

creation

A study of where we came from and why it matters in the 21st Century

LESSON 20: Mercy & Grace Amidst the Fall

In his justice and righteousness, God could have destroyed his creation when man rebelled. He did not. At any point of humanity's existence he could have done the same that, too. He did not. As we will see in a few weeks, he came very near to doing that very thing with the flood, but even then he did not do it in toto. When we were conceived, already having our very souls enmeshed in sin, he could have destroyed us. When first we knew the difference between right and wrong and chose the wrong, he could have pronounced judgment upon us. He did not.

So what gives? Why should God continue to bear with his creation *at all*? Simply, God cares about those in whom he breathed his image. God cares about you and me en masse and as individuals. While this word has such shallow meaning to those in the world today, it is *love*. God's love motivates him to exhibit mercy to those who do not deserve it. God then gives even more to those same urchins.

Within the drama of the Fall, we often miss the lavish grace and mercy exhibited by God. That's our focus this week.

Read and meditate: Genesis 3

1. Notice where God exhibits grace and mercy to Adam and Eve. List them below.
2. Does God's mercy and grace negate his justice and his righteousness? Why or why not?
3. Take some time to list some confounding questions that are raised in the Genesis account. Here's one for starters:
- *Why did God choose to allow Satan to continue to dwell amongst his creatures?*
4. How do God's actions show his grace & mercy toward Adam & Eve in their marriage?
5. How do God's actions show his grace & mercy toward them in their God-given tasks?
6. How does God show his grace & mercy toward them in their clothing?
7. How is his grace & mercy exhibited by preventing them from getting to the Tree of Life?
8. What is the ultimate hope of this very dark chapter in human history?

Consider how important it is for us to understand God's word to us in Genesis 1-3 to be able to understand and comprehend the world around us in the twenty-first century.