
Planted. 2026
Session 3
East of Eden

Another sower

[Matthew 13:24-30] He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while people were sleeping, his enemy came, sowed weeds among the wheat, and left. When the plants sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared. The landowner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Master, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from? ’ “ ‘An enemy did this,’ he told them. “ ‘So, do you want us to go and pull them up? ’ the servants asked him. “ ‘No,’ he said. ‘When you pull up the weeds, you might also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I’ll tell the reapers: Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to burn them, but collect the wheat in my barn.’ ”





Program: Dartboard

Setup: a magnetic dartboard on a wall.
Each person has three shots for each round.

Round 1
Throw darts regularly from 10 feet away.

Round 2
Increase the distance to 20 feet.

Round 3
Put on a blindfold and try to throw darts.

Discuss:
What might the bullseye represent?
What might the distance and the blindfold represent?



Missing the mark

In archery games, when the players miss the mark, the referee would say: “Sin.” Sin (Greek *harmatia*) literally means “missing the mark” (Greek *harmatanein*). If the bullseye represents the way of God, sin would be the rest of the area on the dartboard.

You don’t have to be a Christian to come to the realization that we are broken people living in a broken world, and everyone is broken in different ways. How did brokenness become part of human nature? God’s original creation was good and beautiful, so where did sin come from? What are the consequences of sin? Is there any way out? With grace and truth, we will step into the discovery process together.

[Romans 3:23] For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...
[1 John 1:8] If we say, “We have no sin,” we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
[James 1:15] Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

[Romans 8:1] Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

The Lullaby Effect

The lullaby effect is when familiarity makes something feel so normal that we stop noticing what is actually being said. We hear the words, recognize the story, and mentally move on before asking, “Wait—what is actually happening here?”

Example: *Rock-a-bye Baby*.
“Rock-a-bye baby, on the tree top…”

Genesis 3 has become a kind of biblical lullaby. We already know “Adam, Eve, the serpent, the forbidden fruit, the Fall,” so those familiar labels can prevent us from asking what the narrator actually says.

Now imagine reading Genesis 3 as though you had never heard it before. What would seem strange? What questions would you ask?





What was going on in Genesis 3?

- Why is the serpent introduced as “crafty”? Why does the narrator compare it to the other animals?
- Why does the serpent begin by questioning what God said? Does the serpent quote God accurately?
- Does the woman repeat God’s command accurately, or does she change it?
- Why is the tree described as good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom?
- What does it mean that the woman “saw” that the tree was good? Who has been declaring what is “good” throughout Genesis 1?
- Where is Adam during this scene? What does “her husband, who was with her” suggest?
- What exactly happens after they eat?
- Why do they hide from God?
- Why does God ask, “Where are you?” Does God lack information, or is the question doing something else?
- What happens when God questions the man and woman? Do they confess, explain, blame, or something else?
- Why does Adam blame both the woman and, indirectly, God: “the woman you gave me”?
- Why is the serpent cursed directly, while the man and woman are not described with exactly the same wording?
- What is the significance of the hostility between the serpent’s offspring and the woman’s offspring?
- Why does God make garments for the humans after judging them?
- Why are they expelled specifically so they cannot eat from the tree of life?
- Why are cherubim placed at the entrance of the garden?
- Why does the story end with humanity east of Eden?

Key points

- Noble lies—“Did God really say… ?” “God didn’t give you the best.”
- Autonomy (“self” & “law”, which is different from free will; self-justification) led to alienation.
- Reversed creation order (Creator - imago Dei - creature)
- When Adam and Eve trusted their own choice instead of the life-giving wisdom of God, they didn’t gain more knowledge, they gained more confusion.
- Three dominant cultures of the world: honor-shame, guilt-innocence, fear-power.
- Curse, or consequence? The man’s relationship with the ground and the woman’s relationship with life were affected.
- God setting boundaries before the tree of life is a tremendous act of mercy—so that their spiritual brokenness does not become permanent.
- East of Eden—began the journey of human exile.
- Genesis 3-11—a downward spiral of sin. From sinning against God to sinning against others.



A GLIMPSE OF HOPE

[Revelation 21:4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away.





Inhabit the Story

Salvation has a context. If sin doesn't make sense, salvation won't make sense.

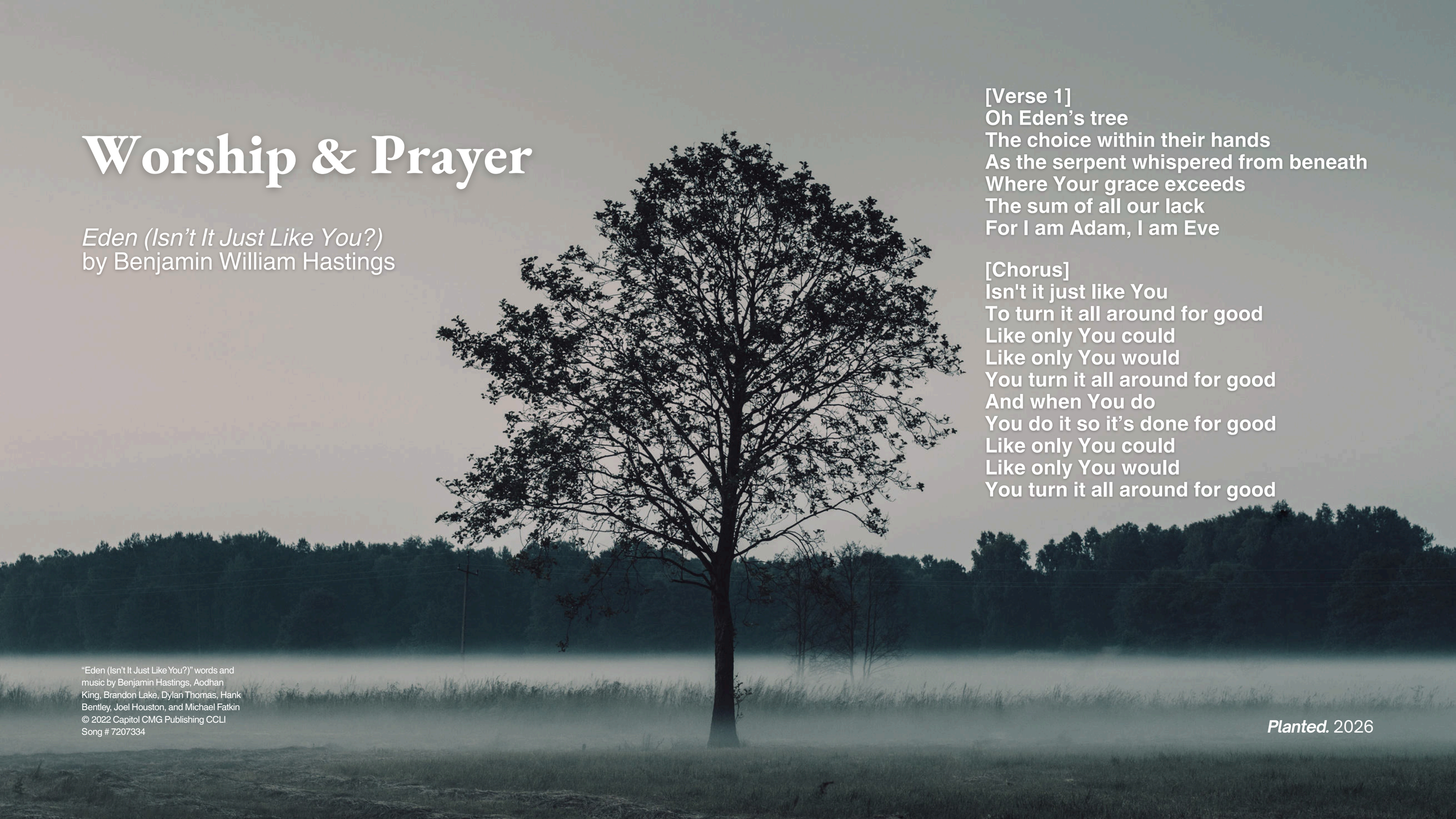
In Genesis 4, sin became from vertical (sinning against God) to horizontal (sinning against other human beings). From Genesis 3 to Genesis 11, there was a downward spiral of sin and brokenness, and humanity moved further and further away from God, as a result of the rebellious heart.

However, in Genesis 12, there was a man who started to return to the way of God. His name was Abraham, and he was later called the Father of Faith. To Abraham, God promised an offspring who would inherit the promised land, and the nations would be blessed through the *seed* of Abraham.

The seed of woman in Genesis 3 and the seed of Abraham in Genesis 12 had been planted and grown, as it's described in Isaiah 53:2: "He grew up before Him *like a young plant* and *like a root* out of dry ground." The promised seed has a name—Jesus. Through him, the curse started to be reversed.

Worship & Prayer

Eden (Isn’t It Just Like You?)
by Benjamin William Hastings



[Verse 1]
Oh Eden’s tree
The choice within their hands
As the serpent whispered from beneath
Where Your grace exceeds
The sum of all our lack
For I am Adam, I am Eve

[Chorus]
Isn't it just like You
To turn it all around for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good
And when You do
You do it so it’s done for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good

“Eden (Isn’t It Just Like You?)” words and music by Benjamin Hastings, Aodhan King, Brandon Lake, Dylan Thomas, Hank Bentley, Joel Houston, and Michael Fatkin
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[Verse 2]
Oh Calvary’s tree
The nails within Your hands
And laughter swept the crowds beneath
Where Your grace exceeds
The sum of all our lack
For I’m a thief upon a tree

[Chorus]
Isn't it just like You
To turn it all around for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good
And when You do
You do it so it’s done for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good

[Tag]
Isn't it just like You
Just like You

[Bridge 1]
Oh the vast extent of my regrets
And all my deepest fears
Were buried in a garden
Where You wept and bled in tears
For You climbed a hill not Yours to climb
They thought Your fate was sealed
For the serpent tried to take you down
But he only bruised Your heel

[Bridge 2]
See the empty grave is overgrown
And the earth begins to heal
For the enemy is overthrown
And the darkness finally yields
So now I don't owe a thing to death
Should ever he appear
For death can only borrow breath
No longer can he steal

[Chorus]
Isn't it just like You
To turn it all around for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good
And when You do
You do it so it’s done for good
Like only You could
Like only You would
You turn it all around for good

[Tag]
Isn't it just like You
Isn't it just like You to go and make it new
Isn't it just like You
It’s just like You
You’re making all things new
You don’t stop until it’s done

[Verse 3]
O tree of life
There’s hope in every branch
And the serpent’s nowhere to be seen
Where Your grace completes
The sum of all our lack
For I am Adam, I am Eve
And Eden’s my eternity



Homework & Book Club

The Bible records two temptation encounters. The first was in the garden; the second took place in a wilderness. Read Matthew 4:1-11 and consider how Jesus responded to temptation differently.

Recommended reading: *Live No Lies: Recognize and Resist the Three Enemies That Sabotage Your Peace* by John Mark Comer
(The devil distorts our understanding of God, the flesh corrupts our desires, and the world shapes how we live, but the Gospel restores our understanding of God, renews our identity in Christ, and transforms our way of life.)



Golden City *Church*

Next Week →

Session 4:
The Serpent-Crusher