**Where We’re From & Where We’re Going**

Pastor Steven Barker – February 23rd, 2019

**Creation and Purpose…**

* God created people to represent Him on earth (image bearers)
* God created people to learn, expand and discover His creation
* God created people to reign and rule (to maintain order and develop the earth)
* God created people to care for creation

**John 1:1-4 NIV**

***The Word Became Flesh***

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 ***Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*** 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**Genesis 1:26-31 NIV**

26 Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, ***so that they may rule over*** the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created mankind ***in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*** 28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; ***fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over*** the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

29 Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 ***God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.*** And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

* Many theologians entitle this section “The Kingdom Mandate” others call it the “First Commission”. Both are great descriptions of humanities general purpose on earth.

**Sin is a Corrupting Force…**

* It causes…
  + Brokenness
  + Sickness
  + Rebellion
  + Disorder & Lawlessness (these two themes are the main reason for judgement)
  + Self-focused living

**Genesis 3 NIV**

***The Fall***

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “***Did God really say***, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4 ***“You will not certainly die,”*** the serpent said to the woman. 5 “***For God knows that*** when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then ***the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized*** they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

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, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”***

10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

11 And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

12 The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “***What is this you have done?***”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “***Because you have done this***, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.   
15 ***And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”***

16 To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.  
19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

20 Adam named his wife Eve, because ***she would become the mother of all the living.***

21 ***The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them***. 22 And the Lord God said, “***The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.*** He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” 23 So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=genesis+3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-80e)] of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

**Genesis 8:15-9:7**

15 Then God said to Noah, 16 “Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives. 17 Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you—the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground—so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”

18 So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives. 19 All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds—everything that moves on land—came out of the ark, one kind after another.

20 ***Then Noah built an altar to the Lord*** and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. 21 The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.

22 “As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

***God’s Covenant With Noah***

9 Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “***Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.*** 2 The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands. 3 ***Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.*** 4 “But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. 5 And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being. 6 “Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind. 7 As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it.”

**Justice, Righteousness, Care for the Poor and the Defenseless**

* Evangelicals have been known for their preaching about sin and against sin (which is a good thing). Because of poor teaching about the nation of Israel, the kingdom of God, the church, and the holy spirit (mostly because of ***extreme*** dispensational and covenantal approaches to scripture), many people have missed the more important issues that are on God’s heart. God has put us on the earth for a reason…

**Ephesians 2:10 NIV**

10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus ***to do good works***, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**Micah 6:8 NIV**

8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.  And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

**Proverbs 6:16-19 NIV**

16 There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him:  
17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood,  
18 a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil,  
19 a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

**Proverbs 15:8-10 NIV**

8 The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

9 The Lord detests the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue righteousness.

10 Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path; the one who hates correction will die.

**Isaiah 1:16-17 NIV**

16 Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong.  
17 Learn to do right; ***seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.***

**Isaiah 61:8 NIV**

8 “For ***I, the Lord, love justice***; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them.

**Zechariah 7:8-10 NIV**

8 And the word of the Lord came again to Zechariah: 9 “This is what the Lord Almighty said: ‘***Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.*** 10 Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.’

**James 1:26-27 NIV**

26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: ***to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.***

**Presence of God, Dwelling, and Temple Themes…**

[*Tracing Theological Themes Through the Whole Bible Story*](https://www.leadershipresources.org/tracing-theological-themes-whole-bible-story/) by Kevin Halloran

“One great thread is the temple, the idea of God dwelling with His people. They were pushed out of that dwelling because of their sin. They were pushed out of that place of His presence but the tabernacle, the temple—all these symbolic images where God comes and dwells among His people. Interestingly, both the tabernacle and temple are filled with God’s glory, but the third temple after the exile isn’t. You don’t see that glory come back to the temple. There’s something missing.

But then you have Jesus standing and the Spirit descends on Him like a dove. We understand that He came and tabernacled among us. This is God Himself tabernacling. It’s not an accident that John uses that terminology in John 1:14. All along we see that God is wanting to restore His presence with His people.

In Ephesians, Paul says we are being built up into the true temple, the dwelling of God in the Spirit. You can follow the theme of the Holy Spirit from the garden all the way through the book of Acts. It’s God’s presence restored through Christ that makes us the indwelling of God.”

**Matthew 1:20-23 NIV**

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, ***because he will save his people from their sins***.”

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, ***and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”)***.

**Luke 17:20-21 NIV**

20 Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, 21 nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ ***because the kingdom of God is in your midst***.”

**1 Corinthians 6:18-20 NIV**

18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. 19 ***Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?*** You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

**Revelation 21:1-4 NIV**

***A New Heaven and a New Earth***

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “***Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.*** 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

**Gospel, Atonement & Restoration…**

“**The Gospel is** the good news that God became man in Jesus Christ. He lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died, in our place. Three days later He rose from the dead, proving that He is the Son of God and offering the gift of salvation and forgiveness of sins for all who repent and believe.”…**Rice Broocks from *The Purple Book***

**1 Corinthians 15:1-8 NIV**

***The Resurrection of Christ***

15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 ***By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you.*** Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: ***that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures***, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

**John 3:3-8 & 16-21 NIV**

3 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, ***no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again***.”

4 “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

5 Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, ***but the Spirit gives birth to spirit***. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

16 ***For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.*** 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

**Final Judgement & End of the World…**

* Sin requires justice & judgment
* Salvation provides each believer escape from the coming wrath and eternal judgement
* Jesus took the punishment for our sins and provided the payment for our righteousness

**Matthew 25:31-46 NIV**

***The Sheep and the Goats***

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 ***All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another*** as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 “Then the King will say ***to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance***, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

41 “Then he will say ***to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*** 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

44 “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

45 “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

46 ***“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”***

**1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 NIV**

***The Day of the Lord***

5 Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, 2 ***for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.*** 3 While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. 6 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 9 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 10 ***He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.*** 11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

**2 Peter 3 NIV**

***The Day of the Lord***

3 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. 2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

3 Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.” 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 ***But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.***

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, ***what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.*** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 ***But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.***

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. 15 ***Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation***, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

17 Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, ***be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.*** 18 But ***grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ***. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

**Our Future…**

* Jesus Christ is coming back to restore what has been wronged and to bring justice to the earth.
* We are given incredible power, authority and position in the new kingdom. The earth becomes the centre of the universe and as believers we reign with God in ruling over all His creation (including the celestial beings)

**Ephesians 2:1-10 NIV**

***Made Alive in Christ***

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, ***God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ*** even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ ***and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*** 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**1 John 3:1-3 NIV**

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and ***what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*** 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

**Revelation 21:1-8 NIV**

***A New Heaven and a New Earth***

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

5 He who was seated on the throne said, ***“I am making everything new!”*** Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

6 He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. ***To the thirsty*** I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 ***Those who are victorious*** will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. 8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

**Salvation Prayer…**

“Lord Jesus, **my prayer is** that I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross and taking the punishment for my sins. I open the door of my life to you. I call out and ask to receive You now as my Lord and Saviour. Lord, I ask you to forgive me and cleanse me from my sins and grant to me eternal life. I ask Holy Spirit, that You take my life and lead, teach and fill me. God, transform me into a person who represents and obeys you well, in Jesus name I ask, amen.”