

Genesis: The Fall, part 2 – Sin’s Curse and Condemnation

Genesis 3:14-24

MPS All are sinful by nature because of the fall of one man, Adam, but in love God seeks to save through Jesus.

OBJ Every person can understand the Fall of humanity into total depravity by Four Moves.

INTRO Last week we saw how the greatest act of evil to ever affect the world occurred. Genesis 3 is a real, historical record of the root of all evil, death, and all that causes it, pain and suffering in the world. All the problems of every human and the whole universe originate here. As Genesis 3 begins, Adam and Eve are enjoying the full pleasure and provision of the garden of Eden, but things go terribly wrong.

All are sinful by nature because of the fall of one man, Adam,
but in love God seeks us out to save through Jesus.

OBJ In the first two of **Four Moves** of man’s fall to total depravity, we considered how temptation to sin always follows a familiar course to naked shame and ruthless blame, but God in love seeks us out to save.

Move #1. Temptation twists Truth to deceive .1-7

Temptation questions the truthfulness and trustworthiness of God’s Word. It is never a mere chance encounter, but an intentional act of war to steal God’s glory. But it is only a one-way path with one destination, the fear, guilt, shame and condemnation of sin. Temptation is always an invitation and path to deception.

Move #2. Sin’s dark knowledge fuels shame and blame. .8-13

Sin fuels doubt and disbelief in God. Its shame is the most uncomfortable loathing of all that causes us to hate self and blame others in attempt to cast it off. Sin creates dark thinking that produces acts of disobedience that result in fear, shame, and guilt. But most importantly, we learned that guilt is not primarily about our feeling but the product of our knowledge of self in light of God. The only way to conquer the guilt and shame of sin is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and receive His forgiveness and cleansing.

TRANS Remember, this is not the story of one man and his wife. The Bible teaches this as the fallen state of every person.

*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin,
and so death spread to all men because all sinned—Romans 5:12*

Romans 5:12 is essential to understand Genesis 3. This is as true for us today as it was for Adam and Eve originally.

OBJ In the last two Moves of man’s Fall to depravity, we will learn,

All live under sin’s curse that condemns,

but Jesus became our curse and bore our condemnation for us that we might be reconciled to God.

Genesis 3:14 and following reveal God’s response to Adam and Eve’s sin. God responds to their sin with a curse. A curse means to place a measure of limitation or harm upon another by that which is invoked. Here, the power invoking the curse is God’s divine power. So, this curse holds a limitation upon those cursed by God’s decree. As we begin to consider these verses, there are some important questions to address. **Is it loving of God to pronounce a curse? What does God accomplish in the curse? What does the curse mean today?** We will identify and answer these issues today.

3. God’s grace in a Curse. .14-19

God first addresses the serpent. READ Genesis 3:14-15

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 dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15I 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.”



He does not ask anything of the serpent, and the serpent says nothing. God's curse on the serpent places him at the lowest of all other creatures, to remain on his belly and eat dust. This is not a new placement but a new significance that the curse highlights of the serpent's lowliest of reality. [God gives no priority or recognition to the serpent, but only curses him to the lowliest place of humiliation.](#)

God then pronounces the serpent's ultimate attempt and defeat. God places enmity between he and the woman and her offspring. The serpent will bruise the offspring's heel, but the offspring will bruise the serpent's head. "Offspring" is singular, pointing to a specific one. [God declares in His curse that though there will be enmity between Satan and humanity, one will be born of woman who will ultimately defeat the Evil One.](#)

This verse is known as the "proto-evangelion, the first glimmer of the gospel."¹ A couple of things are important to note here. First, God's declaration is a sentence placed on the enemy, not an explicit promise to man. The first seed of the gospel deals with sin and glory directly between God and Satan. And God says that He will crush Satan. But another important detail we should see here, that we will not learn of until the gospel of Luke, is the foreshadowing of the virgin birth. Adam is passed over in this declaration. The one who will crush Satan's head will be of the offspring of the woman. [God declares that though Satan will strike him, Jesus will come as the seed of woman to ultimately and finally defeat Him.](#)

TRANS God turns next to the woman. Her offspring will be victorious, but it will not come without pain. **READ** Genesis 3:16
16 To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

When God addresses the woman "curse" is not used and cause is not given.² God addresses the woman in light of her position. Though not released from her wrongdoing, she is culpable through deception as contrasted against the willful rebellion of the serpent and the man.³ The woman is not treated the same by God in His response to her sin, but receives a gentler word because her punishment entails God's creational design and the means of salvation for humanity.

Sin's consequence for the woman is distinct in two ways. First, she will have consequences in the pain of childbearing, which will serve as a blessing and a reminder to her. K. A. Mathews writes, "Painful childbirth signals hope but also serves as a perpetual reminder of sin and the woman's part in it."⁴ This is important because it reveals that the pain of her punishment entails the salvation of the world. Mathews explains, "Whereas the man's action condemned the human family, Eve will play the critical role in liberating them from sin's consequences."⁵ Childbirth itself is not cursed, and Christ did not enter the world through any curse. Rather, the uncursed, both in birth and as born of a virgin, would come to bear our curse for us. It also reveals that God placed the weight of responsibility on the man, as we will see in the next verses. [By God's creational design, the woman will bear children for her offspring and the victor over evil will come this way. But this distinct function will be an ever-present reminder of her sin.](#)

The second distinction of sin's consequence on the woman will be in relationship with her husband. The phrase, "*Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.*", is only used in one other passage in the Bible. In Genesis 4:7, God addresses Cain about his wrong sacrifice. Cain is very mad that God rejected his sacrifice. God warns Cain, "*sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.*" (Gen 4:7) The woman's desire for

¹ Derek Kidner, [Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 1, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 75. Kidner writes, "There is good New Testament authority for seeing here the protevangelium, the first glimmer of the gospel."

² K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 1-11:26](#), vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 248. Mathews notes, "there is no occurrence of 'curse' related to the woman's suffering. Moreover, there is no cause specified for her suffering".

³ K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 1-11:26](#), vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 248. Mathews writes, "Moreover, there is no cause specified for her suffering, whereas the serpent is charged with deception (v. 14) and the man with eating disobediently (v. 17). This is due to the woman's culpability through deception, in contrast with the willful rebellion of the serpent and man; also the oracle has a gentler word for the woman since her punishment entails the salvation of the human couple (v. 15)."

⁴ K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 1-11:26](#), vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 250.

⁵ K. A. Mathews, [Genesis 1-11:26](#), vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 248.



her husband is like the sin that stands ready to leap at Cain. Her internal inclination to dominate her husband is the work of sin within, and she must fight it. Because when she relates to him out of her sin he will reciprocate by mastering and ruling over her. She can either fight and rule her sin within, or she will be ruled by her sin in this way. [The primary work of sin in the woman is that her principle temptation will be to act willfully and independently to dominate her husband, not wanting to be dependent on him, instead of submitting to help him in accordance with God's created order.](#)

TRANS Next, God turns to Adam. **READ** Genesis 3:17-19

17And 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; 18thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19By 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 confronts Adam by addressing his passivity and the abdication of his responsibility in the relationship. Adam holds the principal responsibility because God gave His command to him. He reminds Adam, "I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it'". Gordon Wenham states, "Obeying his wife rather than God was man's fundamental mistake."⁶ To make this more clear, the problem is that he obeyed her instead of considering her. He removed himself from his God-ordained placement in the relationship. He was not being nice and letting her have what she wanted. He was being lazy and leaving her be exposed and unprotected. The command was for both Adam and Eve (Gen 1), but the primary responsibility for the command was placed on Adam. [God holds Adam responsible for listening when he should have been leading, abdicating when he should have taken initiative to act, and obeying when he should have protected his wife.](#)

God curses the ground from which Adam labored to provide for he and his family. It will produce plants for food, but they will be among the thorns and thistles that it also produces. Adam's provision will come by the sweat of his face, by frustration in his hard work required for the provision of life. God doesn't identify hard work as the problem, but man's disdain for its demand on his life. [Sin's distinctive mark on Adam will be pain and frustration from the continuous demand of providing for essential necessities of life by his labors and with his production.](#)

Adam failed to glorify God by trusting in His abundant provision. This will be an ever-constant reminder as he struggles with the reality of his sin to feel satisfied in his labor and with what it produces, to receive rightful reward and acknowledgement for what he must do to produce those provisions, and how he is perceived because of what he produces. Adam will know sin's curse upon him because instead of living in God's value placed on him by His image and producing with his life for God's glory, he will try to earn his value and worth in how he measures up against the rest of the world. [Sin will be most felt by his growing frustrations that rule him when he cannot satisfy the world's demands, and specifically that of his wife and family, and the increasing pain that crushes him when the world does not sufficiently praise him.](#)

APPL **By God's curse we come to know sin's full effect.** Last week, in considering sin's dark knowledge that fuels shame and blame, I said, "When sin infects, by rebellion and disobedience, it affects, by darkening our mind and thinking, to bring about its effects, our deception and condemnation." Sin infects Adam and Eve by striking at the principle responsibility God gave to them in creation, darkens their thinking to course it's affects much deeper and broad within them to destroy the God-image of their value and identity. [God is gracious to us by His curse to reveal for us the full effect of sin on our life by the depth of sin in our very nature and being.](#)

When we fail to trust in God's provision and obey God's commands, sin *infects* us at the point of our God-ordained responsibility, it *affects* the way we see and understand self, God and the whole world, but it's deepest *effect* within us metastasizes in the understanding and expression of our God-imagined value and identity.

⁶ Gordon J. Wenham, [Genesis 1-15](#), vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 82.



Dr. Owen Strachan states that the major issue of the 21st century is that of image.⁷ In his recent book, *Reenchanting Humanity*, Dr. Strachan states that Adam's principle failure in the garden was to do "the anti-God's bidding", what John Milton charges as "'effeminate' failure in full bloom."⁸ Effeminacy is not found in a man's attempt to display woman-like characteristics, but in his sin-fueled failure to demonstrate masculine traits that God created and ordained him for. [Effeminacy marks a man when self-absorbed in his own cares and concerns, and absolved in his own pleasure or pity party, he fails to own his responsibility and take initiative to act in obedience to God.](#)

Sin's effect on the woman will be no different. Her sin-formed image will haunt, frustrate and destroy her from within by a subjugated position and continual pain from childbearing that shapes her view by what it and age has done to her body. But genetic engineers and perfection through technological pursuit have replaced our continuation of Ponce de Leon's search for the fountain of youth.⁹ And consumed by the power of outward beauty, domination is ever more possible. [Feminacy is now portrayed as power over oppression by maintained, outward perfection for domination.](#)

[The greatest false gospels of our day sells women on the primary pursuit of outward beauty in appearance above inward beauty of heart disposition^{1Peter3:4}, and fails to tell men much of anything, except to propagate an increasing effeminacy and leaving them to wallow in the toys and cycle of self-consumption.](#)

TRANS And with the full effect of sin exposed, we begin to see the spread of sin take off.

4. **The Universal Reality of Sin's Separation and Decay. .20-24**

Read Genesis 3:20-24

²⁰The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ²¹And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

²²Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Once the initial high-tension of the fall somewhat subsides, Adam exercises his responsibility and names Eve. And he does this in a way that rightly acknowledges and honors her. Then, we are reminded not only of God's promise, Genesis 3:15, but also of His provision for us. [God demonstrates His continual care for Adam and Eve by replacing their pitiful loin cloths and clothing them with garments made from animal skin.](#)

Finally, God responds to this new knowledge of good and evil and casts them out of the garden, away from the Tree of Life. This may seem harsh, but in fact it is gracious. For, if man were to eat of the Tree of Life that sources eternal living, he would have remained in his sin-damned state forever. Separated from the source of the Tree of Life and faced with the reality of his decay, he must now deal with the ongoing, intensifying and advancing state of chasing death in which his sin has left him. [Adam and Eve are left only to themselves in order to recognize their insufficiency and long for a Savior.](#)

I remind us that "neither the man nor the woman are cursed: only the snake (v 14) and the soil (v 17) are cursed because of man.¹⁰ This is important because understanding how God cursed sin tells us how we are to respond to sin's curse. **IF God had cursed us, how could we turn to Him?** However, what God cursed was sin. So, as we see our sin for what it is and

⁷ Dr. Owen Strachan, Twitter 11:22 AM · Nov 13, 2019. Owen posts, "Acceptance by God: 16th century's major issue (justification). Authority of Word: 20th century's major issue (inerrancy). Anthropology: 21st century's major issue (image)."

⁸ Owen Strachan, *Reenchanting Humanity: A Theology of Mankind*. (Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 2019) 68-69.

⁹ Owen Strachan, *Reenchanting Humanity: A Theology of Mankind*. (Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 2019) 64-65. A personal conclusion in response to reading Dr. Strachan's insights on human technology.

¹⁰ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 81.



recognize the guilt and shame it produces and the isolation it causes, we then can only turn from it to look for help. [The One who revealed how sin condemns us is the One who stands ready to help and save us.](#)

[All live under sin's curse that condemns, but Jesus became our curse and bore our condemnation for us that we might be reconciled to God.](#)

God is holy, righteous, just and loving. In love He pursues us. But He does not do it in a way, that we in our sin often want and even demand of him to do, to dismiss our sin and just move on. No. He reveals His holiness and what sin does to us, and where the natural propensity of our willful disobedience leads us. He loves us in a way to atone for our sin, forgive us for it, remove us from under it and bring us into His light and truth.

What your sin tells you is never the answer and will never help you in the situation it got you into. But IF the narrative you constantly repeat about yourself in your mind is darkened by sin, it will always lead u back to sin's shame and guilt. You must listen to and obey God. You do not have to bear the curse for your sin. [Jesus Christ became a curse for all who will trust in Him.](#)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written,

*“Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”. **Galatians 3:13***

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **2 Cor 5:21***

God, who is truth, tells us the truth about who we are. He tells us the truth about our sin and what it does to us. He tells the truth about the only way we can be saved from sin. He is the Way, the Truth and Light, and those who come out of sin and to God do so only by Him.

[For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. **Romans 5:17**](#)

