

Topic: Creation, The Fall, and Redemption in Jesus Alone

Scriptural References

Genesis 1, 2, 3, Romans 3:23-25, 6:23, Revelation 5:9-10, Ephesians 1:7, Romans 5:17, Galatians 3:13, Galatians 4:5, Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:14-18, Colossians 1:18-20, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Biblical Explanation

The Bible welcomes us into the story of God, having always existed, in His first action creating the heavens and the earth. There was nothing before God created it and yet He did so with order and intentionality. In fact each day He created different aspects of our reality. From light and darkness (Gen 1:3), to vegetation and plants (Gen 1:11), to living creatures (Gen 1:20), God created it all and at the end of each day He said His creation was good. Of course it was good because the creator God, Himself, is good and that which was created was made for a particular purpose, which it achieved. A car or a phone is only good if it gets you to where you want to go or calls who you want to communicate with. God's creation was fulfilling the purpose that it was created for which was to glorify God. On the sixth day God creates man and says two unique things: that man was created in the image of God (Gen 1:26) and that man is to subdue and exercise dominion over the earth (Gen 1:28). God is the King of all and He expects man, us, to look like Him, to be a reflection of His character, to be miniature representations of Him on earth. He also expects us to rule the earth, God's creation, as He would. God transfers kingdom responsibility to man with the goal of seeing all of creation cared for. Man is unique in that we are a part of God's creation story yet are given responsibility to rule over creation in a God-like kingdom manner. A major point to be emphasized is that just as with all of God's creation, He saw you as good. In fact God saw you as a royal extension of His kingdom authority. You were royalty, not the king, but empowered to serve as a ruler for the King. But sin stops us from seeing ourselves as God saw us.

The third chapter of Genesis describes how we compromised our royal position and rule in ways that are counter to God's design. After God gave man authority to rule His creation, He gave instruction, which was to eat of everything but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:15-17). But our first sin, our first rejection of God, our first decision to operate counter to God's desire and remove ourselves from our royal position was the choice and action to eat from the tree God instructed us not to. We destroyed our good status with the King because we were functioning in a way that we were not created to function. That is sin, not being who God created you to be which is a worshipper of Him and one who resembles and reflects God. Sin, is

more than just being mean, or lying, sin can be present in your mind, in your thoughts when any part of you is not like that which God intended. As result of sin, we were ashamed of our conduct before God (Gen 3:8), drama and tension arose between man and woman (Gen 3:15), and the earth, the very thing God gave us to rule over would now be an arduous task for rule, govern, and benefit from (Gen 3:17-19). God's design was compromised by us and sin permeated through all of our being and is still is the case today. Romans 3:23 says, "for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." There is no strength strong enough, no intellect wise enough or any compassion sincere enough for you as a human to eliminate sin from your life. In our own abilities we cannot make ourselves better and return ourselves to the sin-free state where Jesus sees us as image bearers advancing His kingdom. But Jesus can restore us to the place of royalty and eliminate our sinful posture.

Romans 3:24-25 says "and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins." Through Jesus' death and resurrection those that believe that Jesus is Lord are redeemed. The term redeemed or redemption means, "a price fully paid." Sin comes at a cost, it's a debt associated with our life and the only way the debt can be paid is through death. The wages (or payment) for sin is death (Rom 6:23). Jesus is our redeemer because He dies in our place, redeeming, or paying for our sins, conquering death and then rises, validating His authority and power. He then offers to us the gift of having our debt paid and the opportunity to experience eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23). Below are two charts that demonstrate the effects of sin and the effects of redemption.

The Effects of Sin Were:	The Effects of Redemption Are:
Loss of righteousness (Gen 3:7)	Eternal life (Revelation 5:9-10)
Separation from God (Gen 3:8)	Forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7)
Cursed environment (Gen 3:19)	Made righteous (Romans 5:17)
Physical Death (Gen 3:19)	Freedom from the law's curse (Galatians 3:13)
Clothing = Shame (Gen 3:21)	Adoption into God's family (Galatians 4:5)
	Deliverance from sin's bondage (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:14-18)
	Peace with God (Colossians 1:18-20)
	The indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20)

Our prayer is that you would believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and that you would receive the benefits of being a redeemed child of the King. When you are redeemed God sees you as an extension of His kingdom, a member of His army and now you need to simply see yourself as God sees you, as royalty in His kingdom family.

Main Points

- God is the Creator of all things and sees all His creation as good.
- God makes man in His own image.
- God gives king-like authority to man to rule His creation.
- Man should be encouraged by the trust and faith God has in us to rule over His creation. We are royal expressions of God's kingdom authority.
- Sin disrupts our ability to rule as God would desires.
- Sin is the denial of what God intends.
- We do not have the ability to rid ourselves of sin.
- Jesus died to redeem us, to pay our debt, and free us from being slaves to sin.
- Jesus restores us, making us royal servants for His kingdom.

Suggested Questions

- Why was creation good in God's eyes?
- What were two things God said of man that were uniquely different than other aspects of His creation?
- In what ways do you see yourself as a reflection of God? Or how would others say you reflect the image of God?
- How does sin affect our ability to reflect the image of God and rule His creation?
- In what ways are you prone to choose your own ways, feed your desires, or meditate on your (ungodly) thoughts over God's?
- Once a person believes in God what are some of the benefits as a result of being redeemed?
- How does redemption affect the way God sees you? How should redemption affect the way you see yourself?
- What aspect of this teaching would bless a person that does not love or know Jesus?

Additional Resources

Books

- Unger, Merrill F. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *Old Testament Ethics for the people of God*.

Web Articles

- What is the meaning of Christian redemption? <https://www.gotquestions.org/redemption.html>
- 10 Facts: The Emancipation Proclamation. <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/10-facts-emancipation-proclamation>
- Black Civil War Soldiers. <https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/black-civil-war-soldiers>

Music

- Have your way. Casey J. And Pastor Jason Nelson. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM0tL7a1-1A>