

Created After the Image of God

Lesson 4 – The Curse

September 29, 2019

“... and to put on the new self, **created to be like God** in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:24)

“... and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge **in the image of its Creator**” (Colossians 3:10)

1. **“So the LORD God said to the serpent,** ‘Because you have done this, **“Cursed are you** above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.”’ (Genesis 3:14)
 - a. The devil himself was cursed and has no possibility of salvation but will be thrown into fire
 - b. **“The devil,** who deceived them, was **cast into the lake of fire and brimstone**” (Revelation 20:10)
2. **“To the woman he said,** ‘I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; **with painful labor you will give birth to children.** Your desire will be for your husband, and **he will rule over you.**”’ (Genesis 3:16)
 - a. **“But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith,** love and holiness with propriety.” (1 Timothy 2:15)
 - b. **“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands** as you do to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:22)
3. **“To Adam he said,** ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, “You must not eat from it,” Cursed is the ground because of you; **through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.** It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. **By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food** until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”’ (Genesis 3:17-19)
 - a. “Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially **for their own household, has denied the faith** and is worse than an unbeliever.” (1 Timothy 5:8)
 - b. **“Husbands, love your wives,** just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... In this same way, **husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.** He who loves his wife loves himself.” (Ephesians 5:25, 28)
4. God designed the family to be a microcosm of His plan of salvation
 - a. The husband and wife relationship teaches us about Christ and the church
 - i. As the wife submits to her husband, the church submits to Christ
 - ii. As the husband provides for his wife, Christ provides for the church
 - b. “For since **the creation of the world** God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, **being understood** from what has been made, so that **people are without excuse.**” (Romans 1:20)
 - i. We understand that babies come from a man and a woman, not from two men or two women
 - ii. We understand that it’s a baby in the womb, not a blob of tissue
 - iii. We understand our gender at birth, there’s no confusion about this
5. The curse is God’s tough love on us—difficult times teach us that we can’t survive without God
 - a. **“The man has now become like one of us,** knowing good and evil ... **So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden ...**” (Genesis 3:22-23)
 - b. Good parents discipline their children and allow them to fail and suffer consequences
 - c. Many times people don’t call upon the Lord until they are desperate and can do no more
 - d. My mom became a Christian after being diagnosed with cancer and didn’t have long to live
6. The dilemma about the problem of evil is that an all powerful God *could* prevent evil, and an all loving God *would* prevent evil, but since there is evil then: (1) there is no God; (2) there is God but He is either not all powerful or not all loving, or both. However, this dilemma is based on several false assumptions:

- a. That the only solution to the problem of evil is to stop it all
 - i. Allowing evil doesn't show a lack of power but actually just how powerful God really is!
 - ii. He doesn't have to be a micro-manager over our wills in order for His will to be done
 - iii. He is so powerful that He doesn't have to stop all evil to finally overcome it in the end
 - b. That God has not already been stopping and limiting much of it
 - i. "The LORD said to Satan, 'Very well, then, everything he has is in your power, **but on the man himself do not lay a finger.**'" (Job 1:12), "The LORD said to Satan, 'Very well, then, he is in your hands; **but you must spare his life.**'" (Job 2:6).
 - ii. "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; **he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.** But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - iii. "For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but **the one who now holds it back will continue to do so** till he is taken out of the way." (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
 - iv. When God stops evil from happening, we would never know because it never happened!
 - c. That there is not a greater purpose in the evil
 - i. "I consider that **our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.** For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. **For the creation was subjected to frustration,** not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope." (Romans 8:18-20)
 - ii. "And we know that **all things work together for good to those who love God,** to those who are the called according to *His* purpose." (Romans 8:28 NKJV)
 - d. That God allows us to suffer but is unwilling to also suffer
 - i. In a workplace, we respect a boss who is also willing to get their own hands dirty so to speak
 - ii. God pronounced the curse upon the creation knowing His own Son would be subjected to it
 - iii. If man doesn't die then how could Christ have died for man?
7. Another purpose of the curse was to make a context for God's love and our love to be demonstrated
- a. Love is demonstrated not in the good times but in the difficult times—thus the need for the curse
 - i. "**But God demonstrates his own love for us** in this: While we were still sinners, **Christ died for us.**" (Romans 5:8)
 - ii. "**This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us** and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:10)
 - b. Our love for God is shown in how we treat people because we are created after the image of God
 - i. "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it **we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.** Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing." (James 3:9-10)
 - ii. "But I tell you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, **that you may be children of your Father in heaven.**" (Matthew 5:44-45)
8. The creation will be renewed from the curse—this life is like one big test of our love for God
- a. "For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that **the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage** to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God." (Romans 8:20-21)
 - b. "Then I saw '**a new heaven and a new earth,**' for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ... 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. **There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.** He who was seated on the throne said, '**I am making everything new!**' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'" (Revelation 21:1, 4-5)
 - c. "And we know that **all things work together for good to those who love God**" (Romans 8:28)