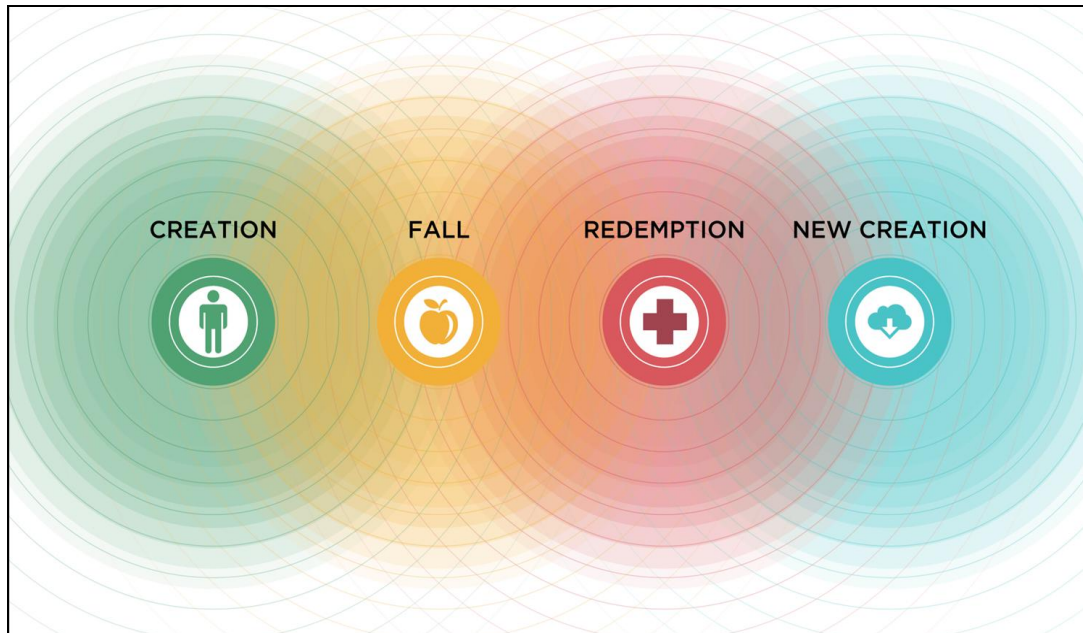


# GOD'S STORY

## The four major categories



### Why Study the Narrative of Scripture, God's Story?

#### 1. It helps us make sense of the world

- God's stage of redemption, though fallen, there is an unfolding drama
- Answers life's biggest questions
  - Creation—who am I? Why do I exist? What are we here for?
  - Fall—what is wrong with the world?
  - Redemption—is there a solution to this mess?
  - New Creation—is there hope for the future?

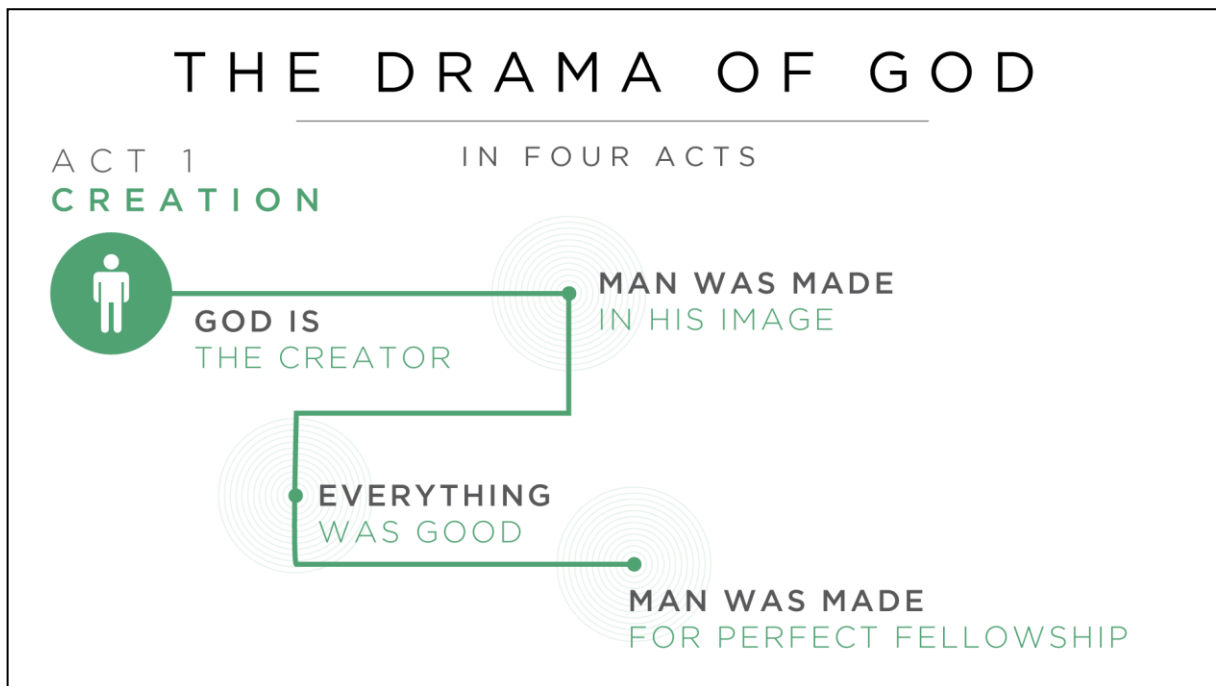
“The Bible has a narrative arc that begins at creation, rises over all that has been and will be, and lands at the end of all things... Isn't it a relief that the world's plot is not limited to the brief span of our lives? We make sense of our days in light of this overarching narrative. The big plot of the Bible, with its guarantee of resurrection and new creation, gives confidence even in the face of death. The Bible's big story opens the windows on stale, stuffy rooms of deadlines and due dates, deaths, and disappointments, and fresh winds of the creation-to-new-creation breezes blow through.” (Hamilton)

## 2. It provides us with purpose, meaning

- We have an **identity** in his image, to reflect Him
- We are **part of a larger story**, work of God in world
- We have a **purpose**, to glorify our Creator plug into his great work!

“The Christian faith is, first and foremost, an unfolding drama... This story runs from Genesis to Revelation, centering on Christ, not only richly informs our mind; it captivates the heart and the imagination, animating and motivating our action in the world”

Michael Horton



## CREATION – Act 1

### (1) God is the Creator

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Gn 1:1, 6 days

- God rules and sustains the world, has unlimited power/creativity
- God provides all good things
- God is in control of the world, sovereign, uses the bad things for his purposes
- God has created the world with purpose

## **(2) We are made in God's image**

"Then God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness...let them have dominion...so God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them... be fruitful and multiply." (1:27) Gen 9:6; James 3:9

**We are like God** in some way, distinct from rest of creation and animals  
Views on Image of God

- Image of God as an **attribute**—moral capacity, free will, complex reasoning
- Image of God as an **activity**—dominion over creation, fruitful and multiply
- Image of God as an **ability to relate**
- Image of God as a **purpose**—to glorify God and to represent him, grow in image
- **Holistic**—Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God and we are to grow into his image, Christlikeness

We are saved, "to be conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom 8:29)

We are "being transformed into his image from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor 3:18)

## **(3) Everything was good (Gn 1:31).**

Repeated them during creation, "it was good...very good (after creating humans)

**Why?**

- Reinforcing the idea of the purity, goodness, integrity of original creation...there was great peace and harmony. Original purpose for creation is to honor/glorify God, be at peace with him, be in proper relationship with him.
- Reminds of that God is a good God. Created everything good, though there is sin now—God is redeeming back original goodness through Christ, this original good will be restored!

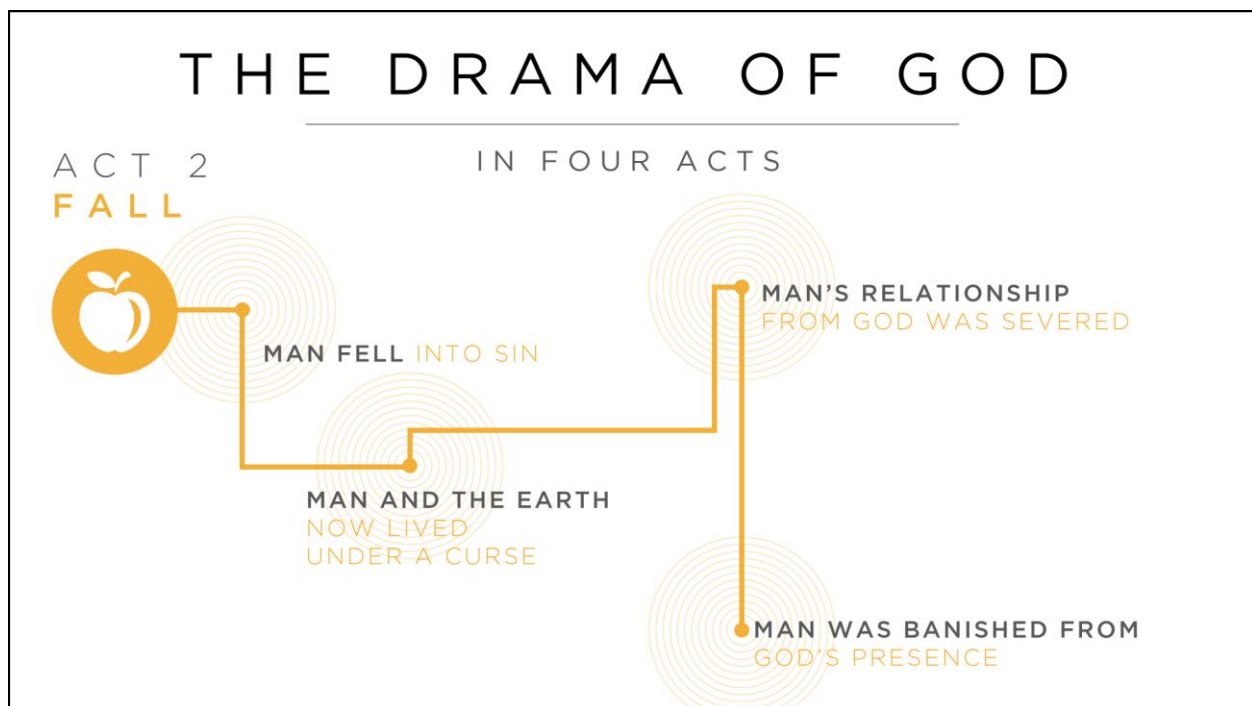
#### (4) Man was made for perfect fellowship

“It was very good” (Gn 1:31)

Humanity is pinnacle, image him, created to relate with God in peace and harmony, honor him/glorify him, walk with him.

“know that the Lord is God, it is he who made us and we are his. We are his people, the sheep of his pasture...for the Lord is good, his steadfast love endures forever, his faithfulness continues throughout all generations.”

(Ps 100:3, 5).



#### FALL – Act 2

**(1) Man fell into sin (Gn 3:6-7).** Adam & Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, great consequences

- “fall” humanity’s downfall—fell from perfection into sinfulness, corruption.

#### **(2) Man and the earth now are under a curse**

“A curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt”

(Is 24:6).

- Now there is **death**—came into the world because of sin
- Curse result—**creation** is under a curse, death, disease, natural disasters—“groaning” Rom 8
- Curse result—**human nature** is corrupted, we have a sinful nature—propensity  
 “Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men because all sinned.” (Rom 5:12)  
 Later “led to condemnation” for us all (Rom 5:19)  
 --“all sinned” we are born guilty, into a sinful nature, deserving death.

--*Depravity*: means every part of us has been corrupted, fallen into sin – mind, body, will, conscience, motivations—  
 total/comprehensive/every part of us

--*totally unable* to do anything that pleases God.

--*totally unable* to work out of this state of sin.

- Curse result—**human relationships** now filled with strife, pride, sin, fighting.
- Humanity made in **God’s image has been distorted**, polluted...but not lost...we do have hope in Christ to become more and more in his image, future—image restored, greater
- Curse result—**man’s relationship with God** is broken, characterized by rebellion vs peace.

### (3) **Man’s relationship with God was severed**

“Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.” (Is 59:2).

- Where there was peace, because of sin, there is rebellion/separation.
- **Consequence**: Means that we will be **punished** and there is no hope apart from Christ.

Those who must pay for their own sin “will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might” (2 Thess 1:9)

- Suffer
- Punishment because of sin
- Eternal
- Destruction
- Away from God's good presence

**“condemned”** sentenced to spiritual death, eternal separation from God—Jesus uses this, “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already” (Jn 3:17-18)

#### **(4) So, Man was banished from God's presence**

“Therefore the Lord God send him out from the garden of Eden.”  
(Gn 3:23).

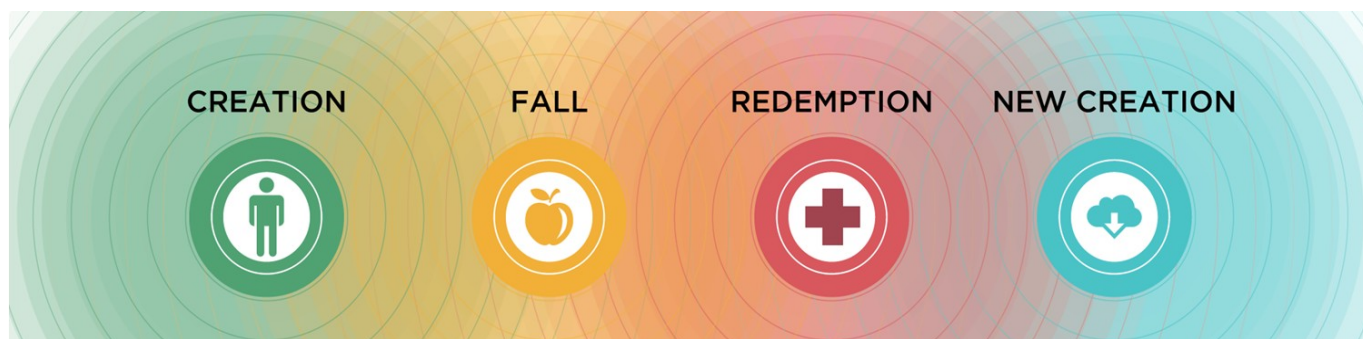
- Eden becomes a picture of perfect harmony of humanity with God, perfect peace and purity... being sent out of the garden represents a severing of relationship.
- Being banished shows seriousness of the consequences of sin.

**END of act 2**, sobering realities, but must understand them fully in order to grasp grace of God in Christ, which is the heart of the gospel and the center of the story of God.

#### **HALF TIME: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What stands out to you as important or meaningful?
2. Read Romans 5:12-21. What themes are similar to those in this talk?  
Add additional truths.
3. Implications for being made in the image of God—how you view yourself, how we should treat others, church?

# REDEMPTION AND NEW CREATION

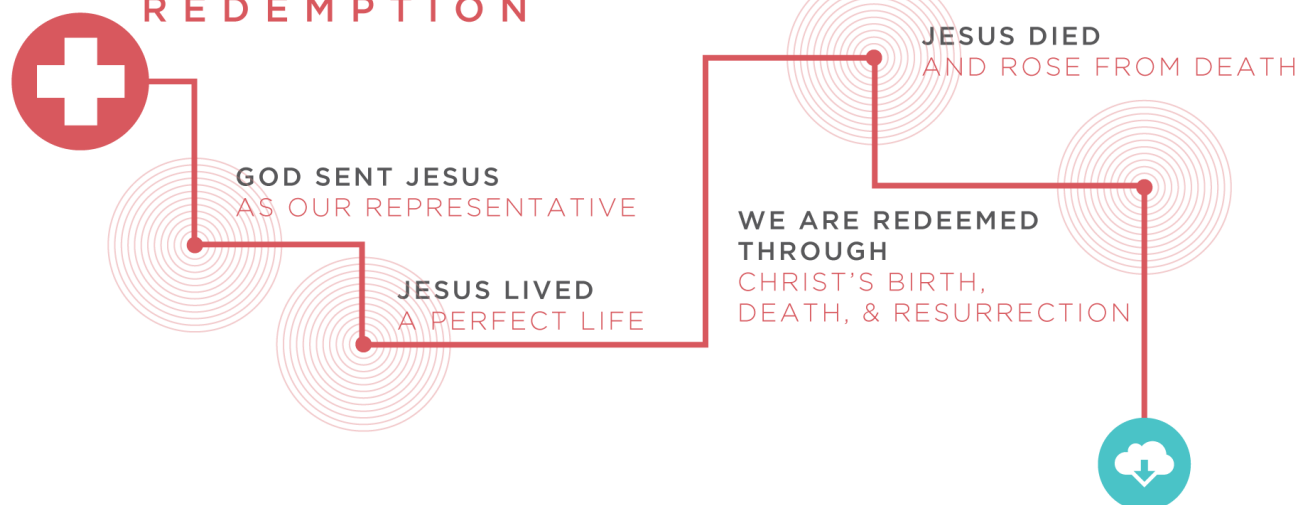


## THE DRAMA OF GOD

IN FOUR ACTS

ACT 3

REDEMPTION



### ACT 3, REDEMPTION

#### (1) God sent Jesus as our representative.

2 Corinthians 5:21, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

#### (2) Jesus lived a perfect life.

Hebrews 4:15, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

### (3) Jesus died and rose from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.”

### (4) We are redeemed through Christ’s birth, death, and resurrection.

Ephesians 1:7, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”

“To redeem is to **buy back** or **secure the release** of someone from slavery or from captivity by the payment of a ransom. Redemption, then, is **the action to secure release**; the ransom is the price paid to effect the action.”  
Jerry Bridges

Ransom = Jesus’ death on cross (Mk 10:45)

The saving work of Jesus Christ as he “bought back” (redeemed) sinners out of their slavery to sin through the payment of a ransom.

Pope Gregory I. 500s-600s AD. Lived in Rome. Saw slavery—from Germanic tribe invasions. Set up monasteries. Wanted to reach out to Britain. Would commission his monks to buy boys from Britain out of slavery, paying the price for their freedom. They would take care of them. Raise them. And then send some of them to be missionaries to Britain.

Picture of what Jesus has done for us. God sent Jesus to the cross to pay price as a ransom, to **redeem** us from slavery to sin. Then has adopted us into his family. Mission.





## Important Verses on Redemption

### (1) Christ as our ransom

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a **ransom** for many.” Mark 10:45

### (2) We are Justified through our Redemption in Christ

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 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.” Rom 3:23-25

### (3) We are Redeemed from the Power of Sin and Death

“For he has **rescued us** from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Col 1:14

### (4) We are Redeemed by the Blood of Christ, his sacrifice

“You were ransomed... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot... through him you are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” 1 Peter 1:18-21

Future, complete redemption, which the Holy Spirit Serves as a Guarantee

“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” Eph 1:13-14

## Epic Redemption—Christ as the Center of the story for the glory of God

Redemption is both *personal* and *global*.

God’s plan in Christ has a **cosmic scope** in the grand story of God.

Because all things on earth have been corrupted by the fall, God is in the process of “reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor 5:19) and putting “all things in subjection under his feet” (1 Cor 15:27).

<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together... <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and **through him to reconcile to himself all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood** of his cross. Colossians 1:15–20

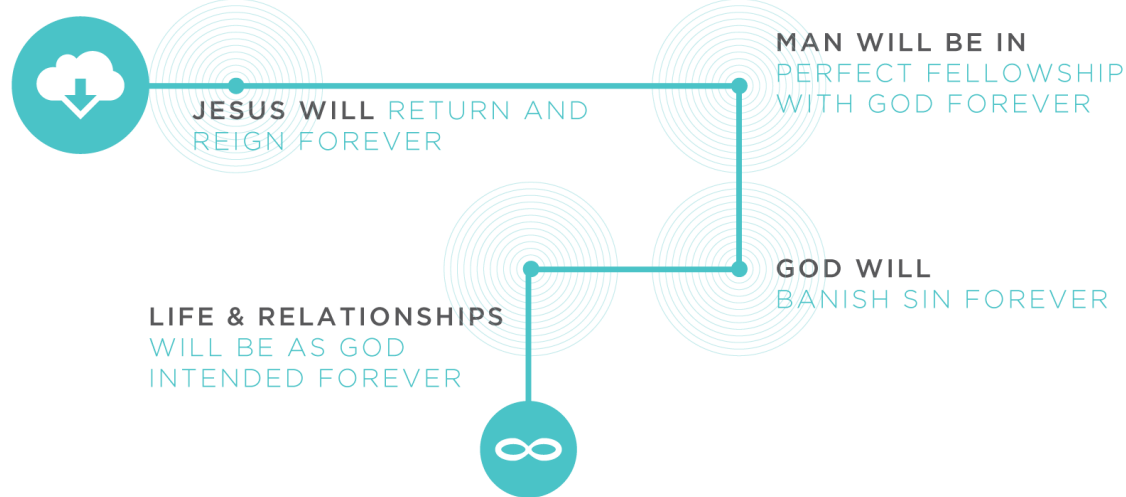
**Plus** – we become part of God’s redemptive work!

# THE DRAMA OF GOD

IN FOUR ACTS

ACT 4

NEW CREATION



## ACT 4, NEW CREATION

### (1) Jesus will return and reign forever.

Luke 1:32–33, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

### (2) God will banish sin forever.

Psalms 103:12, “As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.”

### (3) Man will be in perfect fellowship with God forever.

2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

### (4) Life and relationships will be as God intended forever.

Revelation 21:4, “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”