

Theology Simply Explained — WSC19 “Personal, Painful, Perpetual Misery”

Pastor walks his children through Westminster Shorter Catechism question 19—especially explaining how loss of communion with God is what makes miserable all the miseries of this life, death itself, and the eternal pain of hell.

Q19. What is the misery of that estate whereinto man fell? ***All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all the miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.***

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

So, our shorter catechism question. This week is, what is the misery? Of that estate. We're into men fell. And the answer is And the answer is all mankind by their fall. Lost communion with God, are under his Wrath and curse. And so made liable to all the miseries in this life to death itself.

And the Pains of Forever. And so one of Great places in scripture to Discover the miseries. Or the misery of that estate wherein command fell is Ephesians chapter 2, Ephesians chapter 2. Roughly. Uh speaking. You can split in half the first half. Atonement from the wrath of God. Where it tells us that we were all.

Uh, nature children of Wrath. Um, once can at one point conducting ourselves and the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the Flesh and of the Mind by nature of children of Wrath, By Nature children of Wrath as opposed to Children of God. Who would conduct themselves? Uh, to fulfill the desires of God and find pleasure.

Uh, in him. So the in the second half of Ephesians chapter 2, Covers. A tournament from and Redemption from. Uh, being Uh, wrath and curse. Uh, but being reconciled to God from out of our lack of fellowship with him. There he's talking about how the Lord Jesus reconciles us to God brings us near not only to God.

But if we're all both growing being brought near to God, we're also brought near to one another And this we need not only because we Uh, we're aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the Covenant of Promise. That church nation and or that church State, and Those Covenant.

Um, covenantal. Um, Bonds that were between God and Israel. And so restoring to them outwardly, at least a measure of visible fellowship, perceptible fellowship with him. But then that, which is true for all who lack faith. Whether they are in Israel or not, whether they're in the church or not.

Whether they are in Israel or not, whether they are in the church or not, someone who does not believe. In the Lord is without hope has no hope because he is without God. In the world. And so, the misery of Uh, Which we fell. The misery of the estate, where into we fell.

Is first and foremost, having lost communion with God and coming under. His wrath and curse. Now, the Lord Jesus experienced much in this life that makes man miserable because we lack fellowship with God. We are without God at all to begin with. Uh, or without the, the knowledge of his gracious favor.

Uh, but even After we come to Faith, we do not walk and fellowship with him. To the extent that we ought. And to the extent that we ultimately will this was not true of the Lord Jesus Christ. So he could be Hungry in the wilderness and yet not miserable.

He experienced a misery but with joy in the midst of it as he does as he uh works. In us, we become more and more like him and we are able when hungry and alone. And attacked by Satan. Uh, more and more to enjoy the fellowship with God. And To enjoy the words of God, as more bred to our soul than physical bread is.

To our body.

So he experienced things that are miserable for us, he experience things that are the consequence of our sin. And he felt. The pain and the difficulty of those things in his Humanity, he took upon himself our infirmities to his language of Isaiah 53. And so, He knew our misery, although he himself was not miserable.

And he too. Submitted himself to the point of death, although the moment of death was actually relief for him. It was Upon the completion of his enduring experientially. The great misery. On the cross which is the Pains of Hell forever. And we must not think then. That because the Lord Jesus in his righteousness in his Holiness, in his fellowship with God.

Throughout his life, did not experience misery so much as we did. No. He actually experienced the pain and the difficulty more because in every moment that he had hunger or that he had need or that, he experienced what it is to live among sitters. He was much more aware than we are.

Uh, because of our sinfulness. Much more aware of how very opposite. This was, Of God and opposite of God's design and the consequence of sin and the presence. Of Satan and so many apparent successes of. The devil who, In the same chapter Ephesians 2 called The Prince of the power of the air.

And so Uh, his offense and indignation. Uh, at sin at unbelief, you see him? Groaning at the misery and pain of all those around him. You see him groaning, the Lord Jesus felt the misery of Those whom he cared for more than any of us, feel our own personal misery because of the Perfection of his love for God and the Perfection of his love for man.

So we must not even think that even though In the midst of those miseries, he enjoyed the fellowship and the favor of God. And what we have been learning through the throughout the Book of Leviticus, of course, the Lord Jesus. Was. Was perfectly righteous in from his conception and grew in experiencing and enjoying.

That's one of the things says he grew in wisdom. He grew in stature, you know, he got he learned things and he grew, physically and he grew in favor with God. And with Madden, especially in enjoying and realizing, And the finitude of his human nature. Uh, enjoying Uh, God's favor and fellowship, more and more until he came at last Knowing the glory of God.

Appreciating the glory of God, knowing the favor of God knowing the fellowship of God and knowing that the greatness of God's glory would be bent upon him in Wrath on the cross. And experiencing that. An equivalent of an eternity in hell multiplied by every last one of those for whom he is going to die.

And so, There is. A way in which we see, not only Did he experience? Uh, The other miseries including the misery of death, it took Um, Perhaps his childhood fairly early in life, as father from him. As he grieved, not only over lazarus's death, at the death of others around him, not only did he experience, Those miseries.

More sharply than we do, because of his Holiness because of his love. But not having experienced in himself. What we experience being without hope and without God apart from faith in Jesus Christ it was actually a much more severe experience of the misery of the wrath of God that he endured.

On the cross. And that. Even multiplied by. Uh, so much that hell will never end but Jesus was able to say. And at the end, Of his enduring, the wrath of God, it has been finished and to dismiss his Spirit into the hands of God. And so We ought to think much.

Of. The misery of the estate where until we fell, especially That we have lost communion with God, that is the great nature of the misery that it is personal it has to do with our personal Um, Relation to God. Everyone has a personal relationship with God. It's just a personal relationship of God, being your enemy or a personal relationship of God having reconciled you to himself as your child.

So I don't know if um if you ever hear that sort of language, you will more when you interact with people who are from outside the church or from undereducated parts of the church. And And there is much truth in wanting to have and and the necessity of having a personal relationship with God, real genuine, dealings with him.

Like we heard even in the evening sermon yesterday, Uh, but everyone has a personal relationship with God. That's the problem. Uh, is that he is personally, their enemy And so, the misery is personal, And the misery apart from Christ, of course. Is painful. Um, it is very severe. Not only in the things in which God communicates to us, that this is a creation that is bound to corruption Decay because of our sin, which brought not only our death but made us to live.

Now, in a world that is full of death Cosmos. That is full of death. Perpetual. If you do not have Christ's infinite atonement. For the Wrath that is against you so that he has swallowed it up so that he is propitiated, the wrath of God and eliminated it all together.

Uh, you will never stop enduring the misery. Of the estate. We're into you fell. It is forever and ever. The Lord Jesus. Uh, communicating that to us by that pain, which is external. Inflicted upon us from the outside the destruction that comes from the glory. The presence and the glory of God.

Second Thessalonians chapter 1 and describing that. In terms of a lake of fire where the flame is not quenched. And so that burning, that comes from the outside, but also the Lord Jesus. Uh, describing the Affliction of the inner experience of the heart and the conscience knowing that it is God knowing that it is his glory and describing that as a worm, that does not die.

So like being burned up from the outside and being eaten up from the inside forever and ever. Uh, without relief without pause Without Uh, so great is the glory of God against which we have sinned and uh the and from the enjoyment of which and the reflection of which we have fallen And so it's a great help for us.

To see the greatness of this personal and painful and Perpetual misery. Both. So that we will see how much Christ has done for us. That's the, the great theme in Ephesians chapter 2, where we learn about this, so plainly, Uh but also as a help to hating our sin to hating to walk as the enemies of God to hating even forgetfulness of the fellowship that we have with God.

Let us voluntarily put ourselves through more misery. Uh then is necessary and also give offense to God, give offense to the propitiation of Christ and the reconciliation of Christ. Which, Have given for us even in this life. The ability to walk and fellowship with God, to have him to have hope.

Uh, to be new creatures who Um, Walk in good works and are reconciled to God and to one another Uh, so it does us much good to meditate upon the greatness of this misery. And we are blessed to have. Uh, such as sound and concise. Catechism, answer, what is the misery of that estate?

We're into men fell, all mankind by their fall lost communion with God. Are under his Roth and curse. And so made liable to all the miseries in this life. To death itself. And to the Pains of, Forever.