

The cloud, not the fall, is the problem. Christians are of course right to draw deeply from Genesis that we live in a fallen state. Death, scripture tells us, is the wage of sin, the consequence of humankind's paradise fall. Were it not for the fall, wow! Paradise. Yet God also made everything good, everything that persists in this fallen state. While we know that creation eagerly awaits its redemption, we should not see the persons and things around us as fatally flawed. Our flaw is fatal, but within us lies the ground for Christ's complete and eternal redemption. Creation is good, not evil, just fallen goodness.



And that's where the cloud comes in. The fall is less the problem than our clouded discernment. Or the fall is not the problem at all, given Christ's perfect promise of redemption. Our overriding issue is instead with the things like anger, spiritual error, spiritual immaturity, greed, and temptations that cloud our judgment. Dark mists of emotion, unholy desires,

ingratitude, and other wrong thinking feed on other consequences of the fall to hide God's path, desire, and fierce love for us, while obscuring creation's goodness.

Thinking that the fall remains our problem can make one hopeless. Realizing instead that the cloud is the problem can make one look to God for his light dispelling the darkness. Clouds dissipate. Clouds part, revealing the glorious, heartening, warming sunshine. Clouds lift, revealing the presence of God in the person of his Son and the life's breath of his Spirit. Clouds also descend, making us look more closely and deeply for his movement and hold more strongly to his redemption. If you like the rest of us are fallen, but you like many of us trust in Christ, then you've gotten back up from your fall. You may be walking through a mist that darkens your path, but even mists can be refreshing when you trust in the presence of the risen Lord.