

Let us pray. Almighty and gracious God, thank you for your word of truth that we find in Genesis chapter three. Thank you that in every word of judgment there is also a word of grace. Your judgement, your curse announced to Adam and Eve was given to drive us to You in order to receive and experience your amazing grace. May your message of judgment and grace be heard by us all. Please give us ears to hear and eyes to see what the Spirit is saying to the church. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

My heart breaks when I hear of random, violent shootings occurring all over the United States. Police are killed while doing their best to protect. How they deserve our prayers for protection and wisdom. Young children's lives are taken from bullets that never should have been shot. What we are seeing today are the effects of the fall, when Adam and Eve listened to the voice of Satan and rebelled against God. They ate of the forbidden fruit. The fruit would give human beings knowledge of good and evil too great for them to manage. They failed to believe the very Word of God. They failed to see and understand the goodness of God, that God has everything they need. They wanted themselves elevated and to make their own decisions without having to be bothered by God. Doing what God forbids has become all too common, a way of life. Adam and Eve sinned against God, and we are still reaping the consequences of their original sin.

"The wages of sin is death." There are two deaths. One death is when a person rejects God and God's ways. This is called spiritual death. The second death occurs when we breathe our last breath. When Adam and Eve sinned, they experienced spiritual death. They ran from God. For the first time they felt guilt and shame. It is living in hostility and enmity toward God, deliberately avoiding God, living a life of mocking God, giving God no place in one's life. Living in spiritual death is living as an enemy of God. Living in spiritual death means one thinks he or she can get away with any type of behavior no matter how awful for there is no judgment to come; they answer to only themselves. The power of sin controls them and it is nothing at all to shoot and kill someone. It becomes a way of life for sin's purpose is to steal kill and destroy. To be dead spiritually is to give life to the purposes of Satan and to be one of Satan's tools. This is

why our country is in such a mess today. We are seeing the effects of the fall that began with the original sin of Adam and Eve. Sometimes we hear or see an evil act and we think, "I never thought I would see such depravity in my lifetime or at least here in the United States." We know something has gone wrong, terribly wrong. It is the power of sin in action. Only the second coming of Jesus will put an end to such atrocities. "O Lord, please come quickly.

**1. The serpent is cursed, banished from the Garden, the place of blessing, humbled completely, and placed on its belly to eat dust.** Friends, one time Jesus spoke a strong word of rebuke to Peter, Mark 8:33(NIV) "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Satan uses people and can even use animals to accomplish his purposes. God humbled the snake to crawl on its belly forever and God humbled Peter with strong words of rebuke. Friends, you never want Satan to use you. God will hold you personally responsible. The good news is God has his ways of humbling us and driving us to our knees as He did to Peter and the snake. On to our knees God will drive us. Into misery we will crawl until we repent and receive God's forgiveness and relief from our sin.

**2. Every word that comes out of your mouth will one day be critiqued by God on the day of judgement.** Your words can kill, or your words can give life. God's words give life. Satan can only lie, and his words kill. What words are you speaking.

**3. Blaming and shaming others without critical self-examination has become a national dysfunction/sin.** A hypercritical spirit does not come from God. As I listen to national leaders speak from coast to coast, most of what comes out of their mouths are words of extreme criticism of another political party or of people who they disagree with. There is never any self-examination, looking to see where one's personal actions or words have led to the problems we face as a nation. It is always someone else's fault. One's words are not there to help. One's words are used to destroy, injure, and maim other people. If words could kill there

would not be too many people left in our nation. There is a spirit of anti-Christ in the air where the truths of God are slandered and made to look foolish. Things are so confused that people no longer even know what sex they are. Yes, Satan is the author of confusion and division. Satan loves to confuse, lives to confuse, and will do so until the day of Jesus Christ.

**4. The Curse of Satan is a word of grace to every believer in Jesus Christ.** God is so powerful that God can turn a curse into a word of grace. In Genesis 3:15 we have the Gospel of Jesus Christ articulated by God the Father. God Himself proclaims the Gospel that saves us from the curse for all eternity. It is a word of prophecy of the cross of Jesus Christ where Satan would strike the heel of Jesus the Christ. Striking the heel of Christ means increased suffering on the cross. Satan did everything he could to keep Jesus from going to the cross, striking at his heel constantly. On the cross, Jesus gave the final blow to Satan, striking him in the head. The defeat of Satan is predicted in Genesis 3:15 and God is always true to His word for He can do no other. God's grace is stronger than the curse. **5. Jesus is the antidote to the serpent's venom.**

**6. God's curse upon the women lies at two sensitive roles in her life, childbearing and her relationship to her husband.** The most joyous area of her life, giving birth, was invaded with pain. Her pain in childbearing would be greatly multiplied. I read somewhere that the pain in childbirth may be the worst pain of all. Yes, today there are ways to avoid that pain but God's judgment on women was more than pain in childbirth. Mothering itself would include great toil and painful labor. During my years of being a pastor, I have heard mothers talk about the deep pain and agony brought into their lives by their children. Sleepless nights, wondering where their children are and if they are safe. Illnesses, diseases, and the worst pain of all, the death of a child. When Adam and Eve sinned, death would come to all. For the wages of sin is death. They died spiritually when they sinned. Adam lived 930 years and then died a physical death. This was all predicted and is part of the curse that God's judgment brought on by the sin

of Eve and Adam. Adam and Eve saw the death of their second born by the first born. Their grief was doubled because sin and death entered the world because of their rebellion against the Lord. The strife in families continues.

**7. The marriage relationship itself is tainted by sin.** Before the fall Adam and Eve's relationship was perfect in every way. The words of the curse, "Your desire shall be for your husband." This is the primary sin of women in marriage. Dr. Hughes writes, "The woman would now desire to control her husband, but she will fail because God ordained that man should lead" (Genesis pg. 88). Thus, the marriage relationship is constantly hindered by the sinful nature in the woman and the man.

The good news is these judgments are also filled with grace. The dis-ease and dissatisfaction in what ought to be the most rewarding areas of life is also the greatest pain. These punishments also serve as God's graces. Marriage alone will give no woman all she wants. Mothering is filled with pain from birth onward. And I quote, "To be a mother is to experience a new and ongoing index of pain. Joy and woe go hand in hand. Nothing completely satisfies. This is grace because it will drive the willing soul to seek God. God's judgments would fall on the very center of woman's existence. But in those judgments, there was grace. Nothing would satisfy her but God. Friends, our greatest satisfaction in life comes from the Lord, not things, nor people but from the Lord God. Your dissatisfaction in marriage can be good when it takes you to the well where you draw the water from God that satisfies. God's Holy Spirit filling your soul brings with it a holy satisfaction that makes every pain in life worth it for the deeper the pain, the deeper the satisfaction for your soul from God. This is the Gospel in Eden. Eventually the Messiah would be born of a woman, bringing salvation to all who believe. Judgment, giving birth to grace.

Both Adam and Eve are equally responsible for the fall. Adam was standing right next to Eve when Satan spoke to her. Satan spoke to both of them. The sin of Adam was remaining

passive. He ought to have led Eve and himself away from the serpent and ran to God for help. Adam chose to believe the word of Satan over the word of God. Adam's sin was one of omission, knowing the right thing to do but failing to do it, remaining passive when he should have put his foot down to do the right thing. "Why bother with God, Let's eat the fruit." They rebelled and sin has been in our DNA ever since.

**8. God cursed the man where it would hurt him the most, the earth (workplace).**

God judged the man where it would hurt him the most, the earth, his place of work, the workplace. "Both men and women would experience perpetual pain in the centers of their existence. In the Garden the ground was a source of joy. The earth became his enemy for the ground of his existence, that from which he was made, was cursed. Work itself was not cursed. Work is a blessing. The ground, the creation itself was cursed by God. The soil produces weeds, thistles, and thorns. Jesus wore a crown of thorns on the cross. He bore the curse for us so that we can be in relationship with Him.

I quote, *"God's curse was upon the ground outside the Garden. This applies to all work involved in human culture. Painful toil will assault every soul who attempts to produce in this world. Good hard work glorifies God, but because of the curse, we do it by the sweat of our brow."* For years I have listened to people explain their hardships at the workplace. This will be until the day of Jesus Christ due to the curse.

**9. God's judgment on the workplace is also a word of grace.** When men experience dissatisfaction in the workplace, that dis- ease and dissatisfaction is good when it drives men to their knees to find God's help, to find your satisfaction wholly and completely in God. Men, there is a holy satisfaction that can only come from God. We will never find that in our work, family, friends, hobbies but in the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of grace in the curse is to run not away from God, but to God and his grace will truly satisfy your soul and nothing else can or will to the extent that God and His grace does.

The grace of God's forgiveness enters the picture when God provides clothing for the first couple. The skins God provided came from animals. Those sacrifices for the clothes points to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus that covers our sins, the robes of righteousness.

Now you know why the world is in such a mess. Now you know why the family is under such assault. Now you know why you face so many hardships in the workplace. We are being assaulted by the power of sin announced in the curses of Genesis three. **10. No matter how awful the curse, Jesus is more powerful.** God uses the pain of this world to show us how much we truly need Jesus who overcame this world. Jesus bore the curse, became cursed on the cross. Jesus took it all and all to him we owe. All the problems can be turned into something wonderful as they move us to draw closer to God. God's grace is sufficient for our every need.

This is why the second coming of Jesus will be so wonderful. All the effects of the curse will be over, and paradise will be restored. There will be a brand-new heaven and a brand-new earth. No more death or crying or pain or suffering. The Lord is being patient, giving more time for people to repent, not willing for any to perish. Amen and amen.