

We Live in a Fallen World

by Joe Lee

We struggle to change because we're trying to change ourselves without starting with God's story and His view of life, trouble, and true change.

Duration: 1:02:00

Scripture: Genesis 1:3, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:28, John 1:1, John 1:14, Romans 14:12, Revelation 20:12

Topics: "Fallen World"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the constant bombardment of advertisements and images that try to grab our attention and create an illusion of a perfect life. They acknowledge that we all long for something more and often seek new programs or solutions to change ourselves. The speaker then highlights how humans tend to make excuses and shift blame, referencing the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. They emphasize the need for Christians to have a sense of urgency and compassion for those who do not know Jesus, as there is a judgment coming where we will be held accountable for our actions.

Transcript

Well, today we want to really talk about where we live, because oftentimes as we think about life, we forget the world in which we live. And so let me just introduce you to my friend Mike. Maybe you can identify with Mike.

Mike feels overwhelmed, anxious, and confused. Over the past ten years of his life, he finds himself trying to change over and over again. Over the past two years, he recognizes that he's saying and doing things that he never thought he would do.

He's trying to make sense of life. He's tried anything and everything. And no matter what he does, the result always seems to be the same.

There doesn't seem to be change in his life. He's tried going to church. He's tried going to care group, confessing his sins.

He's tried listening to messages online. He's tried accountability. He's tried even self-help books.

He's gone to a professional counselor. He's read dozens and dozens of books related to fear and anxiety. But yet, he's on an endless hunt for something new.

New ideas, new ways to change. But he's finding himself frustrated at every turn. Now, do you know anyone like this? Maybe this describes you, or maybe this describes someone else that you know in your relational network.

Reality is to live in this world, it's to experience heartache and suffering and trouble. There's no one who's alive on the face of this earth that is immune to the effects of this fallen world. Everyone has trouble.

Whether we want to admit it or not. And everyone, all of us seek solutions to the trouble that we find ourselves in. We want to make sense of life.

Now, what are we called to do? You know, oftentimes what we seek to do is we want someone else to change. We want something else to change. We want a new identity.

We want to recreate ourselves. To become a new me. But we all want to do this on our own terms.

We want to rewrite our own story so often. But the problem is we live in a culture. We live in this culture that really promotes this, that we can recreate ourselves.

Every day, whether you know it or not, if you're on the internet, if you watch TV, if you're out and about, you are exposed to 5,000 to 20,000 images and ads daily. Do you recognize that? Do you recognize everywhere you turn there's some ad, there's something grabbing for your attention? And so these images really depict people living life the way that we want it to be. It shows people having fun.

If you buy this product, if you have this thing, this is what your life could be characterized by. And we all look at that and we all long for that. And it shows people that seem to have everything together.

And it creates this illusion that we in this life, we can achieve this. We by ourselves can solve all problems. You know, we're all in search of something new to try anything to change us.

I mean, maybe that's why you signed up to take this class, because you want something else. You want another program. You want another solution.

You want a formula. It's like, just tell me, how do I change? But let's really be honest with ourselves. If we truly evaluate all the time and effort and energy that we have put into trying to change ourselves, nothing works.

All we're left with at the end of all these pursuits is frustration, it's hopelessness, and it's joylessness. Which really ultimately leads us to think and believe that we will never change. That we're stuck in a rut.

We're stuck in a pit. And as humans, we're always trying to make sense of life. Why is this happening to me? Why me? Why do people think of me this way? Why can't we all just get along? So what hope do we have for change? It seems all bleak and dreary.

Well, listen to this quote on your outline by A.W. Pink. He says this, he says, So for really to apply what A.W. Pink is telling us, when we think about change, we can't start with ourselves. We can't start by trying to make sense of life, trying to make sense of how we can change by looking at ourselves, by looking at what we can do.

By looking at ways that we can produce change in our life. What he's saying is we must start with God. We must start with God's story.

We must get God's view about life, about trouble, about who we are, about where true change comes from. And it's only in God's story that we hear the story about a personal Redeemer. A personal Redeemer in the life, death, and resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

And so what the Bible offers us is not a system or philosophy or a formula to change. What it ultimately offers us is a person. And the place that we start is where God's story begins.

And Roman numeral one, where does God's story begin? Really, to know God's story, we must go to the Bible. And in the Bible, God's story begins with creation. You know, the book of Genesis was written by Moses to help the Israelites see and to show them their history and their origin.

Where did they come from? How did they come to be? Because it's only when we understand where we come from that we truly begin to understand why are we here? What is our purpose? And it tells us in letter A, God is the creator of the universe. Genesis 1.1, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Right from the beginning, it tells us about God.

It doesn't even start with where God came from or when He existed. It begins with this fact that in the beginning, God, it introduced us to this person. This person who is personal.

It reminds us that because God is the author of creation, because God created everything, it reminds us that we are not our own. We belong to Him. Everything that we see around us, everything that we have, even in our own possession, doesn't ultimately belong to us.

It ultimately belongs to God. And the fact that when we think about things that were created, something like a water bottle doesn't find its purpose in itself. It finds its purpose in the person who created it.

It's created for a purpose to hold water. This water bottle can't decide all of a sudden, hey, you know what, I don't like to hold water. I want to do something else for a change.

I mean, how absurd would that be? But isn't that what we try to do daily in our own life? We don't start with why did God create us? What is the purpose for which God created us? We always start with ourselves. We always want to find meaning and purpose in our life inside of us. But God's Word in the beginning tells us that every part of our life is meant to be lived in relationship to God.

Every way that we think, every way that we feel, the things that we do, it all relates with our relationship with God. B, Scripture tells us in Genesis 1-3, and God said, let there be light and there was light. B tells us, letter B tells us, God created all things through His Word.

You know, listen to this quote by Michael Lawrence. Whenever and whatever God creates, it's an act of powerful, irresistible grace. When He does speak, things happen.

And it's not just that He creates the potentiality for things. No, things happen. God's words are not just true, they are effectual.

In John 11, when Jesus calls out the corpse of Lazarus, Lazarus doesn't say to Jesus, not now, ask me again next year. No, when the voice of God rings out in gracious, creative power, not even death or unbelief can resist Him. You know, when we see in Genesis 3, what we see is God creates something.

He creates light out of nothing. It shows us the power of God. I mean, have any of you ever created something out of nothing? I mean, think of everything that we have around us.

There had to be something that we start with in order to create the things that we have, like our clothes, chair, cars that we drive, gasoline. But we see the Bible tells us that God is so powerful that even merely with His own words, He can make something out of nothing. And what that tells us is God's words are powerful.

How often have we read, opened up the Bible and read God's word and doubted whether it truly will happen. We see the promises that God gives to us in His word. Like Matthew 11, 28, where Jesus says, We hear those words and we can assume, well, you know what, I don't know if He can really do that.

We tend to doubt the truthfulness and the power of God's word. But when we see God's word and what it does in creation, what it should stir up in our hearts is that His word is powerful. He will accomplish what He said He will do.

And so as we look at God's word, we see that God has always worked through the spoken word. You know, everything that happens, we see that God gives us His word to reveal Himself to us. We have no way of knowing God apart from His revelation.

And ultimately that revelation is here in His word. And these 66 books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, it really is the story of God's love for His people and His plan to rescue them. And we see over and over again how His word is powerful, how no matter, in spite of man's sin, in spite of our faithlessness, in spite of us rejecting God and rebelling against God, what God has said He will do, He accomplishes.

He always remains faithful to His word. And so when we think about God and His word, we see even how God created through His word. God spoke through His word to tell us about who He is.

But then in John 1 we see that it talks to us about how in the beginning was the word and the word became flesh. His very word took on flesh in the form of Jesus Christ. He came to save us through the word.

As He lived the perfect life on our behalf. As He died to take the penalty for our sins. As He rose again from the dead to declare ultimate victory over sin and death.

We see that His word is powerful and effective. And we are in no place to say that it is not. Corby mentioned even where Jesus was in the boat with His disciples and the storm was raging and the disciples were afraid.

Jesus used His words to calm the storm. His words will have a transforming effect in our life. Letter C. God created man in His image.

Genesis 1.27 So God created man in His own image. In the image of God He created them. Male and female He created them.

Tim Chester says we were made to be God's image on earth. To know Him. To share His rule over the world.

To reflect His glory. We're truly human as we reflect God's glory. Because we were created in God's image we were created to represent the very character and nature of God in how we live our lives on a daily basis.

You know we are called to reflect His glory. We are called to make others know who God is by the way that we live our lives as Christians. In that very call what it tells us is that ultimately our life is ultimately about worshipping God.

That as we worship God with our lives with how we use our time, how we spend our money how we use the gifts and abilities and talents that God has given to us as we use these things as worship we bring glory to God. The primary reason why we exist is not to find worth in ourselves but the primary reason we live and our most fundamental way we give expression to the image of God that is in us is to worship Him. Is to worship Him with everything that we have.

Now this world so far sounds great. You know God created the world for Adam and Eve He said everything was good, He created Adam and Eve and He said everything was very good. And He gave them dominion over the land over the animals.

Now what went wrong? You know up until this point we see the power of God's word and how God's word is effective and it does all that He said it would do. But is that true of our lives right now? Do we see that everything is in perfect harmony? That there is this wonderful relationship with God? No, that's not the case. We just have to think back to even what happened maybe 5-10 minutes ago.

What we were thinking about and we see the reality that life is not what God had originally intended. So Roman numeral 2. What happened in the fall? And we're going to look at Genesis 3. Letter A. A look at temptation. Number 1. Satan is crafty and deceptive.

Genesis 3.1 tells us, Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord had made. So the scripture describes the serpent as crafty. And this dictionary that I looked up defines crafty as marked by skill in deception.

Now notice that when the serpent came to Eve she immediately was not repulsed or fearful of the serpent. She engaged the serpent in conversation. And so the serpent didn't come across as this big, hairy, scary monster that at the first sight we need to run the other way.

No, he comes to us as something pleasant. As something familiar. As something safe.

As an ally. And isn't that true of temptation that we face today? You know, temptation that we face today doesn't come with these glaring neon signs, Stay away, stay away, danger, danger, look out. No, it comes to us in the form of good things that we want oftentimes.

Like a little more money. A little more rest. A little respect.

Ease. Are all those things bad? They're not, are they? In and of themselves those are good things to desire and want. But notice how that temptation, it's deceptive.

What temptation does is it makes sin seem like if you do this right now you'll get what you want. Life will be great. Life will be okay.

Now notice what happens next. Number two, Satan challenges the authority of God's word by planting a seed of doubt. He said to the woman, Did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? You see how Satan is already twisting God's word.

And Satan plants a seed of doubt about the wisdom, the character, the nature, the goodness of God. He's pointing out that God is really not after their good and happiness. He's trying to restrict them from something that's good for them.

Listen to Derek Kidner. In his commentary in Genesis he says, Satan's question smuggles the assumption that God's words is subject to our judgment. Satan wanted Eve to question why God had done what he had done by placing that tree in the garden that they could not go and eat.

What he wants Eve to do is to say, You know what, that's true. That's not fair. Why would God do that? If a God is loving and kind and He had given us dominion over everything else, why would He have this one place, this one thing that we can't go to? Why would there be this one tree where we can't partake of? And that's what Satan does.

He sows seeds of doubt. Doubt about God, about His character, about His love for us, about His purpose to be with us and to help us. And really what we are doing in our own temptation that we face, we're saying we judge God's word.

We say, God, your word is not true. We say that if we obey God's word, it won't really work itself out. And when temptation comes and we give in to temptation, that's in essence what we are doing.

We are saying, God, I can't trust Your word. You're not out for my good. Therefore, I need to find it my own way.

Number three, Satan denies the reality of God's judgment. You know, Genesis 3-4, But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die. Now, do you notice that this is the first time that Satan is actually telling a lie? Because God had commanded Adam and Eve that if you eat of this tree with the knowledge of good and evil, you will surely die.

But here, Satan introduces the first lie and he goes after the doctrine of God's judgment. What he's saying is, you know what? If you sin, there won't be any consequences. That is essentially the lie that Satan is telling to Eve.

Now, isn't it so true when we think about our own sin and when we commit sin, isn't it often the case that in the back of our mind, there is a sense in which, you know what? I know this is wrong. I know God says I shouldn't do this. And I know there are consequences, but you know what? That's not really going to happen to me.

I mean, just this once. I mean, you know what? I can become angry. I can steal.

I can be dishonest. And you know what? Nobody will know. Nobody will even care.

Nothing bad will happen. Now, do you see how Satan works? He begins by sowing seeds of doubt about God and His Word and the authority of God's Word. But then he doesn't just remain there.

He lies about God and the consequences that sin brings about as a result. You know, Satan is our enemy. Now, we're talking about Satan here in the context of Genesis, but in today's day and time, you know, not only is the enemy that we have Satan, but it's also this world in which we live because we live in a fallen world.

We live in a world because of sin that wants to do everything to distort who God is, that wants to take the authority away from God and His Word and place it squarely on ourself. That truth is all based on what we think it is, that there is no absolute truth. But not only do we have the world who wants to sow these seeds of lies and temptation towards us, we also have the sin in our own hearts that lie to us, that we desire these things.

Now, number four, Satan promises pleasure but doesn't tell us the whole truth. Genesis 3.5, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. Now, do you notice how crafty Satan is right here? Because he's saying, when you eat, you will be like God.

But do you remember we read earlier in Genesis 1 that we were created in the image of God? So Satan is holding out this thing. He's saying, hey, if you just do this thing, you will be like God. But he's not telling them the truth.

You know what? They've been already created in God's image. They don't have to go outside the boundaries that God's created to be like Him because He's already created them to reflect His character, to reflect who He is. And so what Satan is doing is he's saying, if you do this, you will know good and evil, which is true.

Because as soon as they ate of the fruit, they recognized they were wrong. Up until this point, all they knew was good. All they knew was unending relationship with God.

All they knew was God. There was no fear. There was no evil.

Everything was good because they were following God's word and His command. But notice how Satan forgets to mention the fine print. You know, he just says, he tells them that their eyes will be open.

They will be like God. But what he fails to mention is that yes, you will be like God. You will know good and evil.

But also will come consequences. There will be conflict. There will be strife between you and your husband.

There will be strife with God. There will be separation from God. There will be consequences, not only for them and their family, but for all mankind.

You know, what Satan so often does, what the world so often does, what the sin in our hearts so often does in the midst of temptation is it promises a false idol. It says, if you just do this, then you will get this in return. And we all fall for that trap so easily.

You know, we think that we see this mirage and we think, okay, that's what I need. It's right there and we go and grasp it. And then we quickly come to our senses and realize it wasn't true.

It wasn't really there. And here's what goes on in our hearts. You know, Satan is telling us, he's telling us that if we keep God's Word, if we actually obey what God says, you know, it's going to keep us from true happiness.

You know, he created subtly within Adam and Eve that they couldn't truly be happy until they ate of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And so he was redefining for them where we find the source of our

joy and happiness. It's no longer found in God and His Word and who He is and what He has said.

It's found in us judging for ourselves what's right and wrong. And it's finding it our own way apart from God. And so as we see and as we think about how this affects us on a daily basis, what we see here is that as a result of temptation, the way temptation works, it begins to tell us lies.

Lies about God and His character. It denies why we were created. It denies the reality of punishment, that there are consequences for sin.

And lastly, temptation promises pleasure but forgets to tell us the whole truth that there is pain involved. Now, letter B, what is the effect of sin on man? So Adam and Eve have fallen into Satan's trap. They have taken of the fruit and they've eaten it.

And let's see how they respond as a result of sin. Let's see what happens. And this is the fine print that Satan failed to inform Adam and Eve of if they had just obeyed God.

Number one, man experiences guilt and shame. Genesis 3.7a, Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew they were naked. You know, H.C. Leupold says this, Here is one of the saddest anticlimaxes of history.

They eat. They expect marvelous results. They wait.

And there grows on them the sense of shame. Can you imagine Adam and Eve in that moment as they took that first bite expecting that everything was going to change? Life was going to be different. They were going to see life with new glasses only to come and find guilt and shame.

I mean, what a shocker it must have been to Adam and Eve the second they took the bite of that fruit. And isn't that true for sin in our own lives? Sin always brings about shame. You know, it always brings about guilt.

When we do something wrong, because we are created in the image of God, God has created a conscience in us. And we see that when we do wrong, we feel guilty. Now, what do we do with that guilt? What do we do with the shame? You know, how do we handle it? Well, number two, man attempts to cover the sin.

You know, Genesis 3.7b, and they sowed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. Do you notice that as soon as they recognized they were guilty, as soon as they recognized that there was shame, they tried to cover themselves. They tried to hide the reality of what was going on.

They tried to do something on the outside. They thought if they got fig leaves and just covered themselves, it would get rid of the guilt and shame. It may have done that on the outside, but inside in their hearts, it was screaming, guilty, you're guilty, you're guilty.

Shame, shame, shame. You know, Michael Lawrence says this in his book, Biblical Theology and the Life of the Church, as long as we think of sin as simple rule-breaking, we will never understand the enormity of sin, the incredible offense that it gives to God and the justness of His response. Fundamentally, sin is not a matter of our behavior, though it eventually shows up in our actions.

Fundamentally, sin is a matter of our hearts. For as fallen creatures, our ruling desire is to remove God from His throne and to sit there instead. You know, that's what we do when we sin.

We want to take God off of His throne in which He rightfully belongs, and we want to place ourselves there. You know, we recently took a class by D.A. Carson, and he defines sin this way. He said, sin is the de-godding of God.

It's taking God from His rightful place and putting ourselves or something else there. But what we see here in Adam and Eve's response, and if we're honest with ourselves, what we see in our own response to our sin is we want to cover our sin. We don't want to declare that we're guilty.

We don't want to declare that we've done anything wrong. We try to cover it. We think that putting band-aids by doing things, we can cover and get rid of our guilt.

You know, last time that you sinned, what was the immediate thought that came to your mind? You know, was it run to God and go ask for forgiveness and seek the help that only He could provide? Or was your thought of, what do I need to do? Did anybody see? How can I get rid of this feeling? What book do I need to read? How many verses of the Bible do I need to read? What do I need to memorize? Who do I need to confess to to get rid of this thing inside my heart? So we see man seeks to cover the sin. And third, we see man hides from God. You know, Genesis 3.8, and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. You know, isn't it true that the natural response to when we do something wrong is to hide from the person in authority? I know that, I guess the new law in Maryland is you're not supposed to talk on your phone without a hands-free set, like without an earpiece or one of those Bluetooth things. But you know, so often I leave it inside the house or I leave it in the office.

And so I usually have to call my wife on my way home just to let her know that I'm coming home. And so here I am driving down 124, I make a call, and the first thing I do after I make the call is I look around, was there any cops? Did anybody just see? And I'm looking in my rear-view mirror and I see a cop. I'm thinking, oh no, what do I need to do to get away? Maybe I should just pull off into a side street.

Or, you know, think about, if you have kids, think about our kids. You know, what do they do as soon as they do something wrong? What do they do? They go run and hide. They want to be as far away as possible.

You know, what do you do when you sin? You know, where do you go and hide? You know, maybe you go and hide by finding refuge in something else. You know, instead of running to God, who's the source of all comfort, who has called us to come to Him, who has promised to forgive us, to cleanse us, instead of running to Him, maybe we go to something else. Maybe we try to ignore it.

Maybe we try to hide by indulging in something. Maybe we turn to drugs and alcohol to drown out the feelings of guilt. You know, maybe we turn to pornography.

Maybe we stop reading God's Word because we don't want to feel bad about what's going on. Maybe we avoid people because some way, somehow, you think that people can see right through you. You know, as a pastor, there are times where when people are not doing well, when I call, they never answer the phone.

They never pick up. You know, just think of the last time a pastor called you. What was your first thought? Yeah, what did I do now? Isn't that our natural response to authority? When we see them, we instantly feel

guilty.

We want to run and hide. We want to cover ourselves. We want to figure out a way out of this.

And that's exactly what Adam and Eve were doing. I mean, think about how foolish this looks. I mean, they realized they were naked and they used fig leaves to cover themselves.

I mean, like, are you serious? Like, is that really going to do something? You know, that's only going to stay on for so long. And here they are thinking that this is going to be the ultimate solution. And, you know, we can laugh about this here and now, but when we really think about how we try to do this in our own lives, it's just as foolish.

If we think that we can hide and cover ourselves by just painting this pretty picture, by saying, hey, how are you doing? Oh, not too bad. You know, if we think that we can lie to get and to cover our sin, we are only fooling ourselves. Because ultimately what we are doing is we are sinning against a holy God.

We're saying, God, You don't rule in rain. You don't get to define the rules. You don't get to define what's right and wrong.

I do. And I don't need to go to You to help me with what I've just done. I can take care of this myself.

That's what we do when we hide. After we sin, when we go and hide and try to attempt to cover what we've done, we are ultimately trying to atone for our sin ourselves. We're saying, God, I don't need You.

And that's why we go down this list of going through everything and everything that we can do just to clean ourselves, to clean our conscience. You know, we read another book. We go to people and just say, tell me what to do.

Give me a formula so I never have to do this again. You know, we all want steps to follow. We all want a recipe so that we can get rid of guilt and shame.

And number four, man makes excuses and blame shifts. You know, Genesis 3, 10-13, and He said, the woman whom you gave to Me to be with Me, she gave Me the fruit of the tree, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the woman, what is this that you have done? And the woman said, the serpent deceived me and I ate.

You know, isn't blame the natural human way that we deal with guilt? We never want to put the bullseye on ourself. We always want to place it on someone else. You know, when was the last time you, maybe you said something like this, you know, you've done something wrong.

You know, you, you're talking, maybe, you know, you're talking to your friend, and you just go to your friend and you want to share what's going on. You say, you know what? I sinned again in anger, but man, if my boss had not treated me this way, this would not have happened. Or, my kids oftentimes, when I, when they're screaming and yelling, and there's crying, you know, I show up on the scene to see what's going on.

It's amazing how quickly they all point the finger at each other as if I didn't do it, they did. You know, nobody wants to accept blame. Nobody wants to say, I did it.

Nobody wants to take responsibility. Instead, we want to justify what we've done. We want to find some excuse so that we don't have to pay for what we've done.

It's because we live thinking, just like our culture tells us and lies to us, that if you have a problem, if you have trouble, you need to solve it, and you can solve it. But the reason why we try to justify it and blame is because we don't want to go to God. We become fearful of God.

We think that God doesn't want to talk to us anymore. We think that God is angry. And the only way to appease His anger is to find place blame somewhere else.

It's to say, I didn't do it. I only did it because of what this person has done. Or it's because of the circumstances that I'm faced with.

Ultimately, when we do that, what Adam and Eve did not recognize as they were doing that, ultimately, because God is the creator of everything, ultimately, they were blaming God. It's because of what you have done. You know, how many times have you had this thought, man, if this situation wasn't here, I would not be responding this way.

You know, how many of you have thought, you know what, if I had parents that were not so hard on me, I would have been different. You know, if my parents had just communicated with me and shown me love and affection, I wouldn't have to go out and find it somewhere else. You know, so often what we want to do as we think about the struggles and the troubles and the suffering that we experience, we don't want to look at ourselves.

And so in the midst of what is going on, in the midst of Adam and Eve who have fallen prey to Satan's lies, who have dethroned God from the rightful throne that He should be sitting on, what does God do? Now, Roman numeral three, God's gracious response to sin. Notice in Genesis 3.9, but the Lord God called to the man and said to him, where are you? Now, when we see that question in Scripture, God is not asking that question because He is unaware of where Adam and Eve are. It's not like He's looking around saying, Adam and Eve, where are you? Where are you? Let me look.

Are you up there? Are you down here? It's not as if He's unaware. Because God knows all things. God sees all things.

God is everywhere. So He knows exactly where they are. But do you notice that God doesn't come with fire and brimstone and lightning and anger? God comes asking the simple question, where are you? And the question that He's asking of where are you to Adam was to help Adam recognize where he truly was.

He was away from God. Because prior to sin, he had always been with God. There was unbroken, unending relationship with God.

He was able to commune with God and to be in God's presence without shame, without fear, without guilt. But God in asking this question, He wanted Adam and Eve to see. He wanted them to see that they were lost.

That they are lost without Him. That the only way to be found is to recognize that you're lost. You know, that's what's true of men and directions.

Do you notice, you know, every time we go somewhere, my wife is always asking me, do you know where you're going? I'm like, of course I know where I'm going. You know, I mean, do you even need to ask that question? And we drive around and around and I even have a GPS and it's still, I can get lost. But it's until I recognize that I'm lost, I won't stop to get directions on how to go to the destination I'm supposed to be going.

That's the same reason why here in the Scripture, God wants Adam to see he's lost. He can't find his own way. Only when he's lost and he recognizes that, will he then see that he needs God.

He needs to go to God because God created him and God created him for a purpose. And that's why Scripture, when we think about Scripture, you know, Scripture describes people who don't know Jesus as those who are lost. They don't know their way.

They're not non-Christians. They're not unsaved. Although those two things are true about them, ultimately, Scripture says that they are lost.

And that's why the Bible tells us that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. We see the parable and the story of the lost sheep. That's true of us.

When we sin, we are lost. We are lost because we have turned away from God. But notice, even here is God's initiative.

Adam and Eve sinned. They have disobeyed God. But yet, look who takes the first initiative to go looking.

It wasn't Adam and Eve coming to their senses and coming to God saying, forgive me, I have done wrong. We know we should have not listened to that serpent. No, it's God.

God in His kindness and mercy comes to seek them out. Comes to find them in the midst of their fear and their shame and their guilt. And let her be.

What does He do in response to sin? He confronts the sinner. Genesis 3, 11-13, He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? And the man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree and I ate. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me and I ate.

You know, notice that God doesn't ignore the sin. He goes searching for them. He finds them.

But He doesn't just say, Okay, I found you. Everything's okay. No, He points out where they were wrong.

He points out what they did wrong. Because God's goal is to confront them in their sin so that they could be restored in relationship with Him. It wasn't ultimately to bring about condemnation.

You know, God wanted Adam and Eve to acknowledge their sin so that God could now deal with it. And isn't that so true when we think about God's kindness and mercy towards us in our sin? You know, so often when we see that God is confronting us through His Word, or when we see areas of struggle in our life, oftentimes when we think about God and Him coming to confront us, we assume He comes to condemn us. He's out to get us.

But even from the very beginning of God's Word, we see that God did not come to condemn them, but He came to confront them of their sin so that they could see that there is only one true hope. That they could not save themselves. They could not get rid of their guilt and their shame on their own.

But they needed to see that. They needed to see that they could not do that. And letter C, God offers hope by bringing judgment and reconciliation.

You know, Genesis 3, 14 and 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. 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. In this, after God confronts Adam and Eve of their sin, look at what God does. He doesn't destroy them.

He doesn't kill them on the spot. But look what He does. He defeats their adversary, the serpent.

The one who had come to lie to them, to deceive them, to betray them. God comes and defeats the serpent on their behalf because He knows that there was no way that we could do that ourselves. That there was no way that we could save ourselves.

And isn't it amazing, even here in Genesis 3, we see how God has already orchestrated His plan of redemption. That God was not just going to leave us to our sin to deal with it ourselves, to cover ourselves, to justify ourselves, to atone for our sin by ourselves. But even here in these words, we see God is enacting His plan of redemption.

His plan to recreate. Where we try to recreate ourselves by the things that we do, God here is showing that only He could bring that about. Only He could destroy the serpent.

But here He talks about that He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel. And He talks about the offspring. You know, we see here is really the first mention of the Redeemer, of Jesus Christ, who is ultimately going to come to crush the power of Satan, to crush the power of sin and death once and for all.

And we see here in this Scripture, even in the first three chapters of Genesis, we see God is already orchestrating His plan of redemption. He's already beginning to point people to the fact that there is a Redeemer coming. That there is one that will come that will ultimately take all of their sin.

Because we find later on in Genesis 3 how Adam and Eve had covered themselves with fig leaves. But we find out later in Genesis 3 that God kills an animal, takes the skin off the animal and covers them. And that symbolizes for us that God was going to atone for our sin through the shedding of blood.

And that covering, when God covered Adam and Eve, covered their shame and guilt through the skin of an animal, it was to show to us the ultimate of how Jesus was going to clothe us with His righteousness. Do you see how foolish it is for us to try, in and of ourselves, to change ourselves? How futile it is and how worrisome a task it is to think that we can do this ourselves. You know, and Michael Lawrence, once again, reminds us, he says, we need more than a self-help program.

We need something far more radical than a makeover that helps us straighten up our lives. What we need is freedom. We need new natures that are freed from the corruption and bondage of sin.

We can no more fix ourselves than a slave can free himself. A slave must be freed and so must we. And because we live in this fallen world, we can't naturally assume and expect that everything is going to go right.

We can't assume that just because we have turned from our sins and placed our faith in Jesus Christ, that we are freed from the effects of the fall, of trouble, of suffering, of trial. But that doesn't leave us down. That doesn't discourage us because ultimately, God has provided exactly what we need.

And He's provided that not in a series of steps for us to follow or rules to keep. He's provided that in a person. And when we think about change in our life, change doesn't begin with doing things ourself.

Change always begins with a relationship, with a relationship with God, with who He is, with what He has done for us. And so as we think about where we live, who we are, we see the reality of the fall in all of our lives. That we, just like Adam and Eve, are prone to believe lies.

Lies that the world tells us. Lies that our sin tells us. Lies that the devil tells us about what's true about God and His Word.

About the hope that we have in Him. That we are prone to neglect the reality of judgment. That so often we live our lives thinking that there won't be any judgment.

That we can do whatever we want without any consequences. If we truly believed in the reality of judgment, it will really transform the way that we live on a daily basis as Christians. But also, if we truly believe in the reality of judgment, our hearts should yearn and break for those who don't know Christ.

It should create in us a sense of urgency. Why is it that as Christians we can live so comfortable while there are those in this world who don't know Him, who are going towards death and destruction? Why is it that we don't have a heart for the lost and compassion for those who don't know Jesus? It's because we have been duped by Satan to believe that there is no judgment. But Scripture is very clear and it reminds us that there is a judgment coming.

That there will be a day where we will all stand before God and we will be held accountable before God in how we have lived our lives. And in that day, what are we going to say? Are we going to say, look at what I've done. Look at how I've clothed myself and gotten rid of my guilt and shame.

And are we going to be like Adam and Eve who thought that fig leaves could do that? Or are we going to be those that see the only way to change is that we need to be freed? That the only person that can do that is Jesus Christ who shed His blood, who clothed us with His righteousness, with His works of obedience for us. That's where we need to place our hope. We need to place our hope not in us, but in God.

Let me just close us as we pray, as we end. God, we just thank You so much that as we just marvel at the goodness of Your plan of redemption about who You are. God, I thank You so much that as we look at ourselves and as we see how so often we fall short of what You call us to do, as we see the reality of how so often, God, we try and attempt to hide from You, how we try and attempt to cover our sin, how we try to blame other things because we don't want to say that we need You.

God, thank You that in the midst of all this, You come. You invade our lives. You initiate with us to show us that we need You.

To show us that our only hope is not found in ourselves, it's found outside of ourselves and it's found in You. And that from the beginning of creation until now and until You return, God, we can trust Your Word for Your Word is powerful and effective. That Your Word will not return void, but will accomplish all that it is set out to accomplish in our lives.

God, thank You that You are at work and recreating us, that we don't have to do this ourselves, that we can turn to You for the help that we need. In Your name we pray, Amen.

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