



Genesis 2:8-9; 15-17

⁸ Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ 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."

Genesis 3:1-6; 13-19

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

⁴ "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

¹⁷ To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

LIFE Community Leader's Guide

Sunday, January 21

Big Idea: Work is Good for You.

Key Verse: "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

Opening Question: How would you answer the question, "How does your work affect you"? Think of one way it's changed you for the better and one way it has effected you negatively. Share with someone.

Study/Discussion Questions:

- Read the following passages from Genesis: 2:8-9; 2:15-17; 3:1-6; 3:13-19
- Was the nature of work different before sin entered the world than it was afterward? How so? Do you see any of the negative implications of the curse at the place where you work?
- In his message, Tom spoke about God's work in the world as the work of restoring Eden. Read Revelation 22:1-5 together. What similarities do you see between this picture in Revelation and the picture we have of Eden before the fall?
- God's work is not only to restore Eden in in heaven, but to restore Eden in the hearts of the people who are his. How can your work life be an environment in which God does this kind of work in you?
- In what ways is your innocence tested in your workplace? Can you think of a specific instance when you, with God's help, overcame a spiritual challenge at work?
- Do you find yourself struggling with the balance of work priorities and the other priorities of life? What can you do to effectively find the right balance?
- Before the Fall, there was a regular pattern of working six days and resting on the Sabbath. Do you find yourself finding a 'Sabbath rest'? What would it take for you to make this possible?
- In the images of both Eden before the fall and Heaven, who seems to be the focus of people's attention? (The Lord!) What would your work look like if you placed God at the center of what you do?
- Imagine putting together a resume that highlighted your accomplishments, not as a worker in your field, but as a member of God's family. How would it look different than a work resume?
- Pray for each other as your work helps you become better people—Eden people in the midst of a word plagued by the curse.