

# Genesis 3:1-24

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Date: 29 January 2017

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[ 0 : 00 ] So I invite you today to turn with me to Genesis chapter 3. And if you've been with us the past few weeks, as we've walked through Genesis chapters 1 and 2, and he's also made human beings in his own image, and he did it in a unique way that we are bodies and souls made for life with him.

And he has established for us a home to dwell with him, and one that the tabernacle and the temple in later biblical history would remind us of.

And he gave us marriage itself a good thing and a picture of something even better, the wedding supper of the Lamb. And so this picture of Genesis 1 and 2, the picture that's painted, is a good picture.

Now, we see echoes of all of that in our world today, don't we? We see the good that is marriage. We see that human beings are something special, made in the image of God.

We see that this, in every sunset, when we go visit national parks, we see that this world is good. We also know that our experience of this world is not exactly like the picture painted in Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

[ 1 : 46 ] There's something wrong also with this world, with us also. Maybe you're here today and you feel like you don't belong in church.

Maybe you're carrying guilt. Today's passage is about that. Maybe you're carrying shame. Today's passage is about that. Maybe you have no idea which way to go.

What is meaningful? Drifting through life without direction or purpose. And today's passage is about that. Or maybe, maybe you're overwhelmed by a workload, or by the injustice, brokenness, or the needs you see around you.

Maybe you feel helpless to stop it, or hopeless to help it. Today's passage is about that. Or maybe, maybe you're mad today.

You've been hurt. You've been wronged or ignored or missed out, and you're livid. Maybe that's you. Maybe it's someone in particular.

[ 3 : 01 ] Maybe just mad in general. Well, today's passage is about that. Or maybe you're mad at God over something that's happened to you, or something that hasn't happened to you, or something that His Word says, or something that one of His people have said.

Or maybe you don't even believe in God, because after all, how could a good and powerful God allow so much suffering in the world? Well, today's passage is also about that.

Now, have I oversold this? That's probably what you're asking, right? How could one passage, one chapter, one word from God address all of those things?

See, today's passage is for everyone. Everyone who is hurt, who is lost, who is separated, who is conflicted, who is mad, who has troubles and burdens and questions.

It speaks to all of us. Now, we may not like the answers, but God has spoken, and He has spoken comprehensively to the whole human condition.

[ 4 : 19 ] What we are, who we are, what we are here for, and what is wrong with this world. And this passage is the beginning of that explanation.

So as we approach God's Word, let us bow our heads in prayer. Father, you are a good and gracious God.

Thank you that you have not left us alone in this world without help. The help that we can find in your Word. Lord, that you've given us guidance, that you have given us tools, that you have given us an understanding of the great story, your great story, in which we find ourselves apart.

Lord, humble our hearts. Help us to see you, to find you beautiful, more so than all this world.

We pray that in the name of Christ, our King. Amen. Genesis chapter 3, verse 1, begins like this.

[ 5 : 32 ] Now, the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. Now, that points out something to us that warrants some reflection.

There is an enemy. We have an enemy. I think there are two errors that churches often fall into. One is finding the devil everywhere.

I knew a nurse at the church that we were in in Pennsylvania when I was in seminary. She worked at an office with a bunch of Christian doctors, and the doctors are like, oh, the computer's broken today.

The devil must not want it. No, you didn't invest in, you're still running Windows 98. But on the flip side, and I think what maybe a church like ours might be more prone to is to completely ignoring the idea or the concept of an enemy.

There is an enemy of our souls. And he is real, and he is a liar, an accuser. Today, he is going to accuse God through deceit.

[ 6 : 47 ] Scripture paints him as a roaring lion looking to devour. Though he is not omnipotent, I don't want us to think that there's this clash between God and the devil in such a way that we don't know the outcome.

We know the outcome. Even though he holds great sway, and Scripture calls him the prince of the power of the air or the god of this age, he does not have complete authority.

Even now. We see this all over Scripture. He asks God permission to afflict Job. He needs to have God's permission. The demons obey Christ's commands.

In the Gospels, we see it over and over again. And someday, he will utterly fail and be completely beaten. And that actually makes us think, what is our battle with him?

And if you know Genesis chapter 3, he's about to have a battle of ideas. And in fact, that is exactly what spiritual warfare is. The movies like to make spiritual warfare seem a little crazy, right?

[ 7 : 59 ] But here's how Scripture paints spiritual warfare. 2 Corinthians chapter 10 says, Though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

And here it is. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

Friends, will you be deceived by opinions and arguments and lofty thoughts raised against the knowledge of God?

Or will you trust God? And that's really what is at stake here. Our enemy's name is Liar and our battle against him is one of truth versus lie.

And here's the start, the very start of that battle. The second half of verse 1 says, He said to the woman, Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

[ 9 : 09 ] There was a study published in 2015 in the Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. The authors ran an experiment and they wanted to see whether or not you could trick someone into believing something, essentially.

What they did was they put an argument that someone disagreed with in terms that they did agree with. And so they found that liberals were much more likely to convince conservative voters to support things like same-sex marriage by framing the issue in language of deregulation and personal liberty, bedrock language in conservative political theory.

And likewise, conservatives were more likely to convince liberals to support reducing taxes by using liberal language, calling it tax relief. Relief being a word, a liberal touchstone standing in, you know, standing next to and fighting for that, the little oppressed guy.

And so now I get the preacher of the year award for teaching you all how to be more manipulative. But that's what the serpent's doing here, isn't it? It's a subtle lie that works on reframing the argument.

Did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? He's reframed the question just a little, and that makes all the difference. It's on the same level as the question, you've probably heard it, have you stopped beating your wife?

[ 10 : 45 ] Well, if you answer yes, that means that you admit to previously beating your wife. And if you say no, then it means you're still beating your wife. What you really need to say is that's the wrong question. Today, we're subjected to questions just like that.

All the time, just like this one. You know, we've been talking about creation, especially in Genesis chapter 1. That creation is a good thing. God saw all that he had made. It was very good.

And so then, people say, well, why shouldn't you indulge in this thing or that thing that you desire? You were born that way, right? We desire all sorts of selfish, harmful things.

Really, wanting something doesn't make it good. Or right? Or a right? I think also, we've been talking about rest in Genesis chapter 2, verses 1 through 3.

Here's a question based on a faulty view of rest. You know, that thing you have to do, whether it's parenting or talking to me, home maintenance.

[ 11 : 54 ] I still have leaves on the ground in my backyard. You know, that's really hard work. Why don't you just, you know, relax? God wants you to rest.

And sometimes that's true, but it kind of simplifies the rest that God wants us to have. It dilutes it into nothing, really. We're meant to rest in maturity and in righteousness and in fellowship with God, not in lethargy and apathy.

Right? And this question falls to us too. Who will you listen to? Will you listen to the questions the world asks you or that your own heart asks you that are framed against God?

Or will you seek the wisdom to see through those lies? How does Eve respond? Verses 2 and 3.

The woman said to the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, You shall not eat of the true.

But God said, You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden. Neither shall you touch it lest you die. So a faithful response.

[ 13 : 16 ] Now, a lot of ink has been spilled about whether she added to God's command because we don't see in the initial command the you shall not touch it part and whether or not she was erecting more barriers than God had even made for her.

I don't think that's necessarily where we need to get ourselves tripped up on. But to see that she actually gives a good and faithful response. But temptation doesn't only come once, does it?

It comes again. Verse 4. First off, he's lying just outright.

They do indeed die. We see it in Genesis 5, verse 5. Adam's death is recorded. But he is kind of right and that they don't die immediately. But until they die, until that day, they lived in the sin-shattered world that they had made.

They lost direct access to God. They were expelled from the Garden of Life. Chapter 4, they watched as their children murdered each other. All of us know what it is like to live in that sin-shattered world, some better than others.

[ 14 : 53 ] And that's actually what he gets to, isn't it? You'll be like God, knowing good and evil. See, here's the thing.

They were already like God, weren't they? Let us make man in our image after our likeness. They were like God.

And so he's framed the question as if they're not. Friends, don't forget who you are in Christ. It's interesting, he says, knowing good and evil, and likely what he's getting at there is decide what is good and evil for yourself, having the power to declare something good and evil.

And is that really what being like God is all about? Because we all kind of do want that for ourselves, don't we? We want to be able to dictate the terms of the world.

We've gone out of our way in the past couple weeks to look at who is this God in the opening chapters of Genesis. Genesis. And even if the serpent could deliver what it promised, and he doesn't, does he?

[ 16 : 13 ] Sin never delivers. They wouldn't actually look like this God at all, would they? In Genesis 1, we saw that God is sovereign and he is good.

The serpent doesn't offer that. In the first few verses of chapter 2, God desires rest for his people, to rest with his people. The serpent doesn't offer that. In the rest of chapter 2, God wants to be near his people.

In fact, the serpent offers them a way away from God. You can be God for yourself. That's what he offers. He says it's you can be like God, but it's nothing like God.

They were already like God. He made them in his own image for himself. Are we forgetting that that is where our highest good is day by day, friends?

Our highest good is found in him. Seeking it elsewhere is a fool's errand. In the very famous book, Near Christianity, C.S.

[ 17 : 25 ] Lewis said this, what Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could be like gods, could set up their own, could set up on their own as if they had created

themselves, be their own masters, invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside of God, apart from God.

And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history. money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery, the long, terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.

God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself because it is not there. There is no such thing.

And then what does the serpent do? He gives them this idea, this promise, this idea, doubt God and you will get more. And that is the last thing the serpent says.

He puts an idea in her head, a stone in her shoe, so to speak, and then he walks away. He promises the good life that he can't deliver and he doesn't stick around for the consequences.

[ 18 : 52 ] And that is what sin and temptation always does. It promises you a one dimensional bliss. It doesn't deliver.

When have you ever been satisfied by sin? And that doesn't stick around for the aftermath, the consequences. You are alone.

The serpent doesn't stick around for their shame. He's nowhere to be found in their guilt. He doesn't cover up their nakedness. God does. He's not a comfort to them when they are separated from the Lord, from each other.

He doesn't help them in their attempts to cover themselves. When we walk into sin, it promises big things, friends. It delivers nothing and abandons us when we face the consequences.

promises. Now, before we continue, they're going to be blaming someone pretty soon when they eat of the fruit.

[ 20 : 03 ] Can we say the devil made me do it? We are responsible before the Lord for our actions. We can't say the devil made me do it.

Later on in this chapter, we can't say my wife made me do it. We can't say I was hungry, I was tired, I was bored, I was lonely, I was anything. We are responsible, friends, to the Lord for our own hearts and our own lives.

Occasions for sin, temptations towards sin, all of those things do not give us license to sin. now, how does Eve react?

Verse 6, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

She also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate. I want to ask you a question. Where were Eve's eyes?

[ 21 : 21 ] And where are your eyes? What did she look at? What was she looking for? kind of three ways we can look at her focus?

First, she was looking at the perceived upside of sinning against God, of abandoning him.

Secondly, she was thinking short term.

it was tasty, it was pretty, and short term thinking led to long, long term pain.

And third, it was misguided. She desired to be made wise apart from God, in contrast maybe even to God, and that separated her from her own actual desire, right?

If she wanted to be wise, you need to be near the wise one, the all wise one. Not separate yourself from, set yourself up against the wise one.

[ 22 : 34 ] And so friends, where are your eyes today? When you are tempted towards sin, where are your eyes? Are you looking at the perceived upside of sin, that one dimensional bliss that it can't even deliver, right?

We think of, some people use drugs, right, to mask pain. But it's a one dimensional mask, isn't it? And it really creates more pain than it ever gives relief.

And then it abandons us in a worse position than we started. That's looking at the perceived benefits, looking at it short-term and looking at it with misguided eyes.

Friends, all sin is like that. Then, verse 7, the eyes of both of them were opened. And they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

They heard the sound of the Lord 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?

[ 23 : 51 ] And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. When Adam and Eve fell, the fall affected them completely as human beings.

Evangelical Christians are often guilty, guilty, of narrowing our focus, you'll see why that's a pun in a second here, narrowing our focus of the gospel strictly to our legal standing before God.

You need a savior so that you can get out of hell because you have a debt so you can go to heaven. And that's absolutely true. I don't want to pretend like that's not true. That is at the very heart of the gospel.

But it is not the complete gospel. The fall has affected us comprehensively as human beings. So we have a legal problem before God.

There is a debt to be paid. We are owed punishment for our sin. The wages of sin is death. That's absolutely true. And our sin scars us. What happens when they betray God?

[ 25 : 04 ] Their eyes are opened just like the serpent promised. Their sinfulness has opened their eyes but it wasn't a good thing. Then the eyes are both were opened and they knew they were naked and they saw good and evil in a way that they had never seen before.

Before this they knew good. In fact, all they knew was good. They had experienced nothing but goodness. But now they knew evil. They had experienced it as well.

Not only did they know guilt, I've done something wrong. They were also experiencing shame. I am something wrong. And further, their perception of the whole world, the whole world is distorted. We're going to see that it is going to distort their relationships with one another. It distorts their relationship to God as well. It kept distorting their mind instead of running to the Lord, the source of goodness, the source of life, the all good, all living, all powerful God who gave them light and life and peace.

They ran from him. That's what sin makes us do. It makes us run from God. They hid from him.

[ 26 : 27 ] See, our sinfulness infects our whole being. It makes us guilty before the Lord and it distorts our gaze. sin. We look in wrong directions, like Eve, looking at the perceived upside of sin, not at the beauty of God.

We look in wrong directions. We dwell on self. We dwell on pleasures, occupations. Sometimes we dwell on misery. Anything but God, it seems.

So sin turns us away from God. In John chapter 3, Jesus said this, this is the judgment, the light, that is he himself. came into the world and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and cannot come to the light, lest his work should be exposed. So sin turns us away from the Lord and it makes us disdain the things of God too.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul says we preach Christ crucified and how does the world receive it? a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.

[ 27 : 40 ] But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. We sang earlier today, holy, holy, holy.

Though the darkness hides thee, though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see. St. Clair Ferguson put it this way, sin is not superficial to us, merely a flesh wound on top. It's a deep distortion, a twisted hostility toward God and his reign over us.

And so it's no wonder then that sin separates us from God, not just in a legal sense, but in a relational sense as well.

John Murray, one of my favorite modern theologians, put it this way, the fall was complete moral revolt against the sovereignty, the supremacy, authority, and will of God.

[ 28 : 45 ] In God's command to Adam was his sovereignty, his authority, his wisdom, his justice, his goodness, and truth. And so disobedience to it was an assault upon the divine majesty, a repudiation of his sovereignty and authority, doubt of his goodness, dispute with his wisdom, contradiction of his veracity.

Sin is a contradiction of every one of God's perfections. And friends, even though we might not think it through, every time we try, to follow sin, every time we do that, we do all those things, even though we're not thinking about it.

We are in the back of our heads, though, saying, no, God, you're not God. I get to decide. Every time I say, I'm not following your law, I say, your truth is not truth.

your goodness is not goodness. How does the Lord respond? Verse 11.

He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat? the man said, the woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me of the fruit of the tree and I ate.

[ 30 : 17 ] Do I need to even comment on that verse? Likewise, then the Lord God said to the woman, what is this that you have done? The woman said, the serpent deceived me.

And I ate. Friends, we are just like our first parents. In so many ways. We cast blame just like they do.

But more at the heart of it, we sin alongside them in a way. In Romans chapter 5, Romans 5 is Paul's commentary, the apostle Paul's commentary.

On Genesis chapter 3. And how we are all either in Adam or in Christ. Here's how he says in Romans 5, 12, therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Every one of us, friends, has rejected the Lord. It looks different in different people's lives, but every single person, on the face of the planet, has not just fallen away, but fallen against God and put something else in his place.

[ 31 : 35 ] If God isn't God to you, something else will be. If God isn't in your view, something else will be. If God isn't your source of wisdom, something else will be.

if God isn't your desire, then something else will be. Sex, reputation, money, entertainment, this goes on and on, and sometimes we are on the receiving end of someone desiring those things above everything else, and we are wounded, wounded, or sometimes we are the ones making the wounds.

See, all those things are not friendly gods, if I had to put it somewhere. They're not sovereign like the Lord, so they can't fully satisfy, right? they're not ultimate good like the Lord, so they can't make you whole.

They're not complete in themselves, so they will leave us wanting. For some, just making it through the day can be the thing you pursue hardest.

And when those things let you down, and they will, or when someone stands in your way of those things, and they will, how will you react?

[ 33 : 03 ] With grief? Will you be undone? With anger? Will you lash out? Friends, this world is broken, and it is we, along with our first parents, who broke it.

The Times of London once set out an inquiry to famous authors asking the question, what's wrong with the world today? G.K. Chesterton responded to the inquiry simply this, Dear Sir, I am yours truly, G.K.

Chesterton. What are the results? What comes of this?

we see the results in verses 14 through 19. Now, we are actually going to save verses 14 and 15 to the end of today's sermon because it helps us understand why there is a rest of the Bible, why we, why the human race was allowed to continue, because they were owed judgment even that day.

Let us look first to the Lord's words to the woman and to the man, and then we'll come back to his words to the serpent. Verse 16, to the woman he said, I will surely multiply your pain and child bearing.

[ 34 : 33 ] In pain you shall bring forth children, your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you. Eve's penalty impacts two of the pillars at the core of femininity.

Motherhood and marriage, both of them are disrupted and disturbed. Perhaps this is something that is problematic, missing, broken, for you too, in some way, and if so, you need to see it for what it is, a sign that this world is not as it should be, and a sign that we need a savior.

especially understanding the second part of the curse. It's helpful for us to look a bit ahead. It literally says your desire shall be for your husband.

The ESV, if you're reading it, that's what I'm preaching out of this morning, brings out the nuance that it is contrary for your husband. This word desire is a very peculiar word. It only occurs three times in all the Old Testament.

There are other words for desire that do also appear, but this one appears only three times, and one of them is in chapter 4. If we look to chapter 4, verses 6 and 7, Cain is contemplating killing his brother.

[ 35 : 58 ] We see the fall in full effect here. The Lord said to Cain, verse 6, why are you angry? And why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted?

And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door, and here it is. Its desire is for you, or contrary to you, but you must rule over it.

When we see Eve's curse here, your desire shall be contrary to your husband, he shall rule over you, especially if your Bible says your desire will be for your husband, it might be easy to see that, as, you know, I'm really into him, but he's going to be mean to me.

That's really not what's going on here. Instead, what it does mean is you and your husband have already put yourselves first as individuals.

When you took that fruit, you put your own interests ahead of everything else. You saw it was good in your eyes, in your estimation. You sought to increase your position.

[ 37 : 10 ] You decided that you were going to play by your rules and for your prize. You have cursed yourself by putting yourself first. You're going to continue to do that.

And he's stronger than you. Now, that is not something that gives husbands license, to be domineering over their wives.

That's not at all what this passage is. It is a description of brokenness in the world. Over and over, husbands are entreated to bear gently with their wives in scripture, to love them as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

This is not an excuse for overbearing, domineering husbands, but an explanation of where they come from, and an explanation of why relationships throughout all of humanity are broken, are messy, are not as they are intended to be.

And then verse 17, he turned to Adam and said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife and I've eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it. Cursed is the ground because of you.

[ 38 : 29 ] 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 and for you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, husbands, we now have license, biblical grounds to not listen to your wives. Bad joke, I know.

here we see that abandoning God, the source of all life, the source of all order, leads to fertility and death.

It is as simple as that. The fall broke the world, both physically and relationally. that's why we said in our introduction today, this speaks to everybody who is hurting in so many ways.

If you are hurting physically, it is because the earth is cursed on account of us. If you are hurting relationally, it is because we are cursed, because we have made ourselves a curse. Now, verse 20, the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

[ 39 : 57 ] And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skin and clothed them. And 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 a flaming sword that turned every way to guard, excuse me, the way to the tree of life.

God doesn't destroy them. He clothes them. He keeps them from the tree of life, which is actually a mercy.

He keeps them from a life that is eternally separated from him. and he sends them on their way. What happened to you?

You will die. We see God's mercy, but is he no longer just? Is he a liar? What happened?

[ 41 : 09 ] He's passing over sin because of what we skipped in verses 14 and 15. the Lord God said unto 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 and he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

Do you remember how I said that Romans 5 is the Apostle Paul's explanation, his sermon on Genesis 3? Let me read from that again.

Just as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin and so death spread to all men because all sinned, but the free gift is not like the trespass.

For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for many.

[ 42 : 21 ] And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.

For if because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

What's Paul saying? He's saying that one day God was going to send. What he said in verse 15, I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and her offspring, and that offspring, he will bruise your head.

Crush is the word in Hebrew, your head and you shall, same word, crush his heel. God passed over sin and permitted our first parents to live, permits us to live, because he passed over sin and punished it in his son, who at the cross had his heel crushed, so to speak, because he died on the cross, but it was not a fatal blow.

Finally, because he rose to life, because he is the Lord of life. I am the way, the truth, and the life, he said. Friends, we've talked a lot about sin.

[ 43 : 59 ] There's not been much laughter at my bad jokes today, because this is a heavy passage. It has a lot to say about why our world is broken. It confronts us at every turn, every decision we make, every relationship we have.

The Lord allows us, in his mercy, to continue living because he punished sin in Christ. and in so doing, crushed the head of the serpent.

Our salvation, friends, in Christ is a salvation from the guilt of sin and also the power of sin. That sickness of sin that our perceptions, that our hearts, that our minds are skewed.

away from God and towards ongoing sin. That's why Jesus calls it new birth, a reversal of everything that we have been talking about today.

The prophets called it a new heart, a heart of flesh, a recognition and an embrace of who God is, a new heart that doesn't see the cross as foolishness and no longer wishes to doubt his goodness, no longer disputes his wisdom, no longer repudiates his authority.

[ 45 : 34 ] And that's why salvation produces what we need most, reconciliation. When the apostle Paul explains the central message of Christianity in 2 Corinthians 5, he calls it the gospel of reconciliation.

reconciliation. Friends, we don't offer Christ as a means out of hell.

It's not a get out of jail free card. We offer Christ himself. It is the gospel of reconciliation to him.

They were cast out, Adam and Eve.

They were cast out away from God. But on the last day, our home will be with God. And the tree of life will stand there in his city. What do we do with all of this?

Three things. First, if you do not know this Christ and this new birth, you do not have him, you want relief from the brokenness of this world, the brokenness that you and I are part of the problem, I will simply read to you from Paul's gospel of reconciliation.

[ 47 : 00 ] We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. It means turning from darkness to light, as Paul also said, returning to him, calling on the name of the Lord.

Secondly, this is for those, for everyone here, but in particular, those who already know Christ.

Where are your eyes? Where are they?

Ask yourselves in your conflicts, where are my eyes? What am I looking at? What am I seeking out? In your plans, where are your eyes? Where are you looking?

In your pain, as you suffer from the fall, not just from the guilt, but also from the pain of the fall. Where are your eyes? Remember, friends, sin promises a hollow joy, one-dimensional, that it cannot deliver and it will leave you abandoned.

[ 48 : 05 ] Don't live in unbelief, either explicitly like Eve did, directly doubting God's goodness, or implicitly in unbelief, just forgetting that he is there.

Let us live our lives before the face of God, friends. And third, remember that the Lord sought them out.

He came walking, asking, where are you? So let us live with thanksgiving that he sought us out, that he sent his son for us, that he died while we were still sinners for us.

And let us be ministers of that reconciliation as well. Friends, will you this week pray for someone whose eyes are open to sin because of the fall but are not yet open to God?

Will you pray for that person that they might see the beauty of this God? That they might desire reconciliation with him and find it because Christ made an end of all their sin on the cross.

[ 49 : 28 ] Will you join me in prayer?