

## Hallmark, It's Not!

### Presentation Handout

#### Hallmark Movies—Happily, Ever After

- Hallmark's movies are famously predictable: man meets woman, and they live happily, every after...!
- Since everything God created in the beginning was good or very good! {**Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31**} we would expect it to continue “happily, ever after, like a Hallmark movie.
  - The use of “good” or “very good” seven different times in the creation story shows us that God's creation was perfect—no defects, faults, or problems.
  - God is the creator of all good {**James 1:17**} because He and His ways are perfect {**2 Samuel 22:31; Psalm 18:30; Matthew 5:48**}.
- Since God is perfect and His creation was perfect, He could not be the author of sin, suffering, pain, hurt, accidents, or death! If He isn't who is? And how did sin begin?

#### Who's Behind the Sin & Suffering in Our World

- **Not God**
  - God does not speak in **Genesis 3** until **verse 9**. He name is only referenced by others reminding us He is **not** the author of sin and suffering in our world. It was not His will for humanity!
  - **Genesis 3:1** introduces us to another being that is “cunning” (deceptive, sly) who is responsible for all sin. He's the one who introduced it into our world.
    - This being is the “serpent” {**Genesis 3:1**}, who is ultimately the Devil or Satan {**Revelation 12:9; 20:2**}.
    - Satan worked through the serpent as a medium, a disguise, to deceive Eve then Adam into sin.
    - So, Satan is the author of all sin, suffering, evil, pain, hurt, accidents, or death in our world, not God.

#### Satan's Deceptions

- Knowing how Satan deceived Eve will help us be forewarned and open to his continual deceptions since he continues to use the same tactics today. Here were his deceptive lies:
- **God is distant, disconnected & uncaring** {**Genesis 3:1b, 3b, 5a**}
  - Satan “de-personalized” God—making Him seem distant, disconnected, and uncaring.
  - He used a “name-play” with God's names

- Satan used “God” (“Elohim” – the all-mighty, all-powerful God) when referring to God, not His “Lord God” name (“Yahweh” – the close, personal, caring, covenant-keeping, loving God).
- He did this to shift Eve’s (and later Adam’s) perception from a loving, caring God to a distant, “cold” God, leading them to view God in a different way than before.
- This wrong perception of God led Eve (then Adam) to view sin as simply outward, wrong actions, instead of involving motives, attitudes, and thoughts that hurt God and others. As a result, their way of thinking and acting became selfish in nature.
- This false idea of sin lead them on a “road”—a progression—to sin:



- ❖ Wrong perception of God
- ❖ Broken relationship with God
- ❖ Sin—internal and external rebellion against God in wrong thoughts, motives, attitudes, and actions

- Now the “door” of Eve’s (and later Adam’s) mind and heart was opened to receive Satan’s remaining three lies about God:

▪ **God is restrictive {Genesis 3:1b}**

- Satan’s second lie reveals his deceptive cunningness as he subtly reframes God’s original, positive command-protection in **Genesis 2:16-17** into a negative, restrictive command.
- Satan’s lie was similar but also different from God’s command—revealing that Satan is a deceiver who mixes error with truth {**Matthew 4:5-7**} to confuse human beings about God’s character.
  - God did restrict, but only one tree, not all of them. Notice the name used for God in **Genesis 2:16**—“Lord God” (“Yahweh” – the covenant, close, personal, caring, loving name for God). God is trying to protect Adam & Eve.
  - Satan’s reframed lie—“God” (not “Lord God”) is restricting all trees from their enjoyment. In other words, God is a “Killjoy” who relishes taking away or preventing humans from experiencing pleasure, joy, fun, etc.
- Unfortunately, Eve tries to defend God, something He never asked her to do. Through this defending-arguing with Satan, the enemy led Eve down a continual path of deception and confusion, revealed by the fact:
  - She also began referring to God by “God” not “Lord God” the same as Satan
  - She began viewing sin as an outward, horizontal act only, forgetting it ultimately involves disconnecting from God and hurting Him {**Genesis 3:6**}.

▪ **God can’t be trusted {Genesis 3:4}**

- While Satan’s first two lies were cunningly deceptive through word-twisting, his third one is a bold “in-your-face” lie: God is a liar! He can’t be trusted!
  - Could it be as Satan is speaking to Eve, he proves his point by putting a piece of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in her hands, and says, “See, Eve, you didn’t die! I told you that God is a liar! He can’t be trusted!”

▪ **God is selfish {Genesis 3:5}**

- Not many people like a selfish person because their life/world rotates around them and their ideas, wishes, demands, etc.—they’re self-absorbed with themselves.

- And selfishness also has a way of “breeding” selfishness in others, particularly in our relationship with God—“if He doesn’t care, why should I?”
  - Humans who perceive God as selfish can end up fighting for themselves, for what’s theirs (or at least what they think is theirs, whatever that may mean). Sadly, this is what happened to Eve {**Genesis 3:6**}.
- This lie was confusing because Satan again mixed error with truth. In this case, Satan was right—God was withholding something from Adam & Eve. But, not in the way Satan was insinuating.
  - God was trying to protect Adam & Eve from knowing and experiencing the knowledge of evil. He only wanted them to know and experience pure good!
  - God covenanted Himself to deal with the sin/evil problem started by Satan through His willingness to suffer, not have humanity experience it and suffer because of it {**Genesis 3:15**}!
  - ***Evil was never part of God’s plan for humanity! He is not the author of evil!***
- What was so damning about this lie is that it insinuates God was withholding good and pleasure from Adam & Eve, which He wasn’t. And this greater knowledge of “good” being withheld would make their lives better. So, Satan encouraged them to “grab” it by force, if need be, And sadly, we all know the terrible results.

### Sin...Genesis 3:6

- Through sin, Eve went from:



- ❖ Vertical connection with God
  - ❖ Horizontal disconnection from God by believing Satan’s lies
  - ❖ Sinning in thoughts, motives, attitudes, and finally actions
- Sadly, Eve desired something she already had, desiring to be God when she already was made in the image of God.
  - Believing Satan’s lies that she didn’t have what she already had, led Eve to lose what she already had.
  - Confusing, huh? This is the mystery of iniquity/sin! It doesn’t make sense...and it **never** will!

### The Answer to Satan’s Lies—The Beautiful Truth about God’s Character

- One point to remember in this sad story of sin entering our world—***God’s truth dispels error***, like light dispels darkness when a light switch is turned on!
  - And the light that dispels Satan’s lies is the truth about God, His character, and the beliefs in the Bible. God’s character and Word answer Satan’s lies:
    - Satan’s lie #1: *God is distant, disconnected & uncaring*. The Godhead’s response in Jesus: “‘...They shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us’” {**Matthew 1:23**}. Jesus (God) came to live in our messy world with/among messed-up people.

- Satan's lie #2: *God is restrictive*. The Godhead's response in Jesus: "The truth (God's truth) shall make you free" {*John 8:32*}! And Jesus died so we could have our freedom back—to choose or not to choose God.
- Satan's lie #3: *God is a liar*. The Godhead's response through Jesus: "I (Jesus) am the way, the truth, and the life" {*John 14:6*}! And Jesus died to fulfill the Godhead's promise made back in the beginning to save humanity {*Genesis 3:15*}.
- Satan's lie #4: *God is selfish, self-absorbed with Himself*. The Godhead's response through Jesus in *Philippians 2:5-8*.

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, <sup>7</sup> but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

**LIVING CHOICE:** In this great controversy war between good & evil, are you living vertically in connection with God and His salvation freedom or horizontally in your own wisdom and sin bondage?