

Paradise Lost And Promised

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 May 2017

Preacher: Shawn Woo

[0 : 00] Worldview is the comprehensive perception of reality, right? We try to figure out how humanity relates to the rest of the world. And every worldview has to answer three fundamental questions.

One is, how are things supposed to be? What's the ideal state? And secondly, what is the main problem with the way things are? And thirdly, what is the solution and how can it be reached?

For example, Plato and much of Greek thought that the main problem with the world was the body, the material things. And so they encouraged philosophy and the cultivation of virtue as a way to transcend the material universe.

Karl Marx blames unjust economic systems and class struggles for the world's ills. And so to him, the solution was the communist state. Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the romanticists thought that the problem in society was industrialization, technology.

And so their solution was to return to art, to nature, and to primitive freedom. And nowadays, what's popular is it's the worldview of the Silicon Valley, who believes that the power of technology, they believe in the power of technology to solve all social ills.

[1 : 12] But philosopher Leslie Stevenson, who teaches in the UK, in his classic introduction to the Western worldviews, entitled Seven Theories of Human Nature, makes a really insightful observation that sets Christianity apart from the other worldviews.

And he writes, So then in locating the fundamental problem of humanity in the relationship with God, the disruption of our relationship with God, and offering a solution not by just what we can do to solve it, but what God has done, the initiative he has taken to solve it, Christianity, the Bible, offers an answer that's unique to those three questions.

And we found out the answer to the first question, how are things supposed to be, what's the ideal state, last week. We were created for worship, which entails our work, and for relationship with God.

And then now today we find here in this passage the answers to the second and third questions. What is the main problem with the way things are, and what is the solution, and how can it be realized? And Genesis 3 teaches us the world is disordered by our sinful rebellion.

And we can reorder our worship of God and relationship with the world only by believing in Jesus Christ. And so you're going to talk about that in three phases.

[2 : 43] We'll talk about first the character of sin, then the consequences of sin, and third the cure for sin, the character, consequences, and the cure. Verse 1 begins ominously.

Now, the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. I'll explain the identity of the serpent more clearly later, but for now it's important to note that it's an actual serpent.

It's a snake. That's why it says the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. So this is a serpent, a snake that the Lord God had made. And this crafted serpent approaches the woman and says to her, Did God actually say, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

But there's a, it seems like an innocent question at first, but there's sinister intent there, right? Because what God actually said in chapter 2, 16, 17 was, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

But the serpent, you know, shrewdly and subversively phrases that question in a way that makes God look stingy and, you know, stringent, right? He says, Did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

[4 : 04] And as the Bible commentator Gordon Wenham puts it, it's a total travesty of God's original generous permission. He said, Here's all of it. You can have it all, except for that one thing.

But Satan makes it seem like, No, he told you not to have anything. And so, not only that, and serpent uses a word for God.

So, previous to this, all the references to God in chapter 2 refer to God as the Lord God. So, not just the generic God, but the Lord God, referring to his covenant name, which points to his relationship, covenant relationship with Adam and Eve.

But the serpent surely avoids that reference and simply calls him God, the generic God, the distant God, the creator that doesn't really care about you, that God, he says.

So, the God, did God actually say to you, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And in verses 2 to 3, Eve does correct the serpent, but not precisely and not fully.

[5 : 08] She says, We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 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, first, God had said, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but Eve kind of waters down that emphatically generous provision of God. So, she doesn't mention that God said, Surely eat of every tree.

And secondly, Eve adapts the serpent's distant way of referring to God. She doesn't say, Lord God. She says, God. And then third, there is a troubling ambiguity in Eve's summary of God's prohibition.

Because she says that God told them not to eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden. But in chapter 2, verse 9, he told us that both the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil are in the midst of the garden.

So, which tree is she talking about? Maybe she thinks God prohibited both of them, everything, all the tree in the garden, from them. And then fourth, and this is the most alarming of everything that Eve changes in this passage, she adds an additional element to God's prohibition.

[6 : 20] It says, Neither shall you touch it, lest you die. God had mentioned nothing about touching the tree. There's no problem with touching the tree. He just said to don't eat of it.

But Eve adds to God's law, and in doing so, actually subtracts from it. And you can see that in saying that, she's already adopting the serpent's attitude, thinking that God's harsh, repressive, stringent.

Instead of acknowledging his generosity, oh, this distant God, he says, you can't even touch it. Don't even touch the tree. So, you can kind of anticipate what's going to happen after Eve's response.

And so, having definitely shifted Eve's attention from appreciating God's provision to doubting his provision, he goes directly to impugn God's motives in verse 4.

But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

[7 : 29] God said, you will surely die when you do this. And the serpent says, you will not surely die. And the implication, of course, is that God's, you know, kind of selfish.

He's thinking about himself. He's maybe even jealous. He doesn't. He wants to make sure he withholds this good thing from Adam and Eve. So, you know what's really going on, Eve?

It's not that there's anything bad about eating from this tree. In fact, it's going to make you more like God and open your eyes. God just doesn't want that for you. He's trying to withhold that from you. So let's ask at this point, what exactly is the tree of knowledge, good and evil?

Because sometimes people think about it as an apple tree. It doesn't actually say that it's an apple tree. It comes from the Latin word for apple, which means also, it's also the same word for evil.

That's why that was used to represent the tree of knowledge, good and evil in the past. But what in fact was a tree, it was a poisonous tree. Like what's going on? Why does it cause death?

[8 : 29] And why does God forbid it? And since tree of life, according to verse 22, gives life, eternal life, it seems that the tree of knowledge of good and evil should give knowledge of good and evil.

Right? That'd be a fair assumption. And if that's the case, then why does God withhold it from Adam and Eve? Isn't knowledge a good thing? Right? In fact, isn't the whole book of Proverbs pointed to, you know, given to us to discern good from good and evil?

Isn't the whole point of the book of Proverbs to pursue knowledge and wisdom? Right? In fact, Psalm 19, 7 to 8, teaches that the law of the Lord makes wise the simple and gives light to the eyes.

Sounds a lot like the tree of knowledge, good and evil. So verse 5, serpent promises Eve, your eyes will be opened. And then it says in verse 6 that the woman saw that the tree was to be desired to make one wise.

So they seek that, seek wisdom, seek that. But why doesn't God want this wisdom for Adam and Eve? And the reason is this, right? Because though the Psalms often praise the law of God and the Proverbs enjoin us to pursue His wisdom, the law and the wisdom that we pursue is always in reference to God.

[9 : 47] It's the wisdom and knowledge that's from God, not knowledge and wisdom that's apart from God. So Proverbs 1, 7 says, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Proverbs 21, 30 says, no wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the Lord. There's wisdom and knowledge that's God's unique prerogative. And we ought to pursue wisdom and knowledge in submission to Him and not in rebellion against Him.

We're supposed to get wisdom and knowledge from Him, not apart from Him. So what Eve's doing here is not just seeking moral knowledge, she's seeking moral autonomy. She wants to know for herself and to decide for herself what is right and wrong, not to get it from the Lord God who created her and designed her to live for Him.

And it's not that Adam and Eve, if you think about it, didn't know at all what was good and evil, right? I mean, they did know to a degree because the Lord God said, you may surely eat of every tree of the garden.

That's good. You can do that. But then He says specifically of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat for in the day you eat of it, you shall surely die. That was not good. And they knew that.

[11 : 01] They knew in that sense what was good and what was evil, what was right and what was wrong because they knew what God had told them, what He had told them not to do. But by taking the fruit, the serpent is cunningly manipulating Eve to be the arbiter of goodness and evil herself, to decide for herself what is good and what is evil.

Jenny once told me about this, actually, and I confirmed it in a Harvard Gazette article. It was actually written two years ago today about a Harvard seal. If you guys have seen it, it's three books, open books, has the word veritas in it, which is the Latin word for truth.

And it's not, that's not the original design. The 17th century design that the Puritans had, the first two books were open, but the third book was closed.

It's not open. And it was to suggest that the first two books are God's revelation, scripture, the Old and the New Testaments. And the third book was supposed to represent the fact that there is knowledge and wisdom that is reserved for God alone.

Compared to that profound theological truth, the new seal looks a little shallow, doesn't it? Now we think, yeah, we can attain all knowledge for ourselves. Human autonomy, that's really what's going on with Eve's sin, right here.

[12 : 26] It's the essence of human hubris to think that we can be the masters of our own faith, to think that we can attain all knowledge and be totally autonomous apart from God and live without reference to God.

The part of root of every sin is, that's why it's pride and unbelief. Those two things, they're flips, two sides of the same coin, pride and unbelief are at the root of every single sin.

It's an act of treason, really. Ultimate rebellion, disbelieving God and then believing that they can be like God, believing that we can be like God.

And notice how the serpent never makes a direct suggestion to Eve, you know, you should really eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He doesn't do that. He understands the art of seduction.

He simply presents an alternative to God's command and makes it seem like it's more desirable. Sin looks attractive in this picture. You see this in verse 6.

[13 : 27] Read that with me. So 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 and she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate.

It was good, delightful, desirable, sin looks attractive, looks good. Vices, sins, have to masquerade as virtues in order to be appealing to us.

You see this everywhere. Lust masquerades as love. Selfishness masquerades as self-love or self-esteem. Abuse masquerades as discipline.

Slutfulness masquerades as being relaxed and laid back. Pride masquerades as being confident. Selfish ambition masquerades as drive and industriousness.

Envy masquerades as righteous indignation. Lack of faith masquerades as reasonableness. And cynicism masquerades as wisdom. Licentiousness masquerades as progressiveness.

[14 : 40] Fear of man masquerades as humility. Mockery and scorn masquerades as witticism. Gossip masquerades as concern. Permissiveness masquerades as tolerance.

Isn't that true? Sin always looks good. It's attractive. We do it because we want to do it. And that's why sin is ultimately so grievous to God.

Not only because we're pridefully declaring that we know better than God does, but because we're also faithlessly denying God's generous provision for us, His goodness toward us.

We're doing exactly what Eve did in thinking that God is stringent. He's withholding something from us. He's being wicked toward us. He's not being good and generous toward us.

That's why sin is grievous. Because God's heart toward His openness is generous and good. He gives us all that is good and provides for us. Yet we think of Him and we think of the sins, the other things that attract us and we see those things and say, no, that's better.

[15 : 54] God's withholding something from me. This is better. That's so grievous to God. He's a generous Father. He's our loving creator. And so Eve takes the fruit and eats and gives it also to her husband.

And now we come to verses 6 to 8 which is the climactic moment of this whole narrative. Chapters 2 and 3 is just really artistically structured. It's the whole thing is structured as a chiasm or it's symmetrically structured so that there's an element in the beginning that corresponds to an element in the end and they kind of come together to highlight what's in the middle.

So that's what's going on. So first, let me show you in chapter 2 verses 5 to 17 God plants the Garden of Eden and then brings the tree of life in the midst of it and then forms man from the dust of the ground and then puts him there to work it and keep it.

So that's what happens in that first section. And in the corresponding section at the end it's God banishes Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and then so that they may not eat from the tree of life and then instead of working the garden now Adam must work the ground from which he was taken and the keeping duty that was given to Adam is now given to the cherubim to keep Adam from coming into the garden.

You see all the stuff that happens. So this structure intentionally highlights the consequences of sin. So after that is the second element chapter 2 verses 18 to 25 it conveys the original ideal of creation.

[17 : 26] man rules over the earth and its animals along with the woman his perfect helpmate and then the scene ends with how the man and wife will procreate together and how they were naked but unashamed.

And then the corresponding section in chapter 3 is verses 14 to 21 that's the fallen reality of creation. There is perpetual enmity now between the woman and the servant and between the man and the woman and the scene also ends with the mention of procreation and this time instead of being naked and unashamed God clothes Adam and Eve in garments of skin.

So again that corresponding element the consequences of sin. And then the third element is chapter 3 verses 1 to 5 which says that the crafty serpent tempts Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil by saying three things about the tree.

And then later in verses 9 to 13 after eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil Adam and Eve discover that they are naked. The word naked is a word play on the word crafty. They look exactly the same.

Almost exactly the same. And then God poses three questions to Adam and Eve. You guys see the structure I'm talking about? And now all this is intended to highlight the element in the middle which is where we are. Verses 6 to 8 Man and woman are standing alone in the middle of the garden and the woman listens to the serpent and the man listens to the woman and God is not listened to by the man.

[18 : 49] So that's it points out the hierarchy that gets broken and subverted here. And even the way the verses 6 to 8 are phrased really highlight the fact that Adam and Eve really is usurping God's rights as a creator.

So if you look at verse 6 to 8 it's just staccato pace rapid pace there's a lot of action the woman saw she took and ate and she also gave some to her husband and he ate.

And all of these things are things that previously were attributed to God God's action right? If you remember in creation God saw that it was good right? But now it's the woman that sees that the fruit is good right?

And then it says that you know God took the rib from Adam and formed Eve with it and then God brought Eve to Adam but now it says the woman took of the fruit and ate it right?

And then so that God's taking the rib from Adam but also God taking the man and putting him in the garden of Eden now eats the woman that takes of the fruit and eats. And then third making right?

[20 : 04] Up to this point it was God who had done all the making to provide for the man's need but now after their sin they themselves make for themselves loincloths to clothe themselves. God's not providing for them in that scene after sin they have to provide for themselves because they have usurped the creator's rights.

So then in these three verses verses 6 to 8 the creator's the created order the divinely instituted order in creation is inverted it's turned upside down.

God as the creator of the heavens and the earth rules over it all and then he formed man to rule over the earth as his representative and then he gave Eve to him as his helper and gave him the responsibility to lead her and to represent her and then together men and women were to rule over the earth which included all the animals right?

So the creational order was God man woman animals but in verses 6 to 8 the woman listens to the serpent which she's supposed to rule over and the man listens to the woman whom he's supposed to lead and take responsibility for and then they both together disobey and rebel against God so the whole thing is inverted and notice in verse 6 it says she gave some to her husband who was with her right?

Adam's there all along right? So people think sometimes oh it's Eve's fault she's the one that took it Adam's right there and you know what he's the one that heard God's command to not take from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil Eve wasn't there he is the one that God gave the charge to take responsibility for his wife instead he is you know classically passive just letting the woman do what she wants and just following her lead forsaking his responsibility and sins against God and what happens now we turn to the consequences of sin verse 7 to 8 verse 7 it says then the eyes of both were opened now this part the serpent got right but if the devil tells you the truth it's always a half truth intended to deceive right?

[22 : 20] so their eyes were opened but instead of gaining great knowledge and wisdom the rest of the verse says that they knew they were naked that's ironic it's really tragic because I told you about the word play between crafty and naked while this great knowledge you gained from following the crafty serpent you discover that you're naked that's it now verse 8 continues and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden so not only are Adam and Eve ashamed of their own nakedness with each other now they're hiding from the Lord God their creator also now instead of intimacy and complete openness that they used to enjoy now there's fear and shame in humanity and isn't it interesting that human beings are the only creatures of the world that wear clothes animals don't wear clothes parallel wears clothes only because Ray and Carolyn put it on right it's because of the shame that we experience due to sin due to our loss of innocence now that doesn't mean that we should embrace our primal nakedness and then go skinny dipping somewhere right to return to

Eden's bliss immodest exposure and public nudity are acts of denial and defiance of the moral reality that we are fallen from where we were that something is wrong in this world so every time we put on clothes in the morning it's a reminder for us that we are sinners in need of God's gracious covering that's the real purpose of clothes so when God comes it is said in verse 8 that he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and the word translated here as cool is the same word translated spirit or wind or breath elsewhere so the wind of the day the breath of the day it's referring to the cool wind in the early evening that drives away the heat of the day right so it's that time of day and God is in the garden and the wind is because it's referenced often to the spirit right so just like in Genesis 1 to 2 the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters so just as the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters in the act of creation now in God's act of redemption the spirit of God is also in the garden looking for his covenant subjects and once again the narrative restores God's name it's not God anymore it's Lord God again because the Lord

God has come for a reckoning to address the subjects who have rebelled against him and so naturally they hide but of course it's God you can't hide from him he asks him verse 9 a rhetorical question really where are you and implicit within the question is why are you hiding from me and they respond Adam responds I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself it's such an illuminating tale just because you see the classic human response to wrongdoing and guilt and all throughout this right because that's a classic tactic he's basically avoiding eye contact and diverting attention he's like oh no I'm naked that's why I hid but that's not the point right I mean God knows what's going on so he asks who told you that you were naked have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat and then another classic defense mechanism blame shifting I mean you guys laughed out loud because it really is funny what happens the man said the woman whom you gave me the woman whom you gave to be with me she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate

I mean he's not just blaming his wife he's accusing God the woman you gave me you thought it was a grand old idea oh man that was a mistake and so Eve was designed to be Adam's helper instead of helping hindered him and so and Adam who's not supposed to take responsibility for Eve and to represent her just abdicates completely and blames her lays all the responsibility on her and then the woman follows suit by shifting her blame as well verse 13 the serpent deceived me and I ate the serpent mind you according to verse 1 the Lord God had made the serpent you made the peace and harmony that characterized the garden of Eden is now shattered sin sin has alienated man from God and woman from man and animals from humanity and notice how the Lord God comes to reestablish that created order even though the woman was the leading protagonist in the preceding narrative he first comes to man because he's holding him responsible because he had appointed him as head that's why in Romans 5 it teaches that sin and death enter humanity through Adam not Eve because Adam was the federal head the representative head in his marriage and of humanity at large and then after addressing Adam that God addresses

Eve and then interestingly God doesn't even give the serpent a chance to speak right though the serpent sought to to be the man's superior and advisor God doesn't even deign to speak to him because Adam and Eve not the serpent are his covenant subjects created in his image and he holds them responsible and then God utters a series of curses over creation as consequences of sin and this is tragic because if you remember from Genesis 1 after each successive act of God's creation what does he do?

[28 : 28] He blesses and now because of sin he curses his creation verses 14 read with me the Lord God said to the serpent because you have done this cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field and on your belly you shall go and thus you shall eat all the days of your life now the serpent was more crafty but now he is more cursed than all the beasts of the field and Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 describe that animals that go on their belly are detestable and unfit for consumption and unfit to be offered for sacrifice and so here the serpent is cursed to go on its belly in fact the serpent violates all the normal classifications of animals according to the Old Testament doesn't fit neatly into any of the God's created categories it swarms and it rides and so it makes it the perfect kind of a symbol of everything that is anti-God anti-order of creation so that's why the serpent

I think is so fitting that's used here so this is and the punishment is true on both literal and figurative levels right because literally the serpent slithers on the ground on the dust of the earth so it's really eating dust all day long but more importantly figuratively eating dust represents abject humiliation complete humiliation that's what you do to your enemies after you conquer them if you look at the Old Testament see Psalm 72 9 Solomon writes that God's enemies will lick the dust so the serpent then will face ultimate humiliation and defeat that's what that punishment implies and God's curse continues in verse 25 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 I'll explain the theological importance of this later but for now this is literally true the curse is still very true I read earlier this year I think it was in January in the Washington Post they ran a story about how Florida is losing its battle against snakes the Everglades are being over you know just overrun by Burmese pythons they're destroying the wildlife in fact they're driving some of them near extinction and so they had to hire special snake hunters from India to come over and find them and it's still a losing battle this is still going on women their offspring humanity versus snakes it's still going on and of course the favorite way to kill a snake is to smash the head right

I mean that's still that's what's in view here and then God turns to the woman in verse 16 and says I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing in pain you shall bring forth children and notice how merciful God is here I never noticed this until I was preparing for this sermon this week is that God he curses his creation but he never curses his man and a woman he doesn't curse the man and a woman he curses the serpent and he curses the ground but he doesn't curse man and a woman because they're still his covenant people because he still loves them right what happens instead is that their spheres are disrupted their responsibilities are now going to come with more difficulty and pain pain is the word that's used to describe them but curse is not used of them it's only used of the serpent and the ground and here

God addresses the woman's childbearing and later the man's work not because the two spheres never overlap or because they ought to be strictly separate but because they are the woman and the man's primary spheres the woman's primary orientation is toward home and toward her children note well that here childbearing itself is not a curse there's not pain in childbearing but childbearing is not a curse and pain of childbearing before epidural was one of the bitterest pains known to humanity frequently led to death and if you look at Genesis 2 18 and 2 23 to 24 being a man's helper and the mother of children constitute a unique role of woman and that's why it's highlighted here and singled out as woman's sphere and giving birth to children is seen as imitating God as his image bearers that's why in Genesis 5 3 it says Adam fathered a son in his own likeness after his image and named him Seth does sound familiar to you to procreate procreation is described in exactly the same terms as God's creation of man and woman in Genesis 1 26 to 27 and of course the fact that childbearing is uniquely the woman's prerogative is hardly a striking insight but many women lose sight of this in a world where gender distinctions are blurred and women are encouraged to do the same things that men do right and the late

Elizabeth Fox Genevieve who is a feminist historian who directed the women's studies department at Emory University she writes this in one of her books she says so long as women bear children they will not be identical to men and hence not equal to them in the end the best explanation for their economic inequality remains women's ability to bear children the inequality that no amount of social policy can erase social policy can erase the consequences of that inequality but it is unlikely to accomplish even that much until we replace the feminist quest for an illusory equality with compassionate attention to the lives most women actually live the unique ability of the woman to bear children should be celebrated not deprecated and more recently in a New York Times article it was Judith Shulovic she's also a feminist author writes it's entitled How to Fix Feminism she writes that Hillary Clinton's generation aimed to free women from domestic prisons but work is a prison too she writes that most feminist policy makers have often focused on benefits for wage earning women but then she asked what about the women who want to get out of the workplace at least for a while and then points to the bill that representative

[35 : 01] Nita Lowy apparently introduced in New York which would give social security credit to caregivers who left the labor market to cut back on hours a public nod to the reality that care is work and caregivers merit the same benefits as other workers mothering is real work mothering is hard work mothering is significant work and this is especially appropriate on Mother's Day mothers should be honored not just on Mother's Day but every day for their invaluable contribution and irreplaceable contribution to society and even more importantly for their irreplaceable contribution to fulfilling God's intention for humanity having children being a parent is uniformly seen as a blessing throughout scripture consider psalm 127 3 behold children are a heritage from the Lord the fruit of the womb of reward but unfortunately this is we have in our culture have an ambivalent view of children on the one hand most couples still want to have children are disappointed when their attempts fail but on the other hand many couples also delay having children for as long as possible in order to pursue their careers and attain financial stability now there is no strong scriptural case against postponing having children sometimes delaying can help a couple to focus on their new relationship especially during their early difficult years of marriage for some but with that said I can't say that the bible recommends such a delay either and we have to examine our hearts to see if our attitudes to see if there isn't an unbiblical devaluation of children and nowadays even the people who want children often see them as a burden right

I saw a meme recently and yes Steve I do know what a meme is it has a drawing of a baby on it and it reads sometimes when I get sad about not having kids I sleep until noon don't cook or do laundry for a week watch everything but cartoons and buy myself a gift yeah it's funny right but it's also selfish isn't it and even childish right our parents or someone else made all those sacrifices to raise us but we're not willing to make those sacrifices for our children so what if we can't sleep until noon you don't get to watch any of your favorite tv shows and you have to cook and do laundry all the time so that so what if you have to give up being able to eat out all the time because you have to take care of your kid or to provide for your kid what if we have to give up personal downtime so that we have time to play with our children we're raising up another human being made in the image of

God they will either live forever with God or perish without him is that not a worthy weighty task to give ourselves to let's not let our children grow up with the impression that they are an inconvenience to us or a nuisance this kind of self giving sacrificial love should not be foreign to people who follow a crucified savior who gave his life to save sinners perhaps you're a single woman or married but for one reason or another is unable to have children if so let me encourage you by telling of another way you can fulfill his commission to be fruitful and multiply because in Matthew 12 49 to 50 Jesus says here are my mother and my brothers for whoever does the will of my father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother teaching the importance of the family of God which will outlast the biological family in 1st timothy 5 1 to 2

Paul writes do not rebuke an older man and speaking to people in the church do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father younger men as brothers older women as mothers younger women as sisters in all purity within the spiritual family of God the church there are numerous opportunities for all the women to be mothers to function as spiritual mothers and to lead people to faith to repentance and belief and in doing so bear spiritual children that's kind of a mother's day aside it was a little bit long but now getting back to verse 16 and you can read the second half of what God tells women so your desire shall be contrary to your husband but he shall rule over you it's not immediately apparent what this verse means but it becomes clear if you compare it to a very close parallel in Genesis 4 7 where God tells Cain if you do well will you not be accepted and if you do not do well sin is crouching at the door its desire is contrary to you but you must rule over it right so same pair of words desire and rule and they can so that helps us to understand it so once again the word desire is conscious with rule so it seems to be a desire to have to control to take possession of so the sin desire is to have its way with Cain but Cain must master it must rule over it and here

God declares that the wife's desire will be to have her way with her husband to rule over her to control but instead the husband will rule over her and the word rule here means to lord it over someone to dominate someone it's a corruption of the husband's God given call to headship to represent and take responsibly for his wife so instead the husband will be tempted to make idol a power and to abuse and rule over his wife and the histories and literatures of every culture and every time is littered with examples of male domination and abuse of women this pronouncement is all too true and lastly God turns to Adam in verse 17 sorry it sounds so hopeless guys the hope is coming at the end lastly God turns to Adam in verse 17 it says 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 for the woman there is now pain in childbearing and for the man now there is pain in ground working and the word listen in Hebrew has the same nuance as the word for obey so here again is God's indictment of Adam he ought to have represented Eve and taken responsibility for her but instead he passively obeyed her 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 thistle 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 this is the reason why work is work no matter what kind of work you do work is tough right and there are days when you don't want to work and I know this empirically because I have the best job in the world and there are still days when I don't want to work that's why the mantra to do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life is naive and misleading it's really an ideological tool of capitalism to exploit laborers when you recognize work as work you could put appropriate boundaries on it protect yourself so you have time for personal things and for family things but when you think of work as not work then it just bleeds over all of your life it runs your life the biblical perspective on work is unparalleled and its balance on the one hand work is not a curse so Adam was placed in the garden to work it before the fall of humanity so we shouldn't think of work as something to avoid or escape in fact it confers dignity when we work we're imitating

[43 : 38] God who works who created the world but on the other hand work is cursed it's not a curse but it is cursed so we shouldn't naively think that it's all going to be roses when we pursue our work there's pain involved setbacks disappointments difficulties with every type of work and that's not the worst of the punishments and by the way I mentioned to you last week a couple books that deal with these chapters covered in chapter 2 and 3 we bought some copies so that if you guys are really interested and want to read it you could grab one if there's not enough for you at the end you could borrow it from someone in the church or buy it yourself as well and so that's not the worst of the punishment it says in verses 22 to 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 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 a cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life so they're expelled banished from the garden of Eden they thought they would become like God in the full sense but instead they just gained knowledge of good and evil which separates and alienates them from God further and God banishes them and this is an act of grace he says lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever because if he reaches out for the tree of life and eats it in his state of alienation from God he will be in forever a state of rebellion and alienation from God because there will be no life to seek so God banishes him because there can only be life in him with every death every page in the obituary reminder that something is amiss that we need God that only he can give us eternal life but wait didn't God say though that on the day they eat of it they will die how come they don't die maybe Satan was telling the truth and God was not telling the truth of course that's not the case and Adam will live to a ripe old age of 930 years according to Genesis 5-5 but the formula you shall not do something for you shall surely die is the formula for divine threats in the Old Testament so it's really a sentencing it's a legal sentencing so if that's what's in view then it means that the day they eat of it they will be sentenced to death consigned to death and that is exactly what happens

God says to Adam in verse 19 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 dust the ground is again a word play the word Adam comes from the word Hebrew word for ground so the ground is the man was formed from the ground and then he was called to cultivate the ground and then when he dies he will return to the ground the ground the dirt it's his cradle it's his work it's his grave and so while the physical death doesn't come until later the sentence comes and the spiritual death comes immediately as I mentioned last week the Garden of Eden is a type of the future temple I mentioned that to you guys right it represents the fullness of God's presence and unbroken communion with him and that's why the cherubim now guards the entrance and later the cherubim guards the Lord's temple the inner sanctuary as well and when Adam and Eve then when they are banned from the temple of Eden they're being banished from the presence of God

God who is the source of all life and they are banned they're severed from his presence and because only in communion with him we can have true life eternal life that's why Romans 5 speaks of condemnation and separation from God as death that entered humanity and an entailment of that spiritual death is physical death which 1 Corinthians 15 talks about physical death is a symptom of spiritual death and all the genealogies throughout the book of Genesis they're there to bear witness to this truth Genesis 5.5 all the days that Adam lived were 930 years and he died Genesis 5.8 all the days of Seth were 912 years and he died Genesis 9.29 all the days of Noah were 950 years and he died everyone dies in the book of Genesis Satan didn't tell the truth

God did so then according to Genesis sin is the main problem of the world that underlies all our problems you saw how it alienated humanity from God and alienated humanity from themselves one another and it alienated them from the rest of creation all creation now he says in Romans is groaning in Romans 8.22 in the pains of childbirth the creation is disorder something is amiss about the world and that fearful prospect should make a shudder of being eternally shut out from God's presence the light of the world but there is still hope then we turn to the cure for sin verse 21 hints at this it says the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them now I don't think that the animal skin is given here to Adam and Eve is pointing to the sacrificial system because there is no mention of blood and you don't use the skin in the sacrificial system but I do see

God graciously clothing Adam and Eve their shame and their nakedness which is a result of sin and I think it foreshadows how God will eventually cover all our sin and shame clothing was one of the most significant markers of social standing in the ancient Near East and in the Bible in the Old Testament especially the expression clothed them is used in only two ways the first way is of king clothing his honored subjects and secondly it's of the priests being clothed in their sacred vestments so when God clothes Adam and Eve here it looks ahead to those things and in fact Moses wrote these books himself so he has them in view God's restoring Adam and Eve in a sense saying no I still have covenant with you I still have relationship with you and you are still called to represent me on earth in Galatians 3:27 later says that we are to put on

[50 : 59] Christ like a garment his righteousness this points to that ultimate reality verses 15 and 20 point even more clearly to Christ verse 20 says the man called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living her description as the mother of all living recalls the promise of offspring in Genesis 3:15 where God curses the serpent and says 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 I mentioned to you earlier that there is a deeper theological sense to this verse because the serpent of course is not just an animal but he represents Satan the devil as Revelation 12:9 describes God's decisive victory of Satan and he says that the great dragon was thrown down that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan the deceiver of the whole world he has thrown down to the earth and his angels were thrown down with him so whether a serpent was actually possessed by Satan here in Genesis 3 or merely personifies

Satan there is satanic influence here and when we consider this we can see that chapter 3 verse 15 is looking ahead to a long struggle between humanity and the forces of Satan the fight between humanity and sin and evil and in this pronouncement humanity has decisive advantage because serpent will bruise his heel but he will bruise his head and the pronoun used is he referring to a son and this may be why this is why throughout Genesis the genealogists have a prominent role because Moses is intentionally tracing the line of the woman to say that the offspring is going to eventually lead to that future Messiah but not only that we just went through the gospel of John you guys remember how Jesus always refers to himself as the son of man and he awkwardly calls his mother woman right it's probably a reference to this as well right he is the son of man promised who will come to bruise the serpent's head so Romans 5 summarizes this in a real amazing way he says sin came into the world through one man and death through sin and so death spread to all men because all sin and then he says

Adam was a type of the one who was to come 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 therefore as one trespass led to the condemnation for all men so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men for as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners so by the one man's disobedience the many will be made righteous so that as sin reigned in death grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord Jesus is the second Adam he's the new and better Adam who fulfills God's intention for humanity he's the one that succeeds where Adam had failed remember John 20 31 we said Jesus is the Christ the son of God and by believing we may have life in his name we forfeited our access humanity did to the tree of life through sin and

Jesus offers us eternal life through his death on a tree the tree of the cross and when we turn away from our sins and cling to Jesus Christ for salvation that's when the spirit of God indwells and imparts to us eternal life and those who have the spirit of God can be assured that after physical death they will be raised again when Christ returns in the resurrection of the body that's the hope we can't solve it any other way we can't make forge our own path to God that gate that entrance to Garden of Eden was forever shut if you're an unbeliever and if you are a believer the only way we can seek to restore to reorder the creation way God intended it to be only way God's intention for creation can be fulfilled is within the gracious provision of God within the Christ like love the community that he forms with the spirit of

God so the world is disordered by our sinful rebellion and we can reorder our worship of God in relationship with the world only by believing in Jesus Christ I hope that fills you with gratitude and love for our savior that he made the way for us that we cannot make ourselves let's pray together God we are profoundly grateful for we do shudder at the prospect of being forever shut out from your presence because you are our generous father because you have been the giver of all good gifts you have been faithful morning after morning have provided all that we have ever needed thanks be to

[56 : 52] God for Jesus Christ made a way for us and we give you all the praise and glory for our salvation and now help us Lord as your representatives on earth as those who have been indwelt by your spirit to by your grace live according to your will in a manner that references you and gives glory to you at every turn rather than on our own independently autonomously help us God in Jesus name we pray amenstone we going to membranes