

LEADER DEVOTIONAL

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 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. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. Romans 8:20–22

Ever heard the song “What a Wonderful World”? Sing along with the first verse: “I see trees of green, red roses, too; I see ‘em bloom for me and you; And I think to myself, what a wonderful world.”

It’s tempting to make that our mantra, isn’t it? We read through Genesis 1 and 2, take a quick look around and think, “Wow, what a wonderful world God made!” And it’s true—God did make a wonderful, good world . . . originally.

Take another look at the lyrics above and ask yourself: what happens when I pick that lovely rose that’s bloomed for me and you? If I’m not careful, I get pricked by a thorn. Ouch. And what about when I’m out enjoying a beautiful stroll along the river and accidentally step on a water moccasin? Major ouch.

The world we live in today is not the world God originally created—it has been marred by sin and the resulting curse God placed on his beautiful handiwork. Somehow, when we’re enjoying Genesis 1 and 2, it’s easy to overlook Genesis 3 and the rest of the Bible, which deals with the effects of our sin and the curse on all of creation.

As important as it is that we teach our students to honor the Creator for his creation, we need to make sure

that we’re providing the whole picture to those in our care, lest we offer them a marred view of God. Too many times, people have used this now-non-wonderful world as an excuse to reject our loving Creator, claiming, “If God is so good, why is there so much pain in the world?” Yet, it isn’t God’s fault—it’s ours. Yours and mine. We sinned against the holy Creator and are suffering the due penalty for that rebellion.

As we rejoice in God’s design of birds today, let’s remember that the incredible design features don’t tell the whole story. And let’s be sure to paint an accurate view of God and his glorious creation.

O God,
Praise waiteth for thee, and to render it is my
noblest exercise;
This is thy due from all thy creatures, for all thy
works display thy attributes and fulfill thy designs;
The sea, dry land, winter cold, summer heat,
morning light, evening shade are full of thee, and
thou givest me them richly to enjoy.

—Arthur Bennet, *The Valley of Vision*
(The Banner of Truth Trust: 2005), p. 14.