



The Bite Heard Round the World (and into eternity)

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Genesis 3:6-7

Some people in our world today believe that humans are basically good and learn to sin from their surroundings or upbringing. As Christians, we understand that the New Testament teaches the depravity of man – that is humans are born in sin and continue in that sinful condition until we receive Christ’s redemption.

It all began in the garden with Adam and Eve. As we understand what happened with **The Bite**, we can understand our own condition when we operate apart from the Holy Spirit of God, whether an unbeliever or a believer living in the flesh rather than in the Spirit.

Before “The Bite,” Adam and Eve walked in fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden. God had given them a perfect environment with perfect bodies, built to last forever. He gave them each a free will and choices to make – whether to follow Him and believe Him or whether to disobey.

When they ate, Self became the ruler of their lives. God was no longer the center of their lives. One of the first affects of The Bite (more commonly known as The Fall) was being afraid of God, not a holy, reverential fear but an emotional state of being afraid. When God went looking for Adam and asked him where he was, Adam said he hid from God because he was afraid.

With Self as the ruler, we can identify the “top three list” as selfish, self-conscious, and self-centered.

1) Selfish: The dictionary defines it as *concerned chiefly or only with oneself*. Some of the synonyms include *egoistical, greedy, narcissistic, self-indulgent*. I think of it as seeking pleasure for my physical desires (the flesh). We indulge our senses of taste (eating, drinking), of smell (perfume, candles), of sight (visual stimulation, movies, TV, pictures), of hearing (auditory stimulation, music, verbal messages make us feel good), and of touch (physical affection, sex.). Our focus is on satisfying Self, even if it means someone else gets hurt or it is detrimental to our physical, emotional, or spiritual health. We want short-term satisfaction, regardless of long-term affects.

Solution to our selfishness: God calls us to deny the flesh and walk in the Spirit. When we are walking in the Spirit, the fleshly desires do not enslave us.

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in

opposition to one another. Galatians 5:16-17a NAS

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

Romans 8:5-6

2) Self-conscious: In the dictionary, it says *aware of oneself as an individual or of one's own being, actions, or thoughts; socially ill at ease; excessively conscious of one's appearance or manner*. Synonyms are *anxious, awkward, embarrassed, nervous, sheepish, shy, stiff, uncertain, uncomfortable, uneasy, unsure*. Genesis says that Adam and Eve were very aware of their nakedness and uncomfortable with it, feeling a need to cover up. I am not saying that we should all walk around naked and not be concerned about it. But what happens is that we put an inordinate amount of emphasis on others acceptance of us, generating fear of failure and fear of rejection. We have a sense of “I don’t measure up.” We try to cover our sin and our shame (nakedness) resulting in a lack of intimacy and vulnerability. As one person put it “Not everyone is looking at you.” But somehow we think they are.

Solution to our self-consciousness: To counter self-consciousness, we have to know who we are in Christ. I have His Righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21 and others), what could I do or how could I look to be more acceptable than that?

3) Self-centered: The dictionary says *engrossed in oneself and one's own affairs limited to or caring only about yourself and your own needs*. A current phrase that expresses this concept wonderfully is “It’s all about me.” As a child when dad comes home from work and is grumpy, we don’t think *I wonder if Dad had a bad day*. We think *What did I do to make Dad upset?* The idea that everything that happens in my world is a personal reflection on who I am. If you are walking down the hall at church and speak to someone and they don’t respond, do you think *What did I do to make them mad?* Or do you think *I wonder if they heard me or if something is going on with them*. It’s not all about me! We overstate our influence and impact in others lives.

Solution to our self-centeredness: There are numerous “one another” verses in the New Testament — such as “love one another,” “encourage one another,” “accept one another,” “be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other.”

Paul said in Philippians 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*