

Creation: Spirit Realm

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[0 : 0 0] We are taking up a new series, and this series, we're going to tell the story of the Bible. It's the main plot line through the Scriptures.

We're not going to cover everything that is in the Scriptures, but we're going to cover the main plot line from beginning to the cross, if you will.

Oh, thank you so much. As a matter of fact, there are a lot of ways you can sort of outline and structure the Bible if you want to try to understand the whole. But on this journey, as we go through it, I want to structure it with five words, and I think you can see it up here.

Did I put that slide there? All right. Yeah, there we go. So what this is is just a way to think about how the Bible is put together as a whole.

It begins with creation, then sin, then covenant, then kingdom, and then fulfillment. And let me just describe that just for a second.

[1 : 0 4] So in creation, we're looking at the very beginning of everything. That's Genesis chapter 1 and 2, and that's what that will sort of cover. Obviously, we're going to talk a little bit about that today.

When we get to sin, we're looking not only for the beginning of where sin came from, but we're looking at the spread of sin and what sin does. And that will take us Genesis chapter 3 through Genesis chapter 11.

Then covenant. Covenant is how God has decided to save us. He's made covenant, and we need to understand what that is.

And sometimes we pass over that and we don't understand it. But that will take us from Genesis chapter 12 through Genesis chapter 50. Now, that's the interesting thing is that in three words, we've only covered the book of Genesis.

The last two words, kingdom, kingdom will basically cover from the book of Exodus to the book of Malachi. It's the rest of the Old Testament because it's really working out this salvation that God is trying, is bringing to his people.

[2 : 0 9] Not that God tries anything. He always succeeds and wins. He never fails. And then fulfillment, the last word, that's the entirety of the New Testament. Because what you have in the Old Testament is promises made, and what you have in the New Testament is promises kept.

And so that's just a way that even as you decide to go read your Bible, you're reading in the middle of the week, and you find yourself in a particular place, you'll kind of know where you are in this outline, if you will.

So how long will it take us to get through all of this? I don't know exactly, but we're not going to fly through it real fast. It's not going to be just a couple of weeks or so. Because I want us to understand and get on the same page about these stories, because these stories are great.

And God displays himself so magnificently through these stories that we want to see that. So today, we're going to be in creation, but we're going to be looking at the creation of the spirit realm, which is not chronologically written, or maybe I should say serially written, in Genesis necessarily.

But we see it in other places, and it's something that I believe happens before a lot of what we see in Genesis 1 and 2. So we're going to talk about that chronologically before these other things, because it will be necessary for us to see some of these things as we get into them.

[3 : 36] So we're beginning with Colossians 1, and I'm going to read verses 13 through 16, and hopefully you have your place there. Paul's written this letter, and he says in verse 13, I'll just stop there and say the one who's rescued us is God the Father.

God the Father has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of his dear Son. Verse 14. Now this is about the Son, because it says, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is the image of the invisible God. Now this is speaking of the Son here. The Son is the He. He is the image of the invisible God. He's the firstborn of all creation. And then our key verse this morning, for by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through him and for him.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you that you have given to us this excellent, perfect, inerrant, infallible treasurer of knowledge in how you have acted, what you have said, and what you think.

And I pray, Lord, that you would help us to order our lives after your word, and we pray this in Christ's name. Amen. A quote for you.

[5 : 20] I will revenge my injuries. If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear. And chiefly towards you, my arch enemy, my creator, do I swear inexhaustible hatred.

These are the words of the monster that Victor Frankenstein created in the classic work, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. And the monster is angry because his creator will not give him what he wants.

Way too many people believe that since God is our creator, then it is his job to give us what we want. But the problem is, is that we do not understand why God has created all things.

If we could grasp and understand why he's created all things, including the spirit beings, we would never say with the monster, I'm going to be after you until you give me what I want.

And so when we look here at Colossians, we see something of God's creation, and we're going to lay it out just kind of broadly here to begin with. And I'm going to look at three things that help us understand God's purpose in all of this and how this all fits together.

[6 : 45] The first thing that we see is the agent of creation. In the very first phrase, it says, for by him all things were created. Who is the him?

Who is the him? If you trace this back, the him here is Jesus Christ. It's one of those things that not a lot of people kind of pick up on as they're reading, but let me just pull you back to verse 15 that says that he is the image of the invisible God, for by him all things were created.

That's the way that comes together. So the image of the invisible God, the son, is the image of the father. That's the invisible God, is the father. So Christ is the agent of creation.

By him all things were created. The way this works is that God is a triune God. We all know the Trinity, that there is one God and three persons.

And by persons, we don't mean human people. What we mean are personalities, individuals. And by that, we mean that one God and three persons.

[7 : 59] So you can't have two gods or three gods. You have one God. And this one God has these three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They're all equal.

They all share the same power. And in this case, what we're saying is that God the Son is the agent of creation. creation. Because here's the way it works.

The Father planned creation. The Son is the agent who brings it about. And the Spirit is the power by which he brings it about.

It's the same for salvation. The Father planned salvation. The Son executed or was the agent of salvation. And he's done it by the power of the Holy Spirit.

So the Trinity is involved in all the work. Does that make sense? Now just so you don't think I'm off my rocker here, I want to take you to another passage in John's Gospel.

[8 : 58] John chapter 1, verse 1 through 3. I'm sure you've seen this and heard this passage many a time. And in this passage we have John showing us the Word of God.

Now we all know if you read through John chapter 1 that the Word here is Jesus or the Son. Right? So in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God and here we go, verse 3. All things came into being through Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

That's why, if you'll notice, let me just, before I go on, again, it is saying that all things come into being through the Word and apart from the Word nothing has come into being that has not come into being.

He's the agent of creation. This is why in Genesis chapter 1 you'll see over and over again something like verse 3 where it says then God said.

[10 : 10] That was God's Word. Do you understand the connection that I'm drawing there? It is by God's Word that all of creation was created.

So as Christians then one of the things we need to believe is we need to believe that the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, is the one through whom the world and the spirit beings, the spirit realm, came into existence.

The one who became flesh, Jesus Christ, is also the one who created all things so that the Creator ate the fish that He created after His resurrection.

He was tempted in a desert that He designed. He was buried beneath the earth that He fashioned and He drove out the spirits that He called into being.

The Lord Jesus Christ who took on flesh was the one who created all things. Now, we might have at this point someone say, okay, we're going to talk about creation. We're going to have to say something about evolution because there's this debate about how the world or all things begin.

[11 : 23] I will say more about this as we go but for today I just want to say one thing and that is this. There's not a single solitary person on this planet for the last 2,000 years who was there in the beginning when everything started except Jesus as the Son of God.

Now, I believe that God created all things in the span of six days by the power of His spoken word and I believe it because I have the testimony of God about it in the Bible.

So, somebody's going to look at me, somebody's going to say to me, oh, you know, but you know, science, science, science, and I'm just going to stop you right there and just say to you, have you done the science?

did you do the experiments yourself? Chances are you didn't. Well, then what you're doing is you're believing the testimony of scientists in a book that you've never met.

I'm just saying that I'm doing the same thing except I've met God in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ. So, we all, and here's the thing, this is the truth of the matter, you can go search out the history of Western thought, we believe things on testimony because most of the things out in this world, we can't go test ourselves.

[12 : 56] I'm just saying I'm going to believe the word of God over the word of men. Christians, if you are a Christian, then you must believe that God created the world by his own power.

Maybe you're the kind of Christian who wants to try to ride the fence between what his word says and what it seems like scientists have discovered, but I'm just going to tell you that if you're truly a Christian, then you're going to believe what his word says, and his word says that he created all things.

It's fundamental to being a Christian to believe what God says. Because here's the thing, if we cannot believe what he says about creation and that he did it by the word of his power, then we cannot believe what he has to say about salvation, resurrection, or life.

It is all a package deal. If we're going to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, then we need to believe as he did. And in Matthew chapter 19 verse 4 and 5, he shows us, I don't have this up there for you, but you just go look it up.

He quotes from Genesis chapter 1 as though it's real history. So if the man who lived a perfect life died a horrible death and was raised from the dead, believes that Genesis chapter 1 happened, then I'm inclined to go with him.

[14 : 28] He is the agent of creation and all things came into existence by him. And that means that if you're not a Christian today, your only hope, your only hope is to turn to the one who created you.

Because not only did he create you, but he can save you. He can save you. Well, that brings us to the second thing, and that is the extent of the creation.

That's what Colossians chapter 1 tells us. It says in that middle phrase, that all things came into being both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

I want to divide this between what is visible and invisible. That helps to put together these things because we could say that things are created in the heavens that are visible and invisible because there's some of these things in the heavens that we can see.

And when we talk about the things that are visible, we're talking about they can be seen not necessarily only with the eyes. Right? So you can do all kinds of measurements and observations, and they have found these things there that we cannot see with the human eye, but we know that they're there.

[15 : 43] You understand what I'm saying? It's matter. So all the things that are visible, this is matter. The material world. The things that are invisible then are the things of the spiritual world.

As a matter of fact, he gives this sort of idea that there are thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities. And that section of saying that, Paul uses that in lots of different places in his epistles to mean the spirit realm.

You can go see in Ephesians chapter 6 how he uses it this way. These are the spiritual realities, these are the spiritual beings, the spirit realm, the creation of the spirit beings, that by Christ, the spirit beings were created.

Now, who are these spirit beings? Let's just talk about this for a second. God is the one who created them, and we call them by a few names. We call them angels. Some of them are called archangels.

And then there's a couple of different classes of them. There are seraphim and cherubim. And in Revelation, they're even called the living ones. They are not infinite like God.

[16 : 56] God is infinite. He has no limitations, right? He has no beginning and no end. But the angels have a beginning point. And then no ending point.

They're eternal. That's the way we are. We have a beginning point, but we have no ending point. Right? We're eternal. We're either going to be eternally with the Lord or eternally separated from him.

So these angels are very much the same. They are eternal, but they are not infinite. They are personal beings. They have intellect and emotions. They have a will where they want to do things and they can do things and choose to do things.

They are spirit beings in that they are non-physical. They are non-material. As a matter of fact, in Ephesians 6, Paul says that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers and powers and world forces, these spiritual forces of wickedness.

Which means that they can go anywhere that they want to, but they can only be in one place at a time. They're not infinite like God, so they can only exist in one place.

[18 : 02] So if Satan is here today with us, he is nowhere else on the face of the planet. Chances of him being here with us are pretty slim, I think. I don't know. You know, he doesn't like the hill country, I guess.

I don't know. I just don't know where that came from, but that's okay. But you understand, they're spiritual beings, but they're also powerful beings.

As a matter of fact, 2 Peter 2, verse 11 gives us this idea that they are more powerful and more strong than we are as humans. We ought not to think to ourselves that we can tangle with them because they're stronger and more powerful than we are.

They're also moral beings. That is, that they are able to be able to choose between good and evil. They're able to know the difference between good and evil, and they can choose it.

That's where you see in 2 Peter 2, verse 4, that God didn't spare the angels when they sinned. They were able to figure out between the two. Now, the thing is, is that as we think about these spirit beings in relationship to creation, Genesis chapter 1, verse 31 says this, God saw all that he made, and behold, it was very good.

[19 : 26] So, when were these spirit beings created? The answer is, we don't know. But they were created somewhere before Genesis 1, 31.

And they fell somewhere, or some of them fell, somewhere after Genesis 1, 31, and before Genesis 3. God has not told us when.

Therefore, it's not a question that we need to worry about. You know, it's like those questions that people like to ask, where did Cain get his wife? My answer in question to that is always, did God tell you?

No. No. Then stop trying to outthink God. Stop trying to outthink God. Now, many of these, a third, we're told through Scripture, rebelled against God sometime after Genesis 1, 31.

Their leader, who we all know, is Satan, the devil, Beelzebub, Apollyon, the serpent, the dragon, Lucifer. And so now, at this point, we have two sets of spirit beings.

[20 : 31] Those who continue to follow after God, two-thirds of them, their activities are that they worship and praise God, they serve God, they obey God, they're ministering spirits for the sake of believers.

But those who have rebelled, these are the ones, they tempt people to sin. Genesis 3, 1 Chronicles 21, they afflict people.

There's a story in the New Testament where a lady is been afflicted for 18 years. She's hunched over and almost doubled over because of a spirit, the Scriptures tell us, afflicting her and causing her bodily harm for the 18 years.

Jesus cast out that demon so she's no longer afflicted. So they can bring affliction upon people. They also can control people. You see lots of demon possession throughout the Scriptures.

in Luke chapter 8 as an example. They're also murderers, or life takers. That's what Jesus called Satan in John chapter 8 verse 44, that he was a murderer from the beginning.

[21 : 44] But the final thing, and this is why we're doing all this, it is also part of their heart to deceive and lie. to deceive and to lie.

We know that Satan can portray himself as an angel of light, which means that the things that he seeks to get us to do are things that always look good. Listen, temptation, temptation never comes to us as the outcome and the end result, but always the pleasure that it brings.

And does that temptation to sin that promises pleasure, is there really pleasure there? Yes, that's why it's so hard to get away from it. But his whole point is to deceive and to lie, and that's why we have Eve being deceived in the garden.

So here's the thing to think about, though, as we just sort of laid that out. Remember that it is God, particularly the Lord Jesus Christ, who created all of these things. It was the Father's plan, the Son executed, the Spirit gave the power for this.

And so what this means is that God is supreme over all spirit beings. When you create something, you have power over it.

[23 : 12] It belongs to you. You should be able to do with it as you please. God created the spirit beings, and if all the spirit beings were to all gather together, and they were all to muster all the wicked people of the earth, and they were to gather together an army to go against God, he would never even flinch a single muscle, but would destroy them all, because he is greater than all.

The reason I'm saying this is because it's so tempting in this life when we begin to think about and talk about demonic activity. And I believe it's true. I believe it's real. I don't believe it's just some sort of fairy tale in the Bible, because when I was a kid, I saw it.

Three times in my life, three separate times, I've seen things. But that's not why I believe it. I believe it because it's there in the Bible. But it's easy to be afraid.

And I remember the fear. I remember being completely and entirely afraid. But we do not have to be afraid.

You do not have to be afraid of the spirit realm, of the evil spirit realm. You do not have to be afraid of Satan, because you need to remember, since God is sovereign, Satan is nothing more than a dog on a leash.

[24 : 35] And he does the bidding of the Father in whatever he does, because God is more powerful than him. But God is also a pure and holy God, and he will not tolerate evil, and he will not tolerate sin.

Even in his own spirit beings, he will not tolerate their rebellion. As a matter of fact, we know that in Matthew chapter 25, verse 41, that the hell was created for Satan and his angels.

And one day, God will cast them all off into the lake of fire. But there is a thing that does need to be said here, because some people who are not believers, some people who have never trusted Christ, you remember at the beginning in chapter 1 of Colossians verse 15, I believe it, no, maybe it's verse 13, anyway, it talks about he rescued us, and he's moved us from the dominion of darkness to the kingdom of his dear son.

Every one of us was born into the kingdom of darkness. And if you've never been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, that's where you still are.

As a matter of fact, Ephesians chapter 2, verse 1 and 2, Paul is describing what the life of a person who's saved was like before they were saved.

[26 : 02] And what he tells them is that you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.

The prince of the power of the air, that is Satan. And what he's saying here is that when you were of the dominion of darkness, before you were saved, you were walking in allegiance with Satan himself.

And what I'm here to tell you today is this, is that you have one of two allegiances. Either you are in line with and in the kingdom of Satan, you are a child of Adam or you've been saved and you've been transferred to the kingdom of his dear son.

There is no neutrality, there is no middle ground, it is one or the other. So where do you stand?

The only hope that we have is found in Ephesians 2 verse 8, that for by grace we have been saved through faith, and that's not of ourselves. It's a gift from God.

[27 : 16] We have the agent of creation, we have the extent of creation, let's talk finally then about the purpose of creation. The very last phrase of verse 16 says, all things have been created through him and for him.

Now all things being created through him we've talked about, that's a lot of what we've already discussed. Christ. We will talk about it more when we turn to Genesis 1 next week.

But I want to talk a little bit about all things being created for him. This little word for, if you get behind it to the Greek, you find out that this is a slightly different for than we've been seeing in the book of Galatians.

This for means unto or towards a goal. The goal of all creation is Jesus Christ. What that means is much like in other places in the scriptures where it's saying that the creation is for the name of Jesus Christ or for the glory of Jesus Christ.

For example, in Romans chapter 11 verse 36 it says that for from him and through him and to him are all things. Or in 1 Corinthians 8 verses 6 it says that we exist for him.

[28 : 32] Or in Isaiah 43 6 and 7 it says that everyone who's called by my name whom I've created for my glory. To be for Jesus Christ is to be for his namesake, for his glory.

A carpenter will build a house and if he's a carpenter worth anything at all, he knows that his name is on the line with that house. So if he builds a new house and you move into that house and you find that that house is terrible, like it's falling down and walls aren't connected and everything is, then his name then is lessened, right?

There's no glory for him. He's done it and his name is attached to it. So he's going to do it as best he can in order to promote his name. The Lord Jesus Christ created us and he's done so for his glory so that his name is attached to us and so that he gets glory out of us not in the sense of adding but in the sense of recognizing.

We don't add anything to God's glory. But what is it, when we say God's glory, what are we talking about here? This is all very kind of like analogy like and so there's lots of talk about light and things and so this is really kind of wispy here but just hang on and maybe we can pull it together.

The word glory has to do with the sum total of all the attributes and the essence of who God is. It's the sum total of all the attributes and the essence of who God is.

[30 : 13] If we were to talk about God and we were to try to say that God is love, that God is holy, that God is just, that God is righteous, that God is omnipotent, he's omniscient, he's omnipresent, he's eternal, he's infinite, he's good, he's sovereign, he's loving, he's wise, he's knowledgeable.

As we just start piling on all of who God is, each one of those would then begin to glow bright with a radiance and a mind overcoming brilliance.

Right? It would be such a brilliance, in the garden, Jesus is waiting for Judas to come, and in John's gospel, they walk up to him and they're like, who are you looking for, Jesus says, and they're like, well, we're looking for Jesus, and he says, I am.

Just like that, he goes, I am. And you know what happens? They all fall down, and knocks them all down. Because his splendor of who he is, just in the word of who he is, knocks them down.

Moses says to God, he says, I want to see your glory. Right? I don't know if you've ever read this in Exodus chapter around 32, 33, 34. He says, I want to see your glory.

[31 : 32] And God says, no one can see my face and live. So what does he do? He takes Moses and he says, I'll hide you on the mountain. I'll put my hand over you, and when I pass by you, you'll see my hind part.

So you'll see the trail of the robe. You have to think of one of these big long robes, right, that are capes, if you will, that like a king might would wear, and it's got this fur-trimmed hem at the end, and as he walks past, that last little trim is what God is talking about.

You'll see the hem, that back part right there. So as I pass by, I'll let you look at that. But when he does, as God passes and he lifts his hand off of Moses, God speaks.

And when God speaks, the glory that Moses sees, he sees by way of hearing with his ears who God is.

So what we're saying is that we want to see glory, but when we say we want to see his glory, what we're saying is we want to see him described in words, before us from the scriptures, that when we hear it, we almost see glory.

[32 : 50] Do you understand what I'm saying? When he created all things, including the spirit beings, he created it so that his glory might be displayed.

Now why is that so important? That is important because without seeing his glory, we begin to think things are about us.

I mean, think about standing before the spectacle of the Grand Canyon, think about the massiveness of that thing, think about the deafening sound of Niagara Falls and the overpowering cacophony of the noise that it brings, and in nature we have these overwhelming spectacles that as we go and experience them, they change us.

Even though it may only be for a few moments, we're overwhelmed. We see the beauty. We see the massiveness. We're overcome by the deafening sound, and something about that changes us.

What we don't do in the face of those things is look at the massiveness of the Grand Canyon and say, I'm big stuff. I'm pretty special.

[34 : 09] We don't stand having our ears drowned out with the sound of the falls and say to ourselves, I'm pretty cool. I'm pretty great. We don't look at glory and think we're great.

We look at glory and we're overwhelmed. The reason that God created all things was so that we might see him and be overwhelmed.

Because when we see his glory, it is an antidote to our self importance. It's an antidote to our pride, and it's an antidote to our hopelessness.

I mean, when we see God for who he is and we see the Grand Canyon and realize God made that. And we see the oceans, and we see the sunset, and we say God created that.

And all of it screams up for his glory. Then how can we stand there and think self-important thoughts? How can we stand there and think prideful thoughts?

[35 : 29] hope for us? But even more, how can we stand there and feel hopeless? Because I know the hopelessness comes. I know that it's there as we look at relationships that we have and we see people hurt or we see things happen or we experience really horrible things between one another, and we feel that hopelessness, there is a sense in which it almost feels as though we're never going to be good again.

And that's the moment where we need to have our eyes adjusted and get off of here and look back up to him and see his massiveness, to see his glory, to see his splendor.

As God creates the spirit world, he does so for his own glory. They exist for him.

they do not get to do their own thing. And as Christians, it should be your joy, delight, and task to do all that you can to take in everything you can from God's word and from God's creation to help you see the splendor and the majesty of God.

You exist so that God's glory is praised. that's going to take time.

[37 : 04] You can't rush it. You can't microwave glory so you can get a little bite of it and slice of it so that it kind of tastes halfway decent. No, that's just not going to work. It's going to take a lot more time than that.

glory. And it's going to take some effort because we don't just see glory willy-nilly. We have to be ready and going for it. So we have to think.

And it has to be our aim. What are we aiming for? What are you aiming for when you go read the scriptures? What do you want to get out of that? To be able to win a theological debate?

To be able to prove something to yourself? Or are you looking for the joy of seeing the splendor and the glory of God? Because that's why you should read the scriptures. Because he's done it all for his glory.

Let's pray together. Let's pray together.