

God's Curse For Sin

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[0:00] Please turn in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 3, verses 14 through 24. If you need a Bible, you're welcome to take one off the back table and keep it as our gift to you.

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. 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 and 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, 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 which, for out of it you are taken.

[1:12] 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 skin 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 from 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 flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

This is the word of the Lord. Thank you. In the words of Ian Pollack that he once shared up here, I'm sorry if I sound sick.

I am. And I guess it's fitting that I might look and sound a little bit sick today, considering that we're talking about God's curse on this world for sin and the devastating effects that we see.

[2:24] Right here in Genesis 3, we see conflict with the enemy. We see pain and childbearing. We see discord in relationships, thorns and thistles and sweat and death.

Now what is described here in Genesis 3, it's our lived experience. It's our everyday experience in this world, isn't it? You know, it's the everyday reality that we face in the brokenness around us. And yet the fact that we can look around and say this isn't right suggests that there is in fact a right. And we experience glimmers and glimpses of this right every day, right?

Enjoying a day at the beach. Maybe not right now, but we envision that. We know that that's a good thing that we get to experience when it's summer. A work project that ends in success.

A cherished friendship. A date night of laughing and connection. A fruitful flower or vegetable garden. You know, but constantly the wrong is invading the right.

[3:39] Your beach day gets rained out. Or it's February or March and you can't even have one. A major error is discovered in your work project that's going to cost the company lots of time and money.

Your friend abandons you in time of need. The date night that you were so looking forward to just ends with fighting and disunity. Or you literally have to battle thorns and thistles that keep choking out your pepper plants.

You know, these and a million more examples of brokenness and we're confronted with them every day. We open up the news yesterday and then we're confronted with more of the broken reality of our existence.

From the trivial and the mundane things that we experience, some of those that I mentioned, to the weighty and the significant broken things of life, they describe our everyday human experience. But those right things that I just mentioned, the good things that we experience, it leaves us wondering, it leaves us longing even. wondering if we were made for a better world, longing for that better world.

[4:46] And then we wonder, is that longing of our hearts that we all experience, is it something logical? Is that longing for a better world? Is it rational? Is it an indicator of something that's actually real?

Or is it just an illusion or a fantasy, a form of escapism when the pain of life is pressing in? By the end of our time together today, I hope you're able to answer with confidence the question that I just posed.

The title of today's sermon is simply God's Curse for Sin. God's Curse for Sin. By the way, my name is Mike, one of the pastors here at Shoreline, and we're glad that you are entering into this sermon series in Genesis with us.

We are right now in the middle of one of the most significant chapters in all of the Bible, Genesis chapter 3. If you haven't already turned to Genesis 3, please turn there. Genesis 1 and 2, we saw that out of the goodness and the love of his divine nature, God spoke all things into existence. And then as the crown of his creation, he made mankind in his image and in his likeness, and he gave mankind every provision in order to live a fruitful and joyful and God-glorifying life.

[6:04] But then we saw last week, the serpent entered into that garden paradise of Eden, and the serpent offered his own version of wisdom, that shiny part of the apple that Matt was just showing us.

And Adam and Eve bought the lie that they could actually become more like God. And so rather than submit to God's authority and God's definition of good, they chose to rebel against God, to define for themselves what is good.

They wanted to be their own gods. And so their heart's corruption leading to that act of rebellion, we then saw it had these immediately destructive consequences.

Alienation, we said, on every level, between man and self, between man and others, between man and nature, between man most significantly, between man and God. And so we saw that they were ashamed of their nakedness, they hid from the Lord in fear, and then God pursues that couple. He is seeking to expose their sin, and yet what Adam and Eve do is they blame, shift ultimately down to the serpent. And so we are picking up the narrative today in verse 14.

[7:18] Before we do, let me just go to the Lord in prayer one more time. Heavenly Father, as we look at this text that you have given to us, God, I pray that your spirit would speak to us, speak to our hearts, speak to our lives, show us today what you want us to take from this, Father.

Make us ultimately more like Christ, and help us to cling more tightly to the anchor for our souls that we were just singing about. We pray this in his name. Amen. And so the first thing that we see is that God subjects everything to curse.

God subjects everything to curse. As Derek Kidner, he's a commentary, what's the word I'm looking for? Commentator, thank you.

As Derek Kidner begins his commentary on this set of verses, he says this, note, in all that follows, the undiminished sovereignty of God. I just want to say from the start here, God is not thrown off balance by what happened in the garden.

He doesn't respond. We're going to see here, God doesn't respond in some sort of angsty way. He remains divinely composed in his divine control. And so God begins his pronouncement of judgment with the serpent.

[8:36] So we're going to see judgment on the serpent. Verse 14, Now there is a Hebrew play on words going on here that is still partially seen in the ESV's alliteration.

Look at verse 1. The serpent was described as crafty, and now the serpent is cursed. He was crafty, and now he's cursed. And the punishment here fits the crime.

The serpent had persuaded the couple to eat the fruit, and now the serpent is relegated to eating dust. But what are we to make of this? Are we to see here an explanation for a snake's lack of arms and legs?

And though it's tempting, I really don't think so. I don't think we need to see here a biological change being made to an animal, just like when Adam's rib is taken out.

We don't see that as a biological change to men. There was something else going on. Though it is possible that this explains why snakes crawl on their bellies, what we need to see here is how Satan is being placed under divine curse.

[9:51] Right? Satan is being subjected to humiliation and disgrace. So when we see a physical snake, we ought to make that connection, though, to Satan, right?

The snake's cunning is like Satan's own craftiness. The snake's venom is like Satan's own power and his poison. The snake's subjection to the ground is like Satan's subjection to humiliation.

Now, you know, this language of eating dust is actually used in Scripture and other places symbolically as well. For example, Micah 7, verse 14, speaking of the rebellious nations of the earth, it says, They shall lick the dust like a serpent, like the crawling things of the earth.

Now, God continues in verse 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.

God's curse on the serpent entails this ongoing rivalry and struggle. It's a war between the offspring or the seed of Eve and then that of the serpent.

[11:05] Now, again, we understand here that although most people have a discussion, raise your hand if you like snakes. Okay, just a few. I think snakes are kind of cool, but the majority of you didn't raise your hand because most people don't actually like snakes.

Now, although we understand that it is actually true that there is this sort of general phobia of snakes. I had a kindergarten teacher that was deathly afraid of snakes, and then the seventh grade science pet snake got lost in the school, and she did not enjoy that week.

The snake did get found. But we do sort of have this fear of snakes, but the enmity that's described here, it's between humanity and the devil, right?

It's between the offspring of Eve and the evil one, the God of this world, 2 Corinthians 4. The offspring of Eve, humanity, is perennially in conflict with Satan and his offspring.

But who are Satan's offspring? Satan does not produce children in the same way that humanity produces children, but Satan indeed has children.

[12:11] We learn more as we read further along in Scripture. Speaking to the Jewish religious leaders of his day, Jesus said this. This is to those who refuse to believe his word, the Pharisees.

Jesus said in John 8, 44, you are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father's desire. Simply put, the offspring of Satan, it's all those, knowingly or unknowingly, who side with Satan against God.

Now this verse explains the cosmic battle between good and evil that we all feel in our souls and we see in our society and is reflected in countless books and movies.

I mean, some of the best stories are based in this reality, the conflict between good and evil. It doesn't come from nowhere. It is reality. And in this battle, God declares, still speaking to the serpent, he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

God is promising right here that there will be one to come from the line of Eve who is going to deal Satan a blow to the head, even as Satan deals him a blow to the heel.

[13:23] And so this curse against Satan, it's actually imbued with promise for humanity. A conqueror, a victor is going to come.

Now Eve may have thought at this point, she's, Adam and Eve are there observing God judging Satan and Eve may have thought, oh, maybe my blame shifting endeavor worked, you know? But then God turns next to Eve, right?

And so I just want to say, kids especially, but this is really for everybody, blame shifting might work with your parents. It might. Blame shifting might work with your boss.

It doesn't work with God. Okay, God always sees right through it. And so God turns next to the woman, pronounces judgment to the woman. To the woman he said, look at verse 16, I will surely

multiply your pain and childbearing.

In pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you. God pronounces judgment here against the woman in her two primary roles, childbearing and marriage.

[14:31] We're not actually sure what childbearing would have looked like in the garden paradise because it never happened. But we certainly know how fraught it is with difficulty now, right?

I don't need to explain that. What is a bit confusing is the phrase, your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you. Like what is God actually saying?

And what really actually helps us is if we look at chapter four, verse seven, in which we see an almost identical phrase. Look at chapter four, verse seven, and we'll unpack this next week more. But God speaking to Cain says, if you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Now here's the phrase, its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.

ESV translates it differently, but it's actually the same phrase. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it. Sin's desire is for Cain. ESV says contrary.

[15:32] It's for Cain in the sense that it seeks to control him. It seeks to master him, to subjugate him. And God is saying, Cain, you must rule over it. Now, similarly here in chapter three, verse 16, God is saying that the wife is going to seek control.

She's going to seek to master, to subjugate the husband, but the husband, not that he must, but that he will. God is explaining what is going to happen, the nature of how relationships will work. The husband will dominate his wife.

In other words, as Victor Hamilton put it, far from being a reign of co-equals over the remainder of God's creation, that's what we saw in Genesis one and two, co-equals reigning together over God's creation.

The woman is the divine helper, the compliment. He says far from that, the relationship now becomes a fierce dispute with each party trying to rule the other. The two who once reigned as one attempt to rule each other.

Now, at this point, I assume that Adam realizes the whole blame-shifting venture was pointless. And so God turns then from Eve to Adam and pronounces judgment against the man.

[16:42] Verse 17, 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.

It's actually paused right there. God's opening words right here to Adam, they highlight two important truths. One of them we talked about last week and one of them we didn't. The one that we talked about last week is that Adam, right here, it's shown that he was responsible to lead his wife in righteousness.

And it's a responsibility that he abdicated, that he set aside, and that he failed in. But we talked about that last week, so I'm not going to talk about that anymore. The second one that we see right here is God holds both Adam and Eve individually accountable for their choice to sin.

Right? We see that right here. Yes, Eve was deceived by the serpent, but the serpent did not make her sin. Yes, Adam did listen.

He was persuaded by his wife, but his wife Eve did not make him sin. Now this is really important. And we buck against this constantly and our culture aids us in the folly, really.

[17:56] There's a difference between conditions and causes. Okay, conditions and causes. Conditions are the external circumstances of life to which I am responding.

Okay? Anything going on in the external world. And conditions do exhibit a shaping influence on us, right? We are shaped by the conditions of life.

But external conditions are not the cause of our sin. The cause of our sin, according to Scripture, according to God who made us, the cause of our sin is us.

It's our hearts. My professor, Dr. Jeremy Pierre, says that we are response-able and therefore responsible.

We are response-able and therefore responsible. Being made in the image of God means that we are response-able. We have moral agency.

[18:52] We have the ability to make moral choices that are either good or bad, either righteous or unrighteous, either godly or ungodly, either consistent with what God wants or inconsistent.

We have that choice, that ability. We're response-able. Because of this, God holds us responsible. God holds us accountable for the choices that we make.

If you were at the Disciple-Making Parent Conference yesterday, Chat Betta said, I am responsible for my actions and reactions. And this principle is everywhere in Scripture. So I just want to give a purely hypothetical, this would never happen in your house kind of example, okay?

Let's say that you're fully engrossed in this compelling fiction novel, okay? You're all in. And then your brother loudly bursts into your room, snatches the book out of your hands, and then runs away and goes, na-na-na-na-na-na, you can't catch me.

An external circumstance has been forced upon you. You did not choose it, right? Here it is, external circumstance. However, you have a choice now to respond.

[19:58] How are you going to respond to the external circumstance, right? Now, responding in kind by running into their room, grabbing the thing most precious to them, and then going outside and chucking it into this six-foot pile of snow, would that be a godly or an ungodly response?

Yeah, I mean, ungodly response. Now, if your mom, who sees what's going on, asks you, why did you do that? I have a feeling your response would be, well, because he stole my book, right?

But no, no. You did it because of the sin in your heart. You responded to evil with evil. Where did that evil come from?

Not your brother. It came from right here, right? It came from right there. Yes, you were responding to him stealing the book, and he's accountable for his own actions, but you are accountable before God for your actions.

Stealing the book was the condition, the cause was the heart, the cause of your sinful choice. And we can apply that to all of the circumstances of life.

[21:09] God holds each person responsible for his or her actions. Adam is here held accountable for his sin. Now then comes the pronouncement, okay? Look there at the second half of verse 17.

God is speaking to Adam. Adam 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.

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.

So just as Eve's primary roles are affected, now we see that so too are Adam's. We already saw in the curse, the judgment against Eve, we saw Adam's role as husband is affected.

Now we see here his role as ruler, as caretaker, worker of the ground. These things are all negatively affected. Thorns and thistles. Those represent both literally and symbolically a state of increasing disorder, right?

[22:14] Increasing chaos. When God spoke creation into existence, he brought order into the disorder, right? And then he made mankind and gave him dominion over the earth to do the same thing, to bring order into disorder.

But now this whole world is under a curse, right? Its default tendency is towards an increasing state of disorder. We recognize this as actual law of nature, right?

This is the second law of thermodynamics. This is that there will always be a state of increasing entropy, which just means disorder. It's always increasing over time.

That is the way that things progress. Now Paul describes this in Romans 8, verse 20. He says that the creation was subjected to futility.

Futility, vanity, meaninglessness, pointlessness, futility. Now even right there, it's important to note that this wasn't merely a natural consequence of sin.

[23:15] It is. But this is a decree of God. God is himself subjecting creation to futility as a righteous judgment for sin.

As a result, as Moses, who wrote the book of Genesis, would later write, and I guess I don't know if it's later, but Moses writes in Psalm 90, verse 10, the years of our life are 70, or even by reason of strength, 80, yet their span is but toil and trouble.

They are soon gone and we fly away. And Moses witnessed a death march through the wilderness, right? He writes that, having seen the destruction of sin.

The preacher in Ecclesiastes 1.14 laments, I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after the wind.

Pain, thorns, thistles, sweat. These are apt descriptors of the human experience, right? Of what we see every day. And in the end, it leads to death.

[24:24] For you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Bruce Waltke summarizes these verses. The man's natural relationship to the ground, to rule over it, is reversed.

Instead of submitting to him, it resists and eventually swallows him. And I just want to ask, friends, do you see how the Bible provides a worldview right here that accurately makes sense of our reality?

Childbearing is fraught with pain and difficulty. And not only in the labor and delivery process, certainly in the labor and delivery process, but the whole thing, beginning with conception, right? It's hard, it's painful, it's unpredictable. It's not the way it would have been. Nor are our marriages. Right?

Adam's awestruck joy over Eve, right? They're being naked and unashamed. That's been totally replaced here by mistrust, by struggle, miscommunication, jockeying for power, eyeing one another with skepticism, pride and defensiveness, withdrawn passivity, or aggressive domineering, all kinds of abuse.

[25:44] All of it finds its origin here at the fall. And this, friends, this isn't just in our marriages. I mean, this describes human relationship. This is why wars are going on in the world.

Alienation where there was once unity. Right? Offense where there was once love. And we see this alienation extends to nature as well. Right? The weeds always grow back.

Right? No matter how much lawn care treatment you put on your lawn, like the crabgrass is going to come. Poison ivy, which I personally hate. I seek, I've avoided it successfully for a few years now, but man, it's everywhere in this state.

It's everywhere, you know? Now, most of us don't actually work in agriculture, but the futility, it's apparent in all of our vocations, isn't it? We plan, whether it's a work project or a house project, or even, you know, a submarine, but it takes like at least three times as long as we had originally planned.

And the Navy keeps thinking that it's going to, you know, it's going to meet schedule. It's not going to meet schedule. I'm sorry. This is just a pastor's word here. You know, we seek consensus, but there's always a dissenter, right?

[27:00] Instruments have to be retuned or replaced. Tyler can tell you all about that. He's an expert in instruments. Metal, rust, O-rings, dry and crack. And, you know, most significant of all, we see here, just death, right?

Death is inevitable. And death, it casts this long, dark shadow over all of humanity. All of us have experienced the effects of death.

The author of Hebrews refers to this as a lifelong slavery due to our fear of death, Hebrews 2.15. You know, we try our best. We've maybe even gotten a little better in our modern technological age. We try our best to ward it off, to fend it off, right? Through diet and exercise, through relaxation techniques, through anti-aging products and treatments and therapy. But, like, try as we may. As Waltke said earlier, eventually the ground swallows us up. We've buried loved ones over the past year. All of creation has been subjected to futility, right?

[28:05] We know it. We feel it. We experience it. We hate it. We want freedom from it. I want to point out one more thing from these verses, verses 14 through 19.

What does God not say to Adam and Eve? Did you catch it? This is something I only really learned this week on my entire life without really realizing this.

In verse 14, speaking to the serpent, God said to the serpent, cursed are you. Cursed are you, speaking to the serpent. In verse 17, God says, speaking to Adam, cursed is the ground. What does God not say to Adam and Eve? He does not say, cursed are you. And I just want to ask, I noticed that this week and said, is that significant?

Is this a significant thing? To be cursed is to have God's favor, his blessing, totally removed. It's to be separated entirely from him and from his goodness.

[29:12] And the tension here is that the judgment that God pronounces against Adam and Eve, it has the marks of curse. Does it not? I mean, they're separated from God and his goodness.

They're subjected to pain and to toil and to death. And yet, has God faded them finally to eternal judgment like Satan? Right?

Are they subjected to curse and left without choice like the ground? This is fascinating here. Now, we already saw a clue back in verse 15.

We saw that promise of a seed. We're given another clue here in the next two verses. So I want you to look now at verses 20 and 21. The man called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living.

Actually, we'll stop there in verse 20. The man called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living. Now, this seems sort of weird. It comes after this judgment of the Lord. Why here?

[30:13] And I want to submit to you that this verse 20 is a sign that God is extending mercy right in the midst of judgment. And so you might ask, okay, Mike, what does Adam naming Eve have anything to do with the mercy of God?

All right? It has to do with the mercy of God because Adam naming and Eve mothering are roles that God had given the man and the woman pre-fall. They are still fulfilling those roles.

God had given Adam dominion over creation. And one way that he demonstrated his dominion was through the naming of all the animals. Right now he's expressing his leadership by naming Eve.

God had given mankind that creation mandate. He said, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

That the woman is now named Eve, the mother of all the living.

It confirms that the creation mandate is still in effect, right? Adam and Eve will indeed be fruitful and will multiply. Eve will fulfill her role as child bearer and mother.

[31:18] This is mercy. And what I'm saying here is the imago Dei that humans are made in the image of God remains. It remains. Adam and Eve, they were made in the image of God.

They were made to represent and then reflect God in the world. Adam in his masculinity, even her femininity. We talked about that. This verse shows us that even after the fall, the imago Dei is still intact.

Yes, it's been corrupted by sin. Absolutely. But God's indelible imprint, it remains. Made in my image. Made in my image. This underscores the great mercy of God.

He could have ended their lives, right? Just like that. They could have been done. God could have wiped them out and started fresh, which he almost does in Genesis chapter 6, but not totally. And we're going to get there.

But he didn't. And he doesn't in Genesis 6. He extends mercy. Friends, we have already established the corruption of our heart, right? Genesis 3 makes us clear.

[32:19] But it also makes clear right here that each of us still retains the imprint of the divine. Each of us still bears God's image.

And not just us, but your neighbor, your coworker, even your enemy. They bear the image of God. So let's treat them with the honor, the respect befitting an image bearer of God.

Of course, there's more to say, but there's not less to say. And then there's verse 21. Look at verse 21. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

An easy verse to rush past. But again, under this mercy being extended, God's sufficient covering is what we see right here. Now look back at verse 7 with me.

After they had eaten the fruit, then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

[33:29] Not exactly robust attire. Right? God sees their flimsy, pathetic loincloths and he says, hey, how about instead these Levi's that I just made for you?

You know? Like these are going to last a little bit longer. He replaces their inadequate coverings with something better, something sufficient. Right? This is God's mercy.

God's mercy. Brothers and sisters, what we see right here is this needed lesson that our man-made coverings are insufficient. Right?

In our sin, we are steeped in guilt and in shame and no matter how much we work to cover it up, the stain remains. Right? We can't hide it.

No amount of material wealth, no amount of sports or career success, no amount of obedience to your parents, no amount of performance in school, no amount of medication or therapy, none of it can cover up the guilt and the shame for sin.

[34:32] We need a divine covering. Right? The solution must come from outside ourselves. It is not going to be found in here. Culture thinks that if we, like we can find it in here, it's not, guys, it's not in here.

We need something from the outside. We're desperate for an extension of mercy and grace. Adam and Eve are shown right here, divine mercy in the midst of judgment.

But then the judgment continues and so look at verses 22 through 24. 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 from 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 a flaming sword that turned every way to guard, to guard the way to the tree of life.

[35:37] And so God banishes sinners from his presence. Now we're intended to see some great irony in God's words that the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil.

This is what Satan actually had promised them, that they would become like God knowing good and evil. Now we talked about this last week, how Adam and Eve did in fact gain knowledge. They gained an experiential knowledge of good and evil that profited them not.

Derek Kidner again, he writes this, his new consciousness of good and evil was both like and unlike the divine knowledge, differing from it and from innocence, here's an analogy he gives, as a sick man's aching awareness of his body differs both from the insight of the physician and the unconcern of the man in health.

this was not better. In this sin-sick state, mankind is not allowed to remain in the purity of the presence of God.

God in his blazing holiness will not tolerate man and their sin. And so, God kicks them out of that garden sanctuary where his presence dwelt.

[36:53] And he bars access to the tree of life. Now, this is an act of judgment indeed, but it is also an act of kindness.

To eat from the tree of life and to live forever in a corrupted state of pain and struggle and conflict would be, I mean, it would be hell.

They ate from that tree of life in their sin. Here's your eternal state. You see the mercy once again that God is extending, even in judgment. Adam and Eve, they're banished from God's presence.

They are cut off from the source of true life and joy, which is God, and yet they're not cursed finally. They're not banished finally to hell. They are given time and opportunity here.

Now, time and opportunity for what, you might ask? Time and opportunity to repent and believe, to admit their wrongdoing and to turn away from it and to receive the mercy of God and to reassert their faith and their trust in him and to believe in his promise, the promise that God is going to send a conqueror through Eve's line who's going to bruise the head of the serpent.

[38:14] In fact, I think verse 20 is an indication that they did exercise faith in God's promise. promise. They realized that God was not done with them and they began to participate in the fulfillment of the Genesis 3 15 promise.

Now, the book of Genesis, we're going to go on and see some of these, but the book of Genesis goes on to provide a number of genealogies. Now, these genealogies are not just filler. They're

tracing the lineage of Adam and Eve, right?

They're tracing the line of promise of Genesis 3:15. We're going to turn the page and perhaps Eve thought that Cain or Abel would be the victor promised, right?

But then Cain murders Abel in cold blood. And perhaps then it's Seth, right? Then Eve bears Seth, but it's not him, nor is it the several generations to follow.

And so we trace the line down to Noah, and then comes Noah, this righteous man before God. Perhaps he's the victor. But then we see even Noah is a man of sin.

[39:22] It's not him, right? Who is going to deliver the human race? Who is the promise of Genesis 3:15? Right? And generation after generation goes by, year after year goes by, thousands of years go by, and still humanity is left longing for deliverance until one man, right?

Staring at the reality of his undeserved crucifixion, which is before him. That man cried out, now is the judgment of this world. Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

John 12:31. Right? Willingly, this man laid down his life upon the cross. And there on the cross, Paul says in Colossians, he canceled the record of debt that stood against us, nailing it to the cross. He's talking about our sin, nailed to the cross, canceled out. There he disarmed the rulers and authorities, and he put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.

Satan struck at the heel of Christ in his betrayal and his trial and his crucifix, and Satan thought that he had won a great victory, but it was simultaneously the fatal bruising of his head.

[40:40] God wielded unprecedented evil in the death of Christ to bring about unimaginable good, the salvation of the world. There on the cross, by his blood sacrifice, Jesus Christ, the son of God and man, he became the conqueror and the victor over Satan on our behalf, on humanity's behalf.

He did it through death. His death was the death of death. His resurrection, sometimes we mix this up, the death was the victory. The resurrection was the proclamation of the victory.

He had already won on the cross, and he could not stay dead. He was God. The cross is the victory. Our sin put to death. And then Christ raises from the dead three days later.

He heralds that victory to the cosmos. Since therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things.

That through death, he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

[41:57] Hebrews 2, 14-15. Friends, when we see here in Genesis chapter 3, we see the gospel in the bud. God. And we now have the gospel in full bloom, don't we?

We have the gospel in full bloom. In Genesis 3-15, we see that humanity is in need of and is promised this victor over Satan, and Jesus Christ is that victor.

He is the conqueror, but he's more still. In the very next verse, we see that relationships are broken, they're severed, we experience that.

But then Jesus Christ comes, he is our peacemaker. He makes peace between us and God, and he brings peace right here in the community of the saints. Peace between one another.

He's a peacemaker, and we're going to enjoy that peace in eternity. In verse 17, we see Adam's failure to lead, and then comes Christ, the second Adam, and he is the perfect leader, the servant leader who leads us in love.

[43:01] He's our leader. We looked at that over Advent, how Christ is going to rule in perfect righteousness and justice, and so that leads to sort of the next thing, because then we see that mankind's dominion over creation is shattered.

We were made to rule this world. Christ comes to be the ruler. He brings order. He restores order to chaos. We're going to enjoy that perfect order forever more under his righteous and just reign.

In verse 19, mankind is subject to physical death. Christ comes to be our life giver, bread of life, water of life.

He grants a spiritual life that will never end. He's going to raise up these bodies and they're never going to die. I am the resurrection and the life. Verse 20, we see that mankind retains the imago Dei, the image of God, but it's been corrupted by sin, and then Jesus Christ comes, the image

bearer of God.

Right? The radiance of God is shown in Christ. He is the image bearer. And he also gives us the ability to image God again.

[44:12] In Christ, we are made new, created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness, Paul says in Ephesians 4, 24. Verse 21, we see our need for a sufficient covering.

You see God's merciful provision to Adam and Eve, but then Jesus Christ comes to be our ultimate covering. He is our covering. All that sin, all that shame replaced, nailed to the cross, he gives us, he clothes us with righteousness.

Christ is our covering. Verse 23 and 24, mankind's access to God is barred, right? Cherubim are posted there, flaming sword.

Because of your sin, you can't go in. The garden, the curtain, and the cross, the kids book, says that over and over again. Now this gets later represented in the very temple that's erected in Jerusalem.

The veil, on that veil is embroidered the cherubim. Behind that veil, the cherubim are spread on top of the Ark of the Covenant. They're guarding the way to the presence of God. And what does Jesus do in his death?

[45:17] What does he do? He rips down that veil, right? The entrance, the access to God is restored. He has become our mediator. He is the way.

He is the way to God. So friends, this Genesis chapter three, on the one hand, we are confronted with the ugly, dark reality of our sin and how it incurred God's curse upon all of creation.

But we're also given a glimpse here of the gospel in embryo. And we now see the gospel. We know the glory of the gospel. And as we sing every Christmas time in the verse three of Joy to the World, he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found.

So I just want to close with just a few points of application here. Enter into Christ's victory by faith. faith. Friends, this was the victory that we could not win on our own.

The Bible is the storyline of how mankind could never win that victory, but it has been won by Christ for us. On our behalf, we enter into his victory by faith.

[46:34] Trust in Christ today. Enter into his victory. If you want to know more about that, please come talk to me. But not only saints, not only do we enter into his victory, we participate in Christ's victory as new creations.

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5.17. Day in and day out, brothers and sisters, as we put off the flesh and clothe ourselves with Christ, we are participating in the victory that he won at Calvary.

I quoted Ephesians 4.24 prior, but I want to say it again. As we put on the new self, I think the youth talked about this today. Put on the new self, created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness.

You see the Imago Dei right there. It is restored. It's restored in Christ. Now look, we saw how Eve's roles were corrupted through sin, right? Her role as child bearer, her role as mother.

We saw how Adam's roles were corrupted. Husband, ruler, worker, they're all corrupted by sin. But they were still enabled to live out these roles as image bearers of God.

[47:47] Well, now through Christ, we're all the more enabled to fulfill those God-given roles. They haven't been removed. The creation blueprint still remains and it's restored in Jesus Christ.

Childbearing is fraught with difficulty, right? We have stories in this room of the difficulty of childbearing and still the Lord, he allows women to image him by bringing forth life into this world and we also have those testimonies all around us, right?

Marriage is fallen. Okay, we all experience the fallenness of marriage if you are married and yet through Christ, we now know what it's always been about. It's been about imaging Christ in the church.

That's what it's been about from the beginning and now we can see that and so marriages can be restored in and through the gospel, the husband leading in love, the wife submitting to the husband as the church submits to Christ and once again being that helper, that complement.

All of our relationships involve conflict, right? And yet in Jesus, through the power of the gospel, through the power of the spirit, we are able to cover over offenses in love.

[49:01] We are able to extend forgiveness and reconciliation through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Work is painful and toilsome and yet by the spirit, we can work as unto Christ, Paul talks about.

We can still bring order into the chaos of this broken world and do what we were called to do. We can still further human flourishing and image God. God. Okay.

Third, herald Christ's victory through gospel proclamation. Look, all the above ways I just talked about are putting the gospel on display, right? In our lives, in our church, and yet we also ought to proclaim the gospel with our lips, right?

With sharing the message of the gospel. We've talked about this a lot over the past year, especially in 1 Corinthians. We do that especially well as a body of Christ when we are showing the world the supernatural love, the supernatural unity of the gospel to bring us together in him.

And so we're called to herald Christ's victory. Here's another one that I want to say here. Lament the delay of Christ's final victory. Like we live in the already not yet, right?

[50:18] Christ has come. There is victory. Okay. Salvation is here, but it's also not here. Check.

There we go. Thanks, Jason. We continue to live in the reality of the curse. And so in this way, we live as sufferers in the broken world.

And it's right and it's healthy for us to lament the brokenness that we face. And scripture is filled with examples of the godly, of the faithful, crying out to God in their pain.

And so follow those examples. The victory of Christ does not mean that we disregard the sufferings of this life. If anything, we ought to feel them even more deeply because we know what Christ has come to do.

We know that the world is going to be remade in glory. We have the book of Revelation, and yet we live in the in-between. So if anything, we ought to be even more in our, we ought to dive into lament even more further.

[51:40] Don't distance yourself from God in your suffering. Okay. Run to the Lord in your suffering. He knows, Psalm 103, God knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust, right?

He knows that, and yet his steadfast love is from everlasting to everlasting. He is disposed towards us with mercy and compassion. And what's more, we have Christ who entered into our brokenness, who suffered and experienced all the miseries that we face.

He experienced those, the temptations that we face. He experienced those to the full and resisted. And so Hebrews says that he is therefore able to sympathize with us in our weaknesses. We can run to him and find grace and mercy in our time of need.

And just, scripture also reminds us, as the body of Christ, we're called to weep with those who weep. We're called to bear one another's burdens. When one member suffers, we all suffer together.

So in your suffering, don't distance yourself from God, and don't distance yourself from the saints. Friends, find comfort in Christ and find comfort in those in whom Christ resides by his spirit.

[52:51] And that leads me finally to the last one. Look and long for Christ's final victory. I read a part of Romans 8 before. I want to read a few more verses. Romans 8, 18 through 21.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it in hope that the creation will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Christ is coming again, church. Christ is coming again. We don't know the timing, but we do know that it is fact. It is going to happen. And we know that when Christ returns, when we're standing with him in glory, in his presence, we are going to look back on the sufferings of this present time and say, man, those are so eclipsed by the glory that we now have.

They're so eclipsed. Eternity's glory, it dwarfs today's suffering. Let us look and long for that day. And we see in Romans 8 that when God subjected the world to futility, he did so with a promise.

[54:13] He did so with an offer of hope. And that hope has been secured through the gospel of Jesus Christ. We cling to that hope. And it's the hope that not we, but sin and Satan and death will be fully and finally banished from God's presence forever.

forever. The hope that the curse is going to be totally reversed. Totally reversed. All things will be made new. We will behold the face of God.

We will enjoy the glory, the beauty of his undiminished presence. It's going to be the Garden of Eden restored, except better.

Even better. Saints, we know that our longing for our heavenly home is not fantasy. It is not illusion. It is a longing based on the rock solid hope that we have through the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this hope, we pray, amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

[55:18] Heavenly Father, thank you for Genesis 3. God, you tell us in the New Testament that before the foundation of the world, you were choosing us in Christ.

You were choosing us. Before the foundation of the world, you saw the end from the beginning. You knew that Genesis 3 was going to happen. You were already in the process of working redemption through your son, Jesus Christ.

We now see it in a fuller picture. We still don't have the whole thing. And so we cling to the hope of what's to come. God, in the brokenness, in the futility of this present world, in the pain that we continue to experience, the death that we continue to see and will ultimately face if Christ does not come back, give us the hope of what is to come.

Christ, you came. You entered into all of it on our behalf. Help us, Lord, to run to you for the grace and the mercy that we need. God, thank you for your mercy.

We worship you now for it. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Thank you, Pastor Mike.