



The Sermon

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Genesis 3:16-24

"Pronouncements and Provision"

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TRANSCRIPT

The verses that we are considering this morning are in chapter 3, Genesis chapter 3, and we'll be studying verses 16 through 24. I have titled this message "Pronouncements and Provisions." These verses explain the human condition as we know it today, and these verses are as applicable today to us as the day that Moses penned them, being divinely inspired. This is God's word. And so I would ask that you would follow along with me as I read to set the context. I'm going to start in verse 14, which Steve Lawson covered last week.

Genesis 3 14, "And the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.'

"To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.' "Then to Adam He said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat from it"; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the

field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Verse 20, "Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. And the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever' – therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim with the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life."

What a passage. Wow! Where is Steve Lawson when you need him? Didn't he say he was the lead preacher last week? He preached last week, he's preaching next week; I feel like I'm the turkey in the middle of his sandwich. Well, let's pray together and ask the Lord for wisdom, that the Lord would help us this morning.

[Prayer] Dear heavenly Father, this explains much of the life as we know it. And, Lord, we come to You humbly this morning, ask that You would teach us, that You would lead us and guide us by Your Spirit, Lord, that Your word would go deep into our soul and, Lord, that You would cause it to have its intended effect upon us. Lord, I pray that You would convict us of sin, that You would encourage us, that You would build us up, that You would strengthen our hope and our faith in You.

Lord, if there's someone here listening, someone listening on the Internet who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ, I pray, Lord, if You be so willing, that You open their eyes, that You show their desperate need and, Lord, that You give the gift of faith and repentance. Lord, You know the needs of this body, there are many. We pray, Lord, that You would protect us from the evil one, and those that have an agenda that is different than

Yours. We pray, Lord, that You would raise up the men and women we need for the ministry. There are many hurts – physical, emotional, Lord, spiritual. You know what the need is. We pray, Lord, that You would meet the need abundantly this morning, that You would build Your people up. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen. [End]

Well, like I said, I titled this "Pronouncements and Provisions," because in these verses we see God's response to Adam and Eve's sin in the garden. This is what happened as a result of their original sin. It's what happens when one rebels against God in His commandment. In short, we see God's answer, His pronouncement to their sin, and it is consistent with His character. God is both holy, He cannot stand sin, He can't tolerate it; and yet He is also gracious and merciful to the sinner; and by His grace He has made provision for His people.

Paul describes these specific attributes of God in this way in Romans 3:26. He says that God is both just – meaning that He has a righteous standard that cannot be compromised – and He is also the justifier of the one who has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He makes gracious provision for the sinner in the Lord Jesus Christ, and it all starts here in Genesis 3. And nothing has really changed for mankind up until this day.

The bad news is simply this: there is a consequence for your sin. You will pay a price for your sin. But God has made a way of escape. He has made a way of escape for the eternal consequence of sin, and that's in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our provision. For the believer, sin will plague you for the rest of your physical life. But it will end for the unbeliever, the consequence of sin remains forever.

I've broken this passage into three sections, if you're taking notes. Verses 16 through 19: "Curses from sin." The second section is verses 20 and 21: "Coverings from God." And the third, verses 22 through 24, "Compelled to cultivate." So let's go to the first section: "The curses of sin." Starting in verse 16: "God turns from the serpent and He looks at the woman and He says to the woman, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, and in

pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

The curse that God pronounced on Satan and the serpent in verses 14 and 15 was direct. But now when He looks at the woman, it's not direct; He curses the major factors of her life. What was the woman's sin? Let's go back to verse 6: "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from the fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband, and he ate."

The woman, if we were to simplify this, was seeking pleasure, and she was seeking pleasure in her pride. What do I mean by that? The tree was good for fruit, it was delightful for the eyes. Andrew Curry said it this way several weeks ago. He said, "It was pleasurable because the food looked yummy."

Her pride is seen in the fact that she usurps her husband's authority, she usurps his leadership, and she ultimately acts independently from him and from God's word; thus the Lord pronounces a curse on the woman. And what He curses is what is the function of her life. He does the same for the man, we'll see it. For the woman's sin, He curses the two areas that play a major role in her life, and that is her children and her husband. This is the consequence of Eve's sin in the garden.

Before we dive into that, let's set the context. I want to make sure that our minds are in the right place, and let's go back to when God created the man and the woman. It's in chapter 1, it's in verse 27. Moses writes, "God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and He said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.'"

So let's look at this. Both the man and the woman were created in the image of God. There is an equal dignity from the hand of God between the man and the woman. The reason that I'm stating this, it should be obvious, but

history has displayed something other than this equal dignity between the man and the woman. The woman was created to be the perfect complement to the man. She was described as a suitable helper. God blessed the man and the woman to bear children, to be fruitful and multiply. In marriage the two of them were one flesh. From the hand of God, there was no pain, there was no sorrow, and there was no toil. He had just blessed them.

Biblically speaking, the role of the woman is that of the homemaker. She is the mother, she is the wife, she was to run the affairs of the house. The man's primary role biblically was that of being the provider. For both of them, they were to work together, having the same goal of nurturing the family to fulfill God's design and God's will. That isn't to say that today the woman can't be the provider and the man can't raise the children at home; but this is how the Bible lays out these roles.

It's important for us to understand that we are living in extraordinary times. The last 175 years are different in our experience than for most of the history of mankind. Up until the last 175 years, there was no disposable income. There wasn't access to medicine. There were no hospitals. The Industrial Revolution hadn't happened, those processes hadn't been developed. They didn't experience the great productivity, because everything was done by hand, it was manual. And so life was hard. Mankind did everything that they could just to survive. There was a battle every day for food. We're not living in a time that is common to the experience of the history of man. There were no restaurants. You didn't go to the grocery store, and you didn't have a baby in a hospital. And so this is where they lived.

So, first, we see that God, the preincarnate Lord Jesus Christ who was in the garden with the man and the woman, He says to the woman that she will have multiplied pain. The pleasure that she was seeking in the garden from the forbidden fruit has been turned into pain, and it's because of her sin. So look what He says: "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth." The literal translation of this in English is, "I will greatly multiply your pain and your conceptions. I will greatly multiply your pain and your

pregnancies. There's going to be an increase in both the pain and the pregnancies. The pain will be intense, and the pregnancies will be many."

We see this in the construction in the Hebrew. It literally says God says, "Causing to be great, I shall cause to be great your sorrow." There's an intensification there. Let me say that again: "Causing to be great, I will cause to be great your sorrow." There's an emphasis on the sorrow. This sorrow is going to be both experiential, and it's also going to be emotional. God says, "In pain you will bring forth children." What does this mean? How is this played out over time?

For centuries women have endured great pain. They've risked complications, and even death, in childbirth. I want you to think about this. You're pregnant, and you're giving birth in a tent in the desert, and there's no doctor. And maybe you have some towels and water. There is going to be great pain. You remember in Genesis 35, Rachel is giving birth as they're traveling. She gives birth to Benjamin, and what is described twice as severe labor. She passes away as he is coming out of the womb; and she doesn't call him Benjamin, she calls him Ben-oni, meaning "the son of my sorrow." She was in great pain. It isn't really until the recent advent of modern medicine, Western medicine, that man has been able to begin to alleviate the pain and sorrow in childbirth. There is still, even with that, great pain, risk to the woman, and risk to the child.

Let's consider Eve for a minute. Not only did God multiply the pain of childbirth, but He also multiplied the number of pregnancies after the fall; and that's really all we have. The woman can get pregnant every month, that's the way God designed her body. And so, all of a sudden, woman is very fertile. Think about this. What was there at that time to keep the woman from getting pregnant? Every time the man and the woman came together, which would have been frequent, there was not only the possibility, but maybe the probability that she got pregnant.

Look at Eve. Let's say we don't know that Eve lived roughly as long as Adam did. That would have been over 900 years. How many times did Eve

get pregnant in her life over those 900 years? Was the majority of her life spent being pregnant? I don't know, but I do know this. Just in a few chapters, right before the flood in Genesis 6, the earth is full of people. It's well-populated.

There have been many pregnancies and many conceptions, even until recently. Queen Anne, she was a queen in Great Britain, she ruled early in the 1700s. She got pregnant. She had the best that money could buy at the time. She got pregnant 18 times between 1684 and the year 1700. She lost all but one of her children in childbirth; and one, William, survived to the age of 11. That is the plight of women. That is where the pain and pregnancies are common to women.

But wherever there is a curse, there's a blessing from God. God is both holy, and yet He is gracious. Jesus says this in John 16:21, "Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world."

It's interesting that for Eve, the curse that has been pronounced from childbirth, through this same childbirth is what would come the seed of the woman. God is gracious - look at this - and from that seed of the woman and in that pain would come the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who would redeem us from what happened in the garden. He is the one that would undo what Adam and Eve did. It was all through the same vehicle, through the seed of the woman.

The second curse for the woman is her relationship with her husband. She was created, they were created, like I said, in equal dignity, to be complementary, to have wonderful companionship, to help each other. And now what has sin done to that? Sin has turned this equal dignity into a struggle of control between the husband and the wife. We see this play out on the stage of human history every day.

There's great tension and discord that exists in our world between the husband and wife. Fifty percent of all marriages end in divorce. Instead of working together, dividing and conquering the task at hand that God has given them, there is a power struggle that often rips them apart: "Who's in control? Who wears the pants in the family?" We joke about it all the time. The man says, "I've learned. I've learned how to say, 'Yes, dear.'"

Look at what the second part of this is: "God says to the woman, 'Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'" The word "desire" here means to seek control. This is not a sexual desire that the woman has for the man, she already had that in the garden before the fall. This is the woman's desire to control her husband, to usurp his headship, his leadership in the family, as Paul states to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 11:13. And the result of this is that the husband will rule over her. Literally that means dominate or reign over her. And often that is done with sheer strength. And as a result, throughout history man has treated women horribly and harshly to put her down. He has treated her, often in many parts of the world and throughout times in history, as merely a possession. He has done everything in his power but to treat her with equal dignity.

I don't need to explain it to you. You know the story, it's common to us. The Pharisee would wake up in the morning. And do you remember his prayer to God? "Lord, I thank You that You didn't make me a Gentile, and You didn't make me a woman." That is how man has looked.

So how do we really understand these verses? Flip over to Genesis 4:7. This is the context that really solidifies our understanding of this difficult verse. Abel and Cain have made an offering to the Lord, and the Lord has had no regard for Cain's offering, and these same words, "desire" and "rule," are used in Genesis 4:7. It's a parallel construction, it's a parallel context, and so we get a parallel meaning.

God says in the second half of that verse, "And if you" - Cain - "do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." That's the same word as "rule." You must master it, or rule it."



What is God doing? He's warning Cain that sin is seeking control of his life, "that sin wants your life, it wants to dominate your life." But he, Cain, must master it. He must rule over it. He must dominate it so that sin does not control him.

So go back to 3:16, "Yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." This union that was ordained by God has disintegrated, because of sin, has disintegrated into the battle of the sexes. This is what happened specifically because of the woman's sin. The role that women play in life is difficult. It is hard. It's sorrowful. Paul instructs Titus in Titus 2:4 that, "The older women should teach the younger women to love their husbands, and to love their children." Why? Because it's difficult. That's what has happened because of sin; it's not easy.

What's the blessing? The blessing is found in Ephesians 5, where Paul does this great parallel between the husband and the wife, and Christ and His church. The woman is to willingly submit to the leadership of the husband, and the man is to love his wife sacrificially like Christ loved the church. That's the only way that this works. Only a man who loves the Lord and fears the Lord can begin to love a woman the way that God wants him to love the woman. It's the only way it can happen.

So now man. God turns to the man, and He tells him what is going to happen as a result of his sin, and how it will affect him in the sphere of his life, which is work, which is providing for his family. Verse 17, "Then He said to Adam, then to Adam He said, 'because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree which I commanded you, saying, "You shall not eat from it"; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it will grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face; you will eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'" This is the first time in the book in Genesis that the man is called Adam. "Adam" literally means "man," there's no definite article before it.

So what is the problem? What problem does Adam have? Was it that he listened to his wife? No. Listening to his wife wasn't the problem. Often the wife – and if you've been married for any time, men, you will know, whether you want to admit it or not, that your wife has more understanding and insight than you do. There's things that just escape us. The issue is this: Eve's words that he was listening to in Genesis 3 were in direct contradiction to God's command. And so Adam – this is where the problem lies – chose to listen to his wife over that of listening to the words of God.

Adam wasn't deceived, Eve was deceived. So his sin, why he is responsible for this sin is premeditated, it's calculated, and its rebellion against God. He knew what God's word was, and he chose to ignore it. So now God curses the ground. All of creation is affected because of sin, because of Adam's sin. The very thing, the ground that sustains life, that brings forth vegetation, from which the crops grow, the trees, the fruit, everything that we get, the sustenance that we need to survive is now under the curse. It's brought under futility.

The word "ground" in Hebrew is *adamah* – it's Adam with an "a" and an "h" on the end. Adam's name is taken from *adamah*, "ground," because that's what he was created from, the dust of the ground. And so God now curses the ground. Romans 8 tells us this, that the creation in verse 20 is subject to futility, that in verse 22, "it groans and suffers with the pains of childbirth until now."

Adam's sin in the garden changed everything. The one who was to rule over the world, that God gave that authority to, the one that was to subdue the world is now clinging to the ground that he's from to survive, he's trying to get everything that he can out of it. And as I stated again, because I don't want this point to be lost: for much of human history, life – eating, maintaining life and moving one step in front of the other – was a great struggle. There was no discretionary time, you were doing everything that you could just to survive.

We see these pictures, and I don't think we really have a great understanding. Even today, we'll turn on the television and we'll see third-world countries that are struck by famine, and we see the mothers with the children, and they're malnourished, and death is reigning. All through the Bible we see it. Remember God drove Israel from Canaan to Egypt. How? By a famine. He sent Joseph beforehand to prepare a way.

Obtaining food, work, man's role, is repetitive. It's monotonous. It's difficult. It takes great effort. It is toil, day after day. Adam lived over 900 years. He toiled with the ground all the days of his life. Before the fall, the work that man did didn't have any toil, it didn't have any pain, it didn't have any sorrow. But the conditions after the fall was different. The world was not well-watered. Remember the garden was well-watered. So now he's fighting for water to irrigate the land. There were no weeds. There were no thorns or thistles. The land produced in the garden a bumper crop, and now it is cursed. One has described the work that Adam had in the garden as simply picking the right fruit he wanted to eat at that time.

It gets much more difficult now. God says this isn't a momentary condition, this isn't going away. Look what He says, this is a lifelong struggle: "In toil" – that's the same word: in sorrow, in pain – "you will eat all the days of your life." Now think about that, "all the days of your life." It's foreshadowing the days when you won't be alive. It's foreshadowing that those days will come to an end, that there will be death – more about that in a minute.

Verse 18. "Not only are you not going to get an abundance from your crops, but you're going to have a nuisance. You're going to have a battle on your hands, because the land isn't going to produce what you want to eat, it's going to produce thorns and thistles." Thorns and thistles, even for somebody who likes vegetables, it's not edible. He's battling the ground with thorns and thistles. The land is cursed. God tells man, "You will eat of the plants of the field." At this point, man is not eating animals. And so everything that man puts in his mouth day after day has to come from the soil.

Verse 19, it tells us again about the intensity of the work. It tells us about the length of the work. There will be perspiration. There will be sweat. This is the effort that it will take to produce what you need to survive: "By the sweat of your face you will eat bread" – how long? – "until you return to the ground." This is a lifelong endeavor for man. You're going to work hard. Work is going to be difficult, it's going to take everything that you've got for the rest of your life.

Remember God's warning, "the rest of your life," Genesis 2:17, "The day you eat from it you will surely die"? The day that Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, they died spiritually. Their bodies started to decay. They would have woken up the next morning and probably felt aches and pains that they had never felt before. But God could have killed them and required their life right then, because that's what He told them: "In the day that you eat of it you will surely die." Again we see God's grace, and we see His mercy.

At the point of death, God tells Adam what's going to happen to his body: "You were created from the ground, you were taken from the ground. and one day you will return to the ground." Our body is made from stuff that will one day be a part of the earth again. 39:00 What's the blessing? There's going to be a new heaven and a new earth. The curse is going to be lifted. And for God's people there is going to be a day when there is no toil, when there is no pain, when there is no sweat, when there is no tear. That's our future, that's our hope.

The second section, "Coverings from God," starting in verse 20: "Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was mother of all the living. And the Lord made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them." When you first read this it seems like these two sentences are disjointed. They're compact, and they almost don't seem like they fit with the narrative. But this is the blessing that we have from God.

First of all, let's look at verse 20: "He calls his wife's name Eve." It's the first time he gives her the name. What does Eve mean? It means life. It means life-giver. That's her name. Well, there's two things that seem odd

about that. Up until this point, this has been a death march: 'You've sinned, you're going to die. There's going to be toil. You're going to return to the ground. Your days are going to have a limit, all the days of your life.' Death, death, death. And yet, he calls her "life." He calls her "life-giver." Doesn't seem to be headed in the same direction.

The second thing that's interesting is he calls her "the mother of the living." She doesn't have children. No one is born yet, she's not a mother. So how can Adam look at her? What do his words mean? How can he look at Eve with everything that he's heard, with the curses that they've heard from God from their sin in the garden, that death has been entered into the world, how can he call her Eve and the mother of the living?

Well, if you remember – and this is so beautiful – Adam was there when the Lord was cursing Satan and the serpent. He heard the words that there would be a seed of the woman. He heard that this seed would triumph over the serpent and Satan, that He would crush the head. And Adam believed God's words. He was looking forward to the One that would come from the woman, the seed of the woman, from his wife.

He also heard these words from God. God is talking to Satan and the serpent, and He says, "I will put enmity, I will put war, I will put hatred between you, Satan, and the woman, and between your seed" – everything that's demonic – "and her seed." It's almost as if God was looking at Satan at that very moment in time and saying, "Satan, you think because of their sin that you've won Adam and Eve, that you've won the war." And God is saying to Satan, "They are Mine. They will repent and believe, and I will cover them with the righteous blood of My Son the Lord Jesus Christ. I, God, will put enmity, hatred, between My people, Adam and Eve, between them and between you." And so Adam, clinging to God's word, could call his wife's name Eve, because there was going to be victory from God; it was to come in the future. This was his hope.

Not only that, he was looking forward to the promise of God. He knew that this woman would be the one that would ultimately issue the seed in the

Lord Jesus Christ, who would be the victor. What is faith? Faith is what is hoped for, not what is seen. Adam is looking forward. He knows that all those who will be spiritually alive, all those who will be God's people will come from Eve. She's the mother of the living.

Verse 21 gets better: "The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them." Do you remember man's answer to his sin and his shame? He sewed fig leaves together. I've never seen anybody walking around with fig leaves, it didn't seem to catch on. It wasn't going to satisfy the requirement of their sin and shame, only God can do that. We see here the divine initiative. We see God doing what Adam and Eve couldn't do. The Holy God makes a covering for man and his wife. He covers their sin and their shame. The words are compact and few, we could read over it, but there's a lot here.

I want you to put yourself in Adam and Eve's position in the garden. God is going to clothe them with skin. How does that happen? How do you get skin from an animal? It would have been shocking. There had been no death to this point, they hadn't seen blood. And so the preincarnate Lord Jesus Christ who is walking with them in the garden takes an animal, maybe multiple animals, and He sacrifices them to cover Adam and Eve's sin. That's how you get skin from an animal, you have to kill it. There was blood. Blood is necessary to atone for sin, it's Hebrews 9:22.

Put yourself in Adam and Eve's position. It would have been shocking. You've never seen anything like this. There would have been blood and the body of an innocent animal, and it was being sacrificed for them. This picture that they saw of this event would have been engraved upon their minds. And the Lord was establishing a pattern.

It has been suggested that the animals that the preincarnate Christ sacrificed were lambs. Why? Because He is the Lamb of God, as John the Baptist said, who takes away the sins of the world. I don't know, it doesn't tell us. Regardless, this would be the pattern by which God says, "You will approach Me." This ultimately foreshadows how sin was atoned for. There

had to be blood; and ultimately it's realized at the cross in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think of this. Why was Abel's sacrifice acceptable? Because it was an animal sacrifice. When Noah got off the ark, what did he do? He sacrificed clean animals. Who did this in the garden? God was the one who made the payment that man could not make. God is the giver of salvation. Salvation is from the Lord. It's always been the same. It's always been by faith, and it's always in the sacrifice that the Lord provides.

The last section, "Compelled to cultivate," verse 22: "Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever' – therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life." The Lord God compels, He drives out Adam and Eve.

Man's relationship has changed with God, because now he has intimate knowledge with sin, he has experiential knowledge with sin. And so the Lord says, "He cannot stay in the garden because it is a risk to him." And so the Lord drives him out. What was the risk? Adam had believed. What was the risk?

Well, the risk was that the fruit of the tree of life was still in the garden, and Adam, wanting to alleviate his sin, wanting to repair his relationship, wanting to live forever, might have the thought to reach out and to eat from the tree of life. But the Lord couldn't have that, because Adam could not stay in that state of sin for the rest of his life, he couldn't stay in that state eternally.

Think about this. When you and I believe, we're living that paradox where we are positionally righteous before God, but at the same time we are practically in a body of death and a body of sin. We have to be glorified. We have to be conformed to the image of Christ, that we might be acceptable to heaven. We're not acceptable this way to heaven right now, and neither was Adam. So the Lord, to prevent him from marching up to the tree of life, marches him out of the garden.

This is the Lord's grace. He's doing this because He wants what's best for Adam. It's Romans 8:28. Life happens, God is sovereign. We look at all that happens, and often we don't understand: "God, are You there? Is this what You really meant to happen? Why is this happening?" But everything that God does is for the good of His people. He knows all the details. He knows how it all fits together for our good.

So He drives Adam out of the garden. He stations cherubim there. Why? He's got a flaming sword. So just in case at any point, if Adam tries to return to that life pre-fall, that the Lord says, "No, you can't go home, you can't go back. Your life has been permanently affected by sin; but it is the life that I have commissioned you to live."

There is no going backwards in the Christian life. There is no going back to the garden of Eden for Adam and Eve. The Lord was not going to let them eat from the tree of life. He tells him, "Go out and cultivate the fields." Literally, he's going to become a farmer. "Toil with the soil. Be fruitful and multiply. This is what I have called you to do."

This passage explains so much of the human condition of where we live today: the problem between men and women in marriage, the struggle that we have to provide for our families. Why is the earth the way it is? Because of man's sin. And I don't want to forget this: God is holy, and He cannot stand sin. But He is gracious and merciful to His people. Sin has a consequence in this life, but God saves His people through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.



Salvation is not up to you, salvation is from God. He has made the way. He has made the sacrifice. He has clothed you in righteousness in His Son, and you are called to believe. And I pray that if you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, that you would turn to Him today, that you would see Him for who He is, the only mediator between God and man; and I pray that the Lord would give you the ability to do that.

There's so much we can learn as believers in how we act and how we should act in our relationships. But if you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ, that's all window dressing, you're never going to get there. So turn to Christ, believe in Him. Let's pray.

[Prayer] Dear heavenly Father, we thank You that You clothed Adam and Eve with a blood sacrifice, that You made a covering for their sin that they could not make. And, Lord, the ultimate fulfillment of that is the Lord Jesus Christ and the cross. Lord, He paid the price that we could not pay. And so when You look at us, You see the righteousness of Your Son. I pray, Lord, that You would not let us forget that. I pray, Lord, that You would help us walk in a way that is pleasing and acceptable to You. I pray, Lord, that we would remember that You are the great God of our salvation. Lord, we desire to be holy, for You are holy. We ask these things in Christ's name. Amen.