Bible*