

THE GENESIS GENESIS FIVE

Part 2 • February 2, 2025 • Pastor Jason Smotherman

THE FALL OF MAN

GENESIS 3:1-7 (AMP)

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty (subtle, skilled in deceit) than any living creature of the field which the Lord God had made. And the serpent (Satan) said to the woman, "Can it really be that God has said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees of the garden,

³ except the fruit from the tree which is in the middle of the garden. God said, 'You shall not eat from it nor touch it, otherwise you will die.'" ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You certainly will not die!

⁵ For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened [that is, you will have greater awareness], and you will be like God, knowing [the difference between] good and evil." ⁶ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired in order to make one wise and insightful, she took some of its fruit and ate it; and she also gave some to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of the two of them were opened [that is, their awareness increased], and they knew that they were naked; and they fastened fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

GENESIS 3:13 (AMP)

¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"

God knew. Do we really know the consequences to that decision? It opened a door that required a sacrifice that only Jesus could give. **It really is the origin story to so many questions.**

It's the source of many of humanities questions and perversions (twisted realities). They originate from the opportunity that God gave us to choose. Free will and the Sovereignty of God are concepts that are hard to grasp and take a lifetime of pondering to grasp in full. **The line between what you can do and what you should do only gets larger when you remain un-submitted to God and his ways.**

The end of the deception that comes from a life rejecting God is described in 1 Timothy. **1 TIMOTHY 4:1-3 (AMP)**

Choice created the atmosphere where two kingdoms can live simultaneously.

In the garden, the Kingdom of God existed alone. God created Man and Woman to live with divine authority to rule and reign with Him over the earth and all of the creatures. There was daily relationship with God and each other. Then perversion, a twisting took place.

The world was introduced to another kingdom. We still have the choice as to which kingdom we reside in. Two things can be true at the same time, God is sovereign and we can choose.

This creates an opportunity for a clashing world, where perversion (twisted realities) exists). Two kingdoms coexisting at the same time. This is why the following questions are not easily answered.

- Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do children suffer from hunger? Why is there injustice? Why cancer? Sicknes? Poverty?

All of this perverted reality, originates from mankind's ability to choose a journey apart from God. God in his sovereign way, made a way back to Him through Jesus.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE FALL OF MAN

Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 2:26). By a voluntary act of the will, Adam and Eve disobeyed God (Genesis 3:6). That first sin had several repercussions: man was excommunicated from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:23), a curse was pronounced (Genesis 3:14-19), the process of physical death began (Genesis 2:17) and man died spiritually (Romans 5:12-19). Sin separated humankind from God (Ephesians 2:11-18) and left man in a fallen and sinful condition (Romans 3:23).

ROMANS 5:12 (AMP), ROMANS 5:19 (AMP)

Us humans are a lot like the philosopher who orders a pizza and the server asks, "Would you like it cut into 6 or 8 slices?" The philosopher replies, "Six, please. I'm not sure I can handle the responsibility of 8 right now."

We philosophize our responsibility away. We blame God externally for a decision mankind made internally. We are no different than Adam and Eve. **ROMANS 3:23 (ESV)**

The Ship and the Captain: A Story of Free Will and God's Sovereignty

Once upon a time, a wealthy captain (God) built a magnificent ship. He designed it to sail across vast oceans, equipped with everything the crew would need for the journey: food, tools, and navigation charts. The captain also appointed a skilled first mate (Jesus) and a crew (Us), giving them the responsibility of steering the ship to their destination.

Before they set sail, the captain gathered the crew and said: "This ship is mine, and its destination is certain. I have charted its course, and nothing will stop it from reaching the harbor. However, I give you the freedom to make choices along the way. I have given you a first mate that has made the way sure, but I am giving you the ability to choose to reside in Him or choose another way. You can steer the ship wisely, enjoy the journey, and

arrive in joy—or you can make foolish decisions and suffer unnecessary hardships. But know this: no matter what you do, the ship will reach the destination I have planned."

The Journey Begins: *At first, the crew worked together harmoniously. They followed the captain's instructions, allowed the first mate to take the lead, using the charts he had provided. The winds were favorable, and the ship sailed smoothly.*

But as time went on, some crew members grew restless. They questioned the captain's wisdom, even though he had built the ship and knew the seas better than anyone. They decided to take matters into their own hands. "We should turn west," one argued. "The east looks too risky." Another shouted, "No, let's stop here and enjoy ourselves. Why follow the captain's plan at all?" The crew began to quarrel, and their choices led to chaos. They steered the ship off course, ran into storms, and lost valuable supplies. Yet, through it all, the ship remained intact, and the captain's unseen hand ensured it stayed afloat.

The Storm: *One night, a fierce storm arose. The crew panicked and cried out for help. They blamed each other for their situation and shouted, "Why did the captain let this happen?" Suddenly, a message arrived from the captain: "I gave you the freedom to steer the ship, but I am still in control of its course. This storm is to remind you that I am here. If you trust me and follow my instructions, I will guide you safely through it." Humbled, the crew returned to the charts the captain had given them. They worked together to realign the ship with the intended course, and the storm began to subside.*

The Destination: *After many months at sea, the ship finally arrived at the harbor the captain had planned. Some crew members were filled with joy because they had trusted the captain throughout the journey. Others were exhausted and regretful because their poor choices had made the trip far harder than it needed to be. The captain greeted them all and said: "Your journey was shaped by your choices, but the destination was never in doubt. I gave you freedom, yet I remained sovereign over the ship. Now, learn from this journey and trust me always."*

This is why Christians have such differing journeys. The Destination is never in doubt but the journey you take is guided by your choices and decisions.

This story illustrates the balance between free will and God's sovereignty:

- God, like the captain, has a plan and ultimate control over His creation. His purposes will prevail (Proverbs 19:21).
- Humans, like the crew, are given the freedom to make choices that shape their experience. Their actions matter and come with consequences (Galatians 6:7).
- Even when people stray, God's sovereignty ensures that His ultimate plan is accomplished (Romans 8:28).

Just as the captain ensured the ship reached its destination, God's sovereign will is never thwarted, even as He allows humans to exercise free will within His divine plan. If you stay in the boat with Jesus, your destination is secure.

Can Free Will Lead to Someone "Jumping Off the Ship"?

Yes, free will gives people the ability to make choices, including harmful or self-destructive ones, such as "jumping off the ship." However, the deeper question is: what does it mean to "jump off the ship" in light of God's sovereignty?

1. GOD ALLOWS FREE WILL, EVEN WHEN IT LEADS TO HARM

God created humanity with the freedom to make real choices, even those that lead to rejecting Him or causing harm:

- Adam and Eve's Choice: In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve's free will led them to disobey God, bringing sin into the world. They "jumped" off the course God intended, but He still worked out His redemptive plan.
- The Rich Young Ruler: In Matthew 19:16–22, Jesus allowed the rich young man to walk away, respecting his choice, even though it meant rejecting eternal life.

If someone "jumps off the ship" in terms of rejecting God or His plan, God respects their decision, even though it grieves Him (2 Peter 3:9).

2. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY EXTENDS EVEN TO THOSE WHO "JUMP"

While free will allows someone to reject God's guidance (e.g., abandoning the ship), God's sovereignty ensures that His overall plan is still fulfilled:

- Jonah's Rebellion: Jonah tried to "jump off the ship" of God's calling, but God used a storm and a great fish to bring him back (Jonah 1–3).
- The Prodigal Son: In Luke 15, the father allows the son to leave, but he welcomes him back when the son realizes his mistake.

God's sovereignty often works through the consequences of poor choices, providing opportunities for redemption and restoration.

3. "JUMPING OFF" AND ETERNAL CONSEQUENCES

Spiritually, "jumping off the ship" could symbolize rejecting God entirely:

- Hebrews 10:26–27 warns about deliberately turning away from God after knowing the truth.
- John 3:16–18 emphasizes that rejecting Christ leads to separation from God.

However, even in these cases, God continues to reach out, offering grace and calling people back to Him until the end (Luke 15:4).

4. GOD'S PLAN INCLUDES RESCUE

Even if someone "jumps off," God does not abandon them:

- The Good Shepherd: Jesus seeks out the one lost sheep (Luke 15:4–7). If someone strays, God pursues them, offering chances to return.
- Romans 8:38–39: Nothing can separate believers from God's love, not even their own poor decisions.

God's grace and sovereignty ensure that those who genuinely turn back to Him, no matter how far they've fallen, will be restored.