

Theme: The Story begins with creation and God's blessing, which were given to us as His image, and were intended to be multiplied throughout life.

## I. Intro - The Story

- A. Today we begin our Advent Series
- B. Too often we begin in the middle - coming of Jesus
- C. Christmas Event we celebrate is part of a grand story
- D. This year we step back to look at the whole story
- E. The importance of story

A modern myth is that we outgrow stories. When someone asks us to explain who we are, we tell a story. Furthermore, we interpret our personal narratives as part of a larger plot. Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? What's the point? Is there a God and if so can we know him? Why is there evil in the world? The biggest questions, demanding the most rigorous intellectual analysis, are really doctrines that arise from a particular story that we either assume or embrace with explicit conviction. The Christian answers these big questions by rehearsing the story of the triune God in creation, the fall of the creatures he made in his own image, the promise of a redeemer through Israel, and the fulfillment of all types and shadows in the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return of Jesus Christ. - Michael Horton, Systematic Theology

- F. This makes the Christmas Story fuller, more meaningful

## II. The Story Begins

- A. John begins the story of Jesus at the beginning!  
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. John 1:1–2

- 1. John does not begin the story of Jesus in manger
- 2. He goes all the way back to beginning - before even time exists
- 3. He does this for two reasons
  - a. This is where Jesus' story actually begins! He is not a created Being, but was with God and is God
  - b. This gives the necessary background to understand the story of Jesus

### B. Like John, we must begin at the beginning!

- 1. If we do not go back to the beginning and let that frame our understanding of the story of Jesus, we are likely to misunderstand Who Jesus Is
  - a. At the beginning of The Story we understand the Person of Jesus - not just a poor baby, but the One True God
  - b. Without a proper understanding of Who Jesus Is, we will never be able to understand What Jesus does
- 2. If we do not go back to the beginning and let that frame our understanding of the story of Jesus, we are likely to misunderstand what Jesus does
  - a. Going back to the beginning also lets us see the framework in which we must understand the coming of Jesus
  - b. Jesus does not come as an antagonist against God and His work, but rather to continue and bring to completion the work God has been doing from the beginning

### III. The Story: Creation and Blessing

#### A. The Story begins with God's good creation

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth... And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. John 1:1–3; Genesis 1:1,3

1. John is clearly and consciously linking the coming of Christ with the original creation
  - a. In the beginning; created/made
  - b. God created through speech; Jesus is the Word through Whom all things were made
  - c. John continues this throughout the Prologue
2. This means the coming of Christ is intimately tied with God's original purposes in creation. To understand the coming of Jesus, we must understand the original nature and purpose of creation.

#### B. Creation was good

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Genesis 1:31

1. God says creation was good seven times!
2. The 7<sup>th</sup> time - very good - full goodness, twice over!
3. The original creation was good. There was nothing dark, sinister or evil, but everything radiated the goodness of God.

#### C. Creation was filled with the blessing of God

God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." Genesis 1:22

1. God added His blessing on top of the goodness of creation
2. The blessing of God makes the creation even more fruitful and productive than was inherent in creation itself
3. This blessing is spoken three times - over birds and fish; over humanity; and over the day of rest to be refreshed and enjoy the good, blessed creation that was God's gift to us.

#### D. Humanity is created in God's image to develop the good creation and extend the blessing of God

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, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own **image**, in the **image** of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> God **blessed** them and said to them, "**Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule** over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." Genesis 1:26–28

1. Humanity is God's image (3x) and likeness
2. Like God, we are to rule over the creation and subdue it. This points to us harnessing and developing creation for God's glory and our good.

3. To enable us to do this, God blessed us to increase and fill the earth. In doing this we were to fill the earth with the image of God, and to further God's purposes in creation.

#### **IV. Jesus, Creation, and Blessing**

- A. Jesus is the Creator come to earth  
Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. John 1:3
  1. The One Who comes to us is our Creator
  2. The Author has stepped into The Story!
  3. He has come to make sure the plot of The Story is followed and comes to its rightful conclusion
- B. Jesus comes to restore and expand the blessing
  1. Jesus is the blessed one  
In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" Luke 1:42
  2. Jesus taught much on blessing  
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." Matthew 5:3-5
  3. Jesus' final action on earth was speaking blessing  
When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Luke 24:50-51
  4. Every blessing is given to us in Christ

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephes. 1:3

#### **C. Jesus the God-Man is our source of blessing**

1. As Creator, Jesus is the Word of blessing at creation, and as our Redeemer He speaks the word of blessing in the new creation.
2. As the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, Jesus has fulfilled our call as God's image bearers, and thus has secured the blessing of fruitfulness and increase.

#### **V. The Story And Our Story**

- A. The Story call us to rejoice in God's good creation
  1. Gnostics separate creation and redemption, but Christians realize that both creation and redemption come from the same God!
  2. God's creation is good - even through and after the fall and curse
  3. This Advent rejoice in the goodness of creation - the taste and texture of good food, the pleasure of a fine drink, the joy of family and friends, the smell of the tree - it is VERY GOOD!
  4. This Advent rejoice in your creative abilities as the image of God - in what you cook, build, write, sing, play - the gifts by which you serve
- B. The Story calls us to receive & walk in God's blessing to be fruitful and multiply
  1. God's blessing gives to us the ability to be fruitful and increase - in all of life

2. Christ the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam has secured this blessing for us forever
3. This Advent, hear God's Word of blessing, and hear the ways God wants you to be fruitful and multiply
4. God has blessed us in Christ - not so we can be consumers, but so that the blessing can be multiplied through us to be a blessing to others!

C. A prayer for blessing

## Creation and Blessing

John 1:1-3

November 29, 2015

Prayer

Psalm 134:3

Teaching keywords: Advent and Christmas, creation, blessing, humanity of Christ, deity of Christ

May the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion.... May the favor and blessing of the Lord our God rest upon you, and may He establish the work of your hands for you! Go forth, to be fruitful and multiply His blessing to all!  
Psalms 134:3//Psalms 90:17

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. John 1:1-3