

EPIC – Week 3

**October 7, 2009 Teaching Outline
by Mark Howard**

RECAP: (Rich Adams)

Life is all about stories

- How you tell about your vacation, or your weekend, or your day at school
- How you get to know each other... "So what did you do over the summer?"
- It's why we love movies... they tell us a story that inspires us or entertains

There is one great story that involves the whole world

- And one great Author writing that story
- And the story is true and real
- And it includes the most important events of all time

The Bible as an epic story involving the whole world...

- Understanding the story shows us who God is and who we are
- Understanding the story shows us what God has done for us
- Understanding the story shows us the kind of life Jesus has made available for us
- It is so powerful that you will give your whole life to it

But the Story doesn't begin in Genesis 1:1 – There's a Story before our human story

Before time, God is existed in RELATIONSHIP, a FELLOWSHIP of three

- Ever picture God as big, powerful, and ALONE?
- We know He is three in one – the trinity – and ALSO
 - Wise, infinite, sovereign, omniscient, omnipresent, faithful, love, self-existing, just, unchanging, merciful, eternal, good, gracious, holy

The ANGELS...

- At some point, God created angels and other heavenly beings – they are CREATED
- The angels of the Bible are so frightening & powerful, everyone was scared to death
Daniel 10:5-8
- Lucifer the angel – the highest, most powerful, beautiful angel – captain of angels
Ezekiel 28:12-17
- Lucifer the beautiful wanted God's worship.

God is betrayed. Lucifer takes 1/3 of all the angels and heaven goes to war. Epic war. Satan loses, and is stripped of his position and thrown to earth and hell

- This evil is the evil that has corrupted our world. The evil in Satan is the same evil in us that makes us sin. Jealousy. Pride. Anger. Violence. And Satan is the king of it all.

Why do we live as if there is no evil in the world?

- There is evil in this world. There is a king of this evil – Satan.
- Every move we make to become like Christ, and to know God more, it fiercely resisted by Satan. He is the villain of our Story! Satan HATES God.
- You are created in God's image, therefore Satan will always be against you.
- Satan doesn't want you to believe God. He doesn't want you to realize the eternal joy and life God has for you in Christ.
- Satan wants you to just keep living as if life is meaningless and boring.
- Satan wants the worship that God deserves.

This is the state of the world that we enter into at Genesis 1:1

- Not the lame opening we think of normally
- When man is created, we are at war

THIS WEEK: Creation and the world as it was intended to be

RICH – “Before we start at the beginning of our story in the Bible, let’s get to know our Bible a bit more. This book is too amazing not to know much about it.”

(MATT MILLER - Bible Trivia Contest – stand up / strike a pose for your guess)

MARK -

Truly an amazing book

- Best selling book of all time – appx. 25 to 100 million every year
- Most archeologically documented book of all time – over 24,000 manuscripts
- One consistent story, although written by 40 authors over 2000 years

So let’s go! Let’s start with Genesis, chapter 1

(Genesis 1 abbreviated reading)

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was ^[a] formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and He 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.

⁶ And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." ⁷ God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹ And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night..." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

Hold on...did you catch that? “He also made the stars.” Like the way I would say, oh, and I baked a cake. Except stars are planet sized balls of burning gas like our sun.

Do you know how many stars there are in the universe?

- ‘03 Australian scientists estimated total of the *visible* stars in the universe.
- 70 sextillion. 7, then twenty two zeros. That’s 70,000 million million million
- That’s all the grains of sand in the world, every beach, every desert...times 10!

Oh, and God made the stars. No big deal. God is that amazing.

²⁰ And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems. And God saw that it was good. ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

On the fifth and sixth day, God makes all the animals, fish, birds, and creatures of the world.

- Estimated 10 million to 100 million different species of animals in the world
- Think about all the amazing different animals you've ever seen. Like 50 you can think of?

No big deal...God makes all the amazing animals in the world. On day five and six.

²⁴ And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. And God saw that it was good.

(Video – Creation)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, ^[b] and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

(Chapter 2 verse 7)

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

Notice how God stoops in mud, forms man, breathes life into his nostrils. It's personal.

- "It was VERY good." We are the pinnacle of creation.
- Our bodies are the greatest mystery of creation – unbelievably detailed and incredible.
- Not only that, but we are loved by God, like his children.
- Made in the image of God...is there any resemblance to our father? Do we look like him?

Genesis 2

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

God rested. And never went back to create more or fix it. It's that perfect the first time.

- Notice how often it says God is pleased?

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. The Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.

Let's stop and think about this garden for a bit – Eden.

- Don't we always think of Eden as this lame little backyard garden?
- A river mighty enough to be split into four rivers – this place was majestic and big
- Imagine exploring God's created world for the first time – unimaginable beauty.

¹⁸ The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God brought (the animals) to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;"

²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Notice what's happening here: Adam is LONELY.

- Imagine what discovering earth and naming all the animals must have been like?
- After seeing all the animals, Adam knows something is MISSING.
- His pet rhino just isn't going to cut it!
- He is longing for relationship - we were designed for it in GOD'S IMAGE
- God makes Eve – Adam busts out in the Bible's first poetry
- Imagine Adam first seeing Eve
- Imagine the conversation to thank God for Eve
- Imagine them getting to know each other and falling in love
- Imagine them exploring the garden together, and talking to God together

This was God's intended design for man and for creation

- Beauty in its truest form.
- Completely innocent – no sin, no pain, no knowledge of evil
- Peace – on the seventh day God rested – nothing left to improve
- **A design for relationships:**

Fellowship with God – complete access

Genesis 3:8

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day...

- A friend and a father – in complete loving control, with authority
- Worshiping the creator, not the created

Fellowship with another – Adam and Eve

- Total peace, total joy – no sin like selfishness, jealousy, etc.
- "Naked without shame" – not because they were in super great shape
 - o No such thing as low self-esteem
 - o No such thing as rejection
 - o **All their security, purpose, love, was found in God – no doubt of self worth**

This is the garden, this is innocence and creation. This is true beauty before sin entered.

And don't we still have remnants of this beauty? The way life was meant to be? And WILL be?

(WORD COLLAGE ON PAPER – KIDS WRITING)

Write a word or two of something you see that still leaves you in awe of God's creation and of the life that God intended for us to have. **ECHOS OF EDEN.**

EXAMPLES:

- a perfect sunrise
- a cool river flowing over a waterfall hidden deep in the woods
- your dog greeting you at the door after school
- a little adorable baby boy or girl smiling at you
- a long hug from someone you haven't seen in a long time
- hearing your dad say, "I'm so proud of you"