

Goodbye to Paradise

Genesis 3

Introduction

We discovered in our last discussion of Genesis, chapter 2, that God created a beautiful relationship between husband and wife. No sooner had God created that relationship than Satan set the wheels in motion to destroy it. And, we will find in chapter 3 of Genesis, the tragic fall of man.

I think Genesis, chapter 3, is the saddest, most tragic chapter in all of the Bible. Yet, as we study this chapter today, we will find interwoven into its tragic tapestry, the threads of hope and salvation.

In verse 1a of chapter 3, we are told,

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. . . .

Oh, Satan is indeed crafty. In fact, two times we are warned of Satan in scriptures by the apostles.

In II Corinthians, chapter 2, verse 11, Paul exhorts the church in Corinth,

so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

In other words, we are not to be ignorant of Satan's schemes. The word "scheme" is the original word "agnumen," which means, "mindset or mentality". Satan has a mentality, a mindset, a way of thinking, and I think he would discover that type of thinking in the humanistic philosophy of today's society.

Paul will also warn the church in Ephesus, in Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 11, to,

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

The word "schemes," or it may be "wiles" in your translation, comes from a different original word. It is the word "methodios," from which we get our word "method".

So, we discover from the writings of scripture that Satan has a mindset, a mentality, and he also has a method. We will discover in chapter 3 of Genesis, the methodology of Satan and its five-faceted deception.

Satan's Five-fold Deceit in Tempting Eve

Look at Genesis, chapter 3, and we will see the five-fold deceit of Satan in tempting Eve.

Satan appeared in a form to deceive

1. The first of this five-fold scheme by Satan in tempting Eve is that he appeared in a form to deceive.

Look at verse 1a again.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. . . .

Evidently, Satan took the form of the serpent. This was one of the creations of God and it was beautiful.

Now understand that this was before the fall. The serpent, like any being or beast, had a wonderful relationship with mankind. It was a beautiful thing and its skin gave off beautiful colors. So, there was no need to fear. Perhaps the beautiful colors were attractive to the woman, so Satan chose to inhabit the serpent.

Satan inhabited a serpent because he wanted to take a form that would deceive. You need to understand that he is not running around town wearing a bright, red suit with a long tail, carrying a pitchfork, showing fangs, and shoveling coal. He is an angel of light. He will take whatever appearance necessary in order to deceive. With Eve, it was the form of a serpent.

Satan displayed cunning in two ways

I want to point out Satan's cunning ways. I asked myself the question, when I looked at verse 1, "Why did Satan come to Eve alone? Why did he pick on her?" I think his cunning ways are revealed in two ways.

Satan understood the pattern of God's creation

- First, Satan knew and understood the pattern of God's creation.

Satan was there and knew that woman was created the weaker vessel. He understood that she was the one easily led, the one prone to follow. So he was cunning in coming to her.

Satan understood the principle of divide and conquer

- Secondly, Satan understood the principle of divide and conquer.

He came to Eve when she was all alone. Look at Ecclesiastes, chapter 4, verses 9 through 12a.

Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone?

(notice this phrase in verse 12a),

And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. . . .

Satan understood the principle of dividing and conquering.

I believe we find in this, an emphasis on the necessity of mutual accountability in marriage. The importance for mutual accountability and unity in marriage is discovered in this temptation of Eve. I think you will find that a person who is unwilling to live in unity with their spouse, is unwilling to follow the guidelines of the word of God in relation to her or him.

The individual who is in rebellion to the institution of the local New Testament church; who is ostracizing himself from the fellowship, from institutions that God has ordained; who is living apart from unity in that relationship, is a person who is a susceptible person. I think that person is a "sitting duck".

There is an interesting verse that the apostle Peter gives us when he talks about husbands and wives living in unity together. Look at I Peter, chapter 3, verse 7b.

. . . So that your prayers will not be hindered.

That has a fascinating implication. He is implying that, if you as a husband and wife, are not in

a harmonious relationship, your prayers are being hindered.

Let me suggest something startling. If you are at odds with your husband or wife, you might as well not pray. It does not matter if you get up at four o'clock in the morning. If you are at odds with your husband or wife, God is interested in the prayer of confession. He is interested in the harmonious relationship between husband and wife. So, forget the religious façade. Get it right with your spouse, and then pray. Your prayers then, will not be hindered – God can answer.

Satan cast doubt on the word of God

2. Secondly, Satan not only appeared in a form to deceive, but he cast doubt on the word of God.

Look at the last part of verse 1 of Genesis, chapter 3.

And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'"

He casually suggests, "Eve, has God said this?" And, if a serpent can smile, he smiled. He says, "Do you really think God meant you couldn't eat from every tree?"

Understand that Satan is not coming across as some brash, rude character. Shakespeare said it well when he wrote, "The prince of darkness is a gentleman."

The serpent came in to beguile her and asked a simple polite question, "Did God say that?"

However, he was sowing in her mind, a seed of doubt.

Notice the response of woman in verses 2 and 3.

The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, . . .

(God did not say that – He only said they could not eat it),

“. . . or you will die.”

Satan denied the truth of God's word

3. Notice the third thing in Satan's temptation; that is, he denied the truth of God's word.

Look at verse 4, and notice that now he is a little brash.

The serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"

Ladies and gentlemen, every temptation is an opportunity to either believe the words of Satan or the words of God. God said, in Genesis, chapter 2, verse 17b,

. . . eat from it you will surely die.

Satan said,

. . . You surely shall not die.

Understand, men and women, that when you sin, you are either believing the words of God or the lies of Satan. God always tells the truth. In John, chapter 8, verse 44b, Jesus declares,

. . . [Satan is] the father of lies.

One of the things Satan will do, as he did with Eve, is pull you from the words of God, sow seeds of doubt in your mind about the words of God, so that you will one day, deny the words of God and follow the words of Satan.

Satan attributed evil motives to God

4. Fourthly, Satan attributed to God evil motives.

Look at the first part of verse 5 of Genesis, chapter 3. This is the amazing thing about the entire temptation to me. Satan suggests; he dares to imply,

For God knows that in the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, . . .

Now, it is God who is jealous; it is God who is the one who in a cowardly manner, protects His throne. Satan would suggest to the woman, "Look, if you eat, God is afraid. He knows that you will be like Him and He trembles at that thought. He is an envious God. He is jealous of His character."

Satan attributes to God the evil motives, when God holds our best interest at heart. Satan is doubting the goodness of God.

Men and women, when you and I face temptation, we come to that same conclusion. We think, "Is God really good in withholding this from me? Could He be better to me if He allowed this for me?"

Satan says, "Oh, God isn't as good to you as He could be, because He'd give you this if He were."

So, Satan doubts the goodness of God and attributes to God evil motives.

Satan promised blessings through disobedience

5. Lastly, number five, Satan promised blessings through disobedience.

Look at the last part of verse 5.

. . . and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Satan says, "Sin will pay off. It'll bring dividends."

And it will, for a season. Make no mistake, however, where obedience to the words of Satan does offer benefits, they are only temporary. Obedience to the word of God offers benefits, but they are eternal.

That is the difference we find in Genesis, chapter 3. "Eat it," Satan says, "and you will be like your Creator; eat it, and you will be like God."

That is not happening today, is it? Yes, it is. In fact, the truth is, Satan is offering to mankind this very same thing. He is saying, "You are divine."

You might say, "I haven't heard that."

Well, if not, you have been in the closet. Have you heard about channeling lately? It is sweeping America and is one of the arms of the New Age Movement. The New Age Movement is the repackaging of humanism. I think in its final form, it will literally win America. We will become like one of the eastern countries with all of its mysticism and many gods, unless God brings revival to America.

I was watching a talk show and on the program, a woman was channeling. If you are not aware of what that is, it is where some spirit from some other planet or some other universal life, inhabits the body of a human and speaks through them. That human becomes the channel through which the spirit speaks. This is not something new – it is as old as sin.

I was watching this particular talk show and the woman was channeling a spirit that had a strange Scottish type of accent. If I had been from Scotland, I think I would have been offended. Finally, someone from the audience raised the question, "Why did you come to planet Earth?"

Think about it, if you rule some universal planet out there, if you have your own kingdom, why take the time to come to Earth?

I will never forget the channeler's answer. Without even a blink of the eye, she said in that strange accent, "I have come to let man know that he is divine."

It is the lie of Satan. He says, "Man/woman, you are God."

Satan has transgressed the boundary between the Creator and the creature.

You say, "But I don't believe in channeling."

Let me ask a question of you. Would you espouse the words of one man who wrote the following that basically states the same thing? "Our responsibility is to direct our own lives, and we do not claim to be in need of forgiveness or salvation."

In other words, "I am the authority in my life. I run my life. I call the shots in my life."

What are you saying? That I am the God in my life; there is no other authority, no higher being. I live as if God does not exist. That is possible not only for an unbeliever, but for a believer as well.

Look at verse 6.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, . . .

(that is the physical lure),

. . . and that it was a delight to the eyes,

(that is the emotional lure),

. . . and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, . . .

(that is the intellectual lure),

. . . she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Do you notice the three things? The emotional, the physical, and the intellectual lures? There will be times when it will make perfect sense to disobey God. There will be times in your life when it will just make common sense to do something other than what God declares. If you talk to someone who does not follow God, you will find that they always have their logic. God says that though it may make sense to you now, there is a coming judgment that ultimately brings death.

A Three-fold Discovery After Sinning

Now, I want to give a three-fold discovery after sinning.

They discovered their nakedness

1. First, Adam and Eve discovered their nakedness because of their sin.

Look at the first part of verse 7.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; . . .

The word "knew" in this verse, is the Hebrew word that could be translated, "they had intellectual insight". All of a sudden, they knew something was wrong.

They discovered self-effort

2. The second thing that they discovered was self-effort.

Look at the last part of verse 7.

. . . and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the first religious act of human history. This is the first act of self-effort to somehow cover over sin; to somehow make oneself better than you know you are. Adam, knowing that there is something wrong, something amiss, takes it into his own hands to remedy the situation.

My friend, let me suggest that if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you can come to church, but that is a fig leaf. You can pray prayers, but they are fig leaves. You can give money to church; you can give money away; you can attend a Bible study; you may even teach one, but they are all fig leaves. It is human self-effort to pull yourself up, to salve your conscience when you have never dealt with sin. That is what Adam and Eve did.

They discovered fear

3. They also discovered, thirdly, fear.

Look at the first phrase of verse 8.

They heard the sound of the Lord God . . .

That is not the sound of His voice, by the way, that is the literal sound of the Lord God walking. Evidently, He had taken some kind of human form or some kind of form that could make Him known to the senses of man. We do not know what kind of form that was. It may not have been a human form. Continue in verse 8,

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and the wife . . .

(notice what they did),

. . . hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Adam and Eve discovered fear. Imagine, “Adam, I hear God. He’s coming.”

“Eve, I hear Him too. Let’s run.”

They run and hide behind some tree. There they are cowering and trembling in fear. Before the fall, they had perfect openness and communion with God. Now, they are hiding behind some shrub.

This is the nature of man. Because of sin, you and I do not run *to* God, we run *from* Him.

There is something beautiful, though, in the expression in the next verse, verse 9.

Then the Lord God called the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”

You run from Him, but, ladies and gentlemen, God has come to you; God has come to remedy the situation. And though you do not want Him, though you may not know Him, God in the person of Jesus Christ, who declared in the gospel of Luke (Luke 19:10), . . .

. . . [I am] come to seek and to save that which was lost.

. . . seeks after us. We would remain behind the shrub, if it were not for His grace.

The tragedy of this whole situation is that Adam and Eve, hiding behind the tree, thought they could get away from God. They thought that somehow God did not know. They are about to learn a lesson that you and I often forget. That is – God knows everything. They have not been clued in on that yet. They thought that they could hide behind the bark of a tree and get away from it.

You and I often forget that God knows our sin, as well. We start at a very young age revealing the lack of understanding that God knows all. We try it out on

our parents first. We did not have to have anyone teach that to us either.

I was sitting in the living room this past week, and one of my little boys walked in with the silliest grin on his face. Kids are so dumb! If he had done something wrong, he should have just acted normally, but he was giving me a silly little grin. And, he walks by me with his hands behind his back. His silly little grin got my attention, and then I noticed his hands were behind his back. Bright kid!

We are just as silly when we sin and give God some pious smile, as if He will not see; as if He will not know. Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 13b, says,

. . . all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him . . .

A Four-fold Disintegration Resulting From Sin

I want to give a four-fold disintegration resulting from sin.

The disintegration of fellowship with God

1. The first is the disintegration of fellowship with God.

Look at verses 9 and 10.

Then the Lord God called the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; . . .

(that is a lie),

“. . . so I hid myself.”

He should have said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden and I have sinned,” but he said, “I was naked, so I hid myself.”

Before the sin, there was openness and communication. Now, there is hiding in guilt.

The disintegration of marital unity

2. Secondly, there is the disintegration of marital unity.

Continue to verses 11 and 12, and note this carefully.

And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

Boy, God is just like a parent, isn't He? Did you do what I told you not to do?

Adam has been called in on the carpet. There is no way out. So, what did he do? Verse 12 tells us.

The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."

In other words, "Well, Lord, she, the one You gave me, she did it."

Now, use your imagination for a moment. We do not have it in the text, but I doubt Eve took that sitting down. I think the blood started going up in her neck; that little vein in her neck got ten times the normal size; her face flushed. She probably stomped her foot and said, "What?! What do you mean I made you do it? I can't make you do anything."

Adam said, "Well, you gave me the fruit."

They are having the first spat in marital history – and it is a "lulu".

Then she probably looked at the Lord and said, "Lord, I can't believe this man blames me." And God says, in verse 13a,

. . . What is this you have done? . . .

Now Eve is on the carpet. So she says, in the last part of the verse,

. . . The serpent deceived me, and I ate.

In other words, "Uh, the serpent, he made me do it."

Now Adam is hot. Oh boy. "What do you mean the serpent? You got on me because I blamed you, and now you're blaming the serpent."

Here they go. Yap! Yap! Yap! Yap! Yap! It is a good one.

How did they learn these techniques? Before this sin, they had never argued; they had perfect harmony. Now, at the drop of a hat, "bang," they are at each other's throats.

I will tell you why. It is because sin brought about a loss in marital harmony.

Three things were lost between husband and wife

Three things drastically changed and were lost between husband and wife.

Marriage lost its harmony

- The first is, marriage lost its harmony.

Adam and Eve blamed each other. I do not know where they learned the techniques of arguing, but they were masters at it all of a sudden.

I read of one newlywed couple who told some friends, "We decided we wouldn't go to sleep at night mad at one another. We haven't had any sleep for three weeks now."

That is so true. Why? Because it just comes naturally. What was unnatural in the garden; that is, arguing and a complaining spirit, is now natural.

Woman lost her naturally submissive spirit

- A second thing that drastically changed as a result of this sin is, woman lost her naturally submissive spirit.

Look at the first part of verse 16, which is a result of the sin or the fall. We will get back to verse 15 in a moment.

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband . . .

Now the word "desire" could be translated, "crave". It is a pursuit. You could translate this phrase, "Your craving will be over your husband."

In other words, now because of the fall, it comes naturally for a woman to desire to form, manipulate, and move her husband. The reason that you, ladies, do that is because it is part of your nature now; because of sin. Her desire, that means her emotional being, is now exaggerated. Where once her husband was His, now she would seek to possess him. She now seeks to manipulate, to fashion, to form him after her own will.

Man lost his naturally loving headship

- The third drastic change as a result of this sin is, man lost his naturally loving headship.

Notice the last part of verse 16.

. . . and he will rule over you.

The implication in this verse, of course, is the exaggerated sense that man will no longer lovingly lead. Now, man will tyrannically rule; will subjugate woman; will press her down.

In countries without the word of God, you will find women who are nothing more than beasts or objects. Even in America, where the word is not learned and loved, you will find women as objects, toys, beasts of burden.

Why? Why does man find it so easy to subjugate? Why does man find it so easy to tyrannically rule? It is because of sin. It now comes naturally to mankind to rule; to dominate without love.

The disintegration of man's paradise

3. The third disintegration resulting from sin is the disintegration of man's paradise.

Look at verse 17.

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; cursed is the ground because of you; . . ."

In other words, what came naturally to the ground will be an unnatural thing. That is why when you plant tomatoes, what do you get? You get tomatoes and weeds. When you plant flowers, what do you get? You get flowers and weeds. Why? Because for every weed that grows, the earth is bearing witness that it is also under the curse. That which was unnatural is now natural.

Continue to the last part of verse 17.

. . . in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

Notice verse 18a,

Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; . . .

The Hebrew, in fact, could read, "Both thorns and thistles shall grow for you by themselves."

Look at verses 18b through 19a.

. . . and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread .

..

I used to think that man would have to sweat to get bread, until I had the privilege of studying the original text. This literally means that man toils and he sweats, and interspersed between man sweating and toiling, he sits down to eat. In other words, work is broken up by his meals. Even when he sits down to eat, he is still sweating. Man is now cursed by being

forced to plow an unyielding soil to work. Even in his eating, he does not rest.

The disintegration of physical immortality

4. Notice also, the disintegration of physical immortality.

Look at the last part of verse 19.

. . . Till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

God's Four-fold Deliverance for Mankind

Let me give God's four-fold deliverance for mankind.

Victory is promised

1. First, victory is promised.

Look at verses 13 through 14.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life;"

Now, however, notice the promise. This is called the "protoevangelium". It is the first promise of the gospel. Look at verse 15a.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed;

...

There are two ways to interpret this, and I think both are correct. One is immediate and the other is prophetic.

The first interpretation is that the seed of the woman; that is, the woman following God, will be at enmity with the seed of the serpent. There is a clash, from this point until God reigns, between those who believe God and those who do not believe God. They will be at war.

Notice there is a prophetic utterance, as well. There is a change from the plural to the singular ("He," not "they"), in verse 15b,

. . . He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

Who is “He”? “He” is Jesus Christ.

Now, what does this verse mean when it says that the serpent will bruise His heel? I have been told and I would guess it to be true, although I never want to experience it, that if a serpent bites you, the best place to be bitten with the least results is the heel. In other words, what He is saying to the serpent is, “You’re going to prick the coming Savior, but it will have no effect. And He will crush your head.”

Now, if you want to kill a serpent, you do not cut off its tail. You do not crush a serpent’s tail, you crush its head. This means that ultimately, he is brought to ruin. That is the promise of Jesus Christ.

Where would this take place? Where would the crushing occur? Where would the bruising of the heel take place? On the cross!! On the cross, the Savior’s heel was pricked, but to no effect because He gained the victory over the grave. In that act He forever broke the power of sin that the serpent had over mankind. The promise is given.

Marital unity can be experienced

2. Secondly, marital unity can be experienced.

Look at the writings of Paul in Ephesians, chapter 5. He writes some unusual words in verse 18.

. . . do not get drunk with wine, . . . but be filled with the Spirit

This does not make a lot of sense unless you go back into history and understand the thinking of the Greeks. They taught in their mythology that their god Zeus, had a son one day. His son’s name was Dionysius, and he was called the god of wine. In their religious system, the Greeks believed they must become drunk with wine. They would, of course, practice all kinds of perversion and filthiness and call it religion. In order to be able to practice such heinous crimes and sins against one another, they would become drunk to dull the senses and quiet the conscience.

This practice was evidently pervasive in the Ephesian society. So Paul comes along and says, “Now look, in worshipping God, don’t become drunk with wine; don’t be controlled by wine; don’t be filled with that substance. Instead, be controlled by the spirit of God.”

Guess what the first thing out of the bag is, as a result of being submissive to the Spirit of God? Wives submitting to husbands; husbands loving their wives. Marital unity can be experienced only if the power of Satan is quenched in the life of the believer in his practice by yielding to the Spirit of God.

Paradise will be re-established

3. Thirdly, paradise will be re-established.

This is a promise. Look at Revelation, chapter 21, verse 1a.

Then I saw a new heaven . . .

(and guess what else),

. . . and a new earth . . .

You and I think heaven is a floating cloud up there. It is also the re-establishment of paradise. Planet Earth is once again made like the days of creation for man to enjoy.

Physical immortality will be assured

4. Fourthly, physical immortality will be assured.

Look at Revelation, chapter 22, and we will read some wonderful verses of scripture.

For all who believe in Jesus Christ (this is the promise), you are no longer under Satan’s dominion, but are now serving the kingdom of God and His future coming kingdom.

Look at what it is going to be like, according to chapter 22, verses 1 through 5 of Revelation. Notice the reference with implications that go back to Genesis, chapter 3.

Then he showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, . . .

Now, at the end of Genesis, chapter 3, man is kept from the tree of life. However, once again, according to verse 2b, it is available,

. . . yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Continue to verses 3 through 5.

There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it,

and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of the lamp nor the light of the sun because the Lord God will illumine them; and they . . .

(that is, the blood bought redeemed ones),

. . . will reign forever and ever.

In Genesis, chapter 3, there is the curse, the fall, the expulsion, and “Goodbye to paradise.” God closes the door on Eden. Revelation, chapter 22, promises the coming paradise; the coming kingdom. And those who believe in the Lamb will be able to participate in that coming kingdom.

Application – Lessons to be Learned From the Fall!

Let me give three applications; three lessons that we can learn from the fall.

In the final analysis, sin never pays

1. First, in the final analysis, sin never pays, it costs.

Look at Genesis, chapter 3, verses 23 and 24. Was it worth it for Adam and Eve to eat, to believe the lie of Satan?

Therefore, the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Literally, this does not mean there a sword that was on fire, but that there was a flame that was shaped like a sword, and it moved in every direction. That is as if it were lightning that flashed all around that tree as quickly as you could see. It is an awesome thing to think that there were cherubim, or angels, stationed around that tree, and a flashing of light all about it to keep man from coming in. It turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

Harmony in the home begins in the heart

2. Secondly, harmony in the home begins in the heart.

Every Christian; every believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling within. To be controlled by the Holy Spirit is the key. It is that control that brings that harmonious state back to the home once again.

Paradise is designed for sinners – but those who have been forgiven

3. Thirdly, paradise is designed for sinners – but those who have been forgiven.

In a cemetery in Strasburgh, Pennsylvania, is the tomb of a soldier who died during the Civil War. Around that tombstone, of course, are many others. Abraham Lincoln sought to honor a soldier in a particular way. So, he chose one particular soldier’s tombstone. Underneath his name and date of birth and death, Lincoln had written into the stone these words, “Abraham Lincoln’s substitute.” That soldier symbolized the fact that those who died in battle, died so others could live.

Men and women, you are either living under the curse of Genesis, chapter 3, or you have the promise of Revelation, chapter 22. What makes the difference that you can look at the cross of Christ, that you can think in your mind that Jesus Christ died one day for you, so that you can live and can you put your name on the cross, “Stephen Davey’s substitute”? If you cannot see your name; if you have never gone to the cross, you are under the curse. If you have gone to the cross, then paradise and abundant life, marital harmony, and forgiveness for sin will be once again experienced.