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## *The Gospel According to Matthew*

### *He Frees Us From the Curse*

*September 2, 2018*

**Sermon Text:** Matthew 8

**Scripture Reading:** Genesis 3

Gal 3:13-14 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"-- (14) so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

“Curse” is an interesting word. Here is the dictionary entry:

1. a solemn utterance intended to invoke a supernatural power to inflict harm or punishment on someone or something.

"she'd **put a curse on him**"  
*synonyms:* malediction, hex, jinx;

2. An offensive word or phrase used to express anger or annoyance.

"his mouth was spitting vile oaths and curses"

obscenity, swear  
word, expletive, oath, profanity

1. As a verb:  
invoke or use a curse against.  
"it often seemed as if the family had been cursed"

We are born into this world, *cursed*. That sounds so foreign to us, does it not? Many if not most people who claim to be Christians reject any such idea. But the Bible is very plain on this. We live in a cursed creation and we enter it under divine curse.

Gal 3:10 For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does

not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

Gen 3:14-19 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. (15) I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

(16) To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

(17) And to Adam he said, "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,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; (18) thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. (19) By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Every human being who is without Christ, who is trusting in themselves and in their own workings and doings to make themselves "right," is under God's condemnation because His Law pronounces them, justly, *cursed*.

This is a very large theme in Scripture – *blessing and curse*. The Lord dealt with Israel in this manner:

Deu 11:26-28 "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: (27) the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, (28) and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way that I am commanding you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.

To be cursed in that day was to be cut off from God's people. Put outside the camp. To forfeit the promises and blessings of Abraham. And so it is today.

Rom 4:5-8 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, (6) just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: (7) "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; (8) blessed is the man against

whom the Lord will not count his sin."

Blessed or cursed. Every human being who has ever lived is one or the other. And the blessing only comes in Jesus Christ who kept the Law for us and thereby removed the curse from all who are in Him by faith.

Mat 25:31-34 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. (32) Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. (34) Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are **blessed** by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Mat 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you **cursed**, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

This morning I want to look one more time at this 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew and show you how the Lord Jesus as King of His Kingdom removes the curse from His people and from all creation.

Rom 8:19-22 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. (20) For the creation

was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (22) For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Consider what we see here in Matthew:

- Jesus healing the leper
- Healing the centurion's servant and the inclusion of the gentiles in the kingdom
- Healing Peter's mother-in-law
- Casting out demons
- Calming the storm

And as we will see in the next chapter, Jesus deals with the real root of all these aspects of the curse by forgiving sins.

All of these things and more are aspects of the curse. Disease. Death. Racism. Satan and demons and their dominion over fallen man and creation. The cursed condition of the physical creation – storms, pestilence, stinging and venomous creatures, ferocious beasts, etc. Death, in other words.

There is a current TV series entitled *Serial Killer Earth*. Some of the episodes are:

- When Lakes Attack – tsumanis and floods, Katrina
- Avalanche Attack
- Tornado vs. Airport

And so on. The world we live in has much beauty, but it is very dangerous and has killed more people than any serial killer. Alaska is a good example. All kinds of beauty, but it will kill you in an instant.

All of this tells us that creation is not right. It is certainly not Eden. Yet we are told by people who refuse to acknowledge God or give Him thanks that the world we live in is “natural.” That man is the abnormality. That it is natural for grizzly bears to kill people or for disease to wipe out populations. It’s all part of the natural order, they say.

But it is not. All these things are aspects of the curse – of a world that is fallen because of man’s rebellion against the Lord.

Rom 5:12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned--

What we see here then in Matthew in Jesus removing the curse from us, justly due to us from our sin, and giving us the blessings of Abraham in the kingdom of God.

We err greatly in thinking that Christ’s work on the cross for us is “so that we can be forgiven and go to heaven.” This is very true of course, but our error is failing to think through what this means. As long as we continue to fail in this regard, the fact is that we will not long for the Day when we are with Christ. We will tend to cling to this world.

Let me show you. Listen to it again from Luke’s Gospel:

Luk 8:22-25 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they set out, (23) and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. (24) And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. (25) He said to them, "Where is your faith?" And they were afraid, and they marveled, saying to one another, "**Who then is this, that he commands even winds and water, and they obey him?**"

And Mark's account of it:

Mar 4:35-41 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." (36) And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. (37) And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. (38) But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" (39) And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. (40) He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" (41) And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, **"Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"**

Who is this, indeed! Here is the answer:

Col 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. (16) For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through him and for him. (17) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

The reason Jesus was able to command the wind and the sea is because HE is the Creator! He made the wind and the sea. He not only created all things, but He holds all things together, from the sub-atomic level on up. This is why you see unity in the diversity of the creation – all life forms have some kind of DNA code for instance. It is Christ who is the explanation of mysteries like light and gravity, energy and force and mass. This is the One who commanded the wind and the waves to be still.

Have you ever turned something of yours over to someone else to oversee? A business. Some property. Finances or such things? And then they botched it all up? Then you had to step back in and deal with the damage and bring it all back to original condition? This is what Christ did when He placed man in the Garden to govern it. And you know what Adam did with that stewardship.

Christ came into this world to reconcile the creation to Himself, and to do so He became cursed for us. He took upon Himself the curse that our sins merited and in setting us right in Him, He puts the entire creation back to its glory. Listen to Paul tell it:

Rom 8:18-25 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is

to be revealed to us. (19) **For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.** (20) For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope (21) that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

**(22) For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.**

(23) And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (24) For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? (25) But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

See it? All of creation is bound up with man. When sin came into the world by Adam, not only Adam fell but the whole creation came under the curse. Eden was gone and instead:

Gen 3:17-18 And to Adam he said, "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,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you

shall eat of it all the days of your life; (18) thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

At the resurrection, the creation is going to come back as Eden. No more curse. That is why you have statements like this in Scripture:

Isa 11:1-9 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. (3) And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, (4) but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. (5) Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

(6) The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. (7) The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (8) The

nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. (9) They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

THIS is what Jesus is showing us when He stilled the wind and waves. When He healed the leper and when He put Peter's mother-in-law back on her feet. It is what we are meant to understand when He exercises total sovereignty over demons so that they obey Him.

And this, Christian, is your HOPE. Let's wind up this morning with some thoughts on this subject – *the Christian's hope*. Romans 8 again:

(24) For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? (25) But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

See that word, "hope"? Do you grasp it? *The Christian's hope that Paul is speaking of here is the resurrection. It is the new heavens and new earth. It is Eden restored. It is a creation free of the curse. And it is the certainty that in Christ YOU are going to be there!*

Listen carefully again-

Rom 8:21-23 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (22) For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. (23) And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Here is this hope repeated over and over again:

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2Co 4:17-18 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, (18) as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2Co 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Rom 5:2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

1Co 15:19 If in Christ we have hope in

this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.

2Co 1:10 He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

Gal 5:5 For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.

Eph 1:18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Col 1:5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,

Col 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

1Th 5:8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, **and for a helmet the hope of salvation.**

your faith, we might say, IS this hope. And don't make the mistake of leaving this hope as just some vague idea of "going to heaven." No. Your hope is your inheritance in Christ. Your hope is eternal life in the New Earth in a new, incorruptible body in an eternal home where no evil thing will ever come in again. And it is REAL.

If you do not grasp these things and dwell on them daily then you are like a soldier going into battle with no helmet or armor. But the Christian who knows his hope and sets his mind on it, who understands what Matthew is showing us here as Christ comes into the world to remove the curse, well – this will be that Christian's experience:

Php 4:6-7 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (7) And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Understand? This HOPE is your helmet, Christian! It is vital to you. It protects the vitals of your faith. In fact,