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Genesis

Chapter 3 - God's Grace Questioned

The Pain of Wanting (vs. 16)

Genesis 3:16: To the woman He said,

“I will greatly multiply

Your pain in childbirth,

In pain you will bring forth children;

Yet your desire will be for your husband,

And he will rule over you.”

I remember a number of years ago, we were attending John MacArthur's Church, and he was going through the Book of Revelation. One of the passages that he referred to was in Revelation 8:1, where it says there was silence in heaven for about 30 minutes. His statement was,

“Proof positive there is no women in heaven.” I think that oftentimes at the very beginning of all of this, our thoughts turn to blaming one party or the other and we tend to separate each other. When we look at this particular passage where it's dealing with the consequence of the sin of the woman, our thoughts immediately go to, “Well, she was the instigator.” But Scripture doesn't want us to think that way. In fact, what God is going to reveal to us is that God is going to bless us through the bad decisions that we make. Sometimes we get so focused on her and him that we lose sight of the Lord and what He's doing. The Book of Genesis is about the graciousness of God. It's about His love towards us and that while we are yet sinners, He will ultimately strive to reconcile us to Himself. The Book of Genesis is about the graciousness of God and His reconciliation and His work of reconciliation throughout the rest of the Book of Genesis. So, as man sins, it is now in the mode of reconciliation, bringing man back to that relationship that God had clearly ordained him to have with Him. As we come to this passage, we realize that clearly God is good. God is gracious.

In fact, in Jonah 4:2, one of the things that Jonah was so angry about was that God was a loving, kind God. He says, "I knew You to be this way, and that's why I'm so upset." Because we don't mind, of course, God being kind to us, but when He's kind to our enemies, that is where we draw the line. That's just the nature of who God is. God is full of lovingkindness and goodness. It's who He is. So, at the very beginning of creation, we see His desire to give. "For God so loved, He gave." It's His nature to do that.

Interestingly enough, in contrast, when man is given the choice to choose what he wants, it ultimately is revealed that man is a self-indulgent, selfish person. He's uncaring, he's egotistic and he's fundamentally a self-preservationist. He's going to think of, "How can I preserve myself?" In his endeavor to want more, which is really internally within his heart, God begins to reveal through the agency of those things that He created what was in man's heart from the start. So, as we read at the beginning of Genesis 3, there is a serpent that God created who was more crafty than any other. As we

understood the name “crafty” literally means “one that uncovers,” and God has so ordained or created this one to uncover what was fundamentally in our hearts; that is a desire to be discontent; to want more; to perceive that if in fact God is not giving us everything that God is holding back good. Now, we've already read in the Book of Genesis that everything that God created was good and it was very good. We also know, according to Scripture, that not one good thing will He withhold. So, what is He withholding? Well, He's withholding things that would hurt us and would not be good for us. Then, man discovers that he finds the very things that God was keeping back from him. What is God keeping back from you? Well, things like treachery, things like shame; things like fear, despair, disparagement. I mean, if you think about all the things that are listed really within this one particular passage, when man begins to open Pandora's box and we begin to see all the sins come out, we realize, “Ok, so this is what we were missing out on.” I mean, deception and disappointment, pain and sorrow. These things God was withholding from us, but man felt like God

was holding back good. So, we pursue, we want, we crave, we desire, and it is in the craving and the desire that we find misery. We crave the very things that God is holding back. We long for the very things that would hurt and destroy, and it brings more sorrow in our lives.

It is what is fundamentally the place that we come to in Genesis 3. If you'll back up to verse 6, you'll see the woman longing for something. I would say specifically, it is the longing for the wrong things that bring about all these things, such as the treachery, deception, pain, sorrow; all of the things that had been held back.

(Genesis 3:6) “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable...”

This particular word is actually translated in another passage, in Micah 2:2, as the word “craving” or “coveting.” What we have is an interesting picture of her coveting something that God told her not to partake of. It was the one thing that God was holding back, and so you find her wanting and craving and longing for that which shouldn't be longed for. This then takes her on a path of

life in which woman is craving, longing. God will ultimately, as woman, makes this choice, give what she longs for. The same thing that you read in Romans Chapter 1 as man decides to not follow God and God says, "I'll give you over to your degrading passions." We perceive that God is holding back because He's telling us not to do certain things, so those very things we pursue. I would say the worst thing that could ever happen to us is we get our wish. She gets her wish in this text, but more than that, it will set her on a course.

I was thinking about all the things that we crave for, and there are a lot of things that make us miserable. Strangely enough, I can't think of one thing that God tells us to long for that makes us miserable, but I can tell you all the things that man craves for that does make him miserable.

One good example is found in Isaiah 55:2, and I like the way that it's put within this particular passage. You don't need to turn there, but it reads this way fundamentally, "working for and spending your money on things that don't satisfy." The question that's raised in that particular

passage is, why do you work for that which doesn't satisfy? That's an interesting question, isn't it? Probably one of the reasons why we're so miserable is we're working so hard. We finally take all of that effort and accumulate money and funds to then go purchase it, and then we find ourselves either in buyer's remorse or in more misery because we have it. Something else to take care of, by the way; something else to draw our attention and cause frustration.

James 4:1-2 says this, that this sense of always longing or always craving will actually produce in you and me a sense of anger and violence. In fact, the more you crave, the more angry and violent you'll become. There's a direct correlation between these particular points and Scripture is revealing that to us.

In fact, the way that it's put in Proverbs 27:20 is that it actually creates a kind of hell on earth. The way that Proverbs puts it is,

(Proverbs 27:20) “Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.”

Do you see the correlation?

So, you're actually trapped longing for what could never satisfy, and it creates an emptiness inside of you and a frustration that just makes you upset.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is clearly a book that reveals this better than any other book, and written by Solomon, who, if anybody knew what it was like to go after stuff, it was Solomon.

If you look at Ecclesiastes 1:17, it reads this way,

“I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.

(Ecclesiastes 1:18) Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge results in increasing pain.”

What he's saying is “The more I longed and the more I pursued, the more miserable I got.”

He then goes into Chapter 2 and then he begins to talk about the fact that he seeks for pleasure. We want satisfaction. We want to have a sense of depth about us. We want to have happiness. I mean, there's a list of things that man desires. Unfortunately, he craves the wrong

things to fulfill those things. In other words, when you and I begin to seek for satisfaction, where do people usually go? Well, according to Ecclesiastes 2:1, it's pleasure. We perceive that going after pleasure is somehow going to bring about a sense of satisfaction. We then go on and we begin to explore all kinds of things in our life. I think one of the things that we try to do is bring a sense of, well in the drug world, you'd probably call it a buzz; a sense of emotion, a sense of feeling, a sense of euphoria. We try to stimulate these things within our body. So, man goes, "Well, I'll drink. That'll give me a buzz." In other words, "The way to stimulate my body will be this way." But of course, it does anything but that because it ultimately deadens the response and relationships and causes no feeling. People and oftentimes children will cut themselves in an endeavor to feel something.

The passage reads this way,

(Ecclesiastes 2:3) "I explored with my mind how to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding me wisely..."

He then goes on and talks about pursuing accomplishments.

(Ecclesiastes 2:4) “I enlarged my works...”

(Ecclesiastes 2:5) “I made gardens and parks for myself...”

Isn't it amazing to actually make a park for yourself? I can do a little gardening, but I can't imagine creating a park for myself.

“I made gardens and parks for myself and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees;

(Ecclesiastes 2:6) I made ponds of water for myself...”

(Ecclesiastes 2:7) “I bought male and female slaves and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem.”

You know, it's very important to actually have more than everybody else, isn't it? Because that's going to bring you a sense of fulfillment. That's going to bring you a sense of security.

(Ecclesiastes 2:8) “Also, I collected for myself silver and gold...”

So much silver that it was like pavement, Scripture tells us, and that would be a lot.

“... and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines.

(Ecclesiastes 2:9) Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me...”

In an effort to, what, maybe find happiness, fulfillment, satisfaction, a sense of feeling, sense of security and worth? What are you looking for? Strangely enough, man craves the wrong things, and the only thing that he ultimately comes up with, he says this in verse 10,

“All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

(Ecclesiastes 2:11) Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.”

Have you ever worked for something, and you found out it was nothing? I can't think of many things that will torture you more than that. Spending your life on something that is meaningless, coming up empty at the end, hoping that this pursuit will somehow bring some kind of fulfillment, but it doesn't.

The New Testament reminds us of the same thing, if you look at me in 1 Timothy 6. It begins to reveal the pursuit of money. Money brings a lot of pain and sorrow, not just because it's money, but because we pursue it. More specifically, that we long after it, we want it, we crave it. It's the longing for the wrong things that bring the pain and the sorrow in our lives.

(1 Timothy 6:5) “and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

(1 Timothy 6:6) But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.”

There's a strange word, one that's not easily found.

(1 Timothy 6:7) “For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.

(1 Timothy 6:8) If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.

(1 Timothy 6:9) But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.”

What is it telling you? Wanting the wrong things brings pain and suffering.

(1 Timothy 6:10) “For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by...”

Underline it, “longing...”

We're not talking about possessing, we're talking about you longing for it.

Those who long for it,

“... have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

Not only in the fact that money doesn't really fulfill, and so you have gross disappointment in your life, but beyond that, how it takes you into a realm of all kinds of sorrow,

because you've spent your life desiring the wrong things and you find yourself having no relationship. You find yourself having a sense of emptiness inside.

It is this that really begins the whole journey with the woman in Genesis 3:6 as she begins to desire something that God told her not to desire. It was in the desiring of wrong things that would bring her to this point. Though the woman would pursue and desire the wrong things selfishly, to the hurt of not only herself, but her relationship with God and with her husband, God will turn this into good. And I think if there's anything that I want you to see within this particular passage, it's God's ability to change things for good.

We oftentimes read this passage and perceive that a curse is coming upon the woman because of things she did, and I want you to note the difference between the way that He deals with the serpent and the way that He deals with the woman. It refers to the fact that there is a curse given to the serpent. There's no mistake about that, he actually said, "Cursed are you." He will not use that

word with the woman. It will not be a curse that the Lord wants to present to the woman. It will be in a way consequence, yes. It will be in a way, discipline, yes, but the consequence and the discipline will not be in the realm of judgment. It would not be in the realm of suffering. It will be in the realm of correction. It will be in the way of direction. God is moving her to a point that would bring her closer to Himself, not further away. He is not isolating her, though she would isolate herself by the decision that she makes. He will reconcile, and what we're going to see within the passage is God working reconciliation through the very desires that we have.

I keep coming back to that very simple passage in Romans 8:28, that God is causing all things to work together for good to those who love Him. Now what's going to happen through this process is she's going to realize what she's done. I think there will probably be some of you saying, "How do you know she's realizing? How do you know there's a sense of repentance?" And I would say, because of what transpires afterwards. There's a clear directive

that really reveals that woman begins to realize that she was longing for the wrong things, and she needs to long for the right things and God will set her on that path. It will be interesting that God will set her on that path through the venue of having a child; that it will be through the promise of the birth that will bring a longing for something better.

It is also to be noted before God gives the consequence of what she had done, He will first introduce the promise as He deals with the serpent. If you look at the end of God dealing with the serpent,

(Genesis 3:14) “The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,

Cursed are you more than all cattle,

And more than every beast of the field;

On your belly you will go,

And dust you will eat

All the days of your life;

(Genesis 3:15) And I will put enmity

Between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her seed;

He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel.””

Now the passage really is prophetic in the sense that in the text there is a Messianic promise. The Messianic promise is that though Christ will be crucified, He will not die. He will rise again, but the serpent will ultimately be destroyed on that particular moment.

Romans 16 makes reference to this as well, that the day is coming when that will take place. The promise is given that through your seed, that is through your children. I do think it's interesting that you usually think of seed as being from the man, and yet the focus is with the woman in this because as you go later, into the Book of Isaiah, in Chapter 7, you have a king that God says, “Ask whatever you will. I'll save you from your enemy.” And instead of going to God, he turns to another enemy to save him. God says, “Because you would not turn to Me, I'm still going to give the promise, but it's going to be without man.” And He pushes man aside and He says, “A child will be born to a virgin.” That's pretty interesting. So, the hope and the

promise then comes in that wonderful picture of through the woman, salvation is going to come.

Paul will mention this in 1 Timothy 2 as well as it comes at the end, that woman will be preserved through the childbirth. God gives this interesting picture of hope, and we usually use the word when a woman is expecting, “expecting,” which has the connotation of hope; a looking forward to; a longing to. She's already on the course of longing. God says, “I'm going to give you something to long for. I'm going to give you a Messiah to long for.” So, she does.

Just to kind of show you a picture of this, if you look in Genesis 4:1, when Adam and Eve have their first child, what do they name the child? “Cain,” or “the gotten one.”

(Genesis 4:1) “Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD.”

In other words, “God has given me the child that will save.” Well, we know Cain is just the opposite. He doesn't save but kills his brother Abel. It will be again, that God

will bless and raise up one like Abel for a wonderful purpose.

(Genesis 4:25) “Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth...”

Now, Seth means “compensation.” More specifically, it makes reference to another in the place of Abel. How do we know? Because it says it right here,

“Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, “God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.””

So, she realized at this juncture that Cain was not going to be the lineage of the Messiah. Then it goes on and reads this way,

(Genesis 4:26) “To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.”

As you read a little bit further in this, you begin to realize that it was through having this son Seth, that the hope of the mother as well as Adam would come the Messiah.

As you read in Genesis 5:3,

“When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.”

Now, Scripture is telling us that was the heart of Adam. I mean, he had other sons, like Cain, but that wasn't according to his image, that wasn't the heart of Adam, but Seth was of the heart of Adam. So, he was in his image. He had the same desires, and we begin to see the genealogy following Seth. In fact, you have Seth, who is now the son of Adam. You have now the grandson who is going to be Enosh in which people will begin to follow the Lord. You have the great grandson that comes Kenan. You have the great, great grandson who is Mahalalel. You have the great, great, great grandson who is now Jared. You have the great, great, great, great grandson, who will be Enoch and Scripture tells us that Enoch walked with God, and he was not because God took him up. He lived 365 years, which I think is appropriate. You want to follow God 365 days of the year, right? He followed God, and

God took him up. Of course, this is made reference to in Hebrews 11:5. He was pleasing to God, and he would not see death because of that. It was God raising up. You also read about Enoch in particular in Jude 14, in which, after the 7th generation of Adam, he would begin to proclaim the judgment of God, which would be kind of a precursor to Noah and the flood coming. It's to be noted that Adam lives 930 years, and he will live long enough to have lived with his great, great, great, great grandson. I've lived long enough to see my great grandson, but he will live long enough to see his great, great, great, great, great grandson, who will proclaim this word, and he will live over 308 years with him. So, they will see the beginning of the promise of God in which God is preserving a lineage. Enoch will have a son, Methuselah, which will be the longest living soul on the earth, 969 years, which will be God's grace period between the time of that birth to the flood. Then, from Methuselah will be born a man by the name of Noah. So, God will do a great work, and Adam will almost see the work through Noah. Interesting, isn't it? We see the heart of both Adam and Eve; that their longing is for this Messiah. God gave Eve a desire for

something good. We tend to long for all the wrong things and our thought is that God's going to punish us for this, but the thing that God does is more remedial. That is to say, it's more a remedy than it is a punishment, and God begins to reveal to her what's going to happen. "You've chosen to long for. I'll give you something to long for that will be good for you."

So, the way the passage reads, if you go back with me in Genesis 3:16, is it takes us into this realm of repairing what had happened and the tearing apart of having a relationship with God as well as with her husband. Now, God is going to repair or reconcile.

(Genesis 3:16) "To the woman He said,
"I will greatly multiply
Your pain in childbirth..."

Now, you say, "So, why has God given her pain?" This is what you forgot. She wanted it. Remember, it was of the tree of the knowledge of good and of evil. She already in many respects had the knowledge of what good was. She hasn't had the two contrasting each other, which is what

the tree was going to do. It was going to contrast good and evil, but she had just seen good. She longed for evil or the name “*ra*”; more specifically, calamity, hardship, pain, sorrow, suffering. “I want it. It looks good. How wonderful pain, sorrow, calamity, and all those horrible things look.” I do think it's interesting that if you were to turn on the TV, that's most of our shows. Don't you think it's also interesting that we are more drawn to those kinds of shows? I mean, if there's murder, if there's killing, if there's mystery, subterfuge and like deception. In fact, they'll even advertise the show. That way we go, “Wow, I want to watch that. That looks pretty cool.” And God is saying, “See, it's still in you. You're still longing for the wrong things.” Sometimes we ask ourselves, “Why do I have so much pain and sorrow in my life?” I don't know, what have you been longing for?

So, in the in the text, she's really getting what she wants. Now, once again, is all this a horrible thing? Well, God wouldn't create pain and suffering if in fact by itself it was bad. It's the sorrow that comes out of this; the ultimate

pain that begins to be multiplied out of all this is because we long for the wrong things, and then we have disappointment on top of that. This is a strange, bizarre thought, but we are actually willing to suffer for doing all the wrong things. Think about the things that you've done throughout your life, whether it's lying, cheating, stealing, or just being nasty to somebody. The fact of the matter is, the ramifications of that just caused tremendous misery, because you've longed for the wrong things. You wanted to get even. So, you have war. You long for the wrong things, right? So, it was your heart that brought you here. The result is all kinds of pain and sorrow. Is it possible to suffer for the right things, and for good to come? So, God is going to give woman the opportunity, as she desired to suffer for the wrong things, to now suffer for the right thing, and that is life. She's going to give of herself in the sense of not being selfish anymore. I think that's one of the reasons why the Book of Romans says to present your bodies a living sacrifice, which is wholly acceptable to God, right? Peter will say we are so fortunate because we get to suffer for doing what's right. That's the one thing that that actually keeps us from being like the world. The

world will gladly suffer for doing wrong. They don't mind the hangovers; they don't mind all of the problems that come from pursuing the wrong things. We are willing to suffer for doing what's right.

“To the woman He said,
“I will greatly multiply
Your pain in childbirth,
In pain you will bring forth children...”

More specifically, the word that is used is “*bēn*,” which is where we get the word “son.” It actually is a root word of “*bānâ*”, which focuses on rebuilding. So, what's interesting about this is, the way that it's worded is “in pain, you shall then rebuild.” That’s probably the direct translation of it. In this, we have that sense of repairing what had been torn down. God has given her an opportunity to be a part of repairing, rebuilding, reconciliation. This is one of the reasons why women perceive that not to have children is such a horrible thing because they can't repair. The wonderful thing is that God, through the person of Christ, has given the women the ability to do that without the children, because of

course, Christ is the fulfillment of that promise. In your pain and in childbirth, it will be greatly multiplied, but hope will come forth because reparations will come.

“... Yet your desire will be for your husband...”

Once again, what are we dealing with? Well, the beginning of her sin was a craving, wanting, a desiring. What will God give her? A hope to desire for, right? John will say, “Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself.” So, that sense of longing for something is actually purifying rather than the opposite of degrading. It also tells us that it's a crown that we will achieve according to 2 Timothy 4, that if you and I have loved the appearing of Christ, we'll receive a crown. So, it's that longing for the higher. This will begin to translate into something good out of this. God is bringing about good.

He then turns and He says, “And as you are bent on desiring and longing...” No cut on women, it's just your nature to desire more than men. Men just have a

tendency to go, "Why can't we just leave it?" "No, I want to add a room," or "I want to change the furniture." There's just something about you that longs for something more, and that's something that God had then ordained to be longing for good. I think one of the great benefits of a woman in a man's life is that she begins to take that longing and pursue the things that man would oftentimes go, "You know, I'm perfectly content being here." And woman kind of pushes him on and says, "No, we've got to go for more." And that's a good thing, if in fact it's the good things that you're pursuing. If it's for the Messiah, if it's for, this particular text says, "your husband."

Now, the way that this is worded has opened itself up to all kinds of translations. The desire for him is actually the focus of the text. So, I know that sometimes the thought is that she will desire his position, or she will desire his strength or whatever, but more specifically, it is she will desire him. God is actually reversing what was happening in the garden because her desire was for other things, not for the relationship with Adam; not for the relationship

with God. God goes, "We're going to turn this desire around and cause you to long for a husband." I think it's to be noted that the text does not read, "Your desire shall be for a man." It reads, "for your husband." And the passage is saying that you'll desire relationship.

You kind of see this in an interesting way with Leah, as you go a little bit further in Genesis. Her desire is, "I'm going to have children, so my husband will love me." But what you see in the text is her desire to be loved, or as 1 Peter three would say, her desire to be cherished. There is something within the heart of woman to be loved and to be cherished by her husband. I know that sometimes guys go, "Why do I have to tell her that she's loved?" Because that's the desire of her heart, but that's a good desire because it's that desire that keeps you close together. It's that desire that keeps you focused on the relationship rather than on the logistics of your life. It keeps you focused and saying that "The relationship is more important than anything else that I could desire." God is setting the stage not only for the relationship, of course with the husband, but the relationship with God. He's

conveying the relationship is what you should be desiring more than anything else.

“... your desire will be for your husband,
And he will rule over you.”

The text is not only saying that you are going to desire your husband, but you're going to desire him to be in charge. Now, I know that you'll have a lot of women that will argue and debate this, but I can tell you this, that a woman who is truly a woman doesn't want a weak husband. She doesn't want somebody that she has to carry. She wants somebody that is going to lead, that's going to direct and ultimately is going to lead for her good. A true woman loves a leader, and she'll willingly follow somebody who will lead.

We were at the beach the other day and I'm sitting in my chair, just minding my own business, which in and of itself is a miracle, but there I am. This the lady starts walking up towards me and Connie had taken a walk on the beach. I'm going, “Ok, what's going to happen?” She starts walking up to me and she goes, “Can you help me?” And I

say, "What do you need?" She goes, "There's this fish that's on the shore, and it's squirming. It needs to go back in the water." It was a stingray, but she goes, "If I pick it up by the tail, will it sting me?" I said, "It probably would." So, she says, "Can you help me get it back in the water?" Of course, her mothering instincts were kicking in. So, I said, "Ok." I brought something that I could pick it up with and take it out in the water. I said to myself, "This is so interesting, that she would seek out a man to do this." Why would you do that? Scripture is saying it's innate. You actually have to suppress these innate things to bring about something different, and of course, the world tries to turn things upside down, but it's within the heart of every woman that she wants man to be in charge. She wants him to take care of the problem. Now, men kind of mistake this by when oftentimes the wife will come and say something about all these problems and she begins to pour out all these problems, and she's wanting to share them with you, knowing that you're going to put them on your shoulders. Now, your job is not necessarily to take care of everything. Your job is to bring them before the Lord, but she's bringing them and sharing them to you

because that's her nature. God had so ordained that to be her nature that she might be drawn to you. So, when we oftentimes read Scripture and it says, "Woman, submit yourself to your husband," or something like this, we think of it in terms of almost adversarial, but God has ordained it so the woman would come to the husband.

Let me show you a perfect example of this. It's found in 1 Corinthians 14. In this particular text, Paul is dealing with order; doing things in an orderly fashion.

(1 Corinthians 14:34) "The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says.

(1 Corinthians 14:35) if they desire to learn anything..."

Stop there. This is this is where we get confused, and say, "God's trying to hold back something." Ok, stop. That's what you thought in the garden. God's not trying to hold back anything. God's giving you something. What is God giving you? A relationship with your husband. Think about this. This is not God trying to make women subservient.

This is God trying to bring the marriage together. Oftentimes, women get so involved in the church that they neglect their relationship with their husband. So, God so wonderfully puts it in Scripture, and He goes, "If they desire to learn anything..." Well, what made the woman fail? She desired knowledge. She desired wisdom. She wanted more. Wouldn't it have been better had she asked her husband, and she talked to him about it? She doesn't, but God says, "We're going to do it right now. We're going to have you communicate together and we're going to work on the relationship rather than you longing for something that won't bring you any satisfaction." These other things that you long for and you say, "Oh, they're so wonderful and so beautiful to look at," are not going to bring you satisfaction, but you getting together with your husband will. So, the reason why it's in the text is to unite the relationship. As Scripture will say, "Look, you want to be a leader in the church?" He says, "First you have to get your household in order." Another way of putting it is, "You've got to get along with your family first." We've had men in the past come into church, and I knew that they wanted a

particular position. We purposely held them back because we knew they weren't getting along with their spouse. Everybody wants to minister, but they don't want to get along with their family.

“If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home...”

“Do you mean I’ve got to talk to my husband at home?”
That would be nice. Why is God holding back in the church?

If you look in 1 Timothy 2, I’ll give you another example of this. It will piggyback on this particular thought, and just as a reminder, the purpose of Timothy is to bring the household of God in order. So, you're dealing now with the church and the order in the church, and he makes reference to that within 1 Timothy 3:14,

“I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long;

(1 Timothy 3:15) but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God..."

The whole reason why he writes the book.

If you drop on down in 1 Timothy 2:12, it reads, "But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet."

And he goes all the way back to the garden. Do you see that in the text?

(1 Timothy 2:13) "For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve."

In other words, God's saying, "Why do you think I made things the way I did? I created an order, and I created the order so that you would not be competitors, but that you would complement each other."

(1 Timothy 2:14) "And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

(1 Timothy 2:15) But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith..."

Scripture is saying, "I've given you a role, and the role is to preserve life." And what a wonderful role it is. God says, "Why don't you concentrate on why I made you, and concentrate on the relationship?" Once again, this is all predicated on the relationship with the man.

Woman has come in and she would pursue the wrong thing selfishly to the hurt of the intimacy, selfishly to the hurt of her relationship. God is going to turn things around. This is not a punitive act by God in which He's causing great hurt to the woman. This is remedial, remedy. This is God's actually healing what has been broken, and God is bringing back a sense of reconciliation and a sense of relationship all the way back to this relationship.

If you look with me in Psalm 42. When you think about desires, and you think about desiring the right thing or the wrong thing, you can't help but think about Psalm 42, as it starts off,

(Psalm 42:1) "As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So my soul pants for You, O God.

(Psalm 42:2) My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?"

The passage is telling us that there is something to long for, and woman was given that longing for the Messiah that would come. When you and I begin to long for the right things, then satisfaction actually comes. The reason we're not satisfied, and the reason that we're miserable and the reason why we're sorrowful and in pain and hurt is because we've longed for all the wrong things. Be willing to suffer for longing for the right things, and you're going to watch something happen. Satisfaction and contentment and fulfillment and peace will all begin to come into your life.

I was thinking about the passage where Jesus stands up in the middle of the feast in John 7, and He says, "If anyone's thirsty, let them come to Me. I'll give him like rivers of water in his innermost being." It's almost the very same thing that He was saying to the woman in John 4, "I'll give you living water. Would you like it to where you never thirst again?" You know what "never thirst again" is? Total contentment; satisfaction. Scripture is telling you, if

you will long for the right thing, you will be satisfied. If you'll long to be close to God, then you're going to find that He's not only going to draw you near to Him, but He's going to take care of all your needs. It's just such a bizarre thing how God takes care of it.

Connie and I, a while back, we were talking about how much we're going to give to those in need up in North Carolina, and we both came up with the figures that we're looking at each other and going, "Ok, do we have that extra money?" And oftentimes you think that way, you know, "extra money," right? But Scripture is saying, sometimes you should give when it hurts. That would be pain and suffering, right? I mean, "Should I have this baby?" I think some babies are really worth it, don't you? So, it is through the pain and suffering that we begin to see something good. What was interesting was that God then increased it, much to our confusion, (which it shouldn't be because God is good) He gave us far more than what we gave. God is showing, according to 2 Corinthians, that you can't out-give God, but more than

that, He will abundantly supply so you can give more. As God calls upon you to want to do the right things, to want to give, to want to help people, God will supply all these needs.

You're not happy because you're not longing for the right things. Longing isn't bad in and of itself. You just have to long for the right things.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today and we give You thanks for these wonderful passages that begin to reveal how You work in our sin; how You can cause things to work together for good if we'll just turn, repent of our ways and long for the right things. The very things that we used as a stumbling block within our life You will use as a building block in our lives. Clearly, as we read Your word, a man by the name of Saul was very zealous for God, and yet he did a lot of damage in the name of God. Yet, You would see a heart that was zealous, and You would turn that zeal into a missionary. Father, how wonderful it is

that You can take our failings, and You could transform them into good.

Come before the Lord today and just lay down your life. Tell Him that you're willing to suffer for even doing what's right, and you're going to watch wonderful things come.