

Paradise Lost and Restored: What is Discipleship? (Part 4)

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I. Introduction

Satan's goal is to isolate you so that he can take your God, your identity, and therefore your destiny away from you. He will get you to think that God hates you (or that He isn't there or if He is there, that He doesn't care), that you will never amount to anything, and neither will your life.

II. Are You Living the Destiny God Gave You or has Satan Stolen it from You?

Discipleship is about our Up, In, and Out relationships, discipling someone is teaching them how to have a proper Up, In, and Out relationship. The Up is our relationship with God, from whom we get our identity and therefore our security and peace of mind. The In relationship is how we get along with each other (whether it's our blood family or church family). The Out relationship is how we get along with the world around us, that is, those who are not yet part of God's family or those who are God's children, but have lost their way?

For those who are not God's children, Satan's goal is to keep them away from God so that they never have an Up relationship with Him and discover their destiny. For those who are God's children, Satan's goal is to disrupt their Up relationship with God so that they fail to live their life in God's Kingdom. And once the Up relationship is off, then the In and Out relationships will also be destroyed. Notice how Satan does this to Adam and Eve.

Satan steals Adam and Eve's Up, In, and Out, Adam and Eve's problem was not eating something, it was believing something false. Satan is the father of lies, John 8:44, thus everything he says is designed to rob you. He wants to steal your God, your identity and thus your destiny.

What lie(s) did Adam and Eve believe about God? That He was harsh when it came to His house rules, Genesis 3:3. That God was keeping something from them that would make them like God, Genesis 3:4-6. But ultimately that He was someone to be feared because He saw every shameful flaw in them and would therefore punish them severely, Genesis 3:7-8.

What lie(s) did Adam and Eve believe about themselves? Once our view of God is off, a distorted view of ourselves follows. Adam and Eve now believed that there was something desperately wrong with them, so wrong that they could not stand in God's presence. This led to other sinful behavior: Adam and Eve are no longer a loving husband and wife; they're selfish and blame others, Genesis 3:9-13.

What lie(s) did Adam and Eve believe about their life? When you have a distorted view of yourself, a distorted view of your life follows and it's filled with wrong decision after wrong decision. Adam and Eve were the representative king and queen of earth, Genesis 1:28. But now they believed that they were the last two people God wanted ruling over the earth, Genesis 3:7-8. They also now believe that you have to look out for #1 and that you could blame someone else for your failures, Genesis 3:12-13.

God restores Adam and Eve's Up, In, and Out, in order to rescue Adam and Eve, God asks two key questions: "Where are you?" (Up) and "Who told you that you were naked?" (In and Out)

The truth of who God is: God is not someone you have to fear, but someone you can run to for help. No matter how bad the sin is, God will forgive you and undo the damage you caused. Adam and Eve thought that God was angry with them so they ran. Instead, God was concerned and wanted to restore what Adam and Eve had lost, Genesis 3:8-24.

The truth of who Adam and Eve are: Adam and Eve were the representative king and queen of earth, Genesis 1:28, and they still were even after they sinned. This is why God ran after them, to restore them to their proper place, Genesis 3:8-24.

The truth of what Adam and Eve's life is supposed to be: they were not meant to live in the shadows covered with fear and shame, constantly wondering when God would punish them for their sin. Instead, they were to be fruitful and multiply and rule the earth. In their respective roles, Adam was to love his wife and Eve was to respect her husband. These roles would now be harder to execute, but their destiny had not changed, Genesis 3:8-24.

Satan tries to steal Jesus' Up, In, and Out, Satan tries to do to Jesus what he did to Adam and Eve. Notice that right after God says, "This is My beloved Son..." Satan says twice, "*If* you are the Son of God..." and "...if you will fall down and worship me." He's trying to steal Jesus' God, His identity, and therefore His destiny, Matthew 3:16-4:11.

Satan's trying to steal your Up, In, and Out, God wants to take you out of Satan's world of darkness and place you inside His Son's Kingdom of light, Colossians 1:13. This is where you were meant to live your life. Satan realizes this, so he does everything in his power to keep you out of the Kingdom completely. Or once you've entered the Kingdom, he tries to make sure you never live your life in God's Kingdom.

Whether you're God's child or not, the battle is over the Up, In, and Out. Satan will try to keep you away from God and His Kingdom. The key to not falling prey to Satan is:

- (1) acknowledge God's voice when He comes to your rescue (Romans 1:15 or John 3:16)
- (2) confess/repent: confess/acknowledge the lies that led to your sin (e.g., addiction, jealousy, arrogance, etc.) or the effects of sin (e.g., anxiety, depression, frustration, confusion, etc.) and repent, which means allow God to show you the truth that will restore what you lost (1 John 1:9 or Acts 17:30)
- (3) once you've entered His Kingdom or re-established your life in the Kingdom, continue your relationship with God through prayer and listening for His voice—especially during moments of pain (e.g., anxiety, depression, frustration, etc.) or moments of challenge (e.g., your boss is unfair, your spouse ignores you, or your health is failing)
- (4) allow God's family to help you: allow your brothers and sisters to be your spiritual parent (e.g., Jesus with His disciples, especially Peter, Luke 5; 22:31-32; John 21)

III. Conclusion

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil... "If You are the Son of God,..." ..., "If You are the Son of God,..." ... "... if You will fall down and worship me." ... Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.