

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 2/18/2024  
Genesis 3:20-24 "Learning from the First Sacrifice"\*\*\*<sup>1</sup>  
*Series: The Christian Family*

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Main Idea: In Genesis 3:20-24, we see the first sacrifice. What's more, we discover that the first sacrifice was necessary because of two reasons. The two reasons are two attributes of God.

- I. We see God's justice (1-19).
  - A. Man sinned (1-13).
  - B. God pronounced judgment (14-19).
    - 1. He sentenced the serpent (14-15).
    - 2. He sentenced the woman (16).
    - 3. He sentenced the man (17-19).
- II. We see God's grace (20-24).
  - A. The first evidence is what Adam did (20).
    - 1. He named Eve.
    - 2. In so doing he exhibited faith.
  - B. The second evidence is what God did (21-24).
    - 1. He clothed them (21).
      - We see the principle of modesty.
      - We see the principle of substitution.
    - 2. He banished them (22-23).
      - He did it for His own glory.
      - He also did it for man's good.
    - 3. He prevented them from going back (24).
      - We cannot erase the past.
      - We must look to the One who gives hope for the future.

Make It Personal: Consider three implications of the first sacrifice.

- 1. Our sin separates us from God.
- 2. We need God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
- 3. The good news is that is exactly what God did.

If you have a perfect family, you do not need today's message. If you have no problems in your family relationships, you do not need today's message. But...if you have problems in your home, if things are not always as they ought to be in your home, this is for you.

We are about to see what God did to bring hope and help to the first messed up family. I could have entitled this message, "What a messed up family needs."

And what does a messed up family need? The short answer? It needs God. It needs the sovereign gracious work of God. It needs a bloody sacrifice. It needs family members who will embrace the gracious, bloody sacrifice that God has provided for them.

There's today's message in a paragraph. And it's incredibly hope-giving for a messed up family!

However, if you are a good person living with good people and you have a good family, this message won't mean much to you. In fact, it may irritate you. You may find yourself thinking, "Who needs a bloody sacrifice? We don't. We're good. And if the rest of you with messed up families would just become more like us, you wouldn't either."

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\*\*\* Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

<sup>1</sup> For a previous look at this passage, see the message preached at WBC in 2000 in our Genesis series.

Friends, the reality is this. Family is great, until it's not. Put two sinners together, and give them some little sinners running around them, with some sinful grandparents showing up once in awhile, and there will be trouble.

So what should happen when a family faces trouble? What does God think about families who are in trouble? We find the answer in today's text. Genesis 3 is a wonderful text to show messed up families how to become the kind of family God intends, and our hearts desire.

*Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:20-24*

As followers of Jesus Christ, we love to sing about the blood of Jesus, don't we? Our hymnbook is full of songs that speak of the bloody sacrifice of our Savior. Such as...

*Would you be free from the burden of sin? There's power in the blood, power in the blood. Would you o'er evil a victory win? There's wonderful power in the blood.* Those are the words of Lewis E. Jones.

Elisha Hoffman penned a series of questions. *Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?*

Here's an older song, written by Nicolaus von Zinzendorf and translated by John Wesley. *Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress; Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, with joy shall I lift up my head.*

You likely can fill in the blanks of this one by Robert Lowry: *What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the \_\_\_\_\_.* The blood of Jesus!

And perhaps the most vivid song about the blood, written by William Cowper, begins as follows. *There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains; lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains; And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.*

Why do we sing about the blood? "Well," you say, "It's because Jesus shed His blood for us." Yes, indeed He did.

But why? Why did He shed His precious blood? You say, "It was because He died as a sacrifice for us." Yes, indeed. But why was His sacrifice necessary in the first place?

And what does this have to do with the family? Everything! The maximum joy of your family is linked to this question.

We could turn many places in God's Word to see this reality. We could look at the epistles, letters written to first century Christian families dealing with problems. What do they need? Instruction about communication, and roles? Yes, and that's what you see in Ephesians and Colossians and 1 Corinthians and 1 Peter. Very necessary. But not most important. In every letter, you see front and center teaching on the bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The family's greatest need is the atoning sacrifice that Jesus Christ provided. It's His atonement that is the basis of everything else the family needs, like help with communication, and roles. We are sinners. We need a solution for our sin, and God has provided it. In Genesis 3:20-24, we discover that the first sacrifice was necessary for two reasons, namely, because of two attributes of God.

## I. We see God's justice (1-19).

The first sacrifice occurs at the end of the chapter, but we'll never appreciate its necessity if we fail to grasp the events that preceded it. As we've seen the last couple of weeks, there are two backdrops for the first sacrifice.

**A. Man sinned (1-13).** God of course created the first man and woman, and put them in a perfect environment in a beautiful garden. But tragically, they refused to obey His command. They ate the forbidden fruit, thus committing the world's *first sin* (1-7).

"Adam, where are you?" God asked (9). The question wasn't for God's sake, but Adam's. "Where are you?" The one created to tend the trees was now hiding in them, cut off from God and filled with shame.

Then came the world's *first excuse* for sin (8-13), as the couple began to blameshift. "Did you eat from the forbidden tree, Adam?" God asked (11). "The *woman* gave it to me!" Adam replied (12).

"What have you done?" God asked Eve (13). And following her husband's example, Eve likewise blameshifted, "The serpent deceived me--and remember, you created the serpent, God--that's why I ate."

So there's the first backdrop. Man sinned. Here's the second.

**B. God pronounced judgment (14-19).** It came in the form of a three-fold sentence, as God declared the consequences for the three guilty parties.

1. *He sentenced the serpent (14-15).* In verse 14, "Cursed are you above all the livestock." Notice the word "cursed." The same word is used of the ground in verse 17. God pronounced a direct curse on the serpent and the ground. When God pronounced judgment, all three parties were judged--including the man and the woman--but only the serpent was cursed.

Last time we discussed two effects of God's curse on the serpent. There would be *humiliation* (verse 14, "You will crawl on your belly and eat dust."). And there would be *enmity* (according to verse 15 between the serpent and the woman, and between the serpent's offspring and the woman's offspring).

Let's elaborate on this aspect of *enmity* by making three observations. First of all, notice that this is a *divine promise*. "I will put enmity between you." Who is speaking? *God* is. This is God's guarantee. God will do it.

Secondly, this "enmity" will be *for Adam and Eve's good*. Why did Eve say she sinned? Because the serpent deceived her, right? So God says, "I'll take care of that problem. I'll put enmity between you and the serpent. Then you won't be so inclined to listen to his words in the future."

Thirdly, the enmity speaks of a *future conflict*. Verse 15 concludes, "He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." And when did that happen? When did the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent engage in a head-to-head conflict?

Jesus answers that question in Luke 10:18-19, where He gives this interesting response to His disciples, right after they expressed their delight at their ability to cast out demons. "He replied, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.'"

Notice the kind of power that Jesus said He possessed. Power over *the enemy*. What enemy? The same one that enticed Eve in the garden. And it was at the cross that the conflict peaked and His power was fully put on display.

Listen to Colossians 2:15. What did Jesus do at the cross? "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

Perhaps no text explains it more succinctly than Hebrews 2:14-15. "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

This is the fulfillment of God's promise in Genesis 3:15. "He will crush your head and you will strike his heel." This is the *proevangelium*, meaning "the first gospel". Derek Kidner calls it the "first glimmer of the gospel,"<sup>2</sup> and remarks, "It comes, not as a direct promise to man, but as a sentence passed on the enemy. Redemption is about God's rule as much as it is about man's need."

When God pronounced judgment He started with the serpent.<sup>3</sup> Next...

2. *He sentenced the woman (16)*. The judgment would affect her child-bearing--she would henceforth bear children in pain. It would also affect her marriage relationship--"Your desire will be for your husband [the idea being she would "desire" to possess or control him] and he will rule over you." Marital harmony will no longer be the norm. Disharmony will be. From this point forward, she will find much easier to complete with him rather than complement him.

This is why when two people marry and do what's natural, they will have a frustrating if not *disastrous* marriage. I guarantee it. Why? Because they are sinners, and sinners are *self-seeking*.

Is there hope? Yes, but the answer isn't simply to try harder. Nor is it merely learning some new techniques. They need someone with the power to *reverse the curse*.

3. *He sentenced the man (17-19)*. In Adam's case, the divine judgment affected his work and his future. First, his work (17-18)--from now on he will have to exert back breaking toil to get food. The ground will now produce weeds and thistles.

Don't miss the fact sin had a drastic effect on the physical conditions of this planet. Prior to sin there was luxurious plant life; after sin there was noxious growth. Prior to sin Adam worked to take care of the earth and it was a joy; from now on it will involve painful toil.

But worst of all were these words. God told Adam (19), "For dust you are and to dust you will return." You're going to die, Adam.

At this point the skeptic says, "Wait a minute! God didn't keep His Word. Didn't He say, 'Eat and you will surely die.'?" And Adam ate. But he didn't die right away. Explain that!"

Okay. For starters, he did die. At this very moment Adam is spiritually dead. He is separated from God. And in time, he will experience the separation of soul and body when he dies physically. But not yet. God delays the experience of physical death for another nine hundred years (see Genesis 5:5). And why the delay? Sovereign grace.

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<sup>2</sup> Derek Kidner, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup>It's noteworthy that many of the legends and mythologies of ancient civilizations contain tales of heroes engaged in life-and-death struggles with serpents and dragons and other monsters. Why is that? Henry Morris offers this insight (68), "These and many similar representations of the ancient myths may well be somewhat distorted remembrances of this great primeval prophecy. Mankind, from the earliest ages, has recorded its hope that some day a Saviour would come who would destroy the devil and reconcile man to God."

There are things that God is graciously going to do for Adam and his descendants before He takes Adam out of this world.

You see, in the Bible death is the reverse of life, not the reverse of existence.<sup>4</sup> To die doesn't mean to cease to be, as Henri Blocher explains, "In biblical terms it means 'cut off from the land of the living,' henceforth unable to act, and to enter another condition."

Even in judgment, we see indications of God's grace. In God's sentence upon the man He told him he would have to work hard, that's true. But three times He said to him, "You will eat (3:17, 18, 19)."

Dear friends, whether we realize it or not, we, too, are living on borrowed time. The fact that we are alive today is due to grace. Please don't presume upon grace. Yes, Adam lived a long life, 930 years, but in the end he died. And so will we.

Oh, how terrible sin is! This was the result of the first sin. God sentenced the serpent, the woman, and the man. See the justice of God. The wages of sin is death.

The justice of God is what makes sacrifice necessary. Grace is what makes it possible. Thankfully, the Creator God is both just *and* gracious. We've just seen His justice. Now His grace in verses 20-24.

## II. We see God's grace (20-24).

It's possible to read Genesis 3 and see the justice of God, yet miss His grace. Sadly, many people do. So let's look carefully at two beautiful evidences of God's grace in the final verses of chapter 3.

**A. The first evidence is what Adam did (20).** Notice verse 20, "The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living."<sup>5</sup> What is the first thing we're told Adam did after the Fall?

1. *He named Eve.* You say, "What does naming Eve have to do with grace?" It's actually a vivid evidence of grace, and here's why. In Hebrew the word for Eve looks very much like the word for "living" or "life."

Ponder that. What prompted Adam to name his wife "Life," especially at a time like this? He had just heard the sentence of death, hadn't he? Why the name change? Because of God's grace. Enabled by grace, Adam grasps the significance of the promise he'd just heard. Yes, he knows suffering and death are coming. But he also knows something else. God has promised that Eve would bear children, in pain for sure, but children no less. The Reformer, Melancthon, rightly called Eve "the seal of grace."

Yes, Adam heard God's promise. He heard about the coming seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's head. And he believed it. So he named his wife *Eve*.

2. *In so doing he exhibited faith.* Why the name Eve? Verse 20 says he chose the name because he knew she would become the mother of all the living. The act of naming was an evidence of Adam's faith.

This family had been devastated by sin, but had God given up on it? No. God said this family, this world, would continue. And Adam believed God, and took steps to show it too.

According to James 2:17, faith without works is dead. Faith is the substance of things *hoped for*, the evidence of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6)." And according to Ephesians 2:8 where does faith come from?

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<sup>4</sup>Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning*, p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> The NIV says, "Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living."

"For by *grace* are you saved through faith--and that not of yourselves--it is the gift of God." Faith is a gift from God, an evidence of His grace.

So if we see Adam exhibiting faith, we know why. It's because of grace.

A quick sidenote. Don't miss the word "all" in verse 20. Eve would become the mother of "all" the living. Did God create other people besides Adam and Eve? The answer is *no*. Why not? The text states that Eve would become the mother of *all* the living. No human being ever walked on this planet who was not a descendant of Adam and Eve. And furthermore, if Eve is not the mother of all people we have a theological problem. There would be people *not* in Adam's lineage. But Christ came to rescue Adam's descendants, right?

This is the first evidence of grace at the end of Genesis 3, what Adam did.

**B. The second evidence is what God did (21-24).** God took action in three ways with Adam and Eve.

1. *He clothed them (21).* "And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." This is beautiful. Adam and Eve had a need, and in His grace God met that need.

But there's more to it. Why did God clothe them? They had already clothed themselves, hadn't they? Actually, they put on fig leaves, but those wouldn't last. Our attempts to take care of our sin problem never do. The first couple needed what God alone could provide for them.

There are two important principles here that are vital for families to consider.

- We see the principle of modesty. God made "garments" for them [the KJV says "coats of skins"]. The Hebrew actually says "tunics of skin."

Wenham explains (84), "A tunic, the basic outer garment worn next to the skin, was a long shirt reaching the knees or ankles...Whereas the human couple could only produce inadequate loincloths (3:7), God provided them with a proper outfit."

Why do we wear clothes today? Is it a cultural matter? No. Modesty is rooted in the very activity of God in Genesis 3.

I don't mean to be crude, but it's true. Sinners want to take off what God put on. What did Adam and Eve feel after they sinned? *Shame* (3:7, 10). So God provided a remedy for their shame. What was the remedy? Clothing.

"That's prudish," some say. "Clothing is just a matter of personal preference and taste." Actually, that's not true. Wearing clothing is rooted in the activity of God.

"But Adam and Eve were naked and shameless!" says the critic. "Why can't we get rid of old fashioned, Victorian narrow-mindedness and learn to celebrate the beauty of the human body?"

Answer this. *When* were Adam and Eve naked and unashamed? The answer is, in Genesis 2. That's *before* the Fall. What were Adam and Eve doing by the end of Genesis 3? Wearing clothes, right? And why? Because God knew they needed them. The truth is, we don't live in a Genesis 2 world, do we? We live in a Genesis 3 world. And there's no going back.

The entrance of sin into the world affected the way the man and woman looked at their bodies, and each others. They ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and *evil*. They now have evil thoughts. If they don't clothe their bodies, these evil thoughts can turn into evil actions.

And God doesn't want that to happen. The gift of clothing is an expression of His kindness to His image-bearers. He's helping the first couple (and their offspring) live in this evil world in the way that will be best for them, and for His honor.

Do you see what's happening here? Our wise and good Creator is showing us something. He is showing us that there are parts of our bodies that ought to be covered when we are in public. Is it because the sexual organs are evil? Not at all. God Himself created sex, and it's a good thing.

But in a post-Genesis 3 world, this good gift which is to be thoroughly enjoyed in marriage, will produce great shame and guilt if engaged outside of the marriage covenant. And to protect that from happening, God Himself covers Adam and Eve, not as punishment, but as an expression of His grace.

Friends, clothing is a gift from God, and it's not just for climate control. God doesn't want us to experience more guilt and shame, but rather, true freedom and joy.

In the eyes of the world, clothing is a fashion statement. In the eyes of God, it's a faith statement. When we choose to dress modestly, we are saying that we trust in the wisdom of our God about what's best for us and others who will be looking at us.

But there's more. It's not just the principle of modesty that we see here.

- We see the principle of substitution. Notice what the text says, "The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife." What does that imply? Don't miss it. Animals had to die in order for people to be covered.

This is amazing. By clothing Adam and Eve, God is doing two things. First, He is meeting their immediate need. But He's also caring for their *ultimate need*. He is showing them the principle of substitution. Blood was shed that day. A substitute died so these two sinners could live.

It's one of the most beautiful truths in the Bible, the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. We see a picture of it right here. We'll see another one next time in Genesis 4:4 where Abel brings an offering to God, a slain animal, a *sacrifice*.

Who wrote Genesis? Moses did. He wrote the first five books of the Bible (called the Pentateuch). Does the Pentateuch have anything else to say about animal sacrifices? Indeed, it does.

We see it in Genesis 15. When God entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham, what did God tell Abraham to do? "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon (15:9)." Why? Because the establishment of a covenant was based on the shedding of the blood of a substitute.

Then we come to the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Anything about animal sacrifices there? Listen to what God told Moses in Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."

Don't miss this. What do sinners need? Atonement. Sinful people cannot enter the presence of a holy God while in their sins. But God provided a way for their sins to be covered, atoned for. And what is it? A blood sacrifice. God said that if a substitute died, the sinner could live.

So for 1,400 years animals were sacrificed in Israel. Hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands of animals died, their blood shed on the altar.

Did those sacrifices take away their sins? No, not according to Hebrews 10:3-4, "But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."

Why then were they offered? They couldn't remove sins. They just covered them temporarily. Until what? Until the final sacrifice was made.

And when did that happen? When *The Lamb of God* was slain! Hebrews 9:27-28 explains, "Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people." Christ's sacrifice did what animal sacrifices could not do--take away sins forever (see also Hebrews 10:11-12).

For family devotions, Martin Luther once read the account of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar in Genesis 22. His wife, Katie, said, "I do not believe it. God would not have treated his son like that!" "But, Katie," Luther replied, "He did."<sup>6</sup>

Dear friends, God treated His Son like we deserve to be treated so He can treat us like His Son deserves to be treated. Do you know what that is? That's *grace*. And grace is what God demonstrated when He clothed Adam and Eve.

2. *He banished them (22-23)*. "Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of us [here's another reference to the Trinity] 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'--therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken."

Wait a minute. Was the serpent right? He told Eve if they ate the fruit they would be like God, knowing good and evil. There was a partial truth in his crafty words. After their transgression their eyes were opened, and they saw things from a perspective they had never seen before—for now they were *rebels*.

Why did God expel the man and the woman from the garden? For two reasons.

- He did it for His own glory. God is God and there is none else. When He cast them from the garden, He's simply keeping His Word. "Eat and you will surely die." The warning had been clear. His glory was at stake.

- He also did it for man's good. How so? Why did God say He was banishing them from the garden? So they wouldn't eat from the tree of life. Was He being stingy? Not at all. He's being merciful. He doesn't want them to live forever in the condition they are in, alienated from Him.

That's not life. People who don't know God don't live. They may *exist*, but they don't know what life is all about.

Keil and Delitzsch explain (107), "The expulsion from paradise...was a punishment inflicted for man's good, intended, while exposing him to temporal death, to preserve him from eternal death." Well said. Even in the banishing we see grace.

3. *He prevented them from going back (24)*. "He 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."<sup>7</sup>

He "drove them out." This is a stronger term than "send out." Later in the Pentateuch the word is used to depict the expulsion of the Canaanites from the Promised Land (Exodus 23:28-31). God made it clear there was no going back.

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<sup>6</sup>*The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers*, W. Wiersbe, p. 191.

<sup>7</sup> In the NIV it reads, "After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life."



The cherubim were there. Where? On the “east” side of the garden. Why on the “east”? Apparently that was where the entrance to the garden was. Remember what this garden was. It was a place of intimate fellowship between man and God.

It's interesting that the entrance to the tabernacle was likewise on the east. The garden, then, was like a sanctuary where God was uniquely present with people. It was that presence that man forfeited when he sinned.

In addition to the cherubim, there was a flaming (or “revolving”) sword. The word suggests the image of forked lightning, zigzagging to and fro.<sup>8</sup> Because of its movement this sword is sure to hit its mark.

We don't know much about the cherubim, but we do know this. We know they are angelic beings that live in the presence of God. And we know that in the tabernacle there were emblems of the cherubim embroidered on the veil that barred access to the holy of holies (Ex 36:35; 37:7-9).

Do you recall what happened to the veil the moment Christ died? The veil was rent in two (Matt 27:51). Do you see the significance? The cherubim once blocked sinful man from the holy presence of God. But no longer. Christ's atoning sacrifice opened the way.

Isn't it interesting what God *didn't* do? He didn't destroy the tree of life before their eyes. Nor did He destroy the garden. Instead, He simply cut off their access to it.

For how long? Until the time when the Seed of the woman would come to root out sin and abolish death forever.

Please notice. The way back is more than hard. It is impossible. The man cannot save himself. Nor can we.

There are two important implications for us in all this.

- We cannot erase the past. Not our past, nor Adam's. I'm convinced that many people have failed to grasp the drastic effect Adam's choice has had on them.

James M. Boice offers the following analogy, "We may illustrate what happened by imagining that Adam was born on the edge of a steep pit and that when God created him he said, 'Adam, do not jump into that pit; because if you do jump into the pit you will not be able to get back out again.' As long as Adam stayed on the edge of the pit he had free will so far as the matter of his jumping or not jumping was concerned. But once he decided to jump in, free will was lost in that area. He still had free will to walk around on the bottom of the pit or sit down. He had the choice of being complacent about his condition or else complaining about it. He could cry for help or be silent. He could blame himself or try to shift the blame to another. He had free will in each of those areas. But in the crucial fact, the fact of his being unable to get out of the pit, he was impotent."<sup>9</sup>

That's what happened to Adam. He fell away from God. He didn't have to, but once he did he lost the possibility of returning to God on his own.

What's more, every person born into this world is born "in Adam." We're born in the same shape we see Adam in at the end of Genesis 3--cut off from God.

Boice continues, "Some are complacent; some are angry. Some are resigned; some are anxious. Most are hardly aware of what has been lost. But regardless of their state of mind, all are in the same condition so far as God is concerned. They cannot choose him. And none do choose him until by grace God reaches down into the mud pit of human

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<sup>8</sup> Wenham, p. 86.

<sup>9</sup>James M. Boice, *Our Savior God*, p. 64.

misery and sin, picks up the sinner, places him upon the edge of the pit once more, and says, 'Now this is the way; walk in it.'"

The fact is, we cannot erase the past. That's the first implication. Here's the second.

•We must look to the One who gives hope for the future. The story of the Bible is what God is doing to restore what man forfeited. From paradise to paradise.

And in the final chapter of the Bible, what do we see once again? The tree of life (Rev 22:2, 14)! In the new paradise we who know the last Adam will enjoy access to what the first Adam forfeited. In fact, Revelation 22:3 makes this amazing statement about the new heavens and new earth. "No longer will there be any curse." Why not? It's because Jesus came to reverse the curse.

So there it is. What does a messed up family need? It needs God. It needs the sovereign gracious work of God. It needs a bloody sacrifice. It needs family members who will embrace the gracious, bloody sacrifice that God has provided for them.

My friend, do you know the One who became a bloody sacrifice for you?

Make It Personal: Consider three implications of the first sacrifice...

1. *Our sin separates us from God.*
2. *We need God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.*
3. *The good news is that is exactly what God did.* A.H. Strong once stated, "God requires satisfaction because He is holiness, but He makes satisfaction because He is love."

**Closing Song:** #196 "*There Is a Fountain*" (all five verses)

**Closing charge:** Let the redeemed of the Lord...SAY SO.

Community Group Discussion:

1. Today we are continuing our series, *The Christian Family*. We've been looking at the first family in Genesis, and recently looking at the first family's first sin in Genesis 3. All families experience sin on a regular basis, since all families are made up of sinners. How was sin dealt with in your family when you were growing up? What lessons have we learned from Genesis 3 in the past three weeks that can help us deal with our sin in a God pleasing way?
2. Perhaps you did not grow up in a Christian home, or in a home where biblical truth was applied. Be encouraged, for you have much in common with many first-generation followers of Jesus in the New Testament. How so? How can people who did not grow up seeing the Christian family modeled experience the joy of having a Christ-honoring family themselves?
3. In this morning's message, we looked at the world's first sacrifice in Genesis 3:20-24. Take time to read the passage again. When God clothed Adam and Eve with skins, he was doing more than just keeping them warm. What lessons did he teach them and us through this action?
4. At the end of Genesis 3, Adam and Eve were cast from the garden. This is obviously a demonstration of God's justice, but also of His mercy. How so?
5. Spend time as a group praying for the salvation of unsaved family members.