

God's Big 'WHY' for Creation

Has anyone read Simon Sinek's book, *Start with WHY?*, or seen his YouTube Ted Talk of the same name? He talks about the necessity of knowing, what he calls, our WHY. In other words, knowing and understanding our purpose, before we start trying to figure out the WHAT and the HOW of what we are endeavouring to achieve.

Mark Twain, the famous American author of over a century ago, made the challenging statement: "The two most important days of your life are the day you were born and the day you discover why!"

So, I have been searching out a clearer understanding of God's ultimate purposes for creation and humanity – looking into the good news story behind God's big 'WHY' for creation.

Tell my story of the Father sharing his idea to create with the Son and the Spirit.

With that thought in mind, **I want us to journey through the biblical panorama of why God created his universe and placed us in it as his representatives – it is such a good news story.**

Question: What is God's end-goal for each of us? We touched on this last week!!!

To be transformed to his image, for which we had been created in the first place –

²⁹ **For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.** (Rom 8:29)

In other words, we were originally created in God's image so that we could have the destiny of being fully transformed into the image of Jesus in our resurrection.

So, in the light of this 'end-goal,' we can now affirm that God's 'good news' began in the heart of God prior to creation, which prompted the decision to create humanity in his image. This 'image-bearing' status has made us capable of responding to him intelligently at his invitation.

But Paul goes on to reveal to us the full sweep of the purpose that God had in mind in his decision to create a universe that was capable of sustaining his image-bearing humanity. Let's take a look at it in Eph 1:3-10 –

³ 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. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. **With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹ he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in**

Christ,¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Paul's parallel passage in Colossians 1:15-20 says basically the same but brings out some other emphases:

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

God's eternal purpose from the very beginning had always been to unify heaven and earth, to bring together in harmony the two realms of the spiritual and the physical, the heavenly and the earthly. This was strategically commenced in the Jesus' incarnation, when he willingly confined himself to function within the limitations of a human body. This meant he had to learn how to be a human, just like each one of us has had to learn in our maturing journey from newborn to mature adult. The outcome of Jesus' learning journey meant he could rightfully become our reconciling redeemer and transforming saviour.

Old Testament Hints of God's Eternal Purpose

There had been hints of this ultimate purpose that God had in mind scattered throughout the Old Testament record. This had been spoken about by the Old Testament prophets in a number of different ways, and specifically substantiated in Isaiah and Ezekiel's prophecies regarding the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth in which peace and harmony would reign for the benefit of all who surrender to his reign:

¹⁷ 'See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ²⁰ 'Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years the one who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere child;... ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,' says the LORD. (Is 65:17-25 excerpts)

²⁵ "I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of savage beasts so that they may live in the wilderness and sleep in the forests in safety. ²⁷ The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. ²⁸ They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid." (Ezek 34:25-28)

A Covenant of Peace

The biblical word for peace used here is the Hebrew word *shalom*. *Shalom* has a very broad range of understanding. It encompasses the realms of peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, wellbeing, and tranquillity.

Shalom pictures a condition of well-being that is home-territory for God – the sort of environment that God as Father, Son and Spirit have always enjoyed together. It includes an equilibrium between God, human beings, and all created things. All parts are interrelated. Each part participates in the whole. Thus, if one part is denied wholeness (*shalom*), every other part is diminished as well. The relational reality of life is grounded in the common origin of God the Creator, who continues to sustain all things. This is the perfected goal that God had in mind for his creation, and that he is still working toward.

2Tim 1:9-10

⁹ He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. *This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,*¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

The Privilege and Challenge of Partnering with God

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. (2Cor 5:17-20)

Our reconciliation to God through Christ means peace with God – no longer the enemies of God, but partners with him in his global mission of reconciliation and transformation into the image of Jesus.

Our role is to be ministers of grace and hope by extending God's love and peace through the presence of the Holy Spirit within our lives to those that we are engaging in our daily interactions at home, in our workplaces, across the fence or over the street with our neighbours, and any other opportunities that may come our way to be dispensers of God's grace and love.

This is how we will influence our community with the gospel – the good news of what God has done in our lives – being the 'good news' that God has called us to be through his grace.