

PARADISE LOST SERIES

MESSAGE # 1

"PARADISE LOST"

What ever happened to Paradise? There was a perfect earth with no sin when Genesis 2 ends. What a place it must have been with all of the glow of Creation unshrouded by sin. Every creature was good, every part of the universe was singing the glory of God. No groaning under the burden of sin was yet present from the creation. But then something drastic happened. What? Adam's and Eve's sin. Look at Genesis 3 with me.

To Eve God said,

"I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" (Gen. 3:16). The pain of childbirth and the subjection of a wife to her husband are direct results of the Fall.

To Adam God 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 toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (3:17-19).

Then man was put out of the garden.

"Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever'-therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken" (3:22-23).

PARADISE LOST

When Adam sinned, the earth was corrupted and he immediately lost his kingdom and his crown.

Because all mankind fell in Adam, because he lost his kingdom and his crown, we do not now see the earth subject to man. The earth originally was subject to man, and it supplied all his needs without his having to do anything. He

had only to accept and enjoy the earth as it provided for him. Then, tempted by Satan, man sinned, and his tempter usurped the crown. There you see the change in the chain of command. Man fell to the bottom, and the earth, under the evil one, now rules man. If you pay much attention to ecology, you know that we do not rule this world; it rules us. With all our modern technology, we must constantly fight against the earth for our survival.

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

What else happened to Adam after he had sinned? First, there was murder within his own family. Then there was polygamy. In the next few chapters of Genesis we read of death. By the time we come to chapter 6, God is sending a flood to destroy all mankind but one family. Man indeed had lost his crown. The prince of the earth, of the system of the world, now is Satan. "The whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19). He rules the cursed earth, which in turn rules sinful man. When man lost his crown, he also lost mastery of himself as well as of the earth. He was totally sinful and became a slave to sin.

Not only that, but the animal kingdom was now subservient to man only out of fear, no longer out of affection. Much of the animal kingdom was no longer able to be tamed at all. The ground originally produced good things naturally and abundantly for man to have for the taking. Now it produces thorns, weeds, and other harmful things naturally and abundantly. Whatever good things man now gets from the earth come only by tiresome effort. Extremes of heat and cold, poisonous plants and reptiles, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, disease, war—all these were released upon man after the Fall. Virtually everything God had given for man's good and blessing became his enemy, and man has been fighting a losing battle ever since. For millennia, he himself has been dying. Now he is finding out that the earth is dying with him.

This morning if you listen carefully you can hear the universe sobbing around us. It is the groan of the weight of sin that now enslaves the perfections of this Cosmos. Turn with me please to Romans 8:18-22

THE GROAN OF CREATION

Amazingly, the earth itself knows its condition. Look again at v. 19-20.

"For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it" (Rom. 8:19-20).

God subjected the earth to this curse in order that man might continually have trouble. Man had to know that God was aware of his sin, and he had to suffer the consequences, in part, by fighting against the very earth that was designed to be his servant. But when the new kingdom begins,

“the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now” (vv. 21-22).

The earth, aware of its curse that came with Adam’s fall, is groaning for the day that the sons of God are manifest in the kingdom, for the earth knows that it, too, will be liberated from corruption.

In the meantime, man is subject to the earth. He plants but he is not sure who will reap. He builds cities and houses and dams and monuments-but they are all subject to destruction by lightning or earthquake or flood or fire or erosion or simply aging. Man lives in jeopardy every hour. Just at the height of professional achievement, his brain may develop a tumor, and he becomes an imbecile. Just at the brink of athletic fame, he may be injured and become a helpless paralytic. He fights himself, he fights his fellowman, and he fights his earth. Every day we read and hear of the distress of nations, of the impossibility of agreement between statesmen in a world that languishes in political and social conflict-not to mention economic hardship, health hazards, and military threats. We hear the whine of pain from dumb animals and even see the struggle of trees and crops against disease and insects. Our many hospitals, doctors, medicines, pesticides, insurance companies, fire and police departments, funeral homes-all bear testimony to the cursed earth.

No wonder the creation groans. But God did not intend it to be this way; and it will continue this way only for a little while, in God’s timetable. Someday, in the world to come, when the kingdom comes, hospitals will be closed, doctors will be out of business, and the ravenous nature of wild animals (and of human beings) will be changed. The crops and the trees will no longer be infested. The game of politics will be over and wars will cease. Man-redeemed man-will reign. “And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they learn war” (Isa. 2:4). A day is coming when, in the wonderful plan of God, the dominion that man lost will be given to him again. God’s redeemed ones, His children, will never again be subject to death. They will be like the angels (Luke 20:36). In the kingdom they will, in fact, reign over the¹ angels.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE UNIVERSE?

When Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God’s command, not only mankind but the earth and all the rest of the world was cursed and corrupted. After the Fall, God said to Adam,

¹ The paragraphs above adapted from MacArthur, Romans 8:22 and Hebrews 2:8.

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 toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (Gen. 3:17-19)

Before the Fall, no weeds or poisonous plants, no thorns or thistles or anything else existed that could cause man misery or harm. But after the Fall, **the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it.** *Mataiotēus* (**futility**) carries the idea of being without success, of being unable to achieve a goal or purpose. Because of man’s sin, no part of nature now exists as God intended it to be and as it originally was. The verb **was subjected** indicates by its form that nature did not curse itself but was cursed by something or someone else. Paul goes on to reveal that the curse on nature was executed by its Creator. God Himself **subjected** it to futility.²

In physics, the law of entropy refers to the constant and irreversible degradation of matter and energy in the universe to increasing disorder. That scientific law clearly contradicts the theory of evolution, which is based on the premise that the natural world is inclined to continual self-improvement. But it is evident even in a simple garden plot that, when it is untended, it deteriorates. Weeds and other undesirable plants will choke out the good ones. The natural bent of the universe—whether of humans, animals, plants, or the inanimate elements of the earth and heavens—is obviously and demonstrably downward, not upward. It could not be otherwise while the world remains in **slavery to the corruption** of sin.³

HOW DID ALL THIS HAPPEN?

This morning we need to go back and meet the 1st two humans on earth. We need to listen to the inspired, accurate and divine recounting of their experience of the perfections of the Garden of Eden.

Throughout the universe, war rages on every front. God, the holy angels, and elect men battle Satan, his demonic hosts, and fallen men. Although the outcome of the war has never been in doubt, the battles are no less real.

What we will see this morning is that the war began on the angelic level when Lucifer, highest of all created beings, rebelled against his Creator. Lucifer, more commonly known as Satan (“adversary”), was cast from heaven, taking with him

²MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

³MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

onethird of the angels (Rev. 12:4). From that moment until the present, war has raged between Satan and God, engulfing angels and men.

On the human front, the battle began when Adam and Eve rebelled against God in Eden. When they sampled the forbidden fruit (At the instigation of Satan) the war of the ages spread to the human realm. Through the centuries since then, men have shaken their fists in defiance at God. And though the folly of fighting Him is selfevident, that does not stop each succeeding generation from trying. They pit their impotence against His omnipotence, shattering themselves like raw eggs thrown against granite.⁴

To understand that titanic, catastrophic fall, try to think with me of life as a perfect human (not life with a perfect human, that is marriage!) and imagine what it was like in the dawn of creation. Your first memory would be waking up in God's garden, Eden. You would remember a comfortable world with no extremes of hot and cold, no storms, no disasters to fear. A secure home with no pestering bugs, no poisonous snakes, no deadly spiders. Just the continual beauty of fragrant and color filled flowering orchids hanging from the verdant green trees. Blooms that never fell off, never yellowed or wilted. Full, juicy fruit that just hung ripe on the branches but never fell off and rotted.

Even more, you would remember when you had a body that never ached, a digestive system that never rebelled, an eyesight that needed no correction, ears that heard the sweet sounds of life all around. No pains, never a sorrow, not even a fear. No weariness, just peace filled living. (Almost sounds like ads for retirement living in Florida?)

In God's perfect Garden it was paradise living. Everyday was an adventure - new colors, new fragrances, new symmetry in flowers, butterflies and all the wonders of a perfect animal world. There were no predators, no scavengers, and no carnivores. Just placid and magnificent creatures reflecting the majesty of God. Around every corner of towering and graceful trees each perfectly planted by God - were flocks, herds and gatherings of exquisite living animals.

Best of all your memories would be remembering the sweetness of the sound of the voice of the Lord. About suppertime each day a gentle breeze would whisper by and then you would hear the voice of God. The Gardener and Planner of the Universe was walking amongst His creatures in the cool of the day. He was seeking fellowship with you His best friends whom He had made to look just like Him. And your ears that He created would hear the sweetest sound of all, the Voice of Jesus who created them!

This is the world as it was in Genesis 1:31. The perfect, just and holy God of the Universe declared all was good. Then chapter 2 repeats the whole account of

⁴MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

Creation from an anthropological (human) view which fills in the details of man and woman, marriage and the Garden. Chapter 1 was cosmological and how we fit in the universe. So All is good and perfect. Then something terrible happens. Satan rebels and then enters the Paradise of God to ruin (so he thought) God's plan.

SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD TODAY

Satan is in an all out attack to make you and me doubt, reject and become deafened to the voice of Jesus. We are not listening to the voice of Jesus when we think wrongly about God! Will you listen to that voice? Adam and Eve chose to not listen to God. Instead of following God obediently in Paradise, Adam and Eve disobeyed, fell into sin, and Paradise was lost. As a side note for you American History buffs, an amazing fact is that the first words printed in America were in the New England Primer. The first page opens with "In Adams Fall We Sinned All".

SATAN'S PLAN IS TO CUT OFF THE VOICE OF JESUS

Genesis 3:1-5 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;³ "but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." NKJV

So where did the Fall originate. When did God's good creation get bad? For just a moment lets go back to that scene and see what happened. We need to go to Ezekiel 28 first.

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF SATAN

Satan's original state. Ezekiel 28:12–15 describes Satan prior to his fall. He enjoyed an exalted position in the presence of God; the brilliance of heaven was his surrounding (28:13). He was called the "anointed ... covering cherub" who enjoyed the position of highest honor before God (28:14, 16). Isaiah refers to this supreme angel as "star of the morning (KJV *Lucifer*; NIV *morning star*), son of the dawn" (14:12). After he became God's chief adversary (Heb. *Satan*) he is never

again called by any of these honorable titles. But in his prefall splendor he was filled with wisdom and beauty, and he was blameless (Ezek. 28:12, 15).

Satan's fall. Satan's fall is described in both Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14. Because of his sin Satan was cast from the presence of God (Ezek. 28:16). The reason for Satan's downfall was his pride; his heart was lifted up because of his beauty, and his wisdom became corrupt (28:17). The statement indicates Satan must have had extraordinarily high rank that led to his pride. Isaiah 14:12–14 further describes the sin that led to his downfall. Five "I will's" emphasize his sin (14:13–14). He desired to enter the very presence of God and establish his throne on God's throne above the other angels. He wanted to be like the "Most High." For that reason God thrust him down out of heaven.⁵

Before his fall, which obviously took place after the creation of the Garden of Eden, Satan was the "anointed cherub who covers" (v. 14). He was the highest ranking angelic being, concerned particularly with the glory of God. He was "on the holy mountain of God," and "walked in the midst of the stones of fire." That speaks of his dwelling in the immediate presence of God. How such a being, blameless since his creation, existing in a perfectly holy environment, could sin remains a mystery. That he did sin is a fact, however. All Ezekiel says of him is that "unrighteousness was found in you" (v. 15). He was then cast from his station among the holy ones in God's presence (v. 16), although he is still allowed access to that presence (Job 1:6; Rev. 12:10). It was then that he became Satan, the adversary; Apollyon, the destroyer; Devil, the slanderer.

It is difficult for our finite minds to understand how a perfect being in a perfect environment could fall into sin. Ezekiel describes Lucifer's motivation in verse 17: "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor." Satan somehow became enamored with his beauty and splendor, and his response was the sin of pride, which led to rebellion.

Isaiah 14:12–14 confirms that it was indeed pride that caused Satan's downfall:

How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

The first sin was pride, and every sin after that has been in some way an extension of pride. Pride led the angel Lucifer to exalt himself above his Creator and Lord. Because the bright "star of the morning" continually said, "I will, I will, I will" in opposition to God's will, he was cast out of heaven (Isa. 14:12–23).

⁵Enns, Paul, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press) 1996.

Because he said, “I am a god,” the Lord cast him “from the mountain of God” (Ezek. 28:11–19). The original sin of Adam and Eve was pride, trusting in their own understanding above God’s (Gen. 3:6–7). The writer of Proverbs warns, “When pride comes, then comes dishonor” (11:2), “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling” (16:18), and again “Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin” (21:4).

Pride is the supreme temptation from Satan, because pride is at the heart of his own evil nature. Consequently, Satan makes sure that the Christian is never entirely free from the temptation of pride. We will always be in a battle with pride until the Lord takes us to be with Himself. Our only protection against pride, and our only source of humility, is a proper view of God. Pride is the sin of competing with God, and humility is the virtue of submitting to His supreme glory.

Pride comes in many forms. We may be tempted to be proud of our abilities, our possessions, our education, our social status, our appearance, our power, and even our biblical knowledge or religious accomplishments. But throughout Scripture the Lord calls His people to humility. “Before honor comes humility” (Prov. 15:33); “The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life” (22:4); “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips” (27:2).

THE KEY TO GOD'S BLESSING: HUMILITY

Humility is an ingredient of all spiritual blessing. Just as every sin has its roots in pride, every virtue has its roots in humility. Humility allows us to see ourselves as we are, because it shows us before God as He is. Just as pride is behind every conflict we have with other people and every problem of fellowship we have with the Lord, so humility is behind every harmonious human relationship, every spiritual success, and every moment of joyous fellowship with the Lord.

Humility begins with proper self-awareness, “the virtue,” said Bernard of Clairvaux, “by which a man becomes conscious of his own unworthiness.” It begins with an honest, unadorned, unretouched view of oneself. The first thing the honest person sees in himself is sin, and therefore one of the surest marks of true humility is daily confession of sin. “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8–9). “We are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves,” Paul says; “but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding” (2 Cor. 10:12). It is not only unspiritual but unintelligent to judge ourselves by comparison with others. We all tend to exaggerate our own good qualities and minimize the good qualities of others. Humility takes off our rose-colored glasses and allows us to see ourselves as we

really are. We are not “adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves,” says Paul, “but our adequacy is from God” (2 Cor. 3:5).

Second, **humility** involves Christ–awareness. He is the only standard by which righteousness can be judged and by which pleasing God can be judged. Our goal should be no less than “to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6), and Jesus Christ walked in perfection. Only of Jesus has God ever said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well–pleased” (Matt. 3:17).

Third, **humility** involves God–awareness. As we study His life in the gospels we come to see Jesus more and more in His human perfection—His perfect humility, His perfect submission to the Father, His perfect love, compassion, and wisdom. But beyond His human perfection we also come to see His divine perfection—His limitless power; His knowing the thoughts and heart of every person; and His authority to heal diseases, cast out demons, and even forgive sins. We come to see Jesus Christ as Isaiah saw the Lord, “sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted” and we want to cry out with the seraphim, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory,” and with the prophet himself, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isa. 6:1, 3, 5.)⁶

⁶MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

SATAN'S FOUR LIES GENESIS 3

1. **DOUBT GOD'S WORD** v. 1a "Has God indeed said". What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD. We doubt God when we doubt His Word. Satan wants us to believe that God's Word is just like any other book. It is nice, helpful, but not absolute. He wants us to question God's Word, avoid God's Word, neglect God's Word or whatever else it takes to get us out of regular contact with the Lord.
2. **DOUBT GOD'S GOODNESS** v. 1b "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD. We doubt God when we doubt His Goodness. Satan wants us to believe is that God is trying to hold out on us, He is robbing us of some good times, He is out of touch with our needs, He missed that disaster we just went through, He messed up on how He made us, He means well but doesn't quite have everything under control. This is a direct attack on the character of God. One of the great truths about our God is the moral attribute of God we know as His GOODNESS. Let me define that for you.

"The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and all that God is and does is worthy of approval."⁷

- ✓ Psalm 34:8 O taste and see that the Lord is good; How blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!
- ✓ Psalm 84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.
- ✓ Psalm 119:68 Thou art good and doest good; Teach me Thy statutes.
- ✓ Matthew 7:11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!
- ✓ Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
- ✓ 1 Thessalonians 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- ✓ Hebrews 12:10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.
- ✓ James 1:17 Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

⁷ Grudem, Systematic, p. 197.

- ✓ Thus in theological terms we can say: God's mercy is His goodness toward those in distress; God's grace is His goodness toward those who deserve only punishment; and God's patience is His goodness toward those who continue to sin over a period of time.
3. **DOUBT GOD'S AUTHORITY** v. 4 "You will not surely die". What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD. We doubt God when we doubt His Authority. Satan wants us to believe is that God is not in charge – we are in charge; God isn't interested in our choices – are in charge; God will not make us accountable for our deeds – we are in charge. The religion of works righteousness was begun with Satan's rebellion against God. As Lucifer, the highest of the angels, he attempted to usurp God's throne and glory by his own creaturely efforts (see Isa. 14:12-15; Luke 10:18). It was with the lure of self-effort that he tempted Eve, and indirectly Adam, to eat the forbidden fruit, deceiving them into thinking that by self-willed disobedience they could wrest divinity for themselves (Gen. 3:1-7). It was the same lure of self-willed effort that prompted Cain to offer his own kind of sacrifice to the Lord and to offer it in presumption rather than faith (4:3-7). In each case God rejected and condemned the self-willed efforts of His creatures. He cast Satan out of heaven, cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden, and refused to accept the faithless sacrifice of Cain. If one carefully studies the various religions and cults of the world, he will soon discover that, without exception, they are founded on some form of human effort and works righteousness. And without exception, all religions and cults that deal with the supernatural trace their origins to angels, extraterrestrial creatures, or other spirit beings. For example, the angel Moroni is said to have presented the Book of Mormon on golden plates to Joseph Smith; the angel Gabriel supposedly dictated the Koran to Muhammad; and it was on supposed angelic revelations to Mrs. Herbert Armstrong that Armstrongism (the Worldwide Church of God) was founded. In addition to that, every human religion and cult denies the Trinity, denies the sole divinity of Jesus among men, and denies His unique and complete sacrificial atonement for man's sin.⁸
 4. **DOUBT GOD'S PLAN** v. 5 "your eyes will be opened" What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD. We doubt God when we doubt His Plan. Satan wants us to believe is that there is a better way to immortality, an easier way to glory, a quicker way to happiness. Again this is an attack upon the very Word of God. God's Word is sufficient. That is one of the characteristics God has given us about His Word. What the sufficiency of the Word means is "that everything God wants to tell us about how we should think about a particular doctrinal issue or to do in a particular situation is to be found in Scripture."⁹ So God has a wonderful and perfect plan revealed in His Word. Every time we open His Word we can hear His plan. The question is not does God speak, it is do we listen?

⁸MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

⁹ Grudem, p. 130-31.

WE MUST LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

GOD has FOUR truths that destroy Satan's 4 lies. We would do well to heed God's Word:

1. TRUST His Word. Psalm 119:89 Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. NKJV
2. REST in His Goodness Psalm 73:1 Truly God is good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. NKJV
3. SUBMIT to His Authority. James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. NKJV
4. FOLLOW His Plan Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. NKJV

Turn with me to Matthew 5:18. We can learn a lot about what Bible Jesus used from this passage. "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished."

- ⇒ EVERY WORD OF GOD IS ABSOLUTE. *Until heaven and earth pass away* represents the end of time, as we know it, the end of earthly history. As God's Word, the law would outlast the universe, which someday will cease to exist. "The present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2 Pet. 3:7; cf. v. 10). Even the psalmist knew that "Of old Thou didst found the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. Even they will perish, but Thou dost endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing Thou wilt change them, and they will be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end" (Ps. 102:25–26). Isaiah said, "Lift up your eyes to the sky, then look to the earth beneath; for the sky will vanish like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die in like manner, but My righteousness shall not wane" (Isaiah. 51:6; cf. 34:4; Rev. 6:13–14).
- ⇒ EVERY WORD OF JESUS IS EQUALLY AUTHORITATIVE: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (Matthew. 24:35). What was true of the law, in its fullest meaning as the Old Testament, was also true of Jesus' teaching. It is timeless. It is incredibly foolish to ask, "What does the Bible, a two-thousand-year-old book, have to say to us today?" The Bible is the eternal Word of the eternal God. It "is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews. 4:12). Phil Johnson says, "It has long preceded and will long outlast every person who questions its validity and relevancy."
- ⇒ EVERY WORD WILL COME TO PASS! *Not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law*, Jesus continued. The smallest letter translates the word *iota*, the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet. To Jesus' Jewish hearers it would have represented the *yodh*, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which looks something like an apostrophe. A stroke (*keraiá*) literally means "little horn" and refers

to the small marks that help distinguish one Hebrew letter from another. God is Jeremiah 1:12 Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word." (NKJV)

- ⇒ EVERY WORD OF GOD WILL BE PRESERVED. As one noted theologian has stated, "In other words, not only will the smallest letter not be erased, but even the smallest part of a letter will not be erased from the Law. Not even the tiniest, seemingly most insignificant, part of God's Word will be removed or modified until all is accomplished. But without the smallest exception, every commandment, every prophecy, every figure and symbol and type would be accomplished."
- ⇒ EVERY LETTER OF GOD'S WORD IS TRUE! No other statement made by our Lord more clearly states His absolute contention that Scripture is verbally inerrant, totally without error in the original form in which God gave it. That is, Scripture is God's own Word not only down to every single written word, but down to every letter and the smallest part of every letter.
- ⇒ EVERY BOOK OF GOD'S WORD IS TRUE! Jesus referred to the Old Testament at least sixty-four times, and always as authoritative truth. In the course of defending His messiahship and divinity before the unbelieving Jewish leaders in the Temple, He said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).
- ⇒ EVERY VERB TENSE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS TRUE! John MacArthur has stated "When the Sadducees tried to trip Him up by asking which of seven successive husbands would be a woman's husband in the resurrection, that is in heaven, He replied, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God" (Matthew. 22:29). In that confrontation with the Sadducees, Jesus' whole argument is based on a single verb tense. In the book of Exodus, which He was here quoting, God told Moses that He is, not was, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (3:6). Hundreds of years after those patriarchs had died, the Lord was still their God. Obviously those men were still alive. God's Word is therefore authoritative not only down to the smallest part of every letter, but also to the grammatical forms of every word. Because Scripture itself is without error, when it is believed and obeyed it will save us from error."
- ⇒ EVERY MORAL PRECEPT IS TRUE! Over and over again, Jesus confirmed the accuracy and the authenticity of the Old Testament. He confirmed the standard of marriage that God established in the Garden of Eden (Matthew. 19:4), the murder of Abel (Luke 11:51), Noah and the flood (Matthew. 24:38-39), Abraham and his faith (John 8:56), Sodom, Lot, and Lot's wife (Luke 17:29), the call of Moses (Mark 12:26), the manna from heaven (John 6:31, 58), and the bronze serpent (John 3:14).

What should be our response to these truths?

1. **YIELD TO THE WORD!** Christ and His Word are inextricable. You cannot divide Him from the Scriptures. He spoke them, defended them and affirmed them. To accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is to yield to what He taught about Scripture. Scripture's authority is Christ's authority. To obey the Lord is to obey His Word. "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God" (John 8:47). To trust in Christ is to say of Him as Peter did, "You have words of eternal life" (John 6:68).
2. **TRUST THE WORD!** The Old Testament cannot contain any errors. If there were any we would have to decide one of two things about Jesus Christ. Either He was ignorant of those errors, in which case He was not omniscient and was therefore not

God. Or else He knew of the errors but denied them, in which case He would have been a liar and a hypocrite, and therefore not holy God.

3. RECEIVE THE WORD! Always remembering that it is “the word implanted, which is able to save [our] souls” (James 1:21). We should receive it because of the infinite majesty of the Author and His authoritative statements about it. We should receive it because of the price that God paid to get it to us, and because it is the standard of truth, joy, blessing, and salvation. And we should receive it because not to receive it brings judgment.
4. EXALT THE WORD! Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name. (NKJV) Charles Spurgeon said, “Is the infallible revelation of the infallible Jehovah to be moderated, to be shaped, to be toned down to the fancies and fashions of the hour? God forbid us if we ever alter His Word.” Martin Luther never feared men, but when he stood up to preach he often felt his knees knock together under a sense of great responsibility to be true to the Word of God.
5. OBEY THE WORD! We should be diligent to present ourselves approved to God as workmen who do “not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Like Jeremiah, we should find God’s words and eat them (Jeremiah. 15:16), and “let the word of Christ richly dwell within” us (Col. 3:16).
6. DEFEND THE WORD! We are to “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). Like Jude, we should fight for the integrity, purity, and authority of Scripture. Spurgeon said, *“The everlasting gospel is worth preaching even if one stood on a burning fagot and addressed the crowds from a pulpit of flames. The truths revealed in Scripture are worth living for and they are worth dying for. I count myself thrice happy, to bear reproach for the sake of the faith. It is an honor of which I feel myself to be unworthy, and yet most truly I can say the words of our hymn, ‘Shall I to soothe the unholy throng, soften Thy truths and smooth my tongue to gain earth’s gilded toys, or flee the cross endured my God by Thee?’”*
7. SHARE THE WORD! We are to have as our constant goal to share the Word. 2 Timothy 4:1-2 I charge [you] therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. (NKJV) Says Spurgeon again, *“I cannot speak out my whole heart on this theme which is so dear to me, but I would stir you all up to be instant in season and out of season in telling out the gospel message, especially to repeat such a word as this: ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.’ Whisper it in the ear of the sick, shout it in the corner of the streets, write it on your tablet, send it forth from the press, but everywhere let this be your great motive and warrant. You preach the gospel because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”*¹⁰

Look with me into the garden, Eden’s delight, where death, pain, sorrow and decay all find their corrupt and slimy birth from the whisper of a dragon, the devil of old, our adversary, Satan.

- God pronounced the curse that would stalk the covenant for all time:

¹⁰MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

- Eve was tempted and Adam fell, but the seed was promised to crush the serpent.
- Abel was murdered, Cain was marked and the race was drowned because it was beyond hope, but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
- The world united in religion against God so at Babel he confounded the languages, but He chose Abraham and the struggle intensified.
- The 12 tribes were corrupted and the true worship apostatized and God was silent for 400 years.
- The Promised Seed was born and the babies were murdered.
- The Christ was tempted in person by the dragon slanderer and murderous liar, but Jesus was triumphant.
- His ministry was dogged with false accusations and death threats, but He did not look away.
- Gethsemane was like a second Garden of Eden. The snake dripped venom again and the Savior sweat blood. But, he didn't turn back.

And then, on Calvary's Hill, He died...at last did Satan, the murderer, win? Was the Promised Seed done, the covenant over?

NO, HE'S ALIVE!

When God wanted to describe the fall of Satan there was no prouder and more haughty people than those of Tyre. As no other creature, Lucifer basked in the splendor and radiance of God's glory. The name Lucifer means "star of the morning" or, more literally, "the bright one." But he was not satisfied with living in God's glory, and he said in his heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High" (Isa. 14:13–14). His ambition was not to reflect God's glory but to usurp God's sovereign power—while forsaking righteousness. Therefore when Satan declared his intention to make himself like the Most High, the Most High responded by declaring to His adversary, "You will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit" (v. 15).¹¹

The first sin was pride, and every sin after that has been in some way an extension of pride. Pride led the angel Lucifer to exalt himself above his Creator and Lord. Because the bright "star of the morning" continually said, "I will, I will, I will" in opposition to God's will, he was cast out of heaven (Isa. 14:12–23). Because he said, "I am a god," the Lord cast him "from the mountain of God" (Ezek. 28:11–19). The original sin of Adam and Eve was pride, trusting in their own understanding above God's (Gen. 3:6–7). The writer of Proverbs warns, "When pride comes, then comes dishonor" (11:2), "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling" (16:18), and again "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin" (21:4).

Pride comes in many forms. We may be tempted to be proud of our abilities, our possessions, our education, our social status, our appearance, our power, and even our biblical knowledge or religious accomplishments. But throughout Scripture the Lord calls His people to humility. "Before honor comes humility" (Prov. 15:33); "The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life" (22:4); "Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips" (27:2).

¹¹MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

Humility is an ingredient of all spiritual blessing. Just as every sin has its roots in pride, every virtue has its roots in humility. Humility allows us to see ourselves as we are, because it shows us before God as He is. Just as pride is behind every conflict we have with other people and every problem of fellowship we have with the Lord, so humility is behind every harmonious human relationship, every spiritual success, and every moment of joyous fellowship with the Lord.

Verse 12 describes mankind's ruin in just twenty-seven English words: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned ..." The ruin that Paul describes is, of course, the fall of Adam as recorded in Genesis 2, 3. In 2:17 God gave the prohibition, "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." But they sinned (Genesis 3:6, 7). The result, Paul tells us, is that sin and death spread to all men because, as the final words of our verse say, "all sinned." The verb "sinned" is in the aorist tense, which signifies a completed action in the past. The idea is, all of us sinned in that simple completed act—no exceptions! This is the foundational statement of our human condition of ruin and a basic truth of Christian theology.

We should stop here and take note that this idea is not easy for us to understand or accept because of our modern tendency toward "me—me—me." Our individualism makes many reject, with little thought, the idea that we could possibly share in Adam's sin.

But the Biblical mind did not have this problem. In Hebrew "Adam" means *mankind*. People in Bible times understood that the human race has a corporate solidarity in Adam. Thus all mankind was present and actually sinned in Adam. Adam was not a mere representative for mankind showing what we would do if we had the same temptation. *We were Adam*. "Adam is mankind," as F. F. Bruce says, and as Adam we sinned. This is Biblical thinking, and it is therefore the only right thinking about man's condition. Any interpretation that departs from this thought or waters it down is mistaken. This is Pauline doctrine, the doctrine of Augustine, the Reformed position and that of orthodoxy. It is the only correct view.

So we all have an Adam-solidarity. We all are in the same boat. John Donne, a great poetic mind and a Biblical mind, spoke of our solidarity this way:

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee.¹²

Our Response

From the above line of thought we can learn at least three lessons.

1. Appreciate the goodness of God. Count your blessings. Learn not to take natural benefits, endowments and pleasures for granted; learn to thank God for them all. Do not slight the Bible, or the gospel of Jesus Christ, by an attitude of casualness toward either. The Bible shows you a Savior who suffered and died in order that we sinners might be reconciled to God; Calvary is the measure of the goodness of God; lay it to heart. Ask

¹²Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Romans—Righteousness From Heaven*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books) 1997.

yourself the psalmist's question—"How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me?" Seek grace to give his answer—"I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD. . . . O LORD, truly I am your servant; . . . I will fulfill my vows to the LORD" (Ps 116:12–18).

2. Appreciate the patience of God. Think how he has borne with you, and still bears with you, when so much in your life is unworthy of him and you have so richly deserved his rejection. Learn to marvel at his patience, and seek grace to imitate it in your dealings with others; and try not to try his patience any more.

3. Appreciate the discipline of God. He is both your upholder and, in the last analysis, your environment. All things come of him, and you have tasted his goodness every day of your life. Has this experience led you to repentance and faith in Christ? If not, you are trifling with God and stand under the threat of his severity. But if, now, he (in Whitefield's phrase) puts thorns in your bed, it is only to awaken you from the sleep of spiritual death—and to make you rise up to seek his mercy. Or if you are a true believer, and he still puts thorns in your bed, it is only to keep you from falling into the somnolence of complacency and to ensure that you "continue in his goodness" by letting your sense of need bring you back constantly in self-abasement and faith to seek his face. This kindly discipline, in which God's severity touches us for a moment in the context of his goodness, is meant to keep us from having to bear the full brunt of that severity apart from that context. It is a discipline of love, and it must be received accordingly. "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline" (Heb 12:5). "It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees" (Ps 119:71).¹³

Charles Colson, in his brilliant book of essays *Who Speaks For God?*, tells of watching a segment of television's "60 Minutes" in which host Mike Wallace interviewed Auschwitz survivor Yehiel Dinur, a principal witness at the Nuremberg war-crime trials. During the interview, a film clip from Adolf Eichmann's 1961 trial was viewed which showed Dinur enter the courtroom and come face to face with Eichmann for the first time since being sent to Auschwitz almost twenty years earlier. Stopped cold, Dinur began to sob uncontrollably and then fainted while the presiding judge pounded his gavel for order. "Was Dinur overcome by hatred? Fear? Horrid memories?" asked Colson, who answers:

No; it was none of these. Rather, as Dinur explained to Wallace, all at once he realized Eichmann was not the godlike army officer who had sent so many to their deaths. This Eichmann was an ordinary man. "I was afraid about myself," said Dinur. "I saw that I am capable to do this. I am . . . exactly like he." Wallace's subsequent summation of Dinur's terrible discovery—"Eichmann is in all of us"—is a horrifying statement; but it indeed captures the central truth about man's nature. For as a result of the fall, sin is in each of us—not just the susceptibility to sin, but sin itself.

It was not the horror of the man Eichmann that smote Dinur, but the horrible revelation of self and the predicament of mankind that made him faint. Eichmann is in all of us, because all of us are in Adam. This is proven by our susceptibility to temptation. We are tempted by theft because we *are* thieves, even though we may not in fact steal. We are

¹³J. I. Packer, *Knowing God—20th Anniversary Edition*, (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press) 1993.

tempted to kill because we *are* murderers, even if we do not literally slay our brother. We are tempted to adultery because we *are* adulterers, even though we may not commit adultery. James says, “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed” (James 1:13, 14). The fact that we are tempted proves that we are prone to evil—and it is terrible. Eichmann is in all of us.¹⁴

Augustine was getting at the same thing that Edwards was. Fallen man has not lost his ability to make choices. The sinner still is able to choose what he wants; he can still act according to his desires. Yet, because his desires are corrupt he does not have the royal liberty of those set free unto righteousness. Fallen man is in a serious state of moral bondage. That state of bondage is called *original sin*.

Original sin is a very difficult subject that virtually every Christian denomination has had to face. The fall of man is so clearly taught in Scripture that we cannot construct a view of man without taking it into consideration. There are few, if any, Christians who argue that man is not fallen. Without acknowledging that we are fallen, we cannot acknowledge that we are sinners. If we do not acknowledge that we are sinners, we can hardly flee to Christ as our Savior. Admitting our fallenness is a prerequisite for coming to Christ.

It is possible to admit that we are fallen without embracing some doctrine of original sin, but only with severe difficulties in the process. It is no accident that almost every Christian body has formulated some doctrine of original sin.

At this point multitudes of Christians disagree. We agree that we must have a doctrine of original sin, but there remains great disagreement as to the concept of original sin and its extent.

Let us begin by stating what original sin is not. Original sin is not the first sin. Original sin does not refer specifically to the sin of Adam and Eve. Original sin refers to the *result* of the sin of Adam and Eve. Original sin is the punishment God gives for the first sin. It goes something like this: Adam and Eve sinned. That is the first sin. As a result of their sin humanity was plunged into moral ruin. Human nature underwent a moral fall. Things changed for us after the first sin was committed. The human race became corrupt. This subsequent corruption is what the church calls original sin.

Original sin is not a specific act of sin. It is a *condition* of sin. Original sin refers to a sin nature out of which particular sinful acts flow. Again, we commit sins because it is our nature to sin. It was not man’s original nature to sin but, after the Fall, his moral nature changed. Now, because of original sin, we have a fallen and corrupt nature.

Fallen man, as the Bible declares, is born in sin. He is “under” sin. By nature we are children of wrath. We are not born in a state of innocence.

John Gerstner was once invited to preach at a local Presbyterian church. He was greeted at the door by the elders of the church, who explained that the order of worship for the day called for the administration of the sacrament of infant baptism. Dr. Gerstner agreed to perform the service. Then one of the elders explained a special tradition of the church. He asked Dr. Gerstner to present a white rose to each infant’s parents before the

¹⁴Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Mark—Jesus, Servant and Savior*, (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books) 1997.

baptism. Dr. Gerstner inquired about the meaning of the white rose. The elder replied, “We present the white rose as a symbol of the infant’s innocence before God.”

“I see,” replied Dr. Gerstner. “And what does the water symbolize?”

Imagine the consternation of the elder when he tried to explain the symbolic purpose of washing away the sin of innocent babies. The confusion of this congregation is not unique. When we acknowledge that infants are not guilty of committing specific acts of sin it is easy to jump to the conclusion that they are therefore innocent. This is a theological broad jump into a pile of swords. Though the infant is innocent of specific acts of sin he is still guilty of original sin.

To understand the Reformed view of predestination it is absolutely necessary to understand the Reformed view of original sin. The two matters stand or fall (no pun intended) together.

The Reformed view follows the thinking of Augustine. Augustine spells out the state of Adam before the Fall and the state of mankind after the Fall. Before the Fall Adam was endowed with two possibilities: He had the ability to sin and the ability not to sin. After the Fall Adam had the ability to sin and the inability to not sin. The idea of the “inability to not” is a bit confusing to us because in English it’s a double negative. Augustine’s Latin formula was *non posse non peccare*. Stated another way, it means that after the Fall man was morally incapable of living without sin. The ability to live without sin was lost in the Fall. This moral inability is the essence of what we call original sin.

When we are born again, our bondage to sin is relieved. After we are made alive in Christ, we once again have the ability to sin and the ability to not sin. In heaven we will have the inability to sin.

Let’s look at this with a chart:

<i>Pre-Fall Man</i>	<i>Post-Fall Man</i>	<i>Reborn Man</i>	<i>Glorified Man</i>
able to sin	able to sin	able to sin	able to not sin
able to not sin	unable to not sin	able to not sin	unable to sin

The chart shows that man before the Fall, after the Fall, and after being reborn is able to sin. Before the Fall he is able to not sin. This ability, the ability to not sin, is lost in the Fall. It is restored when a person is born again and continues in heaven. In creation man did not suffer from moral inability. Moral inability is a result of the Fall. To state it another way, before the Fall man was able to refrain from sinning; after the Fall man is no longer able to refrain from sinning. That is what we call original sin. This moral inability or moral bondage is overcome by spiritual rebirth. Rebirth liberates us from original sin. Before rebirth we still have a free will but we do not have this liberation from the power of sin, what Augustine called “liberty.”

The person who is reborn can still sin. The ability to sin is not removed until we are glorified in heaven. We have the ability to sin but we are no longer under the bondage of original sin. We have been set free. This of course does not mean that now we live

perfect lives. We still sin. But we can never say that we sin because that is all our fallen natures have the power to do.¹⁵

IN NATURE WE CAN HEAR THE VOICE OF JESUS

Have you heard the voice of Jesus ? He is speaking today. His voice is mighty and very powerful. Please look again at THE VOICE OF JESUS this morning in Revelation 1:15b and his voice was as the sound of many waters. (KJV). John was using the metaphor of a thunderous waterfall. This spring we stood at the crest of the mighty Niagara Falls. The avalanche of rushing water vibrated the ground as it thundered downward and burst upward in mist. Since most of us don't live by a mighty waterfall the Scriptures use another metaphor for the voice of the Lord. It is in Psalm 29. Let's turn there and hear God's voice in nature. He compares His voice to the deep rumble and loud roar of thunder

Perhaps the biggest sound that we are aware of on a regular basis, is the product of the electrical discharges of clouds known as lightning and thunderstorms. For just a moment consider how powerful God's voice is portrayed as being!

LIGHTNING may be defined as: A river of electricity careening at 100,000 miles per second, down a twisting canyon of air. Air molecules are heated to about 5 times the temperature of the Sun's surface. They are white hot at 30,000 degrees Celsius as a bolt of lightning passes through them. Around the planet 100 times each second, lightning strikes the earth with its intense, hot strokes.

In a very real sense, it is feeding the plants as the nitrous oxide distills in the rains and goes to the roots of plants. Almost all plants need nitrogen as their basic food. Although 22 million tons of nitrogen hangs in the air over every square mile of the planet, it is unusable without the effects of lightning.

Lightning¹⁶ as we see it is actually traveling upward. It is the meeting of a "leader" coming down from the negatively charged base of a thundercloud, meeting a "streamer" coming up from the positively charged earth beneath that cloud. In the one second long duration of the lightning, as many as 40 pulses of energy have occurred. Heat rising so rapidly out of this super-hot path breaks the sound barrier and "thunder" is produced.

¹⁵Sproul, R. C., *Chosen by God*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1986.

¹⁶ The Amazing World of Nature, Pleasantville, NY:Readers Digest Books, 1969, pp.229-31.

Each stroke contains hundreds of thousands of amperes, and hundreds of millions of volts. All told a single storm¹⁷ produces more electricity than all of America's generators combined.

A single stroke lasting one second could power a city.¹⁸ And with over 600 storms at any given moment on the earth, God's power dwarfs all of man's efforts!

JESUS WAITS FOR US TO HEAR HIS VOICE TODAY

In Psalm 29 we hear His Voice in the Earth and it is Calling us to Reverence Him! Why? The Lord gives us five elements of His eternal greatness we are to reverence as we hear Him. The Lord is:

1. **DECLARING HIS OWNERSHIP** v. 1-2 Give unto the Lord, O you mighty ones, Give unto the Lord glory and strength. 2 Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
2. **DECLARING HIS MAJESTY** 3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The Lord is over many waters. 4 The voice of the Lord is powerful; The voice of the Lord is full of majesty. In v. 3-4 if the thunders are just the power of His voice, what kind of power does He have?
3. **DECLARING HIS POWER** 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, Yes, the Lord splinters the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire. In v. 5-7 the earth rumbles and shakes, quakes and burns before Him.
4. **DECLARING HIS WORSHIP** 8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer give birth, And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everyone says, "Glory!" In v. 8-9 at the sound of His voice all the earth shouts glory. Shouldn't we?
5. **DECLARING HIS JUDGMENT** 10 The Lord sat enthroned at the Flood, And the Lord sits as King forever. 11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. NKJV In v. 10-11 at the flood He destroyed those who pushed Him out of their lives. He is going to do the same thing again.

WHEN YOU HEAR THE VOICE OF JESUS – WORSHIP HIM

¹⁷ National Geographic, July, 1993, pp. 83-103.

¹⁸ The National Geographic, June, 1950, 809-28.

We can hear the voice of Jesus here in His church this morning. It is His Voice in the Church in Revelation 1-3, Jesus is Calling for Worship

Imagine John as he was hearing a voice like a trumpet. And then he writes what he saw.