

God's Response to Sin

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[0 : 00] The scripture reading is taken from Genesis chapter 3 verses 8 through 24.

! And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I hid from you because I was afraid.

I was naked, and I hid myself. He said, Who told you you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?

The man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done?

[1 : 14] The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock, and above all beasts of the field, and on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

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.

To the woman he said, I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing. In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.

And to Adam he said, Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it.

Cursed is the ground because of you. In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you.

[2 : 35] And you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken, for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever.

Therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man and at the east of the garden of Eden, he placed the cherubim and the flaming sword and turned away, and turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

The word of our Lord. Amen. Thank you very much, Rose.

[4 : 11] The book of Genesis is a book of firsts. In the scripture that we just read, we have an account of God's response to the first sin.

You see God's response to that first act of disobedience that brought sin into the world. And as we continue our sermon series in the book of Genesis, and as we consider this passage that was just read this morning, what I want us to see is that God's gracious response to the first sin foreshadows his gracious response to defeat sin and to save sinners.

And so as we consider how God responds to Adam and Eve and their sinful condition, we will see that God's grace is unfathomable.

And it comes shining through throughout this entire account. Before we look at this passage, let's take a moment to pray.

Father, we thank you for your word. The word that we have heard, read, and now, Lord, would you, in the preaching of your word, cause it to be applied to our hearts and to our lives.

[5 : 50] And God, I pray that you would give us not just eyes, but also ears and hearts to see the amazing grace of God. God, I pray that you would give us that comes to undeserving sinners today as it came to Adam and Eve on that fateful day.

God, would you do your work among us and within us, we ask in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

This first account of the first sin, this account of the first sin, is not only an account of the first sin, but it is also God's response to that sin.

It is the first account of the grace of God displayed to sinners.

And one of the lessons that we can learn as we go through the book of Genesis is when we encounter these firsts, they take on the tone, generally speaking, of the meaning of that account, that word, whatever, that's mentioned in the first book of Genesis throughout the rest of the Bible.

[7 : 09] And so what we see in this passage is not just the first mention and account of disobedience, but we also see the first display of God's grace to sinners.

And so this is worthy of our unharried contemplation this morning, because we are sinners. We sang about it this morning. We are sinners who are in need of God's grace moment by moment in every single day.

And even when we think that all is well with us and we feel wonderfully well about ourselves, even then we need the grace of God. Because in and of ourselves, we are unholy and we are unrighteous.

But as we consider how God responds to the sin of his image bearers, Adam and Eve, there's much in it that should cause us to marvel and to be amazed at the grace of God and learn how to respond to God in the midst of our own sin.

In this passage, we see the activities of God summarized in three parts, three scenes, as it were, if you want to consider it that way.

[8 : 37] First, we see that he confronts Adam and Eve in their sin in verses 8 to 13. Second, he punishes them in verses 14 to 20.

And then third, he banishes them in verses 22 to 24. And each one of these activities is marked by the amazing grace of God.

And I want us to consider each one of them in turn in our remaining time. So first, we see God's grace in confronting Adam and Eve.

In verse 8, we see Adam and Eve hiding from the presence of the Lord. And the first thing we should observe is to see how sin separated them from God.

And although Adam and Eve were trying to hide from God, the greater reality is that they were separated from God.

[9 : 42] But God is omnipresent, meaning that God is equally present everywhere at the same time. And so there's nowhere to hide from an omnipresent God.

He cannot be hidden from. But I want us to remember this morning that we're no different from Adam and Eve. In our sin, our first response is to duck and hide and run from the Lord.

But God is omnipresent, and so we cannot hide from him. And a lot of times, we're not mindful that God is omnipresent. And like for right now, we probably are not mindful that God is with us.

In our most secret place, God is with us. But sometimes what God does is not only is he omnipresent, but he manifests his presence.

And he makes his presence known. And that's what he did in this account to Adam and Eve. He manifests his presence to them.

[10 : 52] They were not always conscious of the presence of God. They were not always aware of the presence of God, though he was with them. When Eve was having that conversation with the serpent, and she was reasoning in her mind what she was going to do, when they were disobeying God, they were not mindful of his presence.

If they were, they would not have done what they did. And then even after they sinned, as they were there sowing their fig leaves together, they were not mindful of the presence of God. But God, after that, manifests his presence to them, and they hear his presence in the garden.

In verse 8, that's what we see, that they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And so the man and his wife, they hid themselves.

So here we have these two individuals who formerly were enjoying the presence of God, this unbroken fellowship that they enjoyed with God. And now he comes, and they're running from him.

They're hiding from him. That's what the first sinners did. And that's what all sinners do.

[12 : 13] The belief that there are sinners who see God and pursue God is contrary to the witness of Scripture. No sinner on his or her own seeks God.

All sinners run from God. And I think the big question in Adam and Eve's mind as they were hiding from God was, what's God going to do to us?

What is he going to do to us? As far as they were concerned, they didn't die. They were very much alive. They were walking around the garden. They were sowing things together, hiding from God.

And it's doubtful that they realized that they had experienced death. They had experienced a spiritual death that was separating them from their Creator, running from their Creator. I don't think they realized that.

But in verse 8, we read, They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

[13 : 24] Now, we know that God has perfect knowledge. God is not only on the present, but he is omniscient. He knows everything perfectly all the time. And he knew that Adam and Eve were hiding.

He knew that they were hiding. He knew where they were hiding. And yet, the first step in his confrontation of Adam and Eve is it begins with him calling out to Adam, the one who was in charge, the one who was in the lead position, based on God's design.

And again, God knew where he was. And so the question that God asks him seems a bit odd. God asks him, Adam, where are you?

in verse 9. In verse 9. Seems a bit odd of a question for a God who is omnipresent and omniscient to ask.

I remember a dear old pastor who I loved so much, who is dead now, saying that God was not asking Adam where he was geographically. God knew where Adam was.

[14 : 41] Instead, God was asking Adam if Adam knew where he was spiritually. The idea is he's saying to Adam, Adam, do you know where you are?

And in his sin, Adam responds honestly in verse 10. He says, I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.

Adam was afraid because he was naked and so he hid. And in verse 11, God responds with two questions. He says, first, who told you you were naked?

And second, have you eaten off the tree that I commanded you not to eat? As I was working through this passage and I was just thinking about God's questions to Adam and how Adam responded when God asked him, where are you?

And he responded as he did. I thought to myself, if I was God, I would have responded to Adam differently.

[16 : 08] When Adam said, I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was naked and so I hid myself, I would have said to Adam, but I created you naked.

You were always naked and you weren't afraid and you weren't hiding from me. Why are you hiding from me now? But God's response was more gracious than that.

God knew the answers to the questions that he was asking Adam. It was clear that he was asking Adam not for himself, but he was asking Adam for Adam.

He wanted to bring Adam to a place of honest confession. He wasn't seeking to shame Adam, but he was seeking to bring Adam to a place of honest confession of his sin.

And Adam does that. But Adam doesn't answer the first question. Who told you you were naked? I'm sure he thought about it. Adam knew that it was in eating of the tree his disobedience and how it proved to be a disappointment.

[17 : 31] He knew that it was in that that he became aware of this particular condition that wasn't an issue before, but now became an issue for him.

Adam was aware that this promise that they had, that the devil sold them on, that if they would eat off this tree, they would be like God and they would have wisdom like God and he is aware that instead of getting wisdom to be exalted like God, he has been humiliated in shame.

And he knew that his awareness of his nakedness came as a result of his disobedience. before he disobeyed.

He didn't see nakedness as something to be ashamed about, something to be covered, but now that he has disobeyed, he is ashamed of it and there's now something to be covered.

But Adam does answer the second question. He confesses that he ate of the tree's fruit and he blamed his wife, the woman that God gave him.

[18 : 46] And then God's attention turns to the woman in verse 13. And he asks her one question. What is it, what is this you have done?

And she responds honestly, the serpent deceived me and I ate. In retrospect, Eve is able to see that she was deceived at the moment she didn't realize she was being deceived.

But in retrospect, she now realizes I was deceived. I thought that I would be elevated.

I thought that I would be wise. I thought I didn't expect to be in the condition that I'm in, hiding and afraid. Brothers and sisters, when we consider God's confrontation of Adam and Eve, it is laced with grace.

It is laced with grace. This is the God of the universe, the holy, sovereign God who has been defied by his image bearers.

[19 : 59] and he confronts them in this way. He has a conversation with them. I've reflected on my own life and I could reflect on times when I was defied and I didn't take it kindly.

Low, sinful me being defied didn't take it kindly. and here is the sovereign God of the universe, the creator of Adam and Eve and he confronts them in this particular way.

God knew they were afraid. God knew Adam was afraid. Adam wasn't telling him anything new. He knew that and he knew that's why they hid and he didn't sweat them out.

He didn't say I'm going to let them just grovel in their fear for a little while. But no, he goes to them. He calls to Adam.

He seeks him out. And if God didn't, Adam and Eve would still be hiding. But he doesn't sweat them in their misery. he calls them out and he deals with them in such a way to bring them to a place of confession.

[21 : 26] He doesn't heap shame on their shame. He doesn't heap failure on their failure. And brothers and sisters, the same way he dealt with Adam and Eve is the same way he deals with us.

As I spend time in this passage, I could not help but reflect upon my parenting. Couldn't help but reflect upon 30 years or so of parenting.

I couldn't help but reflect upon countless times when in my parenting, I did not deal with the sins of my children in a way that was laced with this kind of grace.

I dealt with them in a way that was laced with law. I drew conclusions. I made accusations right up front rather than asking good questions, especially when I knew the answer.

But when we read God's confrontation of Adam and Eve, there is not a hint of anger. Now we can imagine the disappointment and here I'm speaking in a human kind of way.

[22 : 52] The way we as a parent may be disappointed about a disobedient and ungrateful child. Our disappointment is rooted in the fact that we don't know the future, so we have high hopes about the future that turn out to be dashed.

And so we get disappointment with it. Certainly God knows the future. He knows every single thing. So he is never disappointed the way we are disappointed. But yet we know from scripture that God has particular divine emotions which he has allowed us to be partakers of.

But in this confrontation we get no hint of blistering anger towards his disobedient image bearers. As I read this passage I reflected upon Psalm 103.

Psalm 103 came to mind. Verses 8 to 10. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. God did not deal with Adam and Eve according to their sins.

[24 : 13] In verses 13 and 14 of Psalm 103 it says, As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust.

If there should ever be a display of those who are dust, it is Adam and Eve. And what we see is God remembers their frame, we see that God remembers their dust, and God shows compassion to them.

God's response to the first sin, and his confrontation of the first sinners, was a gracious confrontation. And Adam and Eve knew this without a doubt.

Adam and Eve knew that they deserved to die. They defied their creator, they defied the king of the universe, and they deserved death.

As brothers John B. He prayed that one grumbling thought from us is worthy of separating us from God forever.

[25 : 39] One grumbling thought. Yet we see high treason on the part of Adam and Eve, and what we see is this grace-laced confrontation that God does towards them in this passage.

They deserve death, and he spared them. And what is that? What do we call that? We call that grace. That's amazing grace.

But in this passage, not only do we see God's grace in confronting Adam and Eve, we also see his grace in punishing Adam and Eve.

This brings to my second point, grace in punishing. We see in verse 14 that God does not question the serpent, but instead he outrightly curses the serpent.

And this indeed is a curse on all serpents. curse. And because of the curse, they all slither on their bellies and they all eat dust.

[26 : 56] And the implication is that they didn't do so before the curse. Now, those of you who were here last week, we recall that when we considered Genesis 3, 1 through 7, we concluded that this talking intelligent serpent, was Satan himself.

And we saw this from Revelation 12 and Revelation 20 where Satan is en masse as the ancient serpent. And so there's more going on here than just an intelligent talking snake.

And one of the things I think we should see is that, and we talked about this last week, that Satan had already rebelled, even though sin had not yet come into the world, because the way God designed that was that he put Adam in charge, and if sin was going to come into the world, it came through Adam, but Satan had fallen, but sin had not yet ended into the world.

And what we should bear in mind is that God dealt with Satan differently than he dealt with Adam and Eve. Satan got no grace. Satan will get no grace. Satan and those who fell with him would get no grace, but we see God dealing with his image bearers in a different way and giving them grace.

It becomes especially clear in verses 14 and 15, and verse 15 in particular, that God is doing more than just cursing snakes to slither on the ground and to eat dust.

[28 : 39] He's doing much more than that. And again, this is especially clear in verse 15. Look at verse 15. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring, and he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

Notice that Genesis 3, 15 refers to two offsprings, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. And again, we've already established that the serpent, that is Satan himself.

And so, these are these two seeds, the seed of the woman, the seed of the serpent. Now, if you weren't here last week, I encourage you to go back and listen to that sermon, or if you've forgotten it, listen to it again.

But what is important for us to note about Genesis 3, 15 is that for almost 2,000 years now, theologians have recognized that this verse is what is called the Protevangelium, which means the first gospel.

This is the first announcement of the gospel. This is the first proclamation of the gospel in Genesis 3, 15.

[29 : 57] And what it is, is it is what you may consider the prophetic fountainhead of the gospel which God himself proclaimed and from which flowed the climaxing act of salvation in the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

It's wrapped up in these words that the Lord utters in 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 will bruise his heel. Christ's death on the cross was the ultimate fulfillment of Satan bruising the heel of Christ and Christ crushing the head of the serpent.

And we can only see this as we look back at this promise in Genesis 3, 15 through the lens of the New Testament. We look back and we're able to see this more clearly than Adam and Eve would have understood it when it was uttered in their hearing.

In the cross of Christ, he defeats sin and sinners are saved. And he also defeats Satan in the process.

[31 : 21] And really when you think of Scripture, everything from Genesis 4 onto the book of Revelation is the unfolding of this promise that God makes in Genesis 3, 15.

That's the whole storyline of the Bible that God is fulfilling this promise that he is going to crush the serpent.

He's going to crush Satan. And the outworking of that is from Genesis 4 up through the book of Revelation.

And let me bear this in mind. It helps us to read our Bibles in the appropriate way. When we consider this particular part of the narrative, Genesis 3, 15 is the highest expression of grace in this entire passage.

And notice where God pronounces and proclaims this grace that he is going to bring. He does it right in the midst of punishment. He does it right in the midst of uttering the punishment.

[32 : 46] As a matter of fact, he utters it even before he punishes them. Even before he declares the punishment on Adam and Eve, he announces this gracious promise that he says, I'm going to do.

I'm going to bring this to pass. This is the mountaintop of grace that we find here in this passage in Genesis chapter 3.

And it is amazing because it is the gospel and it is good news. God graciously proclaims what he will do to save sinners even before he punishes Adam and Eve.

You see the punishment of Eve in verse 16. The Lord punishes her by multiplying her pain and childbearing. And so the clear indication is that there was pain and childbearing, but that pain would be multiplied.

is now greater than it was intended to be. And he also tells her that the dynamic between her and her husband will change.

[33 : 56] That she will desire to usurp his authority and undermine his authority. And her husband will dominate her and he will rule over her in a harsh manner.

Now it's important to see that the first part is the curse that God utters, the increased pain and childbearing, but the second part is not a curse that God utters.

The second part is a consequence of disobedience. This consequence comes as a result of the sinful state that Adam and Eve fell into because of their disobedience.

In her fallen wisdom, she will not think it's a good thing to be led by her husband and she will seek to undermine his leadership. Won't want to naturally follow his leadership. And her husband and his fallen wisdom will not think it's a good thing to lovingly lead his wife.

Instead, he will be seeking to dominate her and rule over her in a harsh manner. And we see the seed of this earlier in chapter 6, chapter 3, which we looked at last week, how Adam is right there, allowing his wife to take initiative and have this long conversation with this serpent instead of him taking the lead.

[35 : 23] And in their fallenness, their roles are somewhat being corrupted and challenged.

marriage. But this was not just the result for Adam and Eve. This was the result for all marriages, all husbands and wives. All husbands and wives face this battle between each other in their roles.

And this is why when we come to the New Testament and the full bloom of the gospel, wives are called to submit to their husbands, not try to usurp their authority, not try to undermine their leadership.

And husbands are called to love their wives, not be harsh with them, not rule over them, and try to dominate them. In verses 17 to 19, the Lord punishes Adam by cursing the ground that he has to work to obtain food.

And notice that God doesn't curse work. God gave Adam work before the fall in chapter 2 and verse 18. He put him in the garden to work it. And so work was not a punishment.

[36 : 39] But the punishment was that Adam's work will now be marked by sweat and toil because the earth will no longer bring forth its strength in an easy manner.

It's now going to be corrupted by thorns and thistles making his work harder, making his labor more difficult to get food for himself and for his family.

God and notice what God does. God curses Adam and Eve at the core of the responsibility, the primary responsibility that he gave them in their relationship before the fall.

God gave Eve the core responsibility of conceiving children as a wife and mother. her punishment, the punishment that God gave her was directed to the core of that responsibility.

Her pain and childbearing was multiplied. And God gave Adam the core responsibility of working to feed and take care of himself and his family.

[37 : 49] And now his work becomes harder. God curses him at the very core of who he was as a man, as a husband. And causing the ground to be difficult to work and causing aggravating painful thorns and thistles to grow and making it harder for him to work the ground and gather food.

And this curse continues to this day on mothers and fathers. The instinctive priority of mothers is their children that they bear in pain.

And the instinctive priority of fathers is to provide for their children and they do this through sweat and toil. And in the fallenness of our world today what we see is that it's even worse than that because we have mothers who are not only bearing children in pain but they are also working and toiling and sweating to provide for all kinds of different reasons.

One of the primary ones is that many fathers sinfully do not shoulder their responsibility to provide for their families. and so the curse has even been compounded as we have delved deeper in our sin and in our fallenness.

I'm sure all of us at one time or another when we were children we had the experience of waiting to be punished. punished. And I had that experience a lot because normally for us to be punished we had to do something by our mother who was at home we had to do something really really bad.

[39 : 51] So the general things that we did worthy of punishment we used to have to wait until our father came home late at night after nine o'clock and if you did something early in the morning you getting beaten late that night and you just waiting all day for your punishment.

And we just got beaten with a belt. And you know when you did something you kind of think in your mind how many cuts is that worth? What am I going to get?

And you know I had enough history to know what I may get for this particular thing that I did. I had a lot to consider. And many times BJ and I would be getting beaten together because we would have committed our crimes together.

And one of the things the only relief we had was to count the cuts to see who got the most cuts. And I remember sometimes I would get beaten first and he would get beaten after me and I would be crying counting his cuts.

One, two, three. just so we could tease each other about who got the most cuts. But you know there were a couple of times when I didn't get beaten as bad as I thought I would have gotten beaten.

[41 : 17] I'm not sure if my father was just tired or what. I don't think he was giving me grace. I think he was just tired. But I can remember sometimes that I got less punishment than I thought I would have.

I got gracious punishment. I think the most gracious punishment that has ever been meeting out is this punishment to Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve were in a very unique situation. I mean, this is a generous God who has given them all of this generosity in this garden and they rebel against that.

When God punishes Adam and Eve, he utters these punishments to them, there is no hint of objection on the part of Adam and Eve. And the reason I don't think they objected is because they knew they deserved to die.

The awareness that they had, the understanding of reality that they had, they knew they deserved to die.

[42 : 35] They were afraid, they were hiding, because they did not know what to expect and God punishes them, but he is gracious. And Adam and Eve, certainly Adam, it's not lost on Adam how gracious God was to them.

Though they should die, God actually helped them to know they were not going to die because he said they were going to have offspring. two sinners who deserve to die don't die and they don't die because of grace, because of amazing grace.

In verse 20, Adam expresses his gratefulness and the hope that he has in God's grace when he names his wife for the first time.

And what does he name her? He names her the mother of all the living because that's what she was going to be. Instead of dying, she was now going to live and she was going to be the mother of all the living and he joyfully calls her Eve, this woman who should be dead.

But Adam was in view of that as well. If Eve was going to be the mother of all the living, Adam was going to be the father of all the living. Two sinners who deserve to die and they're going to progenerate a race.

[44 : 20] Brothers and sisters, that's grace. It's amazing grace. And although punished, God's grace is displayed because Adam and Eve didn't suffer the punishment that they deserved.

In addition to dying spiritually, they deserved to die physically, but God gave them grace instead. We also see God's grace connected to Adam and Eve's punishment in verse 21.

We're told that God made garments of skins for Adam and Eve and clothed them. God saw them in their pitiful loincloths made out of fig leaves.

He had mercy on them. And he gave them a far better covering and a far more enduring covering than they had.

He could have made them a garment of fig leaves to replace their loin cloths. Or he could have said to them, you make up your bad heart, lay down hard, keep making your loin cloths out of figs.

[45 : 34] But he doesn't do that. He makes a garment for them. I want you to see the difference. It's easy to miss it. They made loincloths for themselves. God makes a garment for them.

And Bible scholars tell us that this garment was like a tunic that would have gone down to either their knees or to their ankles. And in essence, God was telling them that they were far more naked than they realized.

And then we see God performing the first sacrifice. And Adam and Eve would have watched. They would have seen an innocent animal slaughtered so they could be clothed.

And I don't think they would have grasped the ultimate point. But we who have our whole Bible should grasp the ultimate point. The point is that sin requires the shedding of blood.

And Jesus Christ, the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world, who was slain by God, so that God could clothe us with a perfect and enduring garment of righteousness to make us acceptable before him and before others.

[46 : 56] He gives us a perfect garment of righteousness that replaces our fig leaves that we put on to cover ourselves. He gives us something so much better and more enduring.

brothers and sisters, the ultimate lamb was slaughtered so that you and I can be clothed in garments of righteousness.

And that grace, that grace is light years more amazing than the grace that Adam and Eve received when God killed an animal to give them garments of skins.

to cover them. And so in the midst of punishing Adam and Eve, God promises to crush the one who caused their fall.

And he kindly cares for them in clothing them in their nakedness. You know the idea is, the idea is not that God just made some garments and kind of threw it to them and said, put those on.

[48 : 07] The idea is that, no, he closed them. But he made those garments and he drew near to them and he closed them. Again, he could have told them, lay down the bed that you made.

Sew fig leaves until you're tired. He didn't do that. He gives them grace and gives them a better and a more enduring garment.

So we see God's grace in confronting Adam and Eve. We see his grace in punishing Adam and Eve in third and finally and briefly.

We see God's grace in banishing Adam and Eve. In verses 22 to 24, God graciously banishes them from the garden.

you might be wondering how can kicking them out of the garden be an expression of grace? We see the answer to that in verses 22 to 23.

[49 : 21] Look at what it says. Then the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever.

Therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. The next verse says that God drove them out of the garden.

If God had left Adam and Eve in the garden and allowed them to eat of the tree of life, they would have lived forever in their fallen state, in their sinful condition.

And so it was a gracious act of God to banish them from the garden by placing cherubim, angels, and a flaming sword to prevent anyone from eating off of the tree of life, which is what we told he did in verse 24.

But God didn't banish Adam and Eve only. We were also banished. banished. When Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden, the offspring that they were going to bring, and particularly righteous offspring, also met with them and was also banished.

[50 : 49] But the banishment was not permanent. God banished them and banished us until the fulfillment of his plan of redemption redemption, which he announced in verse 15 of this chapter.

And God's plan of redemption was fulfilled in the cross of Christ. Jesus made atonement for sin, enabling sinners to be forgiven by God and to be partakers of Christ, the one who is the way, the truth, and the life.

life. And it should not be odd to us that the tree of life in the garden really pointed to Christ. The same way that serpent was more than just a serpent, that tree was more than just a tree, it pointed to, it signified the one who would bring eternal life.

We partake of Christ and we live forever. In Revelation 21 to 22, after Satan's defeat, we read about the new heaven and the new earth described in Edenic language.

When you read the description of Eden in Genesis, you go to Revelation 21 and 22, you see the similarity of the language and the conditions.

[52 : 28] In Revelation 21, 22, there's no more pain and no more death. And God's people will be his people and he will be their God.

And just like Eden that had a single source river, John tells us that in the new earth, there's one river that's flowing from God's throne together with the tree of life.

And there's the promise of eternal harmony never to be interrupted again by sin and rebellion. And so this is the final working of the gospel promise in seed form that God spoke in Genesis 3.15.

And it's what we as believers have to look forward to. And so brothers and sisters, Adam and Eve's banishment was not permanent and it was an act of grace and likewise our own banishment.

One day we will be with our gracious God forever. And for one reason, Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.

[53 : 41] And those who partake of him in faith, those who feast on him in faith will get entrance into that new heaven and that new earth.

And brothers and sisters, that is our eternal imperishable hope. God will be to God to God will get to him.

I trust that the effect of this passage, this sermon on our hearts, is more than just causing us to just think about Adam and Eve.

Because really, this passage is not ultimately about Adam and Eve and their sin. This passage is about God and his grace. And for us who have come to Christ and we know him, I pray that the effect of this passage on our heart is when we sin, that we run to God because we know he's gracious and merciful.

That we don't need to hide and we don't need to be fearful, but we can go to our loving heavenly father. And we can throw ourselves on his mercy.

[54 : 57] knowing that he is quick to pardon all of our sins. And that his grace is amazing and his grace is marvelous.

And let me understand that we run to him, not from him. And if you're here today and you don't know Jesus Christ, I want to say to you this morning that his grace is greater than all of our sins.

The posture that we see in Genesis chapter 3 where there's not a hint of exasperation, there's not a hint of God has to kind of rake up some grace to give them.

His grace was abundant! His grace was abundant for them and his grace is abundant for you. It matters not what you have done. It doesn't matter who you are.

We often sing about it, the vilest offender who truly believes that moment from Jesus upon and receives. And that's because his grace is amazing.

[56 : 05] And we will never come close to exhausting that grace. And so whether we know the Lord or we don't know the Lord, let us all throw ourselves on his mercy.

because he is abundantly good, gracious, and kind. Let's pray. Oh, Father, we thank you for your amazing grace displayed to undeserving sinners.

Oh, thank you that your response to the first sin can help us to understand how you view our own sin.

And God, I pray that your mercy displayed will cause us to run to you and not from you. And God, I pray that those who do not know Christ, whether present in this room or whether listening or watching online, who do not know you, but I ask in the name of Jesus that you would awaken them to the fact that you are good and merciful and kind, that you are slow to anger and you are bounding and steadfast love.

And God, would you be pleased to save sinners and bring them to yourself. Pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's stand for our closing song.

[57 : 52] I ask you to join along as we sing grace. Your grace at least is in our home from death to life forever and sings the song of righteousness by blood and not by marriage.

Verse 2, Your grace. Your grace in your grace that reaches far and wide to every tribe and nation has called my heart to enter in the joy of your salvation.

By grace, by grace I am redeemed. by grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Lord. Sing verse 3, Your grace. Your grace that I cannot explain not by my earthly wisdom.

The prince of life without a stain was traded for his sinner. By grace by grace I am redeemed.

[59 : 39] By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

Lord. Let praise rise up and overflow. Let praise rise up and overflow.

My song resound forever. For grace will see me welcome home to walk beside my Savior.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

By grace I am redeemed. By grace I am restored. And now I freely walk into the arms of Christ my Lord.

[61 : 00] Let's pray together. Let me thank you that it is by your grace that we are redeemed. and it is by your amazing grace that we are restored.

Lord, would you so etch your word in our hearts to be reminded that you are gracious, to be reminded that your grace is greater than all of our sin, that in our sin we will never run from you, that in our sin we will throw ourselves on the great inexhaustible mercy of God.

I pray for those even in this moment who wrestle with guilt and condemnation because of past sin and failure.

God, may they see you as you really are and not as they might imagine you to be. And God, may they come to know and experience your abounding grace to undeserving sinners.

And now the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[62 : 54] Amen. Amen. God bless you. You're dismissed. If you need prayer as the others leave, please feel free to come. Thank you.