

EPIC – Week 5

November 4, 2009 Teaching Outline
by Mark Howard

RECAP:

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

- It's real, it is happening still, it involves you, and it changes who we are

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
- Wise, infinite, sovereign, omniscient, omnipresent, faithful...

God is betrayed and heaven goes to war

- Lucifer the angel – captain of angels wanted God's worship
- Lucifer takes 1/3 of all the angels and heaven goes to war.
- But Satan loses, and he is our enemy and the enemy of God

Creation - Genesis, chapters 1 & 2

- God makes the earth, sky, oceans, land, animals, sun, moon...it is GOOD.
- Then God stoops in mud, forms man, breathes life into his nostrils. It's personal.
- "It was VERY good." We are the pinnacle of creation.

Garden of Eden – not a little tiny backyard garden

- A river mighty enough to be split into four rivers – this place was majestic and big
- Adam enjoying all of Eden...**but he is alone.** The gift of Eve...

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

- Beautiful 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**
- **Fellowship with each other – Adam and Eve**
- Total peace, total joy – no sin like selfishness, jealousy, etc.
- "Naked without shame" – No such thing as low self-esteem, rejection...
- All their security, purpose, love, was found in God – no doubt of self worth

There was a way God intended for life to be and it was AMAZING.

- **But something happened...**

RECAP "The Fall" Illustration – RICH / MATT & youth / Table of pastries / Chocolate

Satan creates MISTRUST of God

- Satan twists God's words & lies to Adam and Eve
- Satan convinced them they couldn't TRUST God
- "Don't let God be in control, decide yourself"
- "God is holding out on you" "There is something better than God's way of life"

The choice of Sin – Adam and Eve decide for THEMSELVES what was good or evil

- NOT letting God decide what was best, what was good, what was evil
- Don't we still do that today? JUSTIFY, TAKE CONTROL, DON'T TRUST God
- **This is rebellion against God. MY WAY, not your way.**

At that moment, everything changed. For then on... Sin ruins everything.

(VIDEO – “The Curse”)

Immediately after the first sin, we see the first CONSEQUENCES of sin

- Suddenly, they feel SHAME, REGRET, PAIN...They hide from God in SHAME

God declares his righteous judgement...the consequences of sin.

- Not out of anger or rage, but out of justice.
- Remember, ultimately, the price for this sin will be paid by God's son, Jesus.

The curse of SIN – SUFFERING & BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS

- Women will have pain in childbirth
- **Broken Relationship: Man and Woman**
- Woman will now desire her husband...security, affirmation, self-worth, and AUTHORITY...trying to find these things in MEN instead of in GOD
- Perfect trust and intimacy are gone.
- Now man must suffer in LABOR against creation

The curse of SIN – Death

- God intended man to live forever! But now he must die.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death...

The curse of SIN – Separation from God

- Banished from the Garden meant banished from the presence of God

Genesis 3:23

So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden

- God is HOLY and can not be in the presence of sin
- **The loss of God / sorrow of the broken fellowship – imagine that**
- Don't we ache to have that kind of fellowship with God again?

If we fast forward in Genesis, this is the story of sin passed to each generation...

Cain & Abel – Chapter 4

- The very first kids of Adam and Eve...one brother kills the other!

The flood – Chapters 6-9

- People are so wicked, God is so disgusted and HEARTBROKEN with mankind...he brings a world wide flood to wipe all man out.
- Noah's family remains...but the sin nature goes on

The story goes on...sinful generation after generation all the way to US.

The story could have just ended here, but God had a plan to rescue mankind.

THIS WEEK: The Promise of Rescue

Already in the story, we see hints of grace and rescue to come

- God came looking for them in Eden after the fall – didn't kill them, but clothed them
- Cain's mark of protection even though he was a murderer (Genesis 4:15)
- Covenant with Noah after the flood (Genesis 9:1-17)

Now fast forward from Noah to his great, great, great...grandson Abram.

(Noah – Shem – Arphaxad – Shelah – Eber – Peleg – Reu – Serug – Nahor – Terah – Abram)

God's Covenant with Abram

- We don't know much about Abram before God appears to him
- God chooses Abram...Abram didn't earn it...to begin the rescue of mankind

Genesis 17:3-7

Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, "...this is my covenant with you...an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants, to be your God.

Genesis 12:2-3

I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

God makes an UNBREAKABLE promise to bless all peoples through Abram.

- The great nation is Israel, Abram's descendants. Through Israel, God will reveal himself, and **ultimately send Jesus to rescue mankind from the curse of sin.**
- This promise, to be our God, is God promising to never leave us and to send rescue.
- God will restore us to the way he intended life to be.

God makes a promise to rescue us through Jesus Christ, THROUGH Abram.

- God loves us, and promises to rescue us
- Just like one of my favorite movies...

(VIDEO – "Last of the Mohicians")

2 most important things to remember from tonight:

- God promises rescue to restore life to how it was intended to be
- When God promises, it's so certain that we can bet our life on it.

What is a promise to us?

- We may or may not keep our promises
- Examples – simple to big (**PICTURES**):
 - o "Promise I'll meet you at Taco Bell..."
 - o "Mom, I promise I'll get better grades next term..."
 - o "Dad, I promise I'll be home on time tonight..."
 - o "Girlfriend, I promise we'll never break up..."
 - o "Husband, I promise to never leave you..."

My wedding...I promised to never leave my wife and to love her always.

- That promise was huge. It affects my whole life. I've given my life to her.
- **That's the power of a promise kept.**

But there is also great power, and pain, in a broken promise:

- You sit in Taco Bell all alone waiting for your friend who never shows
- Your parents find out you broke your promise and they can't trust you
- Your boyfriend says he will never cheat on you, but he does
- Mom says she'll never abandon you, but she moves out
- Dad says he'll never hit you again, but he does

For God, a promise is so much different

- We say God is "faithful" – it means he literally is INCAPABLE of breaking a promise
- When God promises, it's as good as done. You can bet your life on.

His promises are often sealed in blood and given a sign to remember

- Example: God's promise to Noah – sign of rainbow
- Abram – sign of circumcision and sealed in blood

Genesis 15:17

When the sun had set, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces [of killed goat, cow, and ram].

- God takes his promises very seriously. They are as good as done.

AGAIN – the 2 most important things to remember from tonight:

- God promises rescue to restore life to how it was intended to be
- When God promises, it's so certain that we can bet our life on it.

Don't forget...Abram, nor us, earn this promise...it's for God's glory, not ours

- Shows who God is, his amazing grace
- Our joy is a secondary blessing

(WHILE LIGHTING CANDLES ON STAGE)

All through the bible, through this story of us ruining everything with our sin, and God rescuing us, **we see more and more of who God is.**

- We see God's power in creation
- We see God's personal touch in creating man and woman
- We see God's design for life in the beautiful, pain-free garden
- We see God's mercy as he comes looking for Adam and Eve and spares their life
- We see God's hope in the promise to Noah and the rainbow
- We see God's plan for rescue in his promise to Abram

Remember what I said? Understanding the story helps us understand who God is.

- As the story unfolds we see more and more of who God is
- Just like these candles, it begins to illuminate for us who God is
- How will you respond to who God is and what He has done for you?
- Tonight you are invited to response through worship in music