Small Group Guide: The Origin of Evil

Introduction

This week's sermon explored one of the oldest and most profound questions in human history: if God is good and created everything good, where did evil come from? We looked at the origin of Satan, the nature of pride, the reality of spiritual warfare, and the victory that belongs to those who are in Christ. Use this guide to go deeper together as a group.

Key Takeaways

- God is perfectly good and is not the author of moral evil. Everything he created, he declared very good (Genesis 1:31).
- Satan was a created angelic being who was blameless and beautiful until pride led him to rebel against God (Ezekiel 28:12-17).
- Evil is not an eternal force equal to God. Satan is a created being operating fully under God's ultimate authority.
- Pride is the root of Satan's fall and the same pattern of rebellion that tempts human beings today. It places self at the centre rather than God.
- Temptation itself is not sin. The moment of choice is where sin either takes root or is taken captive.
- In Christ, believers have been made new, declared righteous, and given authority over the powers of darkness.

Discussion Questions

Opening

1. The sermon opened with a story about the pastor's mother searching for her biological family and discovering unexpected similarities with a sibling she had never met. What does that story stir in you about the importance of knowing your origins? How does knowing your spiritual origin, being made in the image of God, shape how you see yourself?

2. Before this sermon, how did you tend to think about Satan and evil? Did you tend to overestimate his power, underestimate his influence, or somewhere in between?

Going Deeper

3. The sermon described Satan as a being who cannot create anything, only distort and corrupt what God has already made. How have you seen that pattern of distortion at work in your own life or in the world around you?

4. The five "I will" statements from Isaiah 14 reveal the heart of Satan's rebellion: self-exaltation above God. The sermon said, "Pride tells us that surrender is weakness, obedience is restriction, and independence from God is freedom." Where have you believed one of those lies, even subtly?

5. The sermon drew a distinction between an intrusive or invasive thought and a sinful act, noting that temptation itself is not sin. How does understanding that distinction change the way you respond when a tempting thought enters your mind?

6. James 1:14-15 describes a progression from temptation to desire to sin to death. Can you think of an area in your life, past or present, where you have seen that progression play out? What interrupted it, or what allowed it to continue?

7. The sermon stated that God gave angels and human beings free will because love cannot be compelled. How does that truth change the way you understand both the presence of evil in the world and your own relationship with God?

Bringing It Home

8. The pastor said, "Every time we place our desires above the truth of God, we repeat the pattern of rebellion that Satan fell into." That is a challenging statement. Where in your current life might that be true for you?

9. The sermon offered three closing truths: do not underestimate the enemy, do not overestimate the enemy, and keep your eyes on Jesus. Which of those three do you most need to hear right now, and why?

10. The pastor closed by saying that righteousness is not primarily about doing good things, but about reflecting who God created us to be. How does framing righteousness as identity rather than performance change the way you approach your daily walk with God?

Practical Applications

This week, choose one of the following to put into practice:

- **Identify a pattern of pride.** Spend time in quiet reflection asking the Holy Spirit to reveal one area of your life where you have been placing your own will above God's. Write it down, confess it, and ask God to realign your heart.
- **Practice taking thoughts captive.** Pay attention this week to the thoughts that enter your mind. When a tempting or destructive thought arises, practice naming it, rejecting it, and replacing it with something that is true, good, and godly. Use Philippians 4:8 as a guide for what to think on instead.
- **Speak the truth out loud.** Jesus responded to Satan's temptations in the wilderness by speaking truth. Identify one lie you have been tempted to believe about God or about yourself, find a scripture that counters it, and speak it aloud daily this week.
- **Share your origin story.** The sermon reminded us that our spiritual origin is rooted in God. Take time this week to share with someone, whether in your group or outside of it, what it means to you that you were made in the image of God and restored in Christ.

Closing Prayer Focus

As you close your time together, pray through these areas:

- Thank God for his goodness and for being the author of life, not evil.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any areas of pride or self-sufficiency that need to be surrendered.
- Pray for one another to walk confidently in the identity and authority you have been given in Christ.
- Ask God to make your group a light in the dark places around you this week.

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." — Romans 16:20