

It's complicate^d

Big Idea

Pastor Curt – Part 5

This week, we finished up the series entitled “It’s Complicated” with a message on the Cycle of Deception. Relationships get complicated when we step outside God’s plan, so **in order for relationships to work, let the One who designed them define them.**

In Genesis 3:1-7, Pastor Curt helped us see five consecutive lies that the enemy uses to ultimately trap us in shame from our past. He begins with **questioning God’s Word**, manipulating us to believe that the Word isn’t totally true. But the truth is that while God’s Word may confront us, it’s meant to bring us closer to God’s best for our lives. Next, Satan **downplays the consequences** associated with our sin, leading us to believe that sinful choices won’t hurt anything. But while passions are great, they need parameters. Then Satan **accuses God of evil intentions**, making righteousness seem boring and sin fun. In reality, the most loving thing God does is call us out of our sin. Fourth, the devil advertises sin as beneficial and tries to convince us that life will be better if we are in control, if **we exalt ourselves**. This keeps us from believing the truth that giving up something now for something better later isn’t a sacrifice, but an investment. Last, the devil uses **shame from our past** in an effort to destroy our future relationships. But the truth is that if we turn to God for forgiveness, we can live the rest of our lives free from the pain of our past.

Pastor Curt then used God’s Word to show us how to exit the cycle of deception: **1) submit or resubmit to God’s Word, 2) surround ourselves with godly people, 3) seek wisdom from God’s Word and God’s people, and 4) stay seated in grace.** While the Devil wants to deceive us into thinking that we’ve have done irreversible relationship damage, God calls us back into a loving relationship with Him and with others.

Discussion Questions

- When considering the five lies the enemy uses to distort God’s plan for our relationships, which do you feel you wrestle with the most?
- The lies the enemy uses are meant to produce shame in our lives instead of freedom. Where have you seen evidence of this in your past or present relationships?
- Do you find that it’s sometimes easier to defend living life making your own choices, than surrendering to God’s will?

Prayer Focus

Father, thank You for Your grace that meets us where we are. You have shown us in Your Word that Your plan is the source of joy and fulfillment in our relationships. Allow us to see where we have believed the enemy’s lies, and help us to walk in repentance.

Next Steps

Take time to consider the lies the enemy uses to distract us from God’s truth and how they may be impacting your life. Try to have people in your life that you can get real with. Groups are a great place to start and a great place to invite others to join you!

Leader Tip

Consider sharing a personal example of a lie you’ve believed in your own life and how experiencing God’s truth changed your perspective. Create space for group members to be open as they share their own story by listening and encouraging each of them.