

God's Mercy in the Beginning

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Amen. If you'll please join me in Genesis chapter number 3, verses 14 through 24. Tonight we will behold our God. What a wonderful song. And as we look at this passage, I believe we'll get to learn more about the character of our Savior.

Like as Ed said, we'll look at this chunk of Scripture tonight. Genesis chapter number 3, we'll start in verse number 14 through 24. And it was said of this passage, it said that it embraces and comprehends within itself everything noble and glorious that is to be found anywhere in the Scriptures.

I know I don't have to sell you on listening to the Bible tonight, but that right there ought to grab your attention about what we're going to see. We've been in Romans, and we've been in creation. After creation, man messed things up.

And in Romans, we're seeing the sin and how awful it is. But tonight, we get to see hope. That when Jesus tells of the penalty of sin, He's going to give the promise of a Savior. And I just love that.

[1 : 16] I'm so excited about it. I want to get over it. And I pray that I know that I never will. I'm so thankful tonight we're going to behold a gracious and merciful God in these Scriptures. That we see the first glimpse of the Gospel.

I remember an Old Testament survey in college. I paid my brother away through college one cheat sheet at a time. Or one study sheet at a time. He had this racket. He would write a study sheet because he could get into the mind of the professor.

And he knew what they were going to ask. So he would sell these sheets of paper that you could study for the exams on. And I remember an Old Testament survey, them asking, what is the first mention of the Gospel?

And we find it here in Genesis 3, 14 and 15. But I remember hearing that and turning to the verses and reading it and thinking, I must be reading the wrong verses because I don't see Jesus. I'm not seeing the cross.

I am missing Him. And I'm thankful that I learned and I'm continuing to learn what it teaches us here in Genesis 3, 14 and 15. I'm going to read from 14 to 24. Knowing that we're going to spend more time on 16 through 19 at a later date.

[2 : 16] Tonight we'll be focusing on these first couple verses. Genesis chapter number 3, verse number 14. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle.

And above every beast of the field, upon thy belly shalt thou go. And thus shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed. And it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel.

And unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children. And thy desire shall be to thy husband. And they shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife.

And hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee. Saying, thou shalt not eat of it. Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. The orange also and thistle shall it bring forth to thee.

And thou shalt eat the herb of the field. And the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Till thou return unto the garden. For out of it wast thou taken. For thus thou art and unto thus shalt thou return.

[3 : 19] And Adam called his wife's name Eve. Because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothe them. And the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become as one of us to know good and evil.

And now let us put forth his hand. And take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden. To till the ground for once he was taken.

So he drove out the man and placed out the east of the garden of Eden. Cherubims and a flaming sword. Which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. Heavenly Father, I pray that in the brief moment we have together, Lord.

That I will help the people, Lord. Myself included. Behold you, Lord. From your word, Lord. We want to see you as you're revealed. In scripture, Lord. I ask that you'll allow me to be a voice for the text, Lord.

And we will see you. We'll see you're gracious and merciful. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. There's a sign outside of a convent in Southern California. Never been to Southern California.

[4 : 17] Never been to a convent. But I saw this. I read this in a book. And on the sign it said, Absolutely no trespassing. Violators will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Signed, the Sisters of Mercy.

You know, and sometimes we find it hard. That we wrestle between the confusion between the relationship of God's grace and His judgment. I found as a parent it's very hard to be the one in the home that I'm supposed to be the one that gives the punishment.

And I'm also supposed to be found as loving. And I find that to be a very hard thing for me to do. But I'm thankful for a God that is perfect in that. That He judges perfectly. He loves perfectly.

And that. And it's a difficult thing for us. But it isn't for our God. And tonight, as the songs say, we want to behold our God. Genesis chapter 3 is so important to us because it's in this that helps define for us the way that the world is for us today.

As we learn about grace and we see man. Before the curse on man and woman is given, hope is given. His plan is redemption. He gets to it. As you read it, you see that our God is excitedly telling us about His promise here to us.

[5 : 23] And it tells of the original sin. If you read in Romans 1, which we've been studying, we learn about creation. Which would make sense because we're studying about sin. Well, it would make sense that we would go back to creation where we learn of original sin.

Upstairs with the middle schoolers, which Mark told us when we teach them the night. When we start out, I say Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These are four. And they say gospels. And I say it's a story about who. They say Jesus. About what?

His life. And they say the birth, death, His perfect life, perfect death, and perfect resurrection. Then we go on the book of Acts. Then we get to the book of Romans. And I say the book of Romans is what?

To the gospel. And what we're calling the book of Romans is a biology book to the gospel. If we see a flower in Genesis, then we see a biology book in the book of Romans. Meaning we get to see it.

And we don't fully understand all about it. But we know that it's beautiful. But in Romans, we get to dissect it and understand it inside and out. But here in Genesis chapter number 3, we see the gospel.

[6 : 19] We see it. It's beauty. And we see the impact that it's going to make on our lives. So briefly, let's look at the conviction of man. The condemnation of Satan. Compassion from God. And then the covering that he makes for us.

So as Brother Robert preached on Sunday night in Genesis 3, 8 through 13. We won't go back over that. But we find God brings a conviction. And he does this by coming in on the scene.

Remember, before God comes and walks with him in the cool of day, they're already hiding themselves. And we're told in the Bible, Romans 2, 15, that which show the work of law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and the thoughts that the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.

That they had a shame for the first time. That they realized they were naked and now they're covering themselves. And they felt this and sin had brought this. And so God comes there and his presence brings conviction.

Before there could be any comfort for these people, the presence of God had to bring conviction in their lives. And he brings conviction by asking a series of questions. He asks, where are you?

[7 : 22] God doesn't have to ask where anybody is. But his question, it brings conviction. The answer that Adam should have given as we look back on, he should have said, separated from you in need of a savior is where Adam was.

Then he said, who told you that you were naked? And he should have been able to answer. He said, I chose somebody else as my authority. I have been idolatrous in my life. I have believed, Eve should have said, I've believed the lie I need forgiven.

When he asked that question, he said, who's your source of authority? And that brings conviction. Then he goes on to say, did you disobey me? Did you eat of the tree? And even more conviction is being brought.

He should have said, yes, I did. And I do deserve to die. But even though I deserve to die, Adam could have said, I've eaten of the tree I've disobeyed. But I need something. I know that I'm supposed to die because you said it.

And I'm shameful of what I've done. But I need something. But Adam didn't know the word grace. He wouldn't know the word. And he didn't know it existed. Because he was beholding and learning about his God.

[8 : 22] He did not know what was in our father. But he will quickly find out. And then he asked Eve, what have you done? Which is a question we must be willing to ask other people. So you see that the presence of God and the conviction before he can bring comfort.

As you share the gospel with people, you've got to know that the presence of God is going to bring conviction in their life. And that before there can be any comfort, there must be conviction. They've got to see where they're at and what's their source of authority.

And that they've disobeyed and they have rebelled against the holy God. And then they're anticipating grace. And then when they hear of it and they hear of the covering, then they readily will receive it.

Because they knew they had done wrong. Jacob knew he had done wrong towards Esau. And he knew that he didn't deserve to be forgiven. But he got to experience grace because he knew of his condition. So we see the conviction of man here.

And God could have pronounced sentence upon them without speaking to them. But he insists upon confession. He did not have to come down. As soon as they had there, they could have been gone. Erased.

[9 : 19] Erased. Never to be known again. They could have been immediately cast to a lake of hell prepared for the devil and his angels. He could have done anything. But he comes down to them. And our excuses to God are as those slimily leaves that are covering them.

And this happens today as we speak to people from Romans 1 and 2. And as we go through the Bible with them, just as God comes to them. And it says they hide themselves deeper among the trees.

And they hide deeper. I mean, what would have happened here in the story if Adam and Eve would have had more time? We don't know exactly how long. Was it the next morning? Was it that evening? We don't know how long.

But what if they've been given more time? Do you think maybe if they were given more time, they might have went about doing good things so they would feel better about their shame? Maybe if they had more time, they would have worked harder. Maybe if they would have had more time, they would have created a religion to get God's attention.

Maybe if they had more time, they would get so bad at feeling shameful and guilty and sinful, they would get to the point where they would shake their fist at God and say, I don't even believe in you and I don't believe in the conviction that I have.

[10 : 21] And you say, oh, that's just, it's made up in belief. And I know because God comes quickly onto the scene. But we do see people today and they say there is no God and they want to not recognize his presence. And they do all those things.

They try to cover their sin and their shame. And as people of the book, we have to bring the presence of God. We have to make them aware of that fact. We have to show them that. As our brothers go off to China and they know, from their testimony, they know that they're sinners and that they have to be taught from the word that the presence of God is there and that it brings conviction in their life.

And God's presence brings conviction before it will bring comfort. This is more than just built in consequence of sinful behavior, but this is divine judgment. If I go out the night and I get drunk and I drive, there'll be built in consequences to my sin.

There's more than them just eating of this tree that they disobeyed God. And when he came, they knew that there's a divine judgment that could only be given from God. The judge has walked into the courtroom of mankind.

We are without a lawyer. We have blood on our hands and we are without excuse. There's no place to hide in creation because he made creation. There's no way we can talk out of it.

[11 : 30] There's no way we can shift the blame. But we're completely guilty before God and we're waiting. See, that's what I was alluding to earlier in the excitement of the mission field and the fact that you could find this here as we faithfully share the gospels that when you get to this part of the story, that people don't know what happens next.

And so many times we think we know what happens next so we don't pay attention to it. But they didn't know. They hid among the trees and he came and then he questioned them. And they didn't know what the next action was going to be.

They hadn't read Genesis 1 through 3 from January 1, 2, and 3 and started all over as we all do at the beginning of each year. They hadn't done that yet. So we see that.

And then he moves from that. Then he goes to the condemnation of Satan. And he talks to a serpent. And so it's interesting that instead of before he first speaks to the man, Adam and Eve, he speaks to the serpent. He speaks to the animal, the serpent.

But we find something here because God doesn't speak to animals on behalf of the animals. 1 Corinthians 9, he says, I don't speak to oxen for oxen. It's like I'm speaking for you. You know, these animals are irrational.

[12 : 34] They're like middle schoolers. Now I'm just playing. All right. They're irrational, this animal. So when he's speaking to the serpent, the animal, he is speaking to us. He is letting us hear in on this conversation.

And all creation feels the effect of the fall. Romans 8, 22, they groan for it. And they all feel the effects of the curse upon the earth. And they wait till the day that they can be restored. But this animal was used as an instrument of Satan against the man and hurting him.

And he is cursed. Leviticus 11, 42 tells us that this is the lowest creature. You shouldn't eat it. And they're told here in 15, he says, you're going to go around, that you're going to crawl around, and you're going to eat the dirt.

Dirt. Psalm 72, 9, it's one expression that you may use if you've ever beat anybody in a sport. You say, they really lick the dirt. You ever say that? I don't know that I have, but it sounds like something we say, right?

If you beat somebody, they lick the dirt. Anybody with me? No? Nothing about dirt? They kick the dirt. They bit the dust? Bit the dust. All right? All right. I'm just, you know, okay.

[13 : 32] So they got licked the dirt, but you can imagine that's like the lowest place possible they could get. And it's a picture. You know, I found in study in Isaiah 65 that even there in the millennial reign where we learn about animals being back together, that the serpent still doesn't have its legs.

It's still not the Geico lizard. It's still the serpent without the legs going around. Because what the rainbow wasn't a promise to us, this serpent is a reminder to us that God with his voice took away power from that serpent.

And it's a powerful reminder. I still hate snakes, but next time I see it, I'm going to step back and I'm going to praise the Lord that it has no legs and I have two of them. And I'm going to get away very quickly. So he is, so it reminds us he is powerless and will be destroyed by God's word.

And so we see this in Satan. And John 8, 44, it says, you are the, ye are of your father, the devil and the lust of your father. You will die. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him.

When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own for he is a liar and the father of it. He's not speaking to the serpent, the animal. He's speaking to Satan there. And he says, I'm going to put at enmity the seed of the woman against you.

[14 : 40] Which in this, as he's speaking to the serpent, which is a punishment to Satan, it's a promise to us and it's wonderful that he'll be destroyed by the word of God. At the end of Revelation 12, 17, it says, and the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

And I saw one of his heads as if it was wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed and all the world wondered after the beast. Then in Revelation 19, 15, it says, and out of the mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it it shall smite the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and he tread the winepress of the fierceness and the wrath of an almighty God.

God had no struggle with the serpent. With his word, he took away his feet and in the same way that with his word, which is as a sword, he will destroy Satan and cast him into a lake of fire.

Can I tell you that the battle at the end of the ages between God and them is not Rocky versus Apollo 13. This is not a thing that he has to prepare for and has his own music and he's working out for that with his word.

It is not going to be a cosmic battle, but his word he will do it. And we're reminded of that with the Satan. As same as that serpent had no powers created, the same God will do that to Satan.

[15 : 57] And that's wonderful. Why should Satan intimidate us? He's already bound in prison and he's yelling there and he has no power upon the believer and he offers us power, but he is bound and we're reminded of this.

And then we find the provision is one of Satan's punishment. Think about Satan here. As I told you, we don't know the next verse as it's being written. So Satan believes he has gained an eternal friend in mankind.

He believes that he has staged the coup here on earth as he attempted to do in heaven. He believes that God will now have no use for mankind. That man will forever see God as enemy and as friend.

That Satan has claimed mankind. And he must have thought that he had accomplished what he wanted. In heaven, he took a third of the host of angels now on earth. There's two people and he has both of them in his pocket.

And he thinks he's celebrated. I have ruined the relationship. God has no use for them. And they're done. And I've conquered this world. I may not have heaven, but I have this world.

[16 : 58] But God has another plan. Genesis 3.15, as he says there, and he says, I will put enmity between the woman and between thy seed. We don't see the serpent here speaking, but God speaks to him knowing what he is thinking.

And as I said these things about Satan, we see what God says to him, which makes us believe we know what he was thinking. That he is going to put enmity between the seed of the woman and him. And her seed is the prophecy.

We find here, we find, I wouldn't say prophecy because he's God. So he's just making a statement about the future. There's no guess about it. But he knows about the future that she will be born, that Jesus will be born of a virgin.

Throughout the scripture, we find the seed comes from man. That this is the seed of a woman because he will be born of a virgin. So it is not of the seed of man. And he's through the new birth.

We are now of this seed that we are hid in Christ. And there is contention, there is enmity between the seed of Satan and the seed of Jesus and all those that belong to him. Even to this day, we'll turn over in the next chapter and we'll immediately begin to see the difference between Cain and Abel and the strife that is there.

[18 : 05] An estimated 160,000 Christians were martyred last year. When Saeed was in jail in Morocco and they said, we can't believe you're in jail for being a Christian. You could have done anything else. It would make sense to us, but you're a Christian.

We see there's enmity there. And it says that he will bruise the hill, which would be Jesus, and he will crush the head of the serpent. We find in 1 John 3, 8, He that committed sin is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning.

For this purpose, the Son of God was manifest, that he might destroy the works of the devil. On the cross, he destroys the work of them. And we're told of a story in Matthew 12 where he comes in and they said, you and Satan must be on the same side.

You must be working for Beelzebub. And he said, I would not be able to overcome the strong man that has taken humankind hostage unless I was a stronger man and I'm of a different kingdom. When he came, the kingdom of light, the kingdom of God overtook Satan.

In Romans 16, 20, I love this. It says, It's a good thing to remind Satan of, is that shortly, that promise that will be fulfilled, is that the cross has already struck a blow against death, and that you will one day spend eternity.

[19 : 20] So we look at here, we see, as we look at that, 6 through 19, we look at the consequence of sin upon our lives. And then, as we get to verses 20 through 24, we look very quickly in these verses, but we see here, we find the faith of Adam.

We find man's response. Verse number 20, it says, And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

We'll stop and look at the night. We'll also see atonement, because he makes the covering, and he takes an animal, an innocent animal, to pay for the sin. And we learn of the gospel here, and we see it. And as we learn of that, all the way up to when Jesus is there, we see the perfect lamb, which has come.

Behold, the lamb of God will take away the sins of the world, John the Baptist, when he saw him. But Adam here says something about Eve. Can you believe it, Brother Clapp, that God still lets Adam name his wife?

Okay, so I was talking to Stephanie about this. After all this goes down, and God says, Name Eve, I'm going to name her something different than Eve. I'm going to name her, what were you thinking?

[20 : 22] All right, so every time I call her from the kitchen, I don't know why she's in the kitchen in my store, but I call her from another room. As I say, come in here, I'll say, come in here. What were you thinking? Okay, I am not going to give her this nice name of Eve, Mother of Living, because of what had happened.

But we see the faith of Adam, that God spoke, you've messed up, he's in conviction, he deserves to die, grace is introduced. And by faith, he says, she'll be the mother of living, that from her, all the people, this Savior will come, which will give real life, eternal life, and that also God is not done with us.

Isn't that a wonderful thing? We see the faith, the promise given, Adam trusts, and he believes in faith. Can I ask you just a couple questions tonight, Christian? Look at this more, we'll see more, even more about the gospel, as we continue in Genesis, the pastor comes back.

Can I ask you, Christian, have you ever questioned the grace of God? Then would you go back and look at this again, and ask yourself, is not God gracious, who runs to provide grace immediately, on the heels of the fall, and the curse?

Man, I would never dare to say, that God should have done anything in a different order. But can you imagine, it's like, he couldn't even get done, telling about the consequence of sin, and about the curse, before he goes ahead and tells us the promise, that his grace is there, that he didn't leave them there, that he immediately comes to them, and the conviction is there, and once they recognize their need, he provides for them, a covering.

[21 : 57] He doesn't make them work, or it even says, what you've done, it doesn't work. I'll provide something, I'll take full care of you. So can I ask you, Christian, have you ever questioned the grace of God?

Don't. We see it here, and we see it in our lives. For those of you in here, that are unbelievers, you've never experienced the grace of God, how in the world, would you still continue to hide among the trees, knowing God that speaks to you, that we have the written word, that you have heard.

As I've read these scriptures, I did not speak my words to you, I spoke the words of God to you the night, and he's seeking for a relationship with you, and he wants to restore it, and there's a penalty for your sin, that he paid for on the cross.

That we, this is only a picture, that covering is only a picture, of what he will eventually do on your behalf. How could you ever say no to that? How could you ever say no to that type of grace?

Could you name any offer you've ever been offered, that's better than that? Christian, once again, only the word of God can convict man of his sin, and only God can show compassion, needed to lead them to repentance.

[23 : 04] Are you faithfully showing people, their need of a savior from his word? Can I tell you that you'll never bring conviction, upon somebody's life, like the word of God, and you shouldn't, because the shame and guilt, that you can give them, it doesn't matter.

It's what the word of God says. And can I tell you, the compassion that you show them, and we help people out, and we should, is not near the compassion, that a gracious and merciful God. They need to see that.

They don't need to see guilt coming from you, they need to find it from the word of God. They don't need to see compassion from you, they need to find it from the word of God. We must be faithfully sharing the gospel, with the Bible, and our hand, showing them his words.

He's walking in the garden, he's finding people, he's speaking to them, he's reconciling a relationship, he did not stay silent, he did not leave us looking for him, but he offers grace.

And then I must ask one more thing, to the unbeliever. Tonight we be held our God, how can you continue to make excuses to him, concerning your sin, how can you shake your fist at him, and deny his existence?

[24 : 05] You already know more about him, than most of the world will ever get to know. You know he is gracious, place your faith in him today. How could Adam deny the existence, of a God who created him, and put him in a garden?

The same question I ask you today. How in the world, could you deny the existence of a God, and how can you deny the fact, that he is gracious, to allow you to live another day, to hear the gospel?

Genesis chapter number three, as soon as grace was needed, grace was applied. What a wonderful, and gracious, and merciful God. I challenge you tonight, Christians, behold our God.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for your wonderful, beautiful word, Lord, and I thank you for the grace, that is in my life, Lord. I thank you for a word, Lord, I thank you in this picture here, that you, you came to earth, and you showed, and you spoke, and today Lord, now we have a word of God, that shows us our need of a syndrome, it brings conviction, but we learn of your wonderful grace.

As a piano player, we begin to play, if you're in here tonight, can I just beg you, on behalf of all of those, that have ever experienced grace in here, if you said, I've never seen this grace, I've never experienced it, I don't know this grace, I've never felt conviction, and I've never received that, could I ask you, just raise your hand in here tonight, I would like somebody, to come to you, and show you the grace of God, from his word, if that's where you're at tonight, hiding among the trees, would you raise your hand, so we could send somebody to you, somebody loving and caring, to show you a loving and caring God, is that you in here, tonight, we'll send a man with a man, and a lady with a lady, now Christians, I speak to you from my heart tonight, do you behold your God, have you lived life, thinking that he was, not merciful and gracious to you, would you find a place, in your cedar at this altar, and just thank him, for bringing the word of God, to you and being gracious, that we heard this story, so many times growing up, and just worship him tonight, for being a gracious, and merciful God, altars open.

[26 : 06] This message was recorded, at Vision Baptist Church, in Alfred, Georgia, for more information, log on to, www.visionbaptist.com, where you can find, our service times, location, contact information, and more audio, and video recordings.

Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.