Reverse the Curse
Pastor Joe Oakley - GFC – 2/19/23

We are in a series called Transitions for Growth. Today I'm preaching a sermon called Reverse the Curse.

My plan was to preach on generational curses today, but as I studied this week I realized that many believers do not have a biblical understanding of curses at all. Some think it just means to cuss someone out. Others think it's something you only see in places like Haiti or Africa.

So, I felt led to explain curses more in depth, so what began as one sermon in this series will be at least two sermons. I want to cover the major types of curses in the Bible, not just generational curses.

The reality of blessings and curses is a theme that runs throughout the Bible. So, I'm going to teach on a biblical view of curses today and we will deal with generational curses in a future sermon.

I know some of you may have a problem with the word "curse" – you may even have a doctrinal issue with it. I think if will help you when I give you my definition of curse. There are several words in the Bible that are translated "curse." All of them have the same basic meaning. They mean something that is doomed and devoted to destruction.

A curse is the opposite of blessing. God wants to bless us and Satan wants to steal our blessing. To me – a curse is the absence of God's blessing. A curse is a supernatural force that works to bring harm and destruction to us, and/or hinder us from receiving the blessings of God.

Listen carefully – believers in Jesus Christ do not need to fear curses! Proverbs 26:2 says:

Like the sparrow in her wandering, like the swallow in her flying, so the causeless curse does not alight.

We do not need to fear curses, but we do need to know how to deal with them.

Some people believe we should never deal with curses because Galatians 3:13 says:
Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law…

Yes, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, but that is only one of several different kinds of curses in the Bible. We need to know how to recognize curses, how to revoke curses, and how to reverse curses.

But first, there is one curse in the Bible that we can never revoke. That is the original curse found in Genesis. There are events that happened in Genesis that still impact us today. Genesis 1:27-28 says:

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it (using all its vast resources in the service of God and man); and have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves upon the earth.

This is the original blessing God's pronounced over mankind, and it is still in effect today. I taught over the past few messages how God wants to bless us and He wants us to reflect His image, be fruitful and multiply, and have dominion.

But two chapters later, Adam and Eve sinned against God. This is called original sin. Please understand that this world is not as God created it to be. When God created this world – everything was good!

Before the fall, the earth was full of blessing. Sin let in a curse.
Before the fall, the earth was full of life and health. Sin let in sickness and death.
Before the fall, the earth was full of joy and peace. Sin let in hatred and depression.

We must understand that the term original sin does not just refer to Adam and Eve's original sin. Doctrinally, original sin refers to mankind's sinful condition because of Adam's fall. Ever since Adam and Eve's sin, every person who has ever lived was born a sinner. Psalm 51:5 says:

Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

All of us are born sinners. Sinning is our nature, our natural condition. We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners. We don't have to be taught to sin; it comes naturally.

I once found my granddaughter Brianna had sneaked into the kitchen pantry and was eating cookies. She had cookie smeared all over her shirt and face. She had a cookie in her hand and her mouth filled with cookies. I asked her, Brianna, did you get into the cookies?" She shook her head no. I asked who did. She said, "You did." At that moment I kind of figured she was lying. No one had to teach her to lie. It came naturally. It's that sin nature we are born with.

We have it because we are born in Adam – in his fallen, sinful condition – doing what he did. 1 Corinthians 15:47-49 says:

Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second Man, came from heaven. Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly Man. Just as we are now like the earthly

man, we will someday be like the heavenly Man.

In other words, when we are born, we are born in the image of Adam. When we are born again, we are born in the image of Christ. We are no longer natural, but spiritual; no longer of the world, but of heaven; no longer sinners, but saints!

Romans 5:12-19 says that sin and death entered into the world through one man – Adam – and his sin and death passed on to all. In theology, this is called imputation – which is the act of charging to an account. Adam's sin and death was imputed – charged to – passed on to all people. People say, that's not fair. But there are two sides to imputation:

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned… and everyone died…
Now Adam is a symbol, a representation of Christ, who was yet to come.
But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and His gift of forgiveness to many through this other Man, Jesus Christ.
And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many.
But how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Man, Jesus Christ.
Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.
Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.

When we are born again, we are taken out of Adam and placed into Christ and His righteousness is imputed to us. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says:

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Where we used to be guilty, we are now not guilty.
Where we used to be sinful, we are now righteous.
Where we used to be in Adam, we are now in Christ.
We are new creations in Christ.

So – we've talked about God's original blessing and man's original sin. Now let's look at God's original curse. It's found in Genesis 3:14-18 after that fall into sin.

Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals… You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live.

Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you."
And to the man he said, "Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains."

As a result of the original curse, women have painful childbirths, husbands and wives struggle to control each other, and it takes hard work to make a living. We cannot reverse this curse. It is a part of everyone's daily lives. That has been true since Adam and that will be true until Jesus returns!

That brings us to the curse of the law. Galatians 3:13-14 says:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Yes – Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law, but that does not mean we do not have to deal with curses. Think of it this way – Jesus redeemed us from the penalty of our sin through the cross – but only those who receive redemption by faith are saved. Likewise – He redeemed us from the curse of the law, but we must know how to revoke curses by faith and receive blessing by faith.

The origin of the curse of the law goes back to Deuteronomy 27 and 28. Moses told the Children of Israel that when they got to the Promised Land, God wanted them to go to two mountains. Six tribes would climb Mount Gerizim and six tribes would climb Mount Ebal. The six on Gerizim were to symbolize blessing. The six on Ebal were to symbolize cursing.

Then God listed the things that would result in a curse – which were basically disobeying God's laws – and He listed what those curses were. Things like: confusion, frustration, sickness, crop failure and being defeated by their enemies. And the people agreed and said Amen to the fact that they would be cursed for disobeying God's Law. The last command is found in Deuteronomy 27:26

Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out. Then all the people shall say, "Amen!"

That's the curse of the Law. Then in Deuteronomy 28 God listed the blessings of obedience.
If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all His commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God.

Things like being blessed in the city, blessed in the country, blessed in your work, blessed in your family life, blessed coming in and going out. And the people agreed and said Amen to the fact that they would be blessed for obeying God's law.

That was the choice God gave Israel - you choose to receive God's blessing by obeying God's law or you choose to receive God's cursing by disobeying God's law. And the sad thing is that throughout their history, Israel usually chose cursing over blessing. And all those things that were prophesied happened.

By the way, God knew that no one can be perfectly obedient. God did not expect perfection – He expected a lifestyle of repentance. That's why He instituted blood sacrifices for the remission of sin.

And every single one of those sacrifices pointed to the shed blood of Jesus on the cross! The good news is that blood redeems us from our sins and saves us from Hell. It also redeemed us from the curse of the law! Jesus did that by becoming a curse for us! Galatians 3:13 says:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

On the cross He took on our sins, He also took on the penalty for those sins. That penalty is not only hell, but living under the curse while on earth. And Christ redeemed us from that curse! Hallelujah! Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law and we no longer have to fear hell or the wrath of God or any curse!!!

Unless….. you try to attain righteousness by keeping the law. That's right – those who think that they can make themselves right with God by obeying the Law of God are under that curse of the law. Why? Because NO ONE CAN PERFECTLY KEEP THE LAW! Galatians 3:10-11 says:

And all who depend on the Law (who are seeking to be justified by obedience to the Law) are under a curse and doomed to disappointment and destruction, for it is written in the Scriptures, Cursed (devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment) is everyone who does not obey all the precepts and commands written in God's Book of the Law.
Now it is evident that no person is justified (declared righteous and brought into right standing with God) by keeping the Law, for the Scripture says, The man in right standing with God shall live by faith and he who is declared righteous through faith shall live.

Is there anyone here who has never broken a single one of God's commands in their entire life? Of course not. So, if you are depending on your own righteousness or works to make yourself right with God apart from faith in Christ, you are under a curse. To overcome that curse we must realize that we can never be good enough on our own, but thank God, Jesus is good enough on

His own! And when we place our faith in His finished work on the cross rather than on our own works trying to save ourselves, then we are redeemed from the curse of the Law! And more than that! All the blessings of Abraham come upon us. Hallelujah! Jesus reversed the curse and exchanged it for blessing!

By the way – some people think that curses were only in the Old Testament. But Jesus cursed a fig tree and it withered up and died. Also – in Luke's account of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talked about blessing and cursing. He actually used the word woe – which is an expression of grief over impending doom and destruction. Jesus pronounced woe on Judas for betraying Him and the Pharisees for their hypocrisy. In Luke 10:13-15 Jesus cursed 3 cities, including Capernaum, for refusing to repent when Jesus did miracles there. He said:

It will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

I've been to Capernaum. We're going there on our Holy Land trip. In the time of Christ it was the most important city on the north shore of Galilee. But there is nothing there now except for ruins. The spoken words of Christ came to pass.

This shows that another type of biblical curse is a spoken curse. Whoever said "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me" was wrong. Words have power. Proverbs 18:21 says:

Life and death are in the power of the tongue.

Words have the power to hurt or the power to heal.
Words have the power to destroy or the power to build.
Words have the power to encourage or the power to discourage.
Words have the power to curse or the power to bless.
Words have the power to kill or the power to give life.
Your words can release the promises of God or block the promises of God.
If you don't think so – remember, a negative report kept the Children of Israel out of the Promised Land!

Remember – a curse is the absence of God's blessing. So Satan wants to block your blessings! He wants to keep you from receiving your promises from God. One of his main tools to accomplish that is words. That's why it's so important for us to control what we say. The words you speak minister either life or death.

When people–especially authority figures–speak things into our identity or destiny that are not in line with God's Word, we can be cursed by these words if we receive them and believe them.

Someone in your past may have cursed your future by telling you that you are dumb and will never among to anything. Many need to break free of the power of these destructive words so we can walk in the blessing of God.

If you need to break free from hurtful words, here are some steps you can take:

Forgive the one who spoke the words.
Unforgiveness keeps us bound to those who hurt us and to their words.
Forgiving them means to release them for whatever you are holding against them – and when you release them it releases you!

Break any agreement with the words:
To break free from word curses you must break your agreement with them.
Any way that you have agreed with them, accepted them or repeated them as truth must be renounced. Then…

Replace the lies with truth:
Renew your mind with God's Word, and speak the opposite of the curses that were spoken over you.
Know that you are blessed by God as a redeemed son or daughter, and that Jesus paid the price for every curse to be broken.
Walk in the blessings of God and believe that He has good plans for you!

No believer needs to be living under the power of a curse. Jesus paid the price to set us free and bring us into the blessing of God. Don't allow hurtful words to be a barrier in your life any longer!

The power of curses has been broken on the cross already. We have power over the enemy to break every curse and release the blessings of God in our lives.
I want to lead you in a prayer to renounce and break the power of curses.

Lord Jesus, thank You for dying on the cross and becoming a curse, so that I could be redeemed from every curse and receive God's blessing. Because of Your finished work, I ask You to set me free from every curse that is over my life.

I have power over all the works of the enemy because of the blood of Jesus. So, I break the power of any word curses that have ever been spoken over me and my family, and I uproot them from my life!

I break any agreement I have made with the lies that were spoken. And I command any spirits associated with those curses to leave my life now! I am free in Jesus' name!

And I now speak that the blessings of God will be released in my life, my family, my health, my finances and my future.
I am blessed in Jesus name! Amen