

A Celebration of Sonship
To the Praise of the Glory of His Grace
Dr. Corbett Gaulden Session 5
October 12, 2018

We are really look forward to going with some of you to Israel, this has been a project of Judy's for quite some time trying to talk me into doing this. I remember being there twice in the summer and so you'll note that on this trip its a spring date, I've been to Israel in the summer, it's hot, and we lived in West Texas and Arizona. Customarily, approximately the inside of a matchbook cover has enough notes for four hours, I have nine pages with me (laughter) this morning but I promise we will try to execute these things, really much of it in fairly quick order and I frequently don't actually try to name a topic until I've worked with it for a time and after I've developed it and spoke about it with people then I begin to think, "OK, this might be called 'it'", whatever. For whatever reason this time around really the topic itself developed and there were actually two of them, that's why there's so many pages of notes, two kinds of complementary topics. I took counsel from some people about which of the two I should speak with you about today and it was a draw (laughter) but Sam finally weighed in and so we're going to prosecute the topic "The Corruption of Creation".

My purpose this morning is if you leave and I have not actually offended you at the theological level I didn't do my job (laughter) and I am serious about that, I'm very serious about it, you should be offended at some point. I don't know how to say this other than the way I'm about to say it, so I'm gonna say it, we have 1700 years of detritus of theological kind that has built up to the point that we don't really have much of a sense about what is going on beyond what we could see. We have vague notions of some guy called "the devil", satan, "satan" just means "an accuser", it's all it actually means, I'll go ahead and permit you to keep the big "S" Satan, for the main accuser, that's ok with me, you can have that one but you need to know what a "satan" is. So we're going to speak to how we got into the condition that we're in, why there is so much suffering, why that suffering will continue and the good news is, it will end but not next week, some of you were counting on yesterday. (Laughter) This is getting worse, have you noticed? And it's getting worse not because God wants it that way, it's getting worse because we do, and when I say "we" I'm speaking primarily to those whom I know are the Body of Christ and the reason I say "we're making it worse" is because we refuse to deal with the reality of making it better. That's where we're

headed. I'll pause briefly while you leave the room, whatever you feel is necessary at this point, don't take me entirely seriously but don't actually blow it all off either, we're going to struggle just a little bit here this morning.

I'm going to move through some material fairly quickly. I was kidding a while ago but this really is more than an hour or so presentation, I have to set some things up for you to get to what I'm going to talk about with you. And it actually takes a fair amount of background effort because we have such poor theology, I don't blame you for the poor theology, I blame 1700 years of theological history for the poor theology. I'm beginning to be concerned about who might hear this later but, hey... Let me take you back to the beginning... oh by the way Sheba made the comment about doing Old Testament research, I'm currently actually going to be working on my newest project probably is a discussion of what the Revelation actually says, I think that will be fun and then I've got another one that I'm already working on as well in the Book of Hebrews. Now that's a natural, given my background in the things I'm interested in ordinarily and I know that Sam has been working diligently in Hebrews as well. And for those of you who've known us both for a while, you know that often we're talking about the same thing but you don't know it, (laughter) we don't even know it sometimes until we have an opportunity to be together because of the different approaches that we take and I think that's useful to you, I think it's useful that we won't approach the thing the same way, the conclusions will normally, typically be the same. Noticed I corrected myself from "normally" to "typically" because so many of us use the word "normal" but it ain't the way things are and that ain't normal. Look at it, it ain't normal, normal is defined by a standard and the standard is kept in ?? standards in a place where God is, it isn't up to us to decide what normal is. Furthermore, it is not up to us to decide what truth is. Jonathan has this career in business, I had a career as a business professor, a business dean. We talked about the same things, but I was more abstract and antiseptic but the fact of the matter is one of the conclusions you come to in the business world is that truth is something you negotiate as you go. I'm here to tell you, as a starter, part of opening up here, truth is non-negotiable, He is who He is, He doesn't negotiate what truth is, He doesn't negotiate what normal is, we don't get to decide these things for ourselves and we have a long, long history of doing exactly that. And in fact, accompanying that long history of doing that is, peoples who have negotiated with spiritual leaders to the point that the spiritual leaders give in and they agree with "stuff" that the people want to see being called normal, and it still isn't when that's said and done. So we're failing, we're

not doing well, man isn't. Let's get into that now.

I'm going to begin where I normally begin, in the beginning. (Laughter) I know, I shouldn't do that to you. Genesis 1, I'm going to move very quickly through several passages of scripture and most of these notes I actually copied them so I wouldn't have to be flipping pages. So for those of you who were panicking, it really won't be that long but I'm going to move through several points and get to the actual topic of creation. Genesis 1:31-2:2 says, "And God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, day six." By the way, I'm reading out of the New English Version, I'm about to decide I may move to that thing, it's got some neat stuff. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them." In six days God created the heavens and in the same six days God created the earth. We may be theological about what "a day" is, I don't even care but it was in the same time frame that God was creating the earth He was also creating the "heavens" and they were the "heavens" and whatever it was that was going to go on in the heavens was being put in place so that when God rested on the seventh day, He rested from the works of making the heavens and from the works of making the earth. He rested from all those things. "And in the seventh day God finished the work He had done, He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done and God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it God rested from all His work that He had done in creation." That's actually an amazingly redundant passage of scripture, it may be that there is a point, like, God was finished, He was done with it. Not in the sense of washing His hands of it, He had simply created a flawless creation, there were no flaws in the creation at the end of day six and at the end of day six everything in the heavens and everything in the earth had been already created. Satan was not a late interloper, we treat him theologically like he just showed up in the universe and said, "Hey, I want a part of this action." God created him, in the beginning, during that six day period, along with the seed that became you and the seed that became me; He created all of those things and it was all very good. Satan was not created evil, it was his choice; he wasn't created to be evil, it was his choice. We're going to see in a moment a little bit about how that operationalizes for us and I think there may be a surprise or two in that, based on what I've heard people say.

Now as God was creating His flawless creation, He made in it a ruler for the earth; He created man, He commissioned man to rule - Scripture almost always says to have dominion over that flawless creation, at least the earth part of that flawless creation,

not the heavens; man was not created to have dominion in the heavens, man was created to have dominion in the earth. We'll talk about dominion in the heavens just very briefly in passing, I cannot do a satisfactory job of that in one session like this but I think we can actually get the job done. During the process of doing all this, again in Genesis chapter 1 beginning in verse 26 God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Again, an inclusive statement, a lot of things to make it clear that mosquitos (laughter) were not created to be evil. The shocking thing I'm going to do to some of you because almost every Christian I've ever known has said, "The first thing I'm going to ask God when I get to heaven is 'What about mosquitos?'" (Laughter) Well, we'll talk about mosquitos in a minute but I'm about to say what will lead into that and some of you will leave the room, He didn't create mosquitos. That's hurtful. "How did they get here?" We'll talk about that.

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them," we've been speaking of corporeity, "and God blessed them and He said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' And God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit, you shall have them for food and to every beast of the earth and bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life I have given every green plant for food.'" Now you see why I printed these out? Because that would have taken a long time like this, I'm not an old man but I've noted these drop down menus a lot of times when you're going to put in your birth date and stuff like that, that year has almost disappeared. (Laughter) I don't know what that's about but anyway... I can read rather rapidly if I can see the words. There's a game that's often played in the process of the Passover in Jewish families where you read passages of scripture, one person reads a passage and another one reads it and so forth and it gets progressively longer and you're supposed to read without taking a breath. I could do the last one - well I used to be able to do the last one but lately I haven't done that.

Now God commissioned man to rule, I think it's very clear that man is to have dominion over everything that has anything to do with the earth, even mosquitos,

according to do this. We should be able to do like one of these movie stars that went to a volcano and jumped in and it was all good, this doesn't work out. OK, now the next point, point three, is man complied in his own downfall; we are complicit with what's happening, we are complicit with what's happening. I'll try to say that in a way that makes it more clear: we are complicit with what's happening. I don't know how much clearer you can make it, let me demonstrate that. In Genesis 2:15 says, "The Lord God took the man and He put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to keep it." By the way, when he was hungry, he just reached out and took something to eat, it was there. Wherever he was, "Mmm, pretty good," that was it, that was the way the man made his living and He said to the man, "You may surely eat of every tree of the Garden but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat it you shall surely die." Now we're going to come back to that particular passage at the end of that verse in a few minutes, I'm going to say something about it in passing but I want to focus on it just a little bit later. The fact of the matter is, we don't know what it says there, so I'm going to try to open that up a little more clearly for us in a few minutes and that will explain a whole lot about how it got to be the way it is. I'm not going to let us off the hook, it's our fault so let's get that clear; the mosquitos did not cause this, nor did the kangaroos, it's our fault, let's work at that.

Genesis 3:14, the Lord said to the serpent, this is the scene at the end of what we call the temptation, "the fall", whatever, He said to the serpent, "because you've done this," what he did was simply do what he did. He told the woman that God was fibbing to her and he helped her to decide to believe that, "because you have done that cursed are you above all the livestock and above all the beasts of the field and on your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life." I'm going to talk to in a few minutes if I can get to it, about the restoration of all things but in the restoration passage was to me the most beautiful restoration passage is in actually Isaiah 11 beginning right after the description of the seven spirits of God and it speaks about what that will look like in that time - by the way, the lion shall not lie down with the lamb, that is not in scripture anywhere, a lion and a lamb lying down together isn't in the Book. There's one about a wolf lying down with a lamb but not a lion, that's always been cute to me. But it ends that passage, it ends by saying, at the end after all these things are done, lions are eating straw like oxen and the snake's still on his belly. So apparently God took this seriously, the role that the serpent played but the serpent was simply told he would crawl around on this belly and eat dirt, that there would be enmity, we'll see later. But basically he just crawled around and ate dirt, "I'll put

enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring and he'll bruise your head and you'll bruise his heel." And we have got a lot of theological unpacking in there but I'm not going to dwell on that today, the fact of the matter is we just don't get along well with snakes, some of you pass out if there's a snake mentioned. Now I'm kind of actually interested in the critters and I've handled a fairly large number and some were poisonous and so forth but nobody said I was normal so we'll just move right on past that. I kind of like snakes, they are cool, I mean they are unconcerned with you for the most part, they're not interested in you ruling over them or any such thing.

So to the woman He said, "I'm going to multiple your pain in child bearing and in pain you shall bring forth children," and the New English is really cool here, it says, "Your desire shall be contrary to your husband," how about that? See ladies, now you know why you're such a pain sometimes, (laughter) it's right here in Scripture, you will be. But oh no, it doesn't say this, does it, "he shall rule over you," but we'll pass right over that. (Laughter) And then to the man Adam He said, "Well because you've listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it'". Now this seems hard, a little bit unfair, He just said to the woman she's going to be contrary, now He's saying to the man, "Because you put up with that...you gonna have some problems bubba." I was born in Connecticut, but I got over it. "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you 'You shall not eat of it'". You know, "I said 'Don't' Don't eat it, don't eat that because when you do there's gonna be trouble," "cursed is the ground because of you, in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face you'll eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken for you are dust and to dust you shall return." I call this "Dominion Interrupted". Up until that point the man had had dominion, God said so, in fact He said to him, "Name the animals," and you know Adam being who he was, decided to call them "kangaroos and elephants" instead of "Bob and Sue", it was his choice and God underlined it. When Adam saw an elephant and said, "That's an elephant obviously," and God said, "OK, that's an elephant." It wasn't an elephant until Adam said it was, ever think about that? It wasn't an elephant until Adam said so, yeah, until Adam said so because he was created to exercise dominion on God's behalf in the creation, at least so far as the earth part of it is concerned.

Now I want to back up for just a little bit here because the woman - it looks like to most men - got off pretty well, she really ate the stuff first. I know women who would say, "Well if I would have been Eve this wouldn't have happened," she just took another bite, it was the same sin, thinking to be as wise as God, that is actually the issue, thinking to be as wise as God. So I'm going to move on to Job and try to develop some ideas and then we'll get into what I actually came to talk about.

Job 1 and 2 you've seen these passages and probably some of you predicted this is what I was actually gonna look at. So Job 1:6-12, "And now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord and the satan also came among them," or this particular Satan, "and the Lord said to him, 'Where do you come from?' And Satan said, 'From going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it.' And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth? A blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil?' And Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Does Job fear God for no reason? Have You not put a hedge around him, his house and all that he has on every side? You blessed the works of his hands and possessions and increased in the land? But stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has and he'll curse You to Your face.' And the Lord said to Satan, 'Behold, all that he has is in your hand, only against him do not stretch out your hand.' So satan went from the presence of God." Now we know that after this Satan caused a house to fall on his children and raiders came and took all of his animals and virtually all of the possessions of Job were destroyed or taken, very soon after this interview.

I want to look back in the middle of the interview, a little bit in detail though. Satan said to God, "If You will stretch out Your hand and strike him, he will curse You to Your face." And God did not reach out His hand and strike him, what God said was, "You do it, you stretch out your hand but just don't kill him." Look at this, God responded to the satan's accusation against Job by giving Satan permission to do what happened to Job, God didn't do that! I recently was watching a film and in the film someone said - some catastrophe was going on in someone's life and someone said, "It's all part of God's plan," that's hoey. God's plan was dominion, God's plan did not include evil, it doesn't include evil at all; God has not done evil, I'm almost tempted to say that He is incapable of evil except He can do what He wants to do. But He doesn't do evil, He doesn't do it and so this "it's all just part of God's plan" is just hoey, it's part of what happens but it's not part of God's plan. Part of what happens to us is bad,

when suffering comes it's not God's plan that suffering comes, it's a mechanism that He uses when comes but it's because an enemy stretches out his hand against you that evil comes, and suffering comes. See, I told ya I was gonna puncture some theology, it's not part of God's plan, God's plan was that man should rule and have dominion in the earth and represent God in everything that he did; this flawless creation was not designed to have flaws in it. Now theological you want to know, "Well then, how did all that happen?" It was her fault. No, let's don't go there. It was a concoction that did not involve God, it involved Him only in the sense that the satan made an accusation against God and His holiness and the woman bought it because she wanted something and the nearest thing that God ever did that was evil was to let me and you have a choice. That's as close to evil as He ever got and then we exercised it, in the first woman and as most marriages go, she said, "Here, eat this," and he did, right?

So this "stretch out Your hand" thing is important to us because it demonstrates that God did not smite Job. See you knew that but you really hadn't read the part about God saying, "You do the hand stretching outty thing, I'm not gonna do that, you do it. You have My permission now." Evil is in the world now, suffering is in the world by writ of permission from a God who will not interfere with your free choice and my free choice, that's what He won't do. Not many things He won't do, He's capable of doing everything but let me tell you - again I'm going to do a little theology kicking here. He is omnipotent and at any time He chooses He can interfere with your exercise of free will but He doesn't. It's your exercise of free will that's the problem, it's not God. God does not interfere with us, except on rare, rare occasions. Now we can ask Him to interfere in our situation and we often do, I mean how many times you prayed to the Lord for relief in some situation of suffering, you don't ordinarily say, "Fix me," you ordinarily say, "Fix the situation," if I'm not right.

In Job 2 we have the same scene again, the sons of God have come before God and Satan was among them and God said to Satan, "What you been doin' buddy?" And Satan said, "Well, I've been walking around in the earth, going to and fro and just checking things out." And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? There's none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still holds fast his integrity although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without reason." And then the satan answered and said, "Skin for skin, all that man has he will give for his life but stretch out Your hand and touch his bone and his flesh and he'll curse You to Your face." Satan is still saying to

God, "Do it to him." God said, "No, you do it. He is in your hand, only spare his life." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and struck Job with loathsome sores, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And then in John 13 near the time of the crucifixion, it says, "when He had dipped the morsel He gave Judas, the son of a man named Simon the prosthelite and then after he had taken the morsel Satan entered into him. And Jesus said to him, 'Whatever you're going to do, do quickly.'" Satan entered into Judas, Satan entered into him, not necessarily even with his permission, he just entered into him. Now quite obviously God permitted Satan to enter Judas, it's obvious to us without trying to develop it in some sort of spiritual or theological kind of way, it's obvious that that was a choice that Satan made and it was Judas's choice to not do anything about it or Judas didn't know he had a choice, wherever we want to go with that. And that's where we want to spend our time.

So with these things and in the background I want to talk about how corruption got started and I've already begun to introduce that to you and then talk about fixing that. It's not that we can actually do it, it's that we're going to do the work. That's so weird, isn't it? We'll get there though. Corruption begins as a result, as I said, of the fact that God gave man a particular command. Now Adam only had one rule, he could do anything he wanted too, is that not cool? He could ride his motorcycle around anywhere he wanted to ride it. There were no cops to prevent him, I mean if he wanted to rev that thing up to how many RPMs and get up to 140 miles per hour, it was ok, there was no rule that said he couldn't do that. There was only one rule and the rule was: you can eat of the fruit of every tree of the garden but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. The "you shall surely die" is the part I want to focus on for just a minute. "You shall surely die" in Hebrew it is "moth tamuth" and that's a very difficult construction, "moth" is sort of almost a ??, "dying" and "tamuth" means "you will die", "dying you will die". And theologians have done many things with this and I don't want to dispute with anybody, I have this kind of summary of it, it simply means that when you do that the principle of death enters the world. Now if the principle of death enters the world that means it wasn't already in the world, it wasn't already here. That means also if - we know things that accompany death, among them are corruption and decay and other things that might accompany death and often do are things like diseases, which are a result of compromised biology, diseases don't happen all that easily to really healthy human tissue. Now there are some these days that are coming up that are popping up in the world that are really rough no matter who you are but

we know some things about all of this kind of biological background and I want to get into a little bit of that with you and I'm going to talk about one of the oddest things I think, it will be to some of you I believe, that relate to this.

Now when God said, "In the day that you eat it," it was subjunctive, He wasn't predicting that it was going to happen but it was made possible. Why did God permit the man to have something that would make him fall away from his relationship with God? And the answer is because he couldn't decide to love God if he couldn't decide not to love God. You couldn't do it, you can't decide to love a thing if you can't decide not to love the thing, it's a default state, you simply have a relationship with it and that relationship doesn't have the quality that God wanted to see in man. If we simply were somehow related to Him in a way that had no faults, there was nothing wrong in it, then there really wouldn't be the possibility of anything really right being in it, it would simply be and that would be all there would be to it. It was imperative that in order for God to accomplish His goal in the creation of man that man would have the choice to not go along with God and the only way man could choose not to go along with God was to decide not to be obedient to Him, which is equivalent by the way, theologically to not loving Him. I've demonstrated some place, I think Sam, I'm not sure in the craziness that goes on the paper when I'm doin' that thing, that obedience and love are essentially the same thing, two ways of saying the same thing, insofar as the kind of love we're talking about between ourselves and our Heavenly Father. You say, "I love God and He told me not to do this but I'm going to do it anyway but I love Him anyway." Is a crock, what we used to call it, I'm getting close to profane, I better slow down here Doug.

In Genesis 3:6 it says, "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and it was a delight to the eyes and was desired to make one wise she took the fruit, ate it and also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate." The first two things aren't wrong, the fact that it looked like it would be good food and the fact that it was pleasant to look at, there was nothing wrong with that. In fact, it just said it in the chapter before that, in chapter 2 it said, "The fruit of all the trees was good to look at and was good for food," so the fact that this one was makes no difference, its number three. Item number three: it would make her wise. Now how in the world do you reckon she came to the conclusion that eating that would make her wise when eating anything else wouldn't make her wise? Cause somebody told her so, that's how he got the ball rollin' and then she just decided to do it - by the way, so you know, she was

immediately wise, she now knew good from evil. In the instant her teeth sunk into that I believe, "Oh, ooh," and then later, "Ah, here, have some buddy, I don't want to do this by myself." So she was contrary.

We're finally here, let's talk about corruption, there are various forms of corruption and I've said to you a moment ago and some of it is going to be kind of weird because I'm really going to talk largely, about DNA. We know enough now, scientifically about a thing called "deoxyribonucleic acid" which is a long, big molecule composed of some fairly predictable things and those things cause other things to happen and those are fairly predictable and it replicates itself and I forget exactly how many there are but I think it's in the trillions of instances of it in your body, of DNA. There's actually I believe billions of atoms in one instance of DNA and all of them critters in your body that are DNAs are the same, more or less, they're pretty close to the same. So inside you there is a particular combination of things that is your DNA that determines a lot of things about you. For example, one of the things that determines about you is your propensity to develop digestive problems, God didn't put that in the man to begin, the DNA that God put in Adam when He created him was perfect, there were no propensities to disease in the DNA that God put in Adam or it wouldn't have been "very good". It was flawless, as was Adam and Eve was flawless because Adam gave birth to a full grown woman, it was kind of like a C-section but he did. (Laughter) It's in the book, I didn't make it up.

So his DNA was in her because the source of your DNA is who? Your father, the seed from which you came contains the DNA that you have in your body now and also of course the DNA that's in your body is partly determined by what incubator you were in before you got here. The seed in your father and the incubator in your mother interacting in some manner very early on in all of that right after conception. Whenever that happens, that process that determines all of your genetic stuff coming from both of those parents, it all gets together in some really weird kind of chemical and biological ways and suddenly there you are, you have been conceived and you got some of daddy's DNA and you got some of momma's DNA and as a result of that any defects in daddy's DNA and any defects in momma's DNA are gonna show up in your DNA. And if he had a propensity - this is a pretty difficult one but I'll throw it out there anyway - for heart disease and she had a propensity for a poor digestive system then you got propensities for both in some measure just because of who your parents were. By the way, you don't get to fire them and start over, this is not a do, you can't do

that, you're going to have the DNA, biologically you are gonna have the DNA that you received from your parents. But God created the man and then He caused, by cesarian section, the woman to come forth from the man and their DNA was perfect! It was perfect, it had no flaws, there had no propensity to anything bad that can happen to you in their DNA. Can you get a hold of that? It ain't their fault, DNA was, uh, yeah it is, I was kidding you a little bit because once the man and the woman had decided that they wanted to be as wise as God or she wanted to be as wise as God and he just wanted to get along with her, whichever it was that was going on. Whatever that was, once they had decided that things changed and the serpent acting, I think almost everybody theologically agrees, that the serpent acting under the influence of the Satan who could easily enter a serpent if he could enter a man who walked around with Jesus all over the place, when that occurred it changed things, there were no children yet but it changed things. In fact, interestingly enough, God said to the woman, "I'm going to deal with you in the matter of child bearing," she didn't have any kids yet and it didn't say anything about her not liking fruit anymore, He just said, "I'm going to deal with you at the level of child bearing," put most of the responsibility on the man. You know, He sinned before she did? Yes fellas, Adam sinned before Eve was able to consummate her sin. "How did he sin?" You say. He refused to stop her, it was his responsibility to stop that from occurring and he did not. I could get worked up about that too but I won't, we just got to move on here.

Now, when He was dealing with the man that's where the real deal comes down, He said, "Cursed is the earth." Now I want to propose a question and an answer to you because I don't want you to hurt yourselves. Do you think there were any volcanoes when Adam and Eve were walking around in the Garden of Eden? The answer is no. A volcano is a torturous phenomenon, its a thing that's a result of torture in the earth and God wasn't torturing the earth, He created it for a habituation for the one who would represent Himself in it and it was all "very good". So where does the volcano come from? It might have something to do with the curse that God announced on the earth. Now here is an area where we can get kinda weirded out if we're not careful. God didn't make no volcanos, what He did was He permitted a being that had the power to do so, to do so. That ok with you? I don't care if it's ok, it's just sort of what's implied in the Book. God permitted some phenomenon that was not God to set into the earth forces that eventually result in things like volcanoes and deserts because they're not good. I lived in the desert, we lived three years in Arizona and I loved going out in the desert and humans can do that, we can like anywhere, we can wrap up

with 19 layers of stuff and go to the North Pole but that don't mean it's right (laughter) that there be those polar extremes. And people want to climb Mount Everest, personally I haven't signed up for that one, I've done some crazy things but I'm not interested. That's a big, high mountain and it is hostile to nearly all life, God didn't create anything that was hostile to human life, He didn't do that, so it had to come about some other way.

Now some of you have a theology that implies, you probably wouldn't state it but it implies that after the six days of creation God waited a bit to see what the man and the woman would do and once they had done it God started creatin' some other stuff. He did not! He never, ever created anything evil, period! But He did permit that these things came forth, He permitted then, mosquitos. Is Paul Strange here today? For Paul's benefit, He also permitted the thing we call the dinosaur. Now how did He go about permitting that? He permitted the satan to stretch out his hand and to do the things that result in these works that we're talking about, to include even the touching of human DNA because God didn't create bad DNA, God didn't create anything evil and He's still resting, He's not excited, He's still resting, God is no longer creating. Now, we can't give Satan credit to creating mosquitos but we can understand that he touched something that could eventually at least turn into a mosquito. And I'm still looking for the biological "niche", the ecological "niche" of the mosquito. I have never read a biologist who said they understood the ecological niche - they always talk about the ecological niches of all kinds of things but the niche of the mosquito? The itch of a mosquito I get but the niche.

So the ground was cursed and Jesus in Matthew 24:7 said among other things, "For nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places," an earthquake is not something God set out to cause, an earthquake is because God gave a writ of permission to Satan and whoever works for him to touch the earth in such a way that such things can happen. Last evening, 9:30 or so Judy got a communication from the puppy sitter, princess Lizzy has to have a sitter and the lady was ready to leave the house to take the dog to go over to her house and there was an alarm thing going off in the house and eventually I had to leave and go take care of that rather than studying the notes, Mark Green went with me. And in a little while we located it and basically it's disconnected, we couldn't get a battery to make it stop so we just disconnected and left it. I know some of you are saying, "That's all in God's plan," no, it's a harassment! Come on, Satan had

permission to touch that last evening, that's all, and he did, not him, I don't think I'm important enough to get his personal attention, I'll talk about that in a few minutes.

Famines and earthquakes are not God's work, sometimes it looks like in Scripture God does these terrible things and when He says "I will send this" or "I will send that" and it's a bad thing, we already saw in Job the mechanism for that is there's somebody who hates us enough that they'll do it and He permits it. You have troubles because God permits them and His intent is to use them for good when they occur, if you'll let Him or you can just struggle and get to do it again. I'll leave that alone. When it comes to the living things it says the ground would begin to produce thorns and thistles, by implication there weren't any thorns and thistles before that, you ever think about that? If there weren't ever any thorns and thistles before that then God didn't create thorns and thistles, come on. So where did they come from? Outer-space? (laughter) Where did thorns and thistles come from? If God didn't create them in the six days of creation but they're in the earth and I've been scratched a few times, I know they're here. In fact, this is a theological point I really wish we had time for, it's interesting to me that when it was time for the Christ to be killed for us, the thorn was what was turned to, in turns of His adornment.

But it turns out that plants have DNA too and you know what, and this is really cool because we lived in Arizona, God didn't create cacti either. You know, nearly all the cactuses in the world occur in North and South America, there's a few sub species of prickly pear that occur any where else in the world, as far as cactus are concerned. I find that interesting, it has nothing to do with what I'm trying to accomplish here with you this morning, just one of those facts that pops up when you're doing this kind of research. So these plants, whatever they were, had some DNA in them and some of them got touched and when they got touched their DNA got changed and when their DNA got changed they weren't bearing good food, they were bearing stuff that was sticky and not good for food at all. Some cattle, some animals in different parts of the world will eat thorns sometimes but that's not really way at the top of the menu, it's only in extreme situations that they do so; they're capable of doing it but they only do it in extreme situations.

God didn't create any carnivores, he didn't create carnivores. Now we have a puppy that we're certain came from heaven but God didn't create any carnivores. It says back in Genesis 1 that He gave green stuff for everything to eat and it says in Isaiah 11 that

when this is over with the lions will be eating straw like oxen and cows and - I forget which animal - will graze together. In fact, the first evidence of carnivorism we find is actually in God's announcements to Noah when they came out of the Ark. Now we know that carnivores existed before that but they were a part of this corruption of creation that went on by the permission of God, which was permitted because God found that the man and woman would not love Him as He had intended. Here it is, the cow and the bear shall graze, it says that in Isaiah. Now bears do eat some plants but ordinarily we think of them as being carnivorous, they are as much carnivore as they are herbivore, for sure but everything was originally created, all the animals were originally created as herbivores, that's a very easy inference from Genesis chapter 1. Now let's talk about humans a little bit but let me make a final point about animals. The ones that are destructive in nature, carnivorous in nature and so forth, are not in the form in which they were originally created, their form has been modified through corruption. Are you with me? Modified through corruption.

When it comes to man, there are two major components of man as we find him in the earth, we're put here as a spirit being but our experience with one another is primarily with our soma and physca; soma being the body and physca being in essence we get the word "psychology" from it. Mostly means the mind, the mind is a very seriously active part of the psyche. Our DNA has been affected, I don't know who to blame it on but one of my parents gave me a propensity to a pretty poor digestive system. My mother passed on the genetic requirements that I have male pattern baldness, there some others of us in here, yeah. It's not even uncommon any more, it's a fairly common condition. Let me just put it this way: Adam had a full head of hair (laughter).

Now the body has genetic predispositions now to do all kinds of things that are unpleasant but also there are things that are directed against your body. Some of us took flu shots this year, now why do we take flu shots? Because there's a virus out there that might get us. Where did that virus come from? You think that thing was created by God? I should have preconditioned you by now to believe that no, that virus was not created by God, it's a result of the corruption of the creation that He made and it's a permissive corruption. As He said to Satan in the matter of Job, "You can do anything you want to Him but don't kill Him." That's permissive. Why? Because we have to have free will, that in and of itself takes so long I just can't go there. The psyche is a little different because it's not material, there's no DNA in your psyche, it doesn't have materiality that something can touch, so what does it touch in the psyche? It touches

the way you think, it touches the way you react to people, it touches things that lead you into conditions that we might call something like maybe demonic possession. These things that are wrong with the mind are also things that God did not create, they're a part of the corruption of His creation.

And then there are social, political, financial, economic kind of forces in the world that have been touched by malevolence. We participate in them because we really don't have very much choice, it's no longer true that I can simply walk about my yard and pick fruit and eat it, never was true, that ended a long time ago. The fact of the matter is we have to operate and live in a social, governmental, economic kind of world, that's the way the world works around us. But in the second book of Samuel chapter 8 the people had come to Samuel to basically demand a king and Samuel said, "You don't really want a king," and they said, "Yeah we do," and he went and talked to God and God said, "Let em' have one." Now here's what's gonna happen, at the end of that chapter if you read it, it said, "Pretty soon, before it's all over with you'll simply be a slave to the government." That's in the book, I didn't make it up, that's cause' that's what the people wanted, they were wise in their own eyes, they'd been eatin' the fruit of some tree and they were wise. And we see that governments are not static things, they're evolutionary things and they evolve toward subjugation and they must because they're touched by a malevolence that will corrupt everything that it touches, every single thing... it corrupted your DNA, by the time you got it, it was so messed up most of you are not gonna live a thousand years or even 900. And some of you are wondering like, "If I got to 100, could I stand it?" You get a little older you begin to understand being 100 doesn't sound all that good anymore because it seems like it's just more of this. One of the best things in the world for an old man is his skin because it gets everything else to the same place at the same time, more or less.

Let me do another one about government. There's a wonderful Jewish legend that says that Sarah sent Abraham's servant Eleazar over to Sodom to check in on Lot, to visit with him. Now this particular legend Sarah and Lot were actually brother and sister but that's not the way the Bible presents it. But anyway, they were kin, they knew each other. She sent Eleazar to check up on Lot, Eleazar got to town and soon he began to interact with one of town fellas and the fella picked up a rock and hit him in the middle of the forehead and he began to bleed. He said, "What in the world are you doing?" The man said, "Now you owe me." He said, "You busted my head, how do I owe you?" He said, "Well, I'm lettin' the bad blood out." Now Eleazar is not really

happy about paying the fella anything so he said, "We gotta get some help on this, get some adjudication." So he said, "Alright, I'll take you to the judge." And they went to one of the local judges and the fella Eleazar explained his point of view and the other fella explained his point of view and the judge said, "Yeah, you owe Him, he let the bad blood out." So Eleazar picked up a rock and hit the judge in the middle of the forehead and said, "Pay him what I owe him." (laughter) I mean that's the legend, I didn't make that one up either.

What the point in that is though, you see in that where government goes, they had a law that said if somebody hit you in the head you gotta pay em' because they let bad blood out. They had a law that said that, a law. That's where mens ideas of government go because there is one who has an interest in corrupting the governments of men and all of them will one day be the government of God but they are not yet the government of God and I don't want to go over time. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters, he'll hate the one and love the other or he'll be devoted to the one and despise the other." And then He specifically said, "You can't serve God and wealth." And the reason He chose out wealth (or mammon) is because it's so easy to be ensnared in the corruption that relates to it. It's necessary, we know that money is necessary but it's very easy to be ensnared in the corruption. All of the systems of men that we have in the earth today - and Sam's taught on this in the past - all of these systems are operating under the influence of one whose desire it is to subjugate you absolutely and to cut you off from the love of God, period! And you don't get to say, "I'm going to go in there and fix that." You can't, it cannot be fixed, at least not yet, we'll talk about that in a minute.

This corruption then that I'm talking about... your messed up DNA. I mean, look at this, my parents could have done a better job, (laughter) you know but this is the one I got. I love em' dearly but you know... Corruption is going to continue until it runs its full course at the time of the coming of the millennium, we cannot stop it by our wishes, in fact we're still complicit in it by our actions. We, I'm not talking about "out there", ok? There's going to be apparently a great intensification of the things that lead to suffering in the wrapping up of this matter, that's what the Revelation is largely about, the intensification of everything that has gone wrong through the complicity of man until it just can't even be sustained anymore, it would for all practical purposes - if it were allowed to continue - it would simply disintegrate and be as though it had never been and God doesn't really have that plan in man, that's not His plan but He's

going to allow us to be complicit with our enemy until nothing can be stood any longer and then and only then will we somehow say, "Ok, enough. We're gonna do it Your way now," to our Father.

This stuff is organized and it's organized to our dis-benefit, it is organized to our dis-benefit. Let me say that another way. It's organized to our dis-benefit. The disciples said, "Teach us how to pray." And He said, "Pray like this: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in the earth as it is in heaven." What He was saying was, there is a place where God's will is done absolutely and we should pray that His will be done absolutely here as it is done in that place but Jesus Himself knew that this was not a consummation, that was immediate. We are to pray it, we are not to accept that this is as it should be and we're required to pray it, that it be here as it is there and it will be but it ain't yet. He said this 2000 years ago and it's not fixed, its gettin' worsen.

They're arrayed against us. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places. "Wait a minute, God's will is perfect and in heaven where God is everything is cool." Well yes, where God is but I argue that there's two heavens that we can't see; there's the one out there that has planets and all those cool things in it but there are two other heavens, one of those is the one that has the throne of God because it represents the authority and the presence of God in all of creation. But there is an "other" heaven that contains the Satan and all of his buddies and they are arrayed against us. That means that they are actually put into ordered companies, they are not random beings, you don't randomly ordinarily, you don't randomly run into a demon, they actually intend the encounters. Now there are some that are kind of random. Not too long ago I had one of those nights when my poor digestive system had me up, I was telling Judy when I finally fell asleep in my lounge chair we were attacked, the house was under attack. Twenty years ago I don't know what would have happened, that particular night I just said, "Ok, we're just not going to do this," and the attack almost immediately let up. So I know I have some authority, I just don't ordinarily recognize when I need it, unfortunately.

They are arrayed against us. Why is he saying that? Why would he emphasize that? I'll tell you why I'm emphasizing it because we treat it as though because we can't see them, they're just random events and the Body of Christ cannot do what the Body of

Christ does if it treats all of these malevolence as random occurrences. They have a plan, God has an outcome, somewhere in between there we're trapped in a kind of limbo of not paying attention. Now the church used to, let's give this to the early church: those guys used to recognize there was bad stuff and they on occasion anyway! it's given to us in Scripture, they actually operated against it. But mostly what we do is we say, "Oh God, make this bad toenail go away," and we treat it as a random occurrence and it's not a random occurrence, they are arrayed against us and they have permission to do whatever it is they want to do from the one who is in charge of them because he has a writ of permission that says as long as man is gonna be as wise as God these things will continue in the earth. And when man can come to the place that he doesn't have to be as wise as God it will only be through a suffering that we haven't experienced yet and when the earth and its inhabitants experience that suffering, then we will turn and God can bring this thing to a conclusion. I don't know where we are in time so I'm just gonna wrap up here pretty quickly. I've got five minutes, ten, fifteen? (laughter) Never, (laughter) never in the history have I had fifteen minutes left when I started worrying about time and I'm usually fifteen minutes overtime when I start worrying about time. Wow.

We don't walk in the flesh, Paul says in II Corinthians 10. We're not waging war against the flesh, the war that I'm talking about is not against the flesh, the flesh isn't actually arrayed against us, at least they don't know they are. They're gonna hate us and they already do but they're not necessary arrayed against us, at least not yet until that can be arranged by the malevolence, the chief malavolater. I was talking to some ladies in our household about these next two projects, Revelations and Hebrews and the general consensus was I should go ahead and do the Revelation work first. But one of the ladies said, "I really like Hebrews too, so we're really gonna do them together and call it Hebrelation." (laughter) I don't even know why I remembered that at that particular point.

We're not waging war against the flesh, the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. The weapons that we're waging war with ... by the way, somebody said to you yesterday, "We're at war," I think it was Lanny that said we're born into the war. You were born into the war and more particularly, when you decided that you would permit yourself to go through the process of reconciliation with God Almighty, you became a soldier by definition and if you want to remain an infant soldier you will be killed in the days to come. It's going to occur!

Gideon needed 300 men to whoop all of those guys, if it would have been up to the evangelist they would have said, "Let's wait until it gets to three million," and they would have had three million infants trying to conduct a battle! They don't do well, I was in the Army, the babies after a while they quit crying at night because somebody saw to it. The babies didn't last very long, now they might not have ever grown up in very many ways but they quit crying in their bunks at night because that wasn't an acceptable behavior. Some of you are still crying in your bunks, come on, let's get real about this thing.

We have divine power to destroy strongholds. Now one of the things that tells me is if you go and encounter some fella on the street here and you point your divine weapon at him, it ain't gonna make a bit of difference to him because he's flesh and blood. We got to get over this idea we're gonna fix people, that's not what this is about. "We destroy arguments and everything lofty opinion that's opposed to the knowledge of God and we take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience." Doesn't that sound lofty? And then it wraps up by saying, "when your obedience is complete." Ooh, I can do these things when my obedience, we can do these things when our obedience is complete ourselves. We don't really get very much engaged in this thing while we're still kind of, "I really do like that piece of fruit," when we want to have our way all the time, make choices that benefit us. That's not obedience. And we don't wield these weapons very effectively as long as we're engaging in willful disobedience, we can't, it's not possible. When I was in the Army they trained me... I used to really impress people - I was trained as an expert in the flame thrower, most people were thinking they would faint if they touched it. It's really a pretty simple device, you squeeze that and you squeeze that and fire goes out there. You don't want to be pointing it at your feet (laughter) or anything like that. But for some reason people think that's really cool. Hey, it's a lot easier to hit with that thing than it is with a bullet, that's the way I looked at it, I was a chemist anyway so I used to settis' fires in the lab (laughter). So what's the big deal, it's just another fire.

Our weapons that we have available to us will come to the point that we punish every disobedience when, but not before our obedience is complete. We're ineffective today, generally speaking in the Body of Christ because our obedience has kept us in a state that makes us incapable of handling the weapons of the warfare that are made available to us. That means the war is continuing and we're being casualties and we're not being able to do anything about it except, "Don't please." And our enemy is not

interested in our "don't pleases", he will exploit every weakness, that's how he started, he went to the woman and he said, "I know you have the power of choice, I'm going to tempt you to think you can be as smart as God." And one of the things as a result of that by the way was God said, "You're gonna be contrary." I love that, I don't know why. (laughter)

So who can separate us - in Romans 8 - who can separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword. No. We're all worried about whether somebody is going to trick us into getting 666 wrote on our forehead. If you read the rest of the book, it says several chapters before that He's gonna write His name on your forehead and I guarantee you you couldn't talk one of those 666 agers into getting that 666 on your forehead if you already had the name of God written on your forehead. Can't happen! They'll say, "You're not qualified, you obviously haven't been totally complicit with your enemy." That will get us to something like obedience, which will get us to something like maturity and then we can handle these weapons of this warfare and we can take every thought captive to obedience to Christ. I can't even hardly get my own obedience, most other people I can't get their thoughts obedient to Christ, I'm figuring out and still working on how to get mine there. I'm not mature enough the handle these weapons but when my obedience is complete then this war can be prosecuted. "Wait, is he saying it depends on me?" Ah huh. It goes on to say in verse 37, "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us..." This word "conquerer" here is the same one translated as "overcomes" in most translations, in the letters to the seven churches, "to the conquerers" is another way of reading that. All of these things will accrue to the conquerers, you got to be a conquerer to be fully qualified but once you're fully qualified you're even more than a conquerer, nothing can stand in your way because the one who put corruption in your life, in every aspect of your life can no longer corrupt you and when he can't corrupt you then you can handle these weapons. But as long as he can corrupt you, you're not actually qualified to be very effective with them.

In Matthew 13 Jesus was talking about weeds and wheat and stuff like that. By the way, here's my guess. Just to give us a little bit of concrete thing. As Adam walked about in the Garden from time to time he could walk by something that would be like wheat and he could just pull off a handful and eat it. When the Satan got free, he touched the wheat and this one particular wheat plant wasn't wheat any longer it was tares; it looks like wheat but it's a tare now. That's the kind of corruption that we're talking

about, you can't eat the fruit of the tare but Jesus was saying, "Let Me explain the parable to you: the one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man," speaking of Himself, "the field is the world, the good seed is the sons of the kingdom." You're the good seed, supposed to be and I believe you're here because you are, you're the good seed and He's sowing us in the world and He expects a crop to come up 10, 30, 60, 100 fold. I'm not preaching evangelism, I'm just saying that's what this is about, "and the weeds are the sons of the evil one." The evil one can plant things in the world as well, he has the capacity to do that and God won't prevent it, it happens; the evil one sows seed in the world just as the Son of Man sows seed in the world but the seed that is sown by the Son of Man is a righteous seed, one worthy of consumption in the age to come. The seed sown by the enemy raises up weeds, it's not our business to sort em' out, it says the angels are the reapers and they'll come at the end of the age and separate these things. That means the tares will still be among the wheat, the weeds will still be among the good crop until the end of the age. We're not gonna make it go away and it's getting worse.

Finally in Romans 8 Paul says, "I consider the sufferings of this present age are not worthy of comparison to the glory that is to be revealed in us." The glory of God according to Paul apparently here is that the glory of God is to be revealed in us, it is to be revealed in us. Now sometimes some of you when I encounter you there's this, there's a glory of God thing going on there and I love ya so I'm gonna say the next part in love, generally speaking because you're not always emitting glory, are ya? I don't emit glory in my mirror, I know that and I don't expect that most of the time either.

So the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. The creation wants something called "the sons of God" to be revealed. The creation wants something called "the sons of God" - the whole creation, all of the earth; the deserts that shouldn't be there, the high mountains that shouldn't be there, the extreme weather in the polar areas that shouldn't be there, the volcanoes that shouldn't be there, the tectonic activity that shouldn't be there, that all along with the rest of the earth is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God, why doesn't He just go ahead and reveal us? It isn't time yet, that's all we can conclude about that, we believe the time is coming but isn't yet here. The creation was subjected to futility. The creation has a kind of consciousness, it knows what it was made to be and how it was made to function inherently with a kind of knowledge we don't understand but it knows and it feels futility as a result of what we have done and what we are not doing, it feels a

futility and it wants the futility to be taken away from it but it knows it can't do it itself and it is waiting for futility to be taken away. And then the creation will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the glory of the children of God "for we know the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth, even till now." It continues to groan, ever since the day that God announced that the earth was cursed because of Adam, because of what Adam has done, it has groaned, looking for the end of that futility, it groans as in childbirth. And not only the creation but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, that even includes the redemption of our bodies. You see, I got this all in the Book, I didn't have to make any of it up.

So what does this mean? It means that there is a point in time coming and we are being trained for it, to do war, meaningfully, purposefully and effectively against the corruptor. Not bunch of silly, willy nilly "Satan get out of that pencil sharpener" nonsense, there's something real that we are to do, we don't know how to do it but that's ok, He's training us, He brought us together for some training. What I've tried to do is to get rid of some of some of nonsense and to help you see through, see into that place where those things that are arrayed against you are rejoicing in the fact that you don't know they're arrayed against you and to show you that even in the very essence of your physical, natural body and in the operation of your physical, natural mind the corruption is there because it has been ever since we started making mistakes and choosing "not God", choosing our way, to be as wise as God. I don't know how many times I've heard somebody say, "If I'd have been there," there was a man in a meeting in a Memphis church one time, "If I would have been with those Israelites they wouldn't have done that." That's another bite of that fruit, the best I can tell. What nonsense we have tolerated. Now I'm not trying to make you militant, I'm trying to point out to you that that which is arrayed against you, is. That's all, that's my job. It is militant and it intends to keep you impotent forever.

You're the only person who can ever make the choices that are necessary to not be impotent spiritually, you're the only one, somebody else can't do it for you, your spiritual father can't do it for you, your wife can't do it for you, your husband can't do it for you, your daddy can't do it for you; you have to decide that you will not be spiritually impotent and that you will endure whatever it takes to be ready to take up the weapons of your warfare and to stand against those forces that cannot be seen with the natural eye and to do effectively what you were created to do. (applause) And one

last thought about that, there's not a single word in this Book about the Lone Ranger, get over it, you ain't all that, get over that. It says "we" all over this, there ain't no "I" footprints there, it's "we" footprints. There is no place to stop because I'm just gettin wound up, so I'm stopping. (applause)