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Substance of 3 Sermons preached by our Pastor Mr. J. W. Spaulding-Tyler
on June 18, 1978. at The Dickes

Morning Lesson. Genesis 3.

For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 2 Corinthians 5. 4.

With spiritual perception one would immediately see the connection between the Lesson and the Text, for man has a unique place in the creative power of God, and I would remind you of the manner of his creation, First, God made man, that is, his body, of the dust of the earth. How amazing it is that the wonderful piece of architecture, the human body, with all the limbs, systems, the marvellous brain and heart has been formed from the dust of the earth! And the second part of the creative act; "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." The second part was the creation of the living soul, created in the image of God, possessing an immortal soul, a marvellous mind or spirit. When you read body, soul and spirit in the creation of man, mind is synonymous with spirit. O the solemnity of having an immortal soul that must live eternally; and also the resurrection of the body, so all who have a being will live for ever. Do you realise it? do we faintly conceive of it? There is a tremendous distinction, and solemn and blessed it is. There are those who die in their sins: they are banished eternally from the presence of God, and they know eternally the pouring out of the curse of God in their persons and live in the pains and terrors of the bottomless pit. I am amazed at the mercy of God to this poor sinner in the pulpit, who richly deserves what has been named. It is only the grace of God, His mercy, goodness and love can save us from a doom that is eternal. You will know as we went together to the Throne of Grace we could think of nothing more terrible than to be alive on the earth and totally unprepared for eternity, so when the moment of death comes, unless the Lord intervenes, it must be endless perdition. How glorious and wonderful to be among those saved

by grace, who will live eternally in union and communion with the blessed Lord here, and more abundantly in a glorious state in Heaven! This is expounded in the Text.

I will notice one further point in the preparatory section of the discourse. Have you ever thought of it? your constitution is your body and your soul. Have you considered that your immortal soul is capable of a separate existence? It is not the other way round: your body could never exist without the indwelling of your soul. Immediately the soul leaves the body the body is dead: the spirit returns to God who gave it; the body is mouldering to dust. Your soul is capable of a separate existence, so when it leaves the body and receives the judgment of God, it will pass into bliss or endless misery, and exist there until the resurrection of the body; either the glorified body with the Lord's people reunited to a glorified soul, or the bodies of the wicked raised, not holy, powerful, but in the image of Satan, and they will be for ever consigned to ~~incarceration~~ incarceration in the bottomless pit. My friends, where shall we spend eternity? Are you ready to meet God? Have you a blessed expectation of eternal Glory, or are you being swept along by the tide into black despair? O the solemnity of being in the House of God! I know that there the Lord quickens dead sinners into life by His Spirit. We must live for ever.

I will take a further step. Man in his pristine innocency had the righteousness of the perfection of his creation, and that righteousness covered him. Adam and Eve needed no clothing: they were covered with the primitive righteousness of their pure creation in the image of God. There was no pain, sorrow, grief, death; no separation, but immediate communion as between a holy Creator and the creature: nothing to put in disorder the wonderful method of God in the garden; nothing to bring decay, disease, misery, oppression. A wonderful state it must have ~~have~~ been. From it they fell. Men and women may ridicule the account of the fall of man, and say it is mythology, not factual. Who can deny that man is fallen? Look at the filth, the corruption, malice, murder, adultery, hatred, destruction and misery! Who can ever deny the fall of man? It is a solemn, basic tenet the

Lord teaches us. Man is full of deceit and violence, uncleanness and concupiscence: he has a fallen nature. How can you ever doubt it? especially if the Lord opens your eyes to see it in your own case. They fell. When the Lord came, (they knew they were naked) walking in the garden in the cool of the day, Adam blamed his wife. There was nothing manly about that. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The poor woman blamed the serpent. It is no good blaming any: we are guilty before God, and when the Lord quickens and convinces of sin we smite on our own breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." You will not be able to blame Satan: blame lies at the door; it is ours. Immediately they had partaken of the fruit and violated the beautiful law they had fallen completely. Some have tried to promulgate the doctrine, although man is fallen he retains a residuum of goodness. His ruin is complete. There is no segment of you, as after the flesh that is sound or healthy: not one cell of the body is healthy before God. We are corruptibles, full of wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores.

Two things took place when they fell. They were guilty, and they fled from the presence of God, and ever since men and women have been trying to do the same. If children violate the code of conduct, they try to conceal it rather than to confess it, and even deny they have done it. "No, it was not me, it was someone else." and so they try to conceal their sin. That is why so many crimes are committed in the night, "wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth." It will be like that according to the Bible at the end of the world, and we do not know how near it is. The Lord will come in the clouds with power and great glory, and the wicked will go to the mountains and hills and call on them to hide them from God's presence. Are you fleeing from God, sinner? are you trying to hide yourself? How futile it is! There is only one hiding place for sinners: it is the cleft Rock, the riven side of the Lord Jesus. It is the dear Refuge of our weary souls; a safe place for sinners. They fly ^{to} refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them. Adam and Eve fled because they were guilty. The second is, they knew they were naked: they had no righteousness, no merit, and seeing their nakedness they sewed fig leaves

together, and made themselves aprons. You see intelligently how this leads to the Text. It relates to the tabernacle, or tent, and the references to being unclothed and so on. Wonderful it is that so soon after the fall God gave them the promise of His Son incarnate, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and He made them coats of skin and clothed Adam and Eve. This relates and points to a sacrifice, even the sacrificial death of our blessed Lord. Those blessed garments clothe every needy soul who is led to cry to Him.

Look at the beautiful language of the Text and follow with me. Some of you will say, "I know this abundantly." The apostle had a sacred assurance of immortal glory. He came to this; "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." What is a tabernacle? It is that which your immortal soul dwells in for a short while; This body of sin and death is the tent; as we hope, your precious, eternally loved, immortal soul dwells in. The apostle recognises and expresses what he experiences while dwelling in the tabernacle, and I will seek this morning to come to the expression of these experiences.. He says, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." I am sure this finds an echo from every gracious heart in the Sanctuary. Why do we who fear God and love the Lord and know His grace, and union and communion with Him, why do we in this tabernacle groan, being burdened?. I would speak precisely and to the honour of God and say this. You will, although you are in a fallen state, admire the glory, wisdom and goodness of God in your body. You will realise how good He is to give you sight, or partial sight, and hearing, and a sense of smell, and the power to partake of food. He gives you strength according to your days. He gives you the use of your brain and limbs, and the functions of the human body. I want to give honour to the Lord in this. It is a miracle of His goodness that He sustains and maintains and upholds the human body over many years, with all the functions. If you live to be eighty, ninety, or a hundred your heart is sustained in its integrity from before birth and over many years, and your brain functions. You remember; you have wisdom and recognition, and so on, I want to acknowledge the goodness of God in the human body, and He sustains it. He gives wisdom to farmers: the ground is tilled, the seed sown,

and there is everything to nourish the human body. There are a variety of foods from all parts, and delicious fruits: and He puts a roof over your head; you have a well-built house that does not fall down. You have loved ones to care for you and watch over you and do all that is needful for you. Immediately disease manifests itself we recognise the value of health and the nature of strength. It is only right that we should acknowledge it to God: and this is remarkable; the inbuilt properties in the human body of healing. Having said that and giving the glory to God, I will go to the next section.

When the Lord gives divine life, especially to know the Lord Jesus, we begin to realise in a deepening sense that there are two companies; the old man of sin and the new man of grace, and they are at variance and in mortal conflict. So the body is described as a body of sin and death, and the human ^{heart} is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The fallen nature of man is corrupt; "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores." The people ^{of God} recognise that they are corruptibles. You come to think; "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." There is a microcosm of the world in you; every sin, every form of corruption is manifested. It is a great mercy if it is contained and subdued so it does not break forth.

The apostle says, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." I will try to take a few sections and refer to why it is the Lord's dear people do groan, being burdened. You will feel burdened. Not only is death before us, it is a necessity: it is inescapable, unless you are among those who are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord. If you or your children who are born again are on this planet when the Lord returns, you will be caught up together with the saints in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Groaning is the expression of the deepest emotion man is capable of. It is a word that is used of the indwelling Spirit of God. "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."- that cannot be expressed in language. You could say it is not cheerful if I said

the Lord's people are groaners: they groan in a body of death. They not only groan; they praise the Lord for His goodness. In Romans 7 the apostle says, "O wretched man that I am!" - not as to his standing in Christ and the prospect of immortal glory, but because of the corruption of his nature. A groan means you are wishing and longing for your release to Glory. Illness sanctified sees the release of the soul to immortal bliss. It is because of the corruption of our nature and all the machinations of sin in us, as well as our blunders and follies and how we have defiled ourselves. It is chiefly the ^{terrible} weight of indwelling corruption and pride; seeking to excel everyone else, malice, bitter, hard feelings, uncleanness, carnality, vanity, infidelity. A host of evils the Lord shows us, and His work is deepened in us. I remember meeting a minister I had known for years, and he had reached eighty years. He said to me not long before his death, after all the years he was seeing the inner evils of his heart and nature more than before, feeling the depths of the fall and the corruption of his nature as never before. This encouraged me, because the Lord never does this without leading the soul to the precious blood of Christ. The Lord shows His people these things, and they groan on three counts: what they have been in the past, and what they have done and said in the past. You groan, and if you have never known it you are in a solemn place. If you are not in this you will not be found in the atonement. Let us be plain on this: if you do not know the burden of sin and groan before the Lord because of it you will never know what it is to praise Him. We can never undo anything. If you could spend the rest of your life in tears it would ^{not} pay the debt or make atonement. You groan on account of what you have been, and what you are now, and of what you will be until you die. I suppose one of the bitterest thoughts to a child of God is, when the Lord favours you with the cross of Christ in your religion and you taste forgiving love, and you come to a realisation that you will never cease to be a sinner in this body. You would never sin in thought, word or deed;- you will trust to be preserved. "Nor dare I promise future good to bring; I know my heart deceitful is indeed." You will groan, being burdened. "For immortality we groan, For robes and mansions in the skies." Thanks be to God.