

# Redemptive Conflict

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- [ 0 : 00 ] In the past few weeks, I've seen a repeated theme in some of our recent lessons and messages.
- And one of those themes focuses on the mental activity of considering. Our study on biblical paradoxes challenged us to consider or to bring to mind Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God and how we as members of the kingdom of God live distinctively different lives in this world today.
- And then Pastor John focused on the hypocritical lives and false teaching of the Pharisees in their darkened understanding. They didn't consider God or even believe His revelation should take precedence of their own teaching, their own ideas, their own man-made religion.
- They rejected the deity of Christ, the sufficiency of His sacrificial death, and faith in Him as God's only means for forgiveness of sins and obtaining the necessary righteousness in order to fellowship with God, a righteousness that was to be found in Jesus Christ.
- And then the last two weeks in Sunday school, Jeremy gave us warning of the unhealthy distraction of social media. It can distract our minds from considering and then pursuing greater treasures that are found in Jesus Christ and things that are above that God has given us.
- [ 1 : 41 ] And then last Sunday, Pastor Colin opened up for us the book of Haggai. He showed us the word that God had Haggai declared to the people of Israel, but also preserved for us to hear.
- And that message from God to them and for us was to consider our ways. Think about, as you move through your days, what you're pursuing, what you're giving your minds, your energies to.
- Through Haggai, we learn that the people that he spoke to, and we as well, by extension have hearts, inner longings that are, as the hymn declares, prone to wander and leave the God I love.
- Well, for the next few weeks in our classes, we want to present to you information we think is worth serious consideration that will keep us from hearts, desires, thoughts that make us prone to wander and leave the God that we love.
- The next few weeks, we want to consider the person of Jesus Christ. When I use the word consider, I don't mean in the sense of considering him as a possible option for obtaining what we want out of life.
- [ 3 : 08 ] I mean seeing him in the Word of God, seriously considering who he is, thinking about who he is, and out of the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, having a genuine adoration of him, finding our joy in walking in humble, grateful obedience to him, delighting actually in him, finding rest for our souls in knowing Christ.
- Well, to direct our consideration of Christ, we'll draw from a book written by Alistair Baggins, Sinclair Ferguson, titled Name Above All Names.

There will be a couple of copies in the library if you want to read through the book on your own. Well, we'll look at seven key qualities of Jesus' identity in ministry and pray, certainly as we move through these weeks, that by the Holy Spirit we will see Jesus, to love him, enjoy him, and delight in the Lord.

This was the Apostle Paul's testimony when he considered the value between knowing Christ and really what he valued prior to coming to know Christ.

He wrote in Philippians 3, 7-10, Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

[ 4 : 51 ] For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, something less, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death.

And then John also gave this kind of exalted praise to Christ as he wrote to his readers. In the book of 1 John, chapter 5, he wrote, And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding.

We can rejoice in that as a work of God that he does in opening our hearts and opening our minds to the reality of who he is. He's given us understanding so that we might know him who is true.

And we are in him who is true. In his Son, Jesus Christ, he is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. So throughout this series, we hope that we can keep ourselves from what I call insufficient soul satisfiers.

Try and say that three times fast. Those insufficient soul satisfiers by having the whole of our heart, our inner being, our soul, our mind, our affections, our will fixed on that solid foundation of the person of Jesus Christ.

[ 6 : 32 ] And to begin that look at Jesus, we need to go back to the beginning, long before his incarnation, where we see him referred to as the offspring, the seed of the woman, back in Genesis 3.15.

Speaking to the serpent, God said, And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

So our first introduction to Jesus is in this prophecy of what I'll call redemptive conflict between the offspring of the serpent, Satan, and the offspring of the woman, even Jesus.

Prior to this prophecy, we can read and have read of the life of blessing that Adam and Eve had in the garden, and then of their failed test of faith in God.

God had put Adam and Eve into a beautiful garden, where all they needed for flourishing lives was provided by God. All that was there, they could freely partake of, except one tree.

[ 7 : 50 ] It was a tree, like all others. It was a delight to look at. It had beautiful fruit. What made this tree distinct was that God said, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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.

So here was God's call for them to love Him, to trust Him, to live actually by faith in Him, in their daily lives as they moved through the garden and enjoyed everything that God had provided for them.

Each time they passed the tree, they could consider God and what He had said. Consider God's ways that He had set before them.

Live by faith in God. Enjoy the fullness of life with God, each other and the rest of creation, except for this one tree. But the deceiver brought a different message about God and the tree.

Of course, John identifies the real culprit behind the serpent. In Revelation 12.9 he wrote, And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.

[ 9 : 12 ] And the deceiver said, You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened. And you'll be like God, knowing good and evil.

So Satan really was calling into question and denying the purity of God's motives here. And God's love for Adam and Eve.

Pretty much saying, God's trying to protect His privileged position. And to keep you from something that actually is good for you. So you should go ahead and eat of the tree instead.

It will actually make your life better. You'll be like God, knowing good and evil. Eve made effort to answer the deceiver, but then looked more closely at the tree.

And instead of considering God and what God had said, considering God's ways, she considered the new message that came through the serpent, the great deceiver.

[ 10 : 24 ] She looked at the tree and considered the beauty of it. Its fruit was good to look at.

She considered not God's words, but the serpent's promise of wisdom to come. And with that kind of considering, that is separated from considering God and His ways, it naturally will lead to a certain outcome.

Which it did. She took of the fruit. And then instead of acting in her God-designed role as helper to Adam, she gave the fruit to Him as well.

And instead of acting as her God-designed protector, nourisher, even encouraging her to repentance, He took the fruit as well and ate of it.

Well, immediately, Satan's deception through the serpent was made manifest to them as they experienced what they never experienced before. Can you imagine the guilt and the shame that came through disobedience to God?

[ 11 : 39 ] Having never experienced that before. We experience it more often than we should. We know what it's like. But for the first time, to have this sense within themselves that they've never experienced this before, now this alienation between themselves and God and this shame and this heavy weight of guilt because they considered a different way and acted upon it.

Well, judgment came upon both of them and the serpent, the instrument through which Satan worked to bring about their downfall. But now, hell is not lost. God had greater plans ahead for Adam and Eve and other sinners who would be in bondage to this great deceiver, even Satan, in the midst of their great loss of joyful life with God, each other.

God provided hope. He provided hope of rescue. And the hope of rescue came in His proclamation of judgment upon the serpent.

God didn't let them linger in their hopeless condition. What a gracious God, merciful God, kind God, to these who had turned their backs on Him and disobeyed, moving in their direction again, coming in the garden, seeing their condition, and bringing a message of hope for them in their hopeless situation.

He brought the message of good news that there was hope in the midst of their guilt and shame. It's called, really, the first proclamation of the good news of the gospel.

[ 13 : 25 ] Genesis 3.15, I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

Well, there's good news of a future deliverer, but also news of much enmity and conflict. The conflict, the enmity, would be between Satan and the woman, between Eve.

Now, for she and Adam, it's, I believe, good to see that they did not continue to listen to the deceiver. They were certainly living in the consequences of rejecting God and His wise counsel, but I believe it turned back to God and true repentance and faith and stood in opposition to Satan.

There would be enmity between Satan and the woman. And there would be enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, Satan.

The seed of the woman being those who follow in her steps of faith in God, those who are ones who are in enmity with those who are the seed of the serpent, Satan.

[ 14 : 40 ] Those who are of the seed of Satan are those who live in opposition to God. Those who push the gospel away upon hearing it and pursue their unrighteous way of life.

They don't have time to consider God and His ways. They don't have hearts that are submissive to Him who love Him. They have hearts set on their own ways and suppress the truth and unrighteousness.

John 8, Jesus was speaking to the Jews who were seeking to kill Him and He said to them in verse 43, Why do you not understand what I say? It's because you cannot bear to hear My Word.

Their heart was inclined in a different direction. They did not want to consider God and His ways. He says, You are of your father the devil and you will do as do and your will is to do your father's desire.

They are of the seed of their father the devil. They will do what their father the devil wants them to do. Their hearts, their desires are inclined to go in that direction.

[ 15 : 53 ] And so, they were rejecting Christ. Not following Him. John wrote of the enmity between God's people and those who oppose God who are the seed of Satan.

1 John 3, 13, Don't be surprised, brother, when the world hates you. I mean, that's the source of the hate that is in the world directed toward those who are of the seed of the woman, those who are following God by faith in Jesus Christ.

This past prayer meeting, Pastor John read some verses from Psalm 37 that show the enmity as well in verses 12 and 14. The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him.

The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows to bring down the poor and needy to slay those whose way is upright. They disdain those whose ways are contrary to theirs.

And because they consider the ways of their father to Satan and meditate and dwell on those, when the ways of the righteous are brought up to them, they oppose it.

[ 17 : 07 ] They don't want to hear it. Sometimes they will speak strongly against it. Well, then the climax of the enmity will come between the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent.

He, it says here, singular, the offspring of the woman will bruise or crush the head of the serpent. That seed of the serpent referring to Satan himself. So the scene is set for the ongoing conflict that would take place in the world.

And this conflict you can follow throughout the Scriptures is another assignment for you as you go through your reading, Bible reading, to take note of those times where you see the conflict, the enmity between the seed of the serpent and those who are the seed of the woman, the righteous, who are in Christ Jesus, who follow God.

Alistair Begg writes that in the Bible is a library of books that traces an ages-long cosmic conflict between the two seeds. Satan didn't know who the promised seed of the woman would be.

He didn't know when this promised seed of the woman would come. His strategy had to be to prevent the seed from coming in the first place, to destroy any who might be the seed or once the promised seed is revealed certainly to oppose that one, to kill him and any that would follow him so that he, Satan, could continue to hold on to his kingdom.

[ 18 : 45 ] A kingdom that he had wrestled away, the angelic beings and now all of humanity that were within his grasp and in his domain of darkness.

Again, the conflict begins and we can follow it through the Old Testament. I can just give you a few examples in the very next chapter of Genesis.

We see the enmity between the wicked and the righteous, Cain and Abel. Quite possibly, maybe Eve thought that her firstborn Cain was the promised one to come.

The Lord has given her a man. Now it became evident that he was not to be the one. For Cain was the unrighteous and Abel the righteous when Abel's sacrifice was accepted by God and Cain's wasn't.

Instead of repenting as God had come to him in grace and mercy with the warning, Cain didn't consider God and what he said, but instead gave himself over to Satan-inspired enmity that existed in his heart and it drove him to kill righteous Abel.

[ 20 : 04 ] After Abel's death, God gave Adam and Eve another son whose name was Seth. The name means substitute. Satan had to change his strategy.

If each time he killed what he thought was the promised one and God gave us another substitute, this would go on and on. And so he changed this tactic to apostasy within the human race.

And we see it in Noah's day. The apostasy and wickedness grew to such a degree that it's recorded in Genesis 5-6. The wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Would you like to live in a society like that? I mean, I think, well, we're not far from it. But we can see what happens when a person doesn't consider God, His way, and walk in His ways.

The natural inclination, the natural outworking of a heart that's given itself over to this kind of consideration on a regular basis will be to act in ungodly ways that produces chaos in the individual life but also within the whole society itself.

[ 21 : 28 ] And that's what was happening. But God preserved one righteous man, Noah, who was a descendant of Seth.

Now that's important because it's through the line of Seth that the promised seed, Jesus, would come. Satan's plans cannot stand against God and what God has designed and what God is working out.

But that doesn't stop him. Well, God preserved that man. But the apostasy continued. God's plan was for the people to spread over all the earth but out of their enmity against God they refused.

They wanted to stay together and make a name for themselves and so built a tower to unite around. God thwarted Satan's efforts and caused them to speak different languages and the building stopped and the people began to scatter over all the earth.

Well, the opposition, the conflict, the enmity continued. God raised up a people for Himself, a people of His own, a people that would be for His glory.

[ 22 : 47 ] So the enmity would now be expressed toward them. He expressed it through the nation of Egypt and its king who oppressed God's people and at a particular time ordered that the male babies would be killed.

God promised that a deliverer would come and Moses was born. Protected and eventually led the people out of bondage.

On and on we could go throughout the Old Testament and see the enmity of Satan in action to prevent the coming of this promised seed of the woman that was to crush His head.

But we must turn our attention and consider what's revealed in the New Testament and see the enmity and the conflict move to a more personal level between the seed of Satan, Satan himself, and the seed of the woman, Jesus.

And that personal enmity and conflict can be seen and evident at the birth of Jesus Christ. Every Christmas we read of the efforts of the evil one, Satan, to kill the promised seed of the woman at his birth.

[ 24 : 05 ] And we usually read of it in Matthew chapter 2. The wise men from the east came to Herod and asked him a question. Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?

For we saw his star, when it rose and have come to worship him. Certainly a threat to Herod himself hearing this news.

Herod who was a seed of the serpent, Satan. But news to Satan himself as well. The one that was to crush his head now being identified more specifically.

that which God prophesied hundreds of years prior to this was coming to pass. And the evil one, Satan, must act through his seed, evil King Herod.

And Herod's orders all the children, two years old and younger, to be killed so that the promised seed of the woman, the deliverer, Jesus, would be killed. Certainly reminiscent of what the king of Egypt did so many years ago.

[ 25 : 12 ] I find it interesting. Years ago, when God protected the deliverer, Moses, he now, in Bethlehem, protects the promised seed of the woman, Jesus, from Satan's attack.

God sent an angel to Joseph and told him to take Mary and Jesus and flee to where? Egypt. There's got to be some comedy, I guess, in what God does in a land where the promised seed was, the efforts were made to destroy the line through which the promised seed would come.

Now God takes the promised seed back to Egypt and protects him there. God's great plan cannot be thwarted.

Well, when Jesus grows into a doubt, we read of how Satan's enmity against him, the seed of the woman really took a different track now. Now we begin to read of it in Matthew chapter 4, the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness.

Jesus had just been baptized. At that time, the Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove. What a beautiful beginning to a public ministry of Jesus, the promised seed.

[ 26 : 34 ] Well, then it came this face-to-face confrontation with Satan. Certainly, the enmity is great between them. Matthew 4, 1, then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Mark 1, verse 12 gives us a little bit more information. The Spirit immediately drove him into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness 40 days being tempted by Satan.

And he was with the wild animals and the angels were ministering to him immediately after his baptism. The Holy Spirit drove him.

The ideas impelled him to go into the wilderness. This was a mission of necessity that had to happen. We many times look at this passage and learn, which we can learn, how to confront temptation.

using the Word of God. But there's much more going on here than that. Satan would use his 40 days to tempt Jesus to do evil.

[ 27 : 48 ] Hoping to disqualify him from becoming that perfect Lamb of God that could be that perfect sacrifice on our behalf.

God used it as a means to test and to put on display the holiness of Jesus the seed of the woman and his worthiness to be that perfect Lamb of God that would take away the sin of the world.

Alistair Begg wrote in his book that this is an epic confrontation taking place within the divine strategy. What we see here is Jesus' work of conflict, victory, and salvation.

He came face to face with Satan. He appeared as God's new man, the second Adam, to do what the old man, the first Adam, had failed to do.

And Jesus was doing it under vastly different conditions. Think back to Adam where he faced the temptation.

[ 28 : 56 ] A beautiful garden. Beautiful setting. Peaceful animals all around. Animals that he had named. Full stomach tempted by one representative of Satan, the serpent.

And then we see Jesus in the wilderness. Hot, dry, barren land. Wild animals all around that Mark wrote of.

Having fasted for 40 days in that wilderness for 40 days being tempted by not some representative of Satan, but Satan himself.

So the temptations, we have three recorded, but we can understand that from what it says in the scriptures being tested, 40 days of temptation by Satan.

Alistair Begg writes, Jesus, the last Adam, had to conquer in the context of chaos the first Adam sin had brought into the world, and he did. The seed of the woman, Jesus was victorious in that wilderness setting.

[ 30 : 15 ] He was steadfastly committed to the father that he loved, and he considered the father. All that the father had instructed him was always on his mind, his heart's commitment was always to do the will of him who sent me.

And we see that here, when everything quite possibly in his humanity was saying, go ahead and eat the bread. Take the shortcut. The kingdoms are being offered.

Don't go to the cross. Angels, they can keep that from you. Now he went through the time of temptation, but his evil opponent was not finished.

His efforts to oppose, to thwart, and dissuade the seed of the woman from his prophesied mission continued. We see that throughout the Gospels, as we read in the Gospels, the demonic activity that Jesus had to face in his ministry, in the lives of people.

He came in contact with it. You can read about it in the Gospels. On one occasion, the life of a man in Gadara had been ravaged by the demons who had possessed him. It wasn't one demon that possessed this man, but a legion.

[ 31 : 38 ] A legion of Romans usually consisted of four to five thousand soldiers. Why that many demons in one man? We can read other accounts where it was just one demon.

Why four or five thousand? The confrontation was to be not necessarily with the man, but with the seed of the woman, the prophesied one.

It would take that host of demons to thwart this one, to oppose him. Well, Jesus delivered that man from the demons and was victorious in that case.

And then there was another tract that he took through an individual who loved him, Peter. He loved Jesus and confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

God, and we've made reference to this a few lessons ago, Satan worked through Peter's misguided thinking, his lack of considering what Jesus had previously taught them.

[ 32 : 47 ] When he said, I must go to Jerusalem and suffer and die and be raised again. And Peter said, far be it from you, Lord, this shall never happen to you.

Can you see how that would be used by the great deceiver, the opposer? Let the words come through one that loves him, a close friend, to turn him out of the way.

Don't leave us here. Don't go to the cross. This should never happen to you. Jesus rebuked Satan and Peter on that occasion, but there was another occasion even after that, through another one who had been a follower of Jesus.

But in this case, Satan indwelt this individual, Judas Iscariot, and it was at this juncture of events. Now Satan tries to take the reins of the timing of Jesus' death.

Begg writes in his book, now he's attempting to subvert God's timing so that Jesus' death will be a terrible tragedy, not an obedient saving ministry.

[ 34 : 00 ] And he does this through Judas' betrayal. in the garden Judas gives Jesus a kiss on the cheek. And thus identifies Jesus to the chief priests and the officers of the temple, all those who are the seed of Satan, who would come out against him with clubs and swords.

You see the enmity there, very visible. And you could imagine being there yourselves. The tense situation that it was.

They all experienced it. Peter experienced it. He thought, I've got to take up a sword and keep this from happening again. He still hadn't learned what had to happen. While they and their father, Satan, who was working through them, thought they had the upper hand and all was going according to their plan.

Instead, even as John MacArthur writes in his commentary, it was this hour that God had sovereignly ordained to be theirs in association with the power of darkness.

That is what Jesus spoke to them as they came for him. Matthew 22, verse 53. When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me then.

[ 35 : 14 ] You had all those opportunities. The enmity was there then, but they didn't take it upon themselves. What's going on here? And Jesus said, but this is your hour, the power of darkness.

They think they're in control, but God has a great plan that he's working and has been working from the beginning of time. Jesus, in Peter's sermon in Acts 2, we see the same affirmation of God's sovereign control in Peter in his message.

It says, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men, even though for the moment it looked like the seed of the woman was about to be defeated because Jesus was handed over to lawless men and the seed of Satan, it was actually the God-ordained pathway, the promise seed of the woman would take for the final victory.

what was about to happen was the fulfillment of what was prophesied hundreds of years ago.

He shall crush, bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. The culmination of the ages-long enmity and conflict was about to come to pass, the victory that will come in the first garden, and Adam faced a tree.

[ 36 : 55 ] In his case, it was a beautiful tree with beautiful fruit in a beautiful garden. It was that tree on that occasion where Adam's obedience, his love and trust and faith in God was tested.

Adam's eyes and thus his inner desires were telling him it was an attractive fruit. There was nothing in what he saw. That would motivate him to resist the temptation to eat of that fruit.

And so he did so willingly and knowingly and thus plunged himself in the rest of humanity and the bondage of sin and Satan. But now here's the second Adam, even Jesus, the prophesied seed of the woman.

He also faced, we'll say, a tree, the cross of Calvary, the wooden cross on which he would give his life as a ransom for many. In contrast to the tree, the first Adam was drawn through the tree, the cross set before Jesus really held no beauty of its own.

It represented suffering, shame, and abandonment that was ahead. It held nothing that would tempt him to partake of it.

[ 38 : 14 ] in fact, in his humanity, it repelled him. He prayed to the Father that such a cup of suffering and shame and abandonment would be taken from him.

But he knew his calling, the commission that's prophesied seed of the woman. He loved the Father. So for the joy that was set before him, he willingly went to the cross and he endured the suffering, the shame, and the abandonment.

He drank the full cup of the wrath of God that was due sinners. When his time was complete, he looked at his mother who was standing nearby. He said to his mother, Woman, behold your son.

Interesting as I read about this, some had said, was his use of the term woman a reminder to her of what was really happening at that woman?

He, the seed of the woman, her son, would crush the head of the serpent Satan. Something she needed to consider in this, her time of anguish and grief.

[ 39 : 33 ] Then in verse 30 is recorded for us, when Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, it is finished. And he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

The seed of the woman, Jesus, certainly had his heel bruised. He endured the suffering, the shame, the abandonment and death, but only for a brief time, for three days.

later, the father showed his pleasure, his love, his satisfaction in the sacrifice of his son on the cross and raised him from the dead.

What about the seed of the serpent Satan? Well, the prophecy given so many years ago was fulfilled. Imagine that. Hundreds and hundreds of years passed, culminating at this point.

And the prophecy being fulfilled, Jesus, the seed of a woman, crushed his head. Satan was defeated. Yes, he's still roaming about, but his doom is sure, as it says in the song, and in God's time, as seen in Revelation 21, he will be thrown into the lake of fire where he will be tormented forever and ever.

[ 40 : 58 ] the victory over sin and death and for entrance into the presence of God only comes through being united to Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman.

This seed offers to those who are still the seed of the woman the invitation to come. Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will still give you rest.

Rest for your soul, deliverance out of this domain of darkness into the kingdom of the Son God loves, where he can enjoy eternal fellowship with the seed of the woman throughout all eternity.

And for us who are of the seed of the woman by faith in Jesus Christ, let us consider Jesus and all that he accomplished on our behalf as the seed of the woman who crushed the head of the serpent Satan.

And in our times of temptation, those times where the tree of temptation is set before us, let us consider Jesus.

[ 42 : 15 ] What was prophesied of him so many years ago and what he fulfilled on that cross and the victory purchased for those who are his own so that we could turn aside from the temptation, walk in newness of life and enjoy fellowship with him now and in the eternity to come.

Consider Jesus. Let's pray. Father, this morning we are amazed at yourself.

And the great work that you've done throughout the ages, how sure your word is. Your great grace and mercy and love toward the undeserving.

And Jesus, as the seed of the woman, his commitment and love to you and for those that you would give him. We rejoice and give thanks to you.

Help us now as we move through our day and throughout our week to consider Jesus and all that you've accomplished through him, that we would find our soul's rest and our delight in him.

[ 43 : 40 ] In his name we pray. Amen. Thank you.