

The Fallout Part 3

Grab your Bibles this morning and turn with me to Genesis chapter 3. Genesis chapter 3 and we are going to be looking at verses 16 through 19 this morning. I entitled this morning's message, The Fallout, part 3. And we are continuing to see the devastating effects of the fall, the devastating effects of sin on this creation. We saw last week God begin to address this fallout first by cursing the serpent, really the one in the garden who had tempted Eve and then Eve of course fell into sin and took Adam with her.

And then we saw God immediately promise a seed in verse 15. And now we are going to begin to look today at the trouble that the fall brought to the domestic arena and really the work arena. So everything at home and everything outside of the home has been tainted.

It's been tarnished, it's been injected with difficulty and futility and suffering and pain as a result of what we see here. And we recognized last week that God was immediately gracious to Adam and Eve and that when they sinned He didn't immediately snuff them out. Of course death came that first day, He said in the day that you eat of it you will surely die.

And death surely came, it began to enter into creation on that very day they ate. God in the midst of the consequences, even as we'll see today, has mercy for His creatures. He offers them hope and in fact a future promise that deals with their sin problem.

And so the text before us this morning, verses 16 through 19, God now speaks directly to the woman and to the man. We'll back up to verse 14 and let's read this section together. Genesis 3.14, the Lord God said to the serpent, because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field.

On your belly you shall go and thus you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel.

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

And to Adam, He said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, you shall not eat of it. Cursed is the ground because of you. In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground for out of it you were taken for you are dust and to dust you shall return. God began this section after Adam and Eve fell by speaking first to the serpent. And if you remember as we saw last week, His first words to the serpent are words of judgment.

So, when He comes to Adam and Eve initially and He seeks to draw them out of hiding, He seeks to engage with them because ultimately He's going to lead them in repentance and reconciliation and restore that broken relationship. With the serpent, there's no reconciliation. It's immediately cursing.

God comes to the serpent and He offers him words of judgment. And so, He directly curses the serpent, verse 14. And then, verse 15, there's this glimmer of hope that begins really the first mention in the scriptures of the gospel, the Proto-Ewangelion.

Right there in those words where God says, I will put enmity between you and the woman, God is offering to Eve right there. The hope that although she's fallen into temptation, although she's aligned herself with the serpent, God is going to graciously pull her away. She's still going to be His child.

In fact, there will be a division between Eve and the serpent. And then, that points to two lines, the offspring, your offspring and her offspring. There will be those who are of the prince of the power of this world and those who are of Christ, two lines that will go forth.

And ultimately, those lines will point the line to a single seed, a single offspring, which will be born of the woman, of course, and gain victory over the serpent. And so, God promises, He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel. So, He's telling the serpent, you will have a temporary victory, you will inflict a wound, you will have a measure of success and a battle skirmish.

But ultimately, you will be crushed, it will be a fatal blow. And so, our first parents here are getting an immediate lesson, an immediate lesson right on the heels of their sin. And what they're learning right here in this first interaction is that God alone provides the ultimate solution for our sin problem.

God alone provides the ultimate solution for our sin problem. I mean, this is amazing and it's humbling. This is a good lesson that probably adults have come to learn even by hard knocks.

But for the children in the room, there's nothing you can do to atone for your sins. There's nothing you can do to erase the stains that your sin have caused. There's nothing that you can do to undo the consequences as the result of your sin or the guilt that you've incurred.

Further Adam and Eve are learning right here in this moment, God and God alone provides for a sin problem. Salvation is of the Lord. And so, this is why very often, if you're evangelizing, if you're sharing the gospel with someone, and they don't yet really seem desperate about their condition, you're recognizing that it appears that they've not yet come to the end of themselves.

Because part of coming to God and embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ is despairing of all self-trust. You're coming to the point of despondency. You're giving up any sense of righteousness, any sense of contribution, any sense that you in your own strength could

possibly earn or merit favor with God.

And so, Adam and Eve here start off trying to atone for their sin. They try to blame shift. They try to hide.

God draws them out. And then right here, immediately, He's promising, listen, I'm the one that will provide a seed, and that seed is the one that will deal with the serpent. And so, although Adam and Eve don't yet have all the nitty-gritty details, they don't understand yet that this will be a Jewish carpenter born of a virgin, that he'll grow up in Nazareth, that he'll be a Galilean.

They don't understand that he will one day die on a cross and rise again the third day according to the Scripture, but they already will exercise faith in this very promise of God, an immediate word of hope. And I just want you to see the character of God on display here before we even get to verse 16, that God comes to them in their failure. They're not even repentant yet.

As we saw, Adam's last words are blaming his wife, Eve is blaming the serpent. No one's taking responsibility yet. They're not soft-hearted yet.

They're not repentant. And yet, God comes to them in their failure and He gives them words of comfort. He pronounces grace and mercy to sinners, and He promises them a solution that they don't provide, but He provides, granted to them.

It gives them hymn glory and it's their only way of salvation. And if you notice, it comes before they hear their consequences. I just love that.

One commentator writes, it was not till the prospect of victory had been presented that the sentence of punishment was pronounced. God's letting them know, I'm going to make a provision for you and then I'm going to let you know what your punishment is. And that is just so good.

God doesn't say, I'm going to give you your consequences first and kind of let you sit in it for a while and make sure you really feel the weight of it and then I'll come and bring hope. He starts off immediately with this word of encouragement and hope as recorded in verse 15, and then He gives them the consequences. God came to Adam and Eve quickly, did not leave them long in their sin to despair without hope.

And yet, because God is righteous, He does in fact bring consequences, right? We worship God in part because He's a just God. We worship Him because He punishes sin. And so, Adam and Eve disobey God in the garden.

God promises that He will provide an ultimate remedy for their guilt and their shame, soon He's going to clothe them, again, He's going to be the one that provides that. And yet, it does not happen in such a way as to remove the immediate consequences of their sin. And so, this is devastating.

Verse 16, He says to the woman, I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing in pain, you shall bring forth children. And we're going to take a little time to unpack this, and I want to draw your attention first to note that the woman herself is not cursed. God did say to the serpent, cursed are you.

But for the woman, it's not Eve that receives a curse, rather it's the conditions that she finds herself in. And so, the conditions in which she finds herself are now going to be altered. They're going to be characterized by perpetual pain, difficulty, and frustration.

This is where Debbie Downer comes in now and begins to point out that although there is still the opportunity to be fruitful and multiply, although the creation is not utterly destroyed, there are now, in fact, some things to be very sad about. See, before, the domestic life for Eve was going to be the source of blessing and benefit apart from difficulty. Apart from difficulty.

You read it first, I will surely multiply, and it almost sounds like perhaps she had pain before and now, you know, her pain is being multiplied because you multiply a number by zero, you still get zero, and so surely she had to start out with some pain and now it's being multiplied. It's just a little bit awkward the way it comes out in the English, but the idea would be not starting with a number and then multiplying it, but rather saying, I'm going to make childbearing now painful, and then I'm going to take that pain and it's going to be like a multiplied pain. It will be an exponential pain.

And so, there was no pain prior to the fall. This is now the introduction of pain to Eve. And the point here is that it will not be a little bit of pain, but it will be exponential.

Childbirth will be painful. And that's kind of the irony. You know, husbands, we kind of walk alongside our wives through the childbirth process.

We always say things like, you know, we went to the hospital and we gave birth, and clearly our roles are not the same in that process. I remember going to the classes before our first child and learning how we're going to do the breathing technique and learning how we're going to work through everything. And, you know, as part of those classes, you come up with a birth plan, which is just hilarious because like you really can't come up with the plan.

So I think that's kind of a dumb idea. But we wrote our little plan we had and we're going to the hospital and just kind of being amazed at how the whole process went. And my wife says that I never am more proud of her than after she's given birth.

I think there's just something about that that you're astounded by, what just took place. But I kind of tend to be an analytical guy. So I like to always kind of review, you know, and kind of walk through exactly what happened.

And so I just remember thinking like, you know, babe, we say 14 hours, you're in labor for 14 hours. But like as I'm thinking about it, there's a lot of breaks, you know, in that process. And so like probably it was only about an hour and a half of pain.

So this is representing that. And even as we talk about the contractions, like, you know, they start out, they're not that bad. And then, of course, you transition and then it peaks.

So I just want to make sure when we talk about this, we're not misrepresenting when we say I was in labor for 14 hours. And I decided that doesn't need to be analyzed. We're just going to call it 14 hours of labor.

We're going to leave it at that. The truth of the matter is everyone in the room could be thankful to their mother for what she endured in the birth process. It is incredibly painful.

It's also dangerous. In fact, a high cause of mortality throughout human history was the death of infants, the death of mothers. It's a dangerous endeavor.

Childbirth is notoriously painful. In fact, the prophets would speak of nations being dismayed and in agony. And Isaiah would say in Isaiah 13 that they would be in anguish like a woman in labor.

And so labor pain is a punishment. It is a consequence. It's the direct result of Eve's culpability in the garden that what God had initially given as a gift, the blessing of giving birth to children and bearing children would now be characterized with pain and suffering.

And in this verse, there's two different views primarily as to what's going on. If you read the text, it says, I will surely multiply your pain and childbearing in pain and you shall bring forth children. And the question is, is this simply a poetic way of saying the same thing twice for emphasis, essentially that birth is going to be painful? Or is this being represented in such a way as to add a little bit of new information? Has God speaking of two different arenas here or just one? Both are certainly true.

I think it's likely that God is emphasizing two different realities here. He's speaking specifically of birth itself, but He's also speaking of the process, the totality of really what it means to be a mom. That second phrase, in pain you shall bring forth children, really has the idea of in pain you shall conceive.

And we know it doesn't actually hurt to conceive, but that's a way of kind of simplifying to speak of the whole issue that the idea of conceiving child will be characterized by pain. And in fact, here this pain is not merely physical pain, but includes emotional pain, really vexation is the idea, distress. So I believe what God is most likely conveying to Eve here is that the domestic realm, the home life for a woman, an area that was to be an area of primary blessing, will now be characterized by difficulty.

Let me just think about it. It's not just birth that's difficult. The entire nine months leading up to the birth are oftentimes emotionally and physically taxing.

There's a lot of energy that goes into that, a loss of sleep, sometimes nausea, back pain, swelling, hormonal changes, appetite changes, weight gain, all kinds of things that happen.

And it's not as if a mother gives birth to a child and then all of the difficulty is over. I've got to figure out how to keep that little thing alive.

And once they start to begin to fend for themselves, then those little sinful hearts become all the more evident. And so we have new challenges that we have to deal with. So the perspective here is that for a woman now, this area of great blessing is going to be characterized by difficulty and pain and hardship, really from, I believe, beginning to end.

And if you were to speak with mothers in the room with adult children and ask them, well, when did you stop being concerned about your children? And say, what are you talking about? I'm more concerned now than I've ever been. It's part of the blessing and yet the hardship now of bringing up children. And in fact, for women, it's often the most fruitful years of life in terms of energy and youth are spent pouring out in the lives of advancing the next generation.

In fact, this is one of the arguments of feminism is that women ought to postpone, delay, or perhaps not have children because otherwise they're going to give up very valuable years that they could be progressing in a career. And so here God is saying that Eve, what now was a source of blessing for you, is going to be characterized by difficulty. You're going to expend yourself in burying children through pregnancy, birth is going to be exceedingly painful, you're going to bring them into the earth, it's going to be hardship and toil in many ways, not without blessing and benefit.

Children are a gift from the Lord, but this will now be a burden to bring up children. It will be beset by difficulties. You'll have heartache.

You'll be worried about their spiritual status. You'll be worried about the decisions that they make. You'll have to deal with confronting sin and bearing up with weakness and training and disciplining.

And so the woman now receives her consequence and it is very much connected to her role. It's not just now the domestic realm in terms of children, but he goes on and says, and furthermore your desires shall be, and the ESV says, contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you. I don't much like the word contrary there.

It's an interpretive decision, it's the translators trying to convey the sense of what they think it means. Really, the word there is simply that your desire for your husband, as Alt says in the original, your desire for your husband, he shall rule over you. And so this is a notoriously challenging verse to interpret.

There's not really consensus. There's many different views. Really even in trying to understand that basic desire is asking the question, is what God saying your desire was for your husband, now he's going to dominate you? Is the text saying your desire will be for your husband, so in a good way, but he's going to dominate you? Is it that your desire is to rule over your husband now, but he is going to dominate you? Or is it as the ESV says, here your desire shall be contrary

to your husband, he will dominate you? I'd like to rule out the contrary right at the outset.

That would be a fascinating curse. Essentially what it would mean would be that God would be putting in the heart of a woman a contrary spirit. So if you needed to ask your wife's opinion for those of you married in the room on an issue, she would say, well, I don't know, why don't you tell me your opinion and then I'll tell you mine.

And whatever your opinion is, mine will be the opposite. I know some of you can feel that way sometimes. It's not a part of the curse.

It's not what God has cursed here. He's not cursed women with a contrary position. The challenge is that the word for desire appears only here and in Genesis 4.7 and in Song of Solomon 7.10. It's used in Genesis 4 when God is warning Cain, and he says, if you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door.

For its desire is for you, or here contrary to you as the ESV says, but you must rule over it. Challenge here in our text is that there's nothing contrary, it's specifically stated. It simply says your desire for your husband, and that conjunction there of for is always to your husband or towards your husband.

It doesn't ever mean against your husband. This word for desire is used positively in Song of Solomon 7.10, where we read, I am my beloved's and his desire is for me. And so there we have the wife saying, my husband desires me, and that's even in a sexual connotation there.

And so in Genesis 4, God is saying to Cain, Cain, sin wants you, its desire is for you. Song of Solomon, my beloved's desire is for me. In both cases, the desire is for the object.

And so of course, it would be true that wives do desire their husbands, at least that's how it's supposed to work, and on our better days, that's what happens. It's also true that women desire at times to be in control in a situation. And so either one of those are certainly true, they're seen elsewhere in Scripture.

The question is, what is it that God is conveying to Eve here as part of the curse? And essentially the two views would be this, either God is simply stating the reality, which is in spite of all of the difficult pain of childbirth and the difficulty of raising a family, you're still going to want your husband and he is going to rule over you. It's just stating the terms of the reality, kind of bounding the curse, if you will. In a minute, Adam is going to be told that although it's difficult to work the ground, he's still going to be able to eat from it.

So the idea is that even though things are going to be difficult, you will still desire your husband. Or this desire is in some way toward the husband in a way that is going to introduce conflict and difficulty into the relationship. And I got to tell you, usually I'm able to land firmer than I'm landing here.

I am going to pick a position here, but I would say that both of these I think could be true from

this passage. Both of them have a great supporting data. I think that what the text is saying is this, your desire is going to be for your husband.

And the idea is going to be to have him for your own doing, for your own sake, to have him fit within the parameters of how you want him to be. Your desire is going to be for your husband that he would be kind of within the domain of what you view as safe and wise and prudent and good. You're going to have a desire essentially to take over.

You have a desire to lead. You're going to have within your heart the thought that he's not doing a faithful job and now I want to, for my own protection, be in the driver's seat. Why do I think that? Well, I think it's connected to the sin in the garden.

And so part of Eve's sin was she stepped out. She took the fruit first. She took that leading role in the relationship.

And in that I believe now part of the consequence is God saying there is going to be difficulty in this relationship. Some would even see here that this sets up to some degree the battle of the sexes taking place here in the first marriage and then continuing beyond. Now obviously we know that the idea of male headship was already in Genesis prior to the curse.

So the idea of the man leading and initiating is not part of God's curse on creation. That was part of his good design. The man was made first, not the woman.

The woman was made for the man. The man was commissioned to work the garden. The woman was given as his helper.

The man was created first. The woman was made out of man. The man named the woman.

And so the role there of headship in the relationship by the husband is not the result of sin, but now like so many other areas of creation, this is going to be defunct. You could say it's talionic, like the lex talionis. It's connected to the punishment as fitting the crime.

And so because there was an element of defunct in the relationship when Eve took that fruit and then gave to her husband and took the role of leading the family, that now this is part of the curse. And yet it says, he shall rule over you. And so this is now what the home life is going to oftentimes be characterized by now.

This idea of dominate or rule, it's not necessarily negative, but it is the sense that the husband's influence in the home is going to be one most commonly of authority. Sometimes that is abuse. Sometimes it is abdicated.

And yet in Christ, we find a solution for these relationships, do we not? Where Christ comes in and he tells the husband that your leadership in the home is to be out in front in terms of your sacrifice and your servanthood and the willingly laying down of yourself for the sake of your family. And so in Christ, the husband is still the leader. He's not following the wife.

He's not following out what she wants and then leading the family according to her desires or her fears. But he is to be a gracious and loving leader whose leadership is made easier for a wife to follow. And so sin entered the garden.

By sin came the consequences. Eve is experiencing now what was to be the joy and bliss really of the domestic life. Now be set with difficulty, relational difficulty, difficulty with children, difficulty with her husband.

And Adam's domain likewise is going to be beset by difficulty. Verse 17, to Adam God said, because you've 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. Now I want to draw your attention again here.

Notice the location of the cursing. Adam the man is not being cursed. So serpent gets cursed.

Eve is not cursed. It's her environment. Same thing now with Adam.

Adam is still blessed by God. He's still going to be blessed in his role, but the circumstances by which he's going to carry that role out now have been cursed. So sometimes you say things like work is cursed, kind of really the idea here is the ground is cursed.

Work is still a good thing, but it's not going to yield what it once did. And here again, I would say it's another example of the punishment fitting the crime. Adam ate from the tree, and if you notice now, eating is going to become difficult.

Look at verse 17, because you've eaten of the tree that I commanded, you shall not eat of it. Into verse 17, in pain you shall eat of it. Verse 18, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field.

Verse 19, by the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread. So Adam stole this piece of fruit that was forbidden and God said, okay, the punishment is going to fit the crime. It's the last free meal you're ever going to get.

There's no more free lunches. From now on, eating is going to come with labor, painful labor. Interestingly enough, that verse, or that word for pain in verse 17 is the same kind of pain that the woman is going to experience in her home life.

And suddenly you say, man, life is starting to make a lot more sense right now. When things are difficult at home and things are difficult at work, this is part of the reality of the consequences of sin on the earth. There's that repetition of eating and the perspective now is that Adam sinned certainly by eating the fruit and that, of course, he listened to the voice of his wife and there's a role that she was playing in that as well.

And now, all of the eating is going to be characterized by difficulty. In fact, verse 18, not only are you going to have pain, it should be really all of the mental anguish and anxiety associated

with work, all of the frustrations, kind of all of the challenges that we have mentally and emotionally in dealing with work, and then the physical side of actual exhaustion, the labor side of things, both of those are contained here. So, God had given work to Adam in the garden, but that was like enjoyable, everything worked together, it always went well, it always worked out according to plan, it yielded very easily and abundantly.

Now, it's going to be characterized by thorns and thistles, thorns and thistles, things that are going to cause difficulty in the bringing forth of production. And so now, Adam is going to be responsible still to tame the creation, to exercise dominion, to bring order to chaos, there will still be productiveness and the fact that he's going to be able to eat, but now everything is going to be much more difficult. I remember I was young and I was not the brightest and now I'm older and still not the brightest, but it was in the early years of trying to start a business.

And in God's grace, my business partner was a believer, that was certainly a conviction that you need to be yoked together with a believer in that situation. But we had the benefit of sharpening one another and speaking truth to one another. And I remember we were laboring and I was a guy that, you know, wanted to get into the office while it was still dark so I could get a bunch of work done before everybody else got there and stay late and it was just kind of my mindset to try to, you know, see this thing get off the ground in the way that we wanted to.

And I remember my dear friend and brother coming to me at one point and he said, hey, I need to address a perspective that you have right now, because I hear you talk about your vision for work and I think you're trying to create heaven on earth. I think you're trying to create a non-cursed ground. You're trying to create a work environment where everything is just so systemized.

It's so streamlined. It's so efficient. The training has happened so well.

The tools are so well organized. The plans have all been laid in place so that now, you're going to sit back and just watch the thing work and we don't even have to do anything anymore. He confronted my perspective.

He used Genesis 3. He reminded me of the difficulty and I suddenly saw, wow, this is how I approach yard work. This is how I approach waxing the car. This is how I approach everything in my life right now is with this hopeful desperate hope, hope against hope that I'm going to control the domain now in such a way as to have unending comfort and ease.

I just have to crack the code. I just have to find the right formula. If I work hard enough, I can finally undo the curse.

What does God say to Adam? Verse 19, by the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread. This is every dimension of struggle on earth right now. It's the result of the fall of our first parents.

God cursed the ground. He cursed the ground. I mean, all of the entropy of everything that is moving into chaos is all the result of Adam and Eve's sin.

God cursing the ground. I read one author who was not a believer. He's just remarking about how the world works and here's what he says.

We've all observed entropy in our daily lives. Everything tends toward disorder. Life always seems to get more complicated.

Once tidy rooms become cluttered and dusty, strong relationships grow fractured and end. We grow old, complex skills are forgotten, buildings degrade as brickwork cracks, paint chips and tiles loosen. Disorder is not a mistake, it is the default.

Order is always artificial and temporary. He goes on and says, just because entropy is the natural tendency of things, that doesn't mean you can't fight back. You can clean a messy house, pull weeds out of the garden and practice your skills.

You can maintain your relationship, go to the gym and even put up a fresh coat of paint. Combating entropy requires energy. When you clean a messy house, you use energy to return the house to a previous simpler, tidier state.

That's why entropy is nature's tax. You need to expend energy just to maintain the current state and failing to pay nature's tax means things always get more complicated, disorganized and messier. He goes on and says, we cannot expect anything to stay the way we leave it.

I mean, do you understand this explains so much of industry and invention. I mean, I'm excited when I find, you know, the new paint now has the primer in it. It'll last two more years before you have to repaint.

We're always trying to find a way to deal with the reeling effects here that we live in a creation, to use the words of the Apostle Paul, that is groaning. It is groaning for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there's a part of effort on this earth that is subjected to futility.

That's the word Paul uses, and it's right here in this passage. I mean, I just think of Adam right now, and I mean, you're watching your entire life's dreams crumble before you in a moment. He says, by the sweat of your face, verse 19, 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.

I mean, that's it. You're going to eat by difficult labor until you die, and then you're going to become dust again. Do you get the sense of a little bit of futility? I mean, and the irony was when Adam was eating of the fruit, when Eve was eating of the fruit, they were believing that this would make them wise in some way and more like God.

Instead, the result here is now you have a serpent that's going to be crawling around in dust. Adam's going to become dust. Eve is going to become dust.

Everyone is humiliated. Everyone is coming to nothing. This radically changes the perspective on creation.

See death is recognizing here the totality of the futility that the creation is subjected to in this era. I mean, certainly, this is a very specific pronouncement of physical death that Adam is going to face. It also extended to spiritual death, which meant things between him and God were not right any longer.

He had died spiritually when he sinned. Certainly it meant eternal death, which would be condemnation and judgment. And yet here is a bit of poetic irony for Adam, that in the end, all of your achievements are going to amount to nothing.

Adam, you're going to spend the rest of your life working in this stupid garden. Actually, you're going to get kicked out of the garden, so you're going to be working outside of the garden looking in. You're going to spend your whole life farming just so you can put food on the table.

And then you're going to die and the weeds are going to grow up and someone else is going to take the mantle. You're not going to take any of it with you. Dust to dust.

It's the idea of futility. Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 3.20, all go to one place, all are from dust and to dust all return. It's really that idea that whether you're rich or whether you're poor, in the end, it just amounts to nothing.

This is the place where moth and rust destroy. It's the place where thieves break in and steal. And yet in this, we have the comfort of knowing what the psalmist said in Psalm 103.

He remembers our frame that we are but dust. He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust.

What does this mean? Well, this means that as short and difficult as life is, as we labor on a creation that's been cursed, the Lord has made gracious promises to us so that we can endure this life and we can have hope for the next. Romans 8, Paul would say this, the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. What does that mean? Well, the creation is waiting for Jesus to return and to reveal His people, the sons of the Father, the sons of God, His brothers and sisters.

He goes on and says, for the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it. I mean, creation didn't cause the fall. Mankind caused the fall, but creation got brought down with it.

God is the one who subjected the creation to futility. And yet He goes on and says, in a hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption. What's the bondage to corruption? Well, everything is breaking down into chaos.

People are dying. Animals are dying. The environment is getting worse, not better.

Will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. One day it will be set free. The creation will be set free.

So many Christians seek to find a life that is not subjected to the curse. Genesis 3 reminds us that life is not possible and that your goal in life is not to find a way to live apart from difficulties or to strive assuming that that's even possible, rather to let those difficulties remind you of the devastation of the consequences of sin and then to long for the return of Jesus. You see, that's what's supposed to happen.

For the moms in the room, parenting is hard. Pregnancy is hard. Birth is hard.

Child training is hard. Ministering to your adult children is hard. Certainly there are times of joy and blessing, but it is difficult.

And you're to recognize when that happens that it's not some strange ordeal that's happening just to you. It's not something that you could merely fix to avoid all of that or an indication that you've done something wrong and if you just played your cards right, things would be different. Rather, these are your expectations.

And for those who are seeking to provide for the men in the room, the ground is cursed. Okay, do you understand that? The ground is cursed. And so as much as we want to make things easy and efficient and processes and systems and training to make it all work the way it's supposed to, it's just not.

And so yes, give it your level best for continuous improvement and refining and systemizing and making things more beautiful and work better, but do it for God's glory and do it expecting that that's the work that you've been given until Jesus returns. But in all of that, our hope is that we have a King who's coming back and when He comes back, He's going to remove the curse. Do you understand that? He's going to remove the curse in its entirety.

That's the hope. Think of the Watts hymn that we sing every Christmas, Joy to the World. It's actually a song about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 3 goes like this, no more let sins and sorrows grow. That's when the King comes back. No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground.

He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found. Friends, when we read Genesis 3, we're to see the mercy of God that He promises first to deal with Adam and Eve's sin problem before He even curses them. And we're to have proper expectations for life on this earth based upon the consequences, the punishments that were divinely handed down.

And then finally, we're to see that Jesus came certainly to save us from our sins, but also to come and to make all things new and to remove the effects of the curse so far as it is found. I just hope this is an encouragement for you. I can tell you all week, I've just been marveling.

I've reflected on this passage because it has so many applications day by day, both as we're living our life and then what we're actually striving for and toward, where we're fixing our hope. Let's pray. Lord in heaven, it is so frustrating, as you know, you walk the earth.

You know how frustrating it is to not have things work the way that they seem like they're supposed to. Lord, you know the difficulty and the heartache of all the broken relationships that you experienced, even your own family, Lord Jesus, had issues and conflict and things that arose from what we read here. And Lord, we love you and praise you because you became a curse for us.

And Lord, we know that was a different kind of curse. It was the curse that the law would bring. It was the consequences of sin and you became a curse willingly because of the curse that we've received.

And Lord, we thank you that you came to bring redemption for us, or that we can look forward to the day that you come back and you make all of your enemies your footstool and you set up your kingdom in righteousness, Lord, and there all the things that are broken and defunct and defiled and corrupt now will be made new. Lord, thank you for our confidence, Lord, that this is not merely this kind of generic comfort that we place before ourselves to encourage us on difficult days, but rather we bank our very lives on it and we trust you to do it. I pray that you'd use that, Lord, to encourage those in our church who are going through difficult times right now.

Lord, for those that are experiencing heartache and difficulty with work and difficulty with their children, Lord, or other arenas of life, Father, this would be a particular help to them that there's not something strange happening to them, there's not something particularly wrong other than what we read here, Lord, in the reminder and the hope that you are in fact making all things new. We love you. We praise you.

Amen.