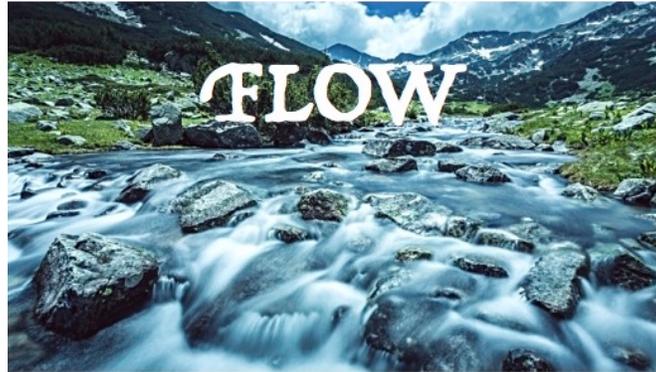


#18 March 24, 2017



## **The Curses**

### **How Do They Affect a Beautiful World?**

by Steve Wells

Genesis 3:1-24 tells the happenings that describe the fall of mankind. From the moment that Adam and Eve conceived even the inkling of desire to taste of the fruit, humans learned the craftiness of the serpent and his deceitful ways. Since then, humans have been cursed and our world filled with death and pain.



Recently, my wife and I saw the movie, "The Shack." Mack, the main character of the story, at one point experiences a walk in the garden. Though the garden was beautiful, he noticed the garden was full of chaos and was, as he put it, "a mess!" So as not to spoil this part of the movie, I won't say any more. However, I will make this parallel - as God's creation, we are Beautiful! But when the world enters in, we encounter evil, sin,

destruction, pain, and the beauty of us is tainted; it's scarred; it's flawed. Why?

*“So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!”*

Romans 7:21-25

Years ago, when I was in full time ministry, I was steeped in an addiction that had made my life “a mess.” I longed for that beauty that lived deep within my soul, yet at the same time I couldn’t find my way through the darkness. I was blinded by the sinful nature and the false hopes that my sins would offer me on a daily basis. It wasn’t until Jesus met me in the muck and pulled me up out of the muck and mire, that the light of God’s love broke through and led me down a path of truth and love. I believe that the Trinity had been tilling and preparing the soil of my soul for a day in which the seed of healing and recovery would take hold and soon become deeply rooted in that very ground. Out of the ashes of death and addiction comes God’s beauty. My “mess” had become beautiful again. The following is a link to a story that has moved my heart for years, second only to that of the story of Christ. Enjoy this read!

<https://breakingtheadddiction.wordpress.com/2010/05/06/the-prince-and-the-dragon/>

**Questions:**

- 1) Is there sin in your life today that hasn’t been dealt with and is holding you back from the beauty of God’s love in your life?
- 2) When sin isn’t dealt with, it grows bigger and becomes more rooted in your heart. Have you truly experienced the healing power of Jesus?

If so, take time to remind yourself of that experience and let that be what drives your actions today.

**Now take some time to listen to the following song:**

“Beautiful Things” by Gungor

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1spkhp41ig4>

**Prayer:**

*Father God, today I come before you with a heart that is broken and hurting. I come before you with my mess. I come before you with my faults and failures. I bring before you the sins of my heart and lay them at your feet. I ask, God, that you would take my sins and throw them deep into the depths of the ocean. Jesus, it is with this request that I repent of my sins and ask that you would give me strength to listen to your voice, to keep my eyes focused on yours and to renew my mind. May your light overcome the darkness of my heart and lead me to a place of redemption. May you take my “mess” and bring beautiful things to life out of the ashes of my pain and sorrow. To you I give all glory and honor and praise! Thank you, Jesus! In your holy name, I pray, amen!*

**Additional Resources and Scripture:**

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Colossians 1:13-15

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

**The Creeds:**

**7.137 Q. 27.** What misery did the Fall bring upon mankind?

**A.** The Fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse; so as we are by nature children of wrath, bondslaves to Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world and that which is to come.

**7.138Q. 28.** What are the punishments of sin in this world?

**A.** The punishments of sin in this world, are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections: or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sake, and all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations, and employments; together with death itself.

**B.**

**7.139Q. 29.** What are the punishments of sin in the world to come?

**A.** The punishments of sin in the world to come are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in hell fire forever.

**7.140Q. 30.** Doth God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery?

**A.** God doth not leave all men to perish in the estate of sin and misery, into which they fell by the breach of the first covenant, commonly called the covenant of works; but of his mere love and mercy delivereth his elect out of it, and bringeth them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant, commonly called the covenant of grace.