

GENESIS 3:14-26 | PARADISE LOST

This guide is designed to be used for community group discussions, but can easily be adapted for personal reflection.

ENGAGE (15-20 MINUTES)

Real Biblical community involves people “doing life together.” As much as we can, we want to create an atmosphere where people get to know one another, and feel comfortable sharing the ups, downs, and in-betweens of life. So take some time for people to get acquainted. A possible icebreaker question: Share a high and a low from the previous week. Or, rate your week 1-10. Or, make up one of your own.

REFLECTION AND STUDY (30-35 MINUTES)

Life is a strange mix. You can hear a song on the radio like Louis Armstrong’s classic “What a wonderful world” and agree with every affirmation he makes about the green trees, red roses, babies smiling and all the other splendors of our world. And as the song ends, perhaps you flip over to a news station and hear the usual litany of destruction, death, conflict and bad news. How are we to understand the nature of the world in which we live. Genesis 3 tells us about the curse that comes on the world because of sin.

Read Genesis 3:14-24

- 1.) What is the punishment for the serpent? the woman? the man?
- 2.) How would you describe the effects of sin upon the world? (see Titus 1:15, Hosea 4:2-3)
- 3.) Have you seen any evidence of the curse in our city? in your own life or family?
- 3.) Does this passage give you any reason for hope? (see Gen 3:15)
- 4.) Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 45-49. In what ways are Adam and Christ alike? In what ways are they contrasted?
- 5.) Read Romans 8:18-25. How does Paul describe the current state of the world? When and how will this be changed? What is to be our attitude toward suffering?
- 6.) At the end of the sermon, Dave asked us to think about whether or not we are being reformed? He pointed us to God’s word, saying we need to believe it is true, good, and beautiful. Practically, how can you make God’s word a bigger part of your life this week?

***Sermon outline on the next page*

PRAYER (15 MINUTES)

Break into men and women for prayer. Share prayer requests and pray for one another. Pray especially about applications to question #6.

PARADISE LOST

Introduction

- “Trumphant Realism”

An Enemy Kingdom

- The serpent
 - "That great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray." (Revelation 12: 9)
- The curse
- War is declared
 - "A perpetual quarrel is here commenced between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness among men: war is proclaimed between the seed of woman and the seed of the serpent." (Matthew Henry)
- Satan's tactics

A Glorious Ruin

- Eve is judged
- Adam is judged
- their corruption (inner)
 - "To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted." (Titus 1: 15)
 - "He commits depraved acts by which he offends God, his neighbor, and himself: shameful acts by which he defiles his name, his person, and his conscience; and vain acts by which he ignore all things important, useful, and necessary." (Pope Innocent III)
- their corruption (outer)
 - "There is only cursing, lying, and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. Because of this the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying." (Hosea 4: 2-3)
 - "For mines are for men, not for money. And money is not something to go mad about, and throw your hat into the air for. Money is for food and clothes and comfort, and a visit to the pictures. Money is to make happy the lives of children. Money is for security, and for dreams, and for hopes, and for purposes. Money is for buying the fruits of the earth, of the land where you were born." (Cry the Beloved Country)
- their expulsion

A Powerful Reversal

- a daunting dilemma
 - "Do Lawd, come down here and walk amongst yo people
And tek 'em by the hand and tell 'em
That yo ain't hex wid 'em.

And do Lawd come yoself,
Don't send yo son,
Cause this ain't no place for chillen."
(composed by slaves, 1866, Charleston, SC)

- a gracious promise
- a great reversal
- the spoils of war

Are you being re-formed?

- His word is true
- His word is good
- His word is beautiful
- “Their sorrows were so many servants prepatring their joy.” (Victory Hugo, Les Miserables)