

GENESIS: THE BEGINNING IS NOT THE END

The Pitfalls of Being a Manager

TEXT: Genesis 3

INTRODUCTION: **The principles we have seen thus far beginning in Genesis and carried through in the New Testament:**

- **God is the owner of everything.**
- **God made man and woman His managers.**
- **God greatly blesses faithful managers.**

This morning I want us to see – The Pitfalls of Being a Manager.

- Now you may be thinking, “I know how to avoid the pitfalls of being God’s manager. I just won’t do it. I will not agree to be in management!”
- Well, my friend, that is like saying, “I just refuse to be a human, because of the possible pitfalls of being a part of humanity.”
- That is silliness.
- You are a human because God made you to be one.
- Likewise, **you are one of God’s managers, because God made you to be one.**
- Even lost people are one of God’s managers of the things of the physical universe.

God made Adam and Eve to be His managers, stewards of the earth and partners with God. For a while they were good managers, taking good care of what God had made and doing what the owner of all creation told them to do. ... For a while.

Bible students vary in their estimate of how long Adam and Eve practiced faithful stewardship and obeyed God. Some thinking a few weeks, and a few thinking it was a few years. However, there is no doubt that **there came a day when they quit doing what the owner/boss had told them to do**, and they chose instead to do what they wanted to do.

There is a lot to be learned from their choice, and we will see more about it in future weeks. But today I want us to look at their choice in light of their position as managers, as stewards of the things of God. Would you keep that perspective in mind as we read what happened from the Word of God.

Genesis 2:16–17 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 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.”

Genesis 3:6 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.

We could spend all morning analyzing the motives of both Eve and Adam as to why after walking faithfully with God since their creation, and enjoying all the benefits and privileges of being God's obedient managers, they would now abandon all that they had been given in order to exercise their own choice contrary to God's.

As I mentioned, we will most certainly return to this passage and examine this important question on another day, but for our purpose to day, why they disobeyed God does not matter. The fact is that they did disobey. They did not do the one thing that a good manager must do – Obey the boss. Do what the owner wants.

And thus begins the sad story of the fall of man

- his and her fall into sin
- their joint fall out of both relationship and fellowship with God
- the end of a period of faithful stewardship as the appointed managers of God in the garden

Adam and Eve were the first, but they were far from the last.

Malachi addressed a group of people who were very confident of their relationship to God as part of the chosen people. They had much to be grateful for, because they were part of the Remnant that returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity. God had set them free, and as His managers, His stewards, He had especially given them the task of rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple.

But like their ancient ancestors, these Jews of **the Remnant also at some point chose to disobey God and become unfaithful stewards**. They were still God's managers, for no person can abandon that designation given them by their Creator, but they were no longer good stewards. They had become unfaithful managers.

God sent a word to them through His prophet Malachi.

Malachi 3:8–9 8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. 9 You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, *Even this whole nation*.

Two weeks ago we looked at the perks of being a manager. Today we look at the pitfalls.

I will tell you on the front end that I know this message will not be popular. Honestly, I don't like it any more than you do.

- I would much rather preach about the blessings than the curses.
- I would much rather expound upon the perks of being God's faithful manager than the pitfalls of being the Lord's unfaithful steward.
- But the truth is that both are needed, and that is why we have both in Scripture.
- The elevator arrives with the sweet sound of a bell and a pleasant little light pointing up or down; but the sound of a fire alarm is loud and grates on our nerves, and no one delights in hearing it.

- But the truth is that we need the fire alarm more than we need the elevator bell.
- The bell is a convenience; the alarm can save lives.

I also should add as your pastor, I am not totally naive.

- While I know that some of you were already faithful managers in partnership with God before we examined these principles,
- And I hope that some of you have begun in the last few weeks to become good managers who are in active partnership with God concerning your time, your talent, and your treasure,
- I am not so naïve as to believe that everybody has arrived at the point of even deciding that you will begin the journey of becoming a faithful manager/partner with God.
- Some of you have decided not to do obey the Lord.
- Others have just put the question off, hoping it will go away.
- But the truth remains that every one of us has been created by God as His manager. We are either a good manager or a bad one. We are either faithful in our task or unfaithful.

This morning I seek to warn whoever might need it of the pitfalls for the unfaithful manager. They come in two groups:

I. AN UNFAITHFUL MANAGER ROBBS GOD.

- **Of money**
- **Of delight in obedience**

1 Samuel 15:22 So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

- **Of joy in giving a blessing**
- **Of funding for God's ministries through Christ's church**
- **Of the gospel for God's world**

II. AN UNFAITHFUL MANAGER ROBBS HIMSELF.

(Malachi said, "He is cursed with a curse.")

AN UNFAITHFUL MANAGER ROBBS HIMSELF.

- **Of the peace of mind produced by obedience**
- **Of the blessings God wanted to give**
- **Of more than 10% of what God has already given**
- **Of the fulfillment of being a good partner with God**
 - **In the gospel**
 - **In ministry**
 - **In finances**
- **Of increased faith**

CONCLUSION: My dear friend, I share this warning with you because I care about you.

God sends this warning in His Word because He loves you and wants the best for you. Ezekiel tells us that God takes no pleasure when people reap the consequences of their sin. He is no sadist who delights that someone broke the rules and now He can squash them.

God wants to bless you as you engage in a faithful partnership with Him. Being a good manager for God is not burdensome but joyful.

- **Are you already one of God's faithful stewards? Bless you. Keep it up for God's glory and your own good.**
- **Will you decide to become one of God's faithful managers and engage in partnership with Him?**

1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.