

THE STORY OF THE WORLD

A FOUR WEEK BIBLE STUDY



CAMPUS OUTREACH COLUMBUS

A person is standing on a white stand-up paddleboard (SUP) on a calm, deep blue lake. The person is wearing a dark shirt and light-colored pants, and is using a paddle. The lake's surface is still, reflecting the surrounding landscape. In the background, there is a dense forest of trees with autumn-colored foliage (yellows and oranges) along the shoreline. Above the forest, the landscape rises into steep, rocky mountains with patches of snow and glaciers. The sky is overcast and grey. The overall scene is serene and majestic.

The Story of **the World**

————— A Four Week Bible Study —————

The Story of the World

Creation

"I had always felt life first as a story: and if there is a story there is a story-teller."
—G.K Chesterton

What is a worldview, and why is it important?

To understand the Christian worldview, we must begin with the Bible:

The Bible is God's story. It tells an overarching narrative of how God loves his people and enters into his world that needs saving. This story is a collection of texts ranging from histories, poems, songs, and prophecies. They are given to us by God in order for us to know him. The climax of this story is found in the person of Jesus Christ. But to find out why he needed to come into the world, we need to start at the beginning with creation.

Read Genesis 1.

What did God create?

- v. 1: _____
- v. 3: _____
- v. 6-8: _____
- v. 9-10: _____
- v. 11-12: _____
- v. 14-19: _____
- v. 20-25: _____
- v. 27: _____

What is the primary difference between humankind and everything else that God created (v. 27)?

Image: A person or thing that closely resembles another (e.g., "That boy is the image of his father.")

What was God's direction for humanity (v. 28-31)?

At this point, what was man's relationship like with:

- God (Genesis 1:31)?
- The world (Genesis 1:28-29, 2:15)?
- Each other (Genesis 2:25)?

What do you think humanity's worldview was at creation?

From what we have learned about God in the creation story, what conclusions can we draw about him?

For Further Study/Discussion

One way of thinking about Biblical inspiration:

“Consider a jazz musician who can play all sorts of different instruments. Nobody, listening to Louis Armstrong, would ask whether the music was being made by Louis or his trumpet; everybody knows that the breath and the tune come from Louis, but the instrument through which the breath passes, in order to become audible, is the trumpet. The Bible writers, if you like, are the instruments of revelation — a trumpet here, an oboe there, a saxophone here — and they all make different sounds. But the musician, the skilled artist who fills them all with his breath and ensures the tune is played correctly, is the Holy Spirit. That’s kind of how inspiration works.”

—Andrew Wilson, *Unbreakable*

Five Ways We Are Created in God’s Image

Discuss what you believe each means, then look up the Scripture.

- **Spiritual** (Ecclesiastes 3:11)
- **Moral** (Jeremiah 31:33, Romans 2:15)
- **Rational** (2 Timothy 2:7, Matthew 22:37)
- **Creative** (Exodus 35:30-33)
- **Relational** (Genesis 2:23-25)

References/Resources:

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. And God said, ‘Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.’ And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. And God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.’ And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, ‘Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.’ And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.’ And it was so. And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night,

and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. And God said, 'Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.' So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.' And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' And God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." (Genesis 1 ESV)

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33)

"They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus." (Romans 2:15-16)

"Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything." (2 Timothy 2:7)

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment." (Matthew 22:36-38)

"Then Moses said to the people of Israel, 'See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft.'" (Exodus 35:30-33)

"Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:23-25)

The Story of the World

The Fall

“There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’” –C.S. Lewis

Review from “Creation”:

What was humanity’s perspective of God in Genesis 1?

The story continues by telling about the origin of the disconnect between humanity and God. For the worldview of Adam and Eve to dissolve, a problem would have to surface. This problem, known as the fall or the fall of humanity is detailed in the following reading. What resulted was a broken world that longs for restoration.

Read Genesis 3:1-13. What happens in these verses?

This is the first instance of sin in the story of the world. How would you define “sin”?

Why did they disobey God?

- They _____ God’s Word (3:1).
 - “Did God really say that?”
- Sin looked _____ (3:6).
 - “The tree was to be desired.”
- They _____ God’s position (3:5).
 - “You will be like God.”
- They chose their will over God’s will.

How do we see this in our own lives?

What does the Bible say?

- **We _____ the truth.**
 - Romans 1:18-19, 32
- **We are _____ by the attractiveness of sin.**
 - Proverbs 5:3-4
- **We desire God’s _____.**
 - Romans 1:22-23
 - Jeremiah 2:13

What are the consequences of these decisions for man's relationship with:

• God?

- _____ (Genesis 3:23-24, Isaiah 59:2).
 - We lose our relationship with God when we are separated from him.
 - Why does sin separate us from God?
 - Because God is _____.
 - He hates sin.
 - Psalm 5:4
 - He will not let sin go unpunished.
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Romans 12:19

• The world?

- No longer submits to man, in opposition
 - Genesis 3:17-19

• Others?

- Shame, disunity, and selfishness
 - Genesis 3:7 and 3:12

How do you think the problem of sin can be solved?

What does the Bible say (Romans 3:20, 23; James 2:10)?

References/Resources:

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?' And the woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So 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 to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, 'Where are you?' And he said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked,

and I hid myself.' He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'" (Genesis 3:1-13)

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them." (Romans 1:18-19)

"Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them." (Romans 1:32)

"For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil, but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol." (Proverbs 5:3-5)

"Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things." (Romans 1:22-23)

"For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:13)

"Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life." (Genesis 3:23-24)

"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

"For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you." (Psalm 5:4)

"They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might." (2 Thessalonians 1:9)

"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'" (Romans 12:19)

"And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'" (Genesis 3:17-19)

"For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:20, 23)

"For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it." (James 2:10)

The Story of the World

Redemption

Review from “The Fall”:

- What are the consequences for the offense (sin) committed by Adam and Eve (and us) (Genesis 3:3)?
- Because Adam and Eve didn’t “die” the day they ate the fruit, what kind of death is God talking about (Ephesians 2:1-3)?
- Is there any way for us to get “right” again with God (Romans 3:10-12, 18-20)?

The story of the fall shows humanity’s need for saving. Someone unaffected by the curse of sin and someone fully content with God’s goodness would have to enter the scene. We find this person in Jesus of Nazareth.

If what separates us from God is our sin, how does Christ’s life, death, and resurrection *reconcile* us to God?

God’s law demands _____ (James 2:10).

Jesus lived _____ (Hebrews 4:15).

God’s justice demands _____ for our sin (Ephesians 5:6).

Jesus took the wrath for _____ sin by dying on the _____ (Colossians 2:13-14).

Jesus _____ from the dead as proof that he was _____ and assurance that his _____ for sin was accepted (Romans 4:25).

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

So, on the cross, Jesus becomes _____, and we become _____.

How does the cross exemplify the character of God? How does the cross show that God is just and that God is merciful and loving?

References/Resources:

- Propaganda, G.O.S.P.E.L. Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlhGxEdez98>
- Thabiti Anyabwile, "What is the Gospel?": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w79hiVcXSDc>
- The Bible Project video 'The Gospel of the Kingdom':
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmFPS0f-kzs&list=PLH0Szn1yYNec-HZjVHooeb4BSDSeHhEoh&index=7>

"But God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" (Genesis 3:3)

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind." (Ephesians 2:1-3)

"As it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin." (Romans 3:10-12, 18-20)

"For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it." (James 2:10)

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

"For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." (Ephesians 5:5-6)

"And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross." (Colossians 2:13-14)

"But the words 'it was counted to him' were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification." (Romans 4:23-25)

The Story of the World

New Creation

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”
(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Review: What is the gospel? What happened on the cross (summarize 2 Corinthians 5:21)?

The gospel is so eye-opening that it calls for a response from all of us. The gospel story allows humanity to turn back to its original status with God. That is, it offers a restored relationship with him. God’s story is still being written, and we have the chance to be a part of it. A major aspect of the Christian life is continually deepening your relationship with God in order to make your faith practical.

Read Titus 2:11-14. What does it mean to be “zealous” for good works. How does the grace of God produce a person like that?

We don’t have to obey God to get his approval; we obey God because we have his approval. The gospel makes you _____ to obey!

How does this differ from the world’s other major religions?

Is this understanding of God different from how most people think about God?

In Christ, what is man’s relationship like with:

- **God** (Ephesians 2:13-15)?
- **The World** (Romans 8:22-23)?
- **Each Other** (Hebrews 10:24-25)?
- **The Future** (Revelation 21:1-5)?
 - Right now all of these things are in a process of being made perfect again, like they once were.
 - What does Jesus promise he will do one day?

In this study, we broke up the story of the world as presented in the Bible into four main parts: creation, the fall, redemption, and new creation. **Briefly explain each.** This is an overview of the worldview of someone who follows Christ.

In what ways do you see the Christian worldview explaining the way things are in the world?

What about the Christian worldview is the hardest thing to believe?

For you, what is the next step in pursuing God and/or the truth about the world?

References/Resources:

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

“Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’” (Galatians 3:11)

“I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.” (Galatians 2:21)

“For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Corinthians 5:14-17)

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Titus 2:11-14)

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace.” (Ephesians 2:13-15)

“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.” (Romans 8:22-23)

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’ And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’” (Revelation 21:1-5)

Continued Exploring

One of the first questions Jesus answered as he began his public ministry was, “Rabbi (which means teacher), where are you staying?” His response? “Come, and you will see.”

This is simply a list of verses for you to reference as you are seeking to investigate Jesus and his claims. Jesus has nothing to hide, and he doesn’t want you to be in the dark. His invitation to John’s disciples still stands for you today: “Come and see.” This study walks you through the book of John, one of the easiest-to-read books of the New Testament. As you work through this account of Jesus’ life and ministry, commit to doing a few things: **Observe** his character. **Notice** the way he relates to God and other people. **Think** about the claims he makes and how they might challenge your preconceived notions about him. **Let Jesus define what it means to be a Christian.**

How to use this study:

- Read the verses in context. In other words, consider reading the entire chapter that the highlighted verses are in.
- Who is the author, and what is his original intent? What is he trying to say through these verses? Consider writing down a main thought.
- What application, if any, might you be challenged to make as a result of the verses you studied?

Day 1: John 1:1-18	Day 11: John 10:1-21	Day 21: John 20:30-31
Day 2: John 1:3, 5-51	Day 12: John 11:1-44	Day 22: Romans 3:23
Day 3: John 2:1-12	Day 13: John 12:1-8	Day 23: Romans 6:23
Day 4: John 3:1-16	Day 14: John 13:1-20	Day 24: Galatians 2:20
Day 5: John 4:1-45	Day 15: John 13:31-35	Day 25: Galatians 5:1
Day 6: John 6:1-21	Day 16: John 14:6	Day 26: Ephesians 2:8-9
Day 7: John 6:22-40	Day 17: John 15:1-17	Day 27: Colossians 1:15-22
Day 8: John 6:60-71	Day 18: John 18:28-38	Day 28: Hebrew 4:15-16
Day 9: John 7:37-52	Day 19: John 19:16-37	Day 29: James 1:2-4
Day 10: John 8:1-11	Day 20: John 20:1-10	Day 30: 1 John 4:7-12



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