

Foundations – Creation, the Gospel & New Identity

Identity - "I am a new creation. I am redeemed. I belong to God."

I. Typical Creation Questions

- Where did God come from?
- How did people live so long (and what about the dinosaurs)?
- Where did all the people come from?

II. Beginning the Study

- Read Genesis 3:1-6. The first sin --
- Definition of the occult:
 - Why was the first sin a sin of the occult? How could Satan now claim ownership over man?
- White shirt, spaghetti and the definition of holy:
 - Read Isaiah 59:2. What is the consequence of sin?
 - Read Psalm 51:5 and Romans 3:10-12. Is anyone without sin?
- Definition of Hell:
- Read Matthew 27:45-46. What was the true agony of the Cross?
- Definition of The Gospel:
 - **Romans Road:** Romans 3:23, 6:23a, 5:8, 10:9, 10:13, 8:1-2
 - Extra goodies: 2 Corinthians 5:21, Psalm 103:11-12, Jeremiah 31:34b, John 8:36
- ***Lets take a closer look at what consequences of sin Jesus endured for us:***
(Reference: *Blessing or Curse* by Derek Prince)
 - Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven. (Isaiah 53:10)
 - Jesus was wounded that we might be healed. (Isaiah 53:5)
 - Jesus was made sin with our sinfulness that we might become righteous with His righteousness. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - Jesus died our death that we might share His life. (Hebrews 2:9)
 - Jesus became poor with our poverty that we might become rich with His riches. He also endured hunger, thirst, nakedness, and a need for all things including a borrowed tomb. (2 Corinthians 8:9)
 - Jesus bore our shame that we might share in His glory. (Isaiah 53:4, Hebrews 2:10)
 - Jesus endured our rejection that we might have His acceptance as children of God. (Matthew 27:46-50, Ephesians 1:5-7)
 - Jesus became a curse that we might receive a blessing. (Galatians 3:13)

III. New Identities!

- I am a *new creation*. (2 Corinthians 5:17):

- I am *redeemed*. (Ephesians 1:7):

- I *belong to God*. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20):

IV. Small Group Questions

- 1) Read Genesis 1:26. Satan hates that we were made in the image of God. How does he try to attack this identity in people? After the prodigal son had fallen in sin (Luke 15:18-19), how does his identity, in relation with his father, change?

- 2) How does God's first question in Genesis 3:11 relate to how our identity is shaped, either by God or by the world and Satan? What are some ways that commercials and advertising shape a child's identity?

- 3) Read Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9-10. What is taken off and what is put on? How have you changed since accepting Christ? How do you actively put on the new self?

- 4) After reviewing what Jesus endured for us on the Cross, what are some of the things in your life that you want to give to Him (such as a certain sin, poverty, shame, a scar)? After sharing, pray for each other.

Memory Verse of the Week –

Foundations – Creation, the Gospel & New Identity (Master)

"I am a new creation. I am redeemed. I belong to God."

I. Typical Creation Questions

These questions are not critical to the study, but they are fun to cover as most new Christians ask these questions and desire to put them to rest.

- **Where did God come from?**

Revelation 1:8 – *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, 'who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.'"* (ESV) Alpha means the first and Omega means the last. In terms of time, they would be negative infinity and positive infinity. In truth there is no beginning and there is no end. God is an eternal being who always was and who always is and who always will be. So nothing can create God and nothing can take God away. He is unchanging.

- **How did people live so long?**

Genesis 1:6 says, "And God said, 'Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so." (ESV) In Genesis 7:11, "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights." (ESV)

According to research it had never rained before the flood. Where did 40 days worth of rain come from? Genesis 1:6 documents a huge expanse of water in the sky. Research says that the ozone layer used to be massively thick. This caused great vegetation and would have also lengthened life span in great measure. After the flood you will notice that human life span gradually shrank, likely as the sun's rays increased. Also, if life lived a lot longer before the flood, this would also help explain dinosaurs. Reptiles continue to grow until they die, so if every creature lived much longer before the flood then small reptiles would grow huge. God ordained a shorter life span just before the flood in Genesis 6:3.

- **Where did all the people come from?**

Simple math explains population growth: If a man was to have four kids and his kids were to have four kids and so forth, the population would boom exponentially. Most Christian belief holds that this was how the earth was populated. The human gene was so perfect that originally incest would not damage the children. Early in Genesis marriage of cousins was common (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob). As time progressed though, God instituted laws that banned incest. By 2Samuel 13, relations among relatives are shown as detestable.

***For questions of race/culture/language, see Genesis 11 (Tower of Babel)*

II. Beginning the Study

I assume all of you know the story of Adam and Eve and the snake in the garden. I want us to cover the root of the sin and its effect on mankind.

- **Read Genesis 3:1-6. The first sin – What was the root of this first sin? What was Eve desiring when she ate the fruit?**

- **Definition of the occult:** Seeking knowledge or power from a source other than God

Tarot card readers, palm readers, astrologists, psychics, and Ouija boards are all examples of the occult. The occult is the most severe of sins because whatever knowledge and power you are seeking, you are actually seeking from Satan and not from God. By opening yourself up to Satan you allow him to take a part of you as a stronghold. Demons of the occult are the strongest because they are able to claim the person due to his sin. Sexual sin and sin against man are bad, but they can only allow so much ownership of Satan. Occultic sin welcomes ownership of the mind. Let's read Genesis 3:1-6.

- **Why was the first sin a sin of the occult? How could Satan now claim ownership over man?**

Eve was seeking knowledge and power from something forbidden. Because she allowed Satan to influence her and because she sinned against God, she was now under the influence of the "prince of sinners" – Satan.

- **White shirt, spaghetti and the definition of holy:** To be set apart, sacred

Imagine that you have a pristine, white dress shirt. It was mad expensive and of great quality. What foods would you avoid eating if you were to wear this shirt? Why? Any spot on that shirt will ruin it, whether it's a big spot or a small one. Right?

God is holy. He is pure and spotless. Nothing unholy, apart from the grace of God, can stand before Him. Another example would be poop. If you see a big pile of poop, you aren't going to roll in it. And even if it's just a small piece of poop, you aren't going to roll in it. Poop is poop. You don't want any of it on you, no matter how small the amount.

- **Read Isaiah 59:2. What is the consequence of sin?**

Sin separates us from God. The unholy cannot be with the holy. It is impossible. Because of our sin, we cannot enter the presence of God.

- **Read Psalm 51:5 and Romans 3:10-12. Is anyone without sin?**

Simple answer: NO.

- **Definition of Hell:** Eternal separation from God

When this Scripture says, "the wages of sin is death," it does not just mean physical death. The greater consequence of sin is the separation that occurs between us and God. Because of our unrighteousness, God cannot be near us. When people are witnessing to new believers, they often use the bridge diagram. Here are you and God together. Then sin occurs and *boom*, there is a huge divide between you and God. Because of your sin, you are unholy. The holy cannot be a part of the unholy. The two simply cannot commune. So, you can no longer be near God. You cannot enter into His presence.

What many people do not realize is that the separation from God is precisely what Hell is. People think of Hell as the place with fire and a lot of people screaming in torment. But actually, fire in the *Bible* is a symbol; it is a symbol that represents judgment. Scripture refers to Hell as the place of "blackest darkness." What Hell actually is, is eternal separation from God. God is light. When God says, "I will shine my light on you," He is actually saying, "I will look upon you." But in Hell, God cannot reveal Himself; He has to look away. The people of Hell have received the wages of their sin: separation from God.

Separation from God can be difficult to comprehend. A simple analogy would be when you fall out of favor with people that you love or care about. And because you have fallen out of favor with them, they

no longer acknowledge you. They give you the silent treatment. They look away when you enter the room. You know that they know you are there, but because of what you have done or what has happened between you and them, they turn away. Think about that for a moment. All of us have had times in our lives that have caused separation, whether it be breakups in relationships or arguments with family members or friends. Take a moment to remember that hurt.

That pain hurts, but it is not eternal. Now imagine the God we love suddenly turning away from us. We are no longer clean because of our sins and He has to look away. We cry out to Him, but He cannot answer. We seek Him, but we are surrounded by darkness. There is no more love, no more faith, no more hope, and no more peace— just darkness.

Although there are many definitions for Hell, the truest and scariest definition is this separation.

- **Read Matthew 27:45-46. What was the true agony of the Cross?**

Jesus endured Hell for us. He endured God forsaking Him. The darkness covering the land was the symbol of God turning away. It had not been the anticipation of the pain, the rejection, or the shame of the Cross that had made Jesus earnestly cry out to God before being arrested to “take this cup from Him.” It had been the knowledge that He would lose fellowship with God, if even for just a short amount of time. Many Christians have endured unspeakable sufferings for their faith... but no Christian has to endure Hell.

- **Definition of The Gospel:** The good news

The gospel is the Christian revelation of salvation and the kingdom of God. It is the revelation that Christ has endured ALL the consequences of sin for us. It is that if we confess our faith in Him and accept Him into our hearts, we will be saved.

- **Romans Road:** Romans 3:23, 6:23a, 5:8, 10:9, 10:13, 8:1-2
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- **Let's take a closer look at what consequences of sin Jesus endured for us:**
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III. New Identities!

- **I am a *new creation*. (2 Corinthians 5:17):**

There is a reason why Jesus liked to say that we must be, “born again.” This is the foundation. As we grow in claiming our identity in Christ, Satan is going to keep trying to remind us of our past. But that is not us anymore. That was a different person. We are a new creation and no longer relate to that former self. Please declare with me, “In Christ, I am a new creation!” Amen.

- **I am redeemed. (Ephesians 1:7):**

You can add to it “justified” and “forgiven” as well. When we confess faith in God and accept Christ into our hearts, we are **redeemed** by His blood. All those negative traits and past failures have been covered over. Our sins have been hurled into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). Please declare with me, “In Christ, I am redeemed!” Amen. When we pray the blood of Jesus over ourselves, we are basically stating our redemption in God. We no longer belong to the prince of this world and the king of sinners; we have been redeemed from a life of sin!

- **I belong to God. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20):**

If we no longer belong to the prince of this world, then who do we belong to? We belong to God! We are not our own. We are God’s possession. We belong to God. There is power in understanding that you are God’s possession. John 10:28-29 – “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.” (ESV)

Sexual bondage is a common way that Satan makes us believe we belong to him. Whenever someone falls with his purity, Satan will try and convince the person that he belongs to the sin and can not escape it. Satan makes the person believe that he might as well give up to the sin. But no, we are redeemed and we are God’s possession! We might stumble or fall, but by the blood of Jesus, we receive grace. Satan can not steal from God. He knows he can not snatch us from God’s hand, yet Satan still tries to deceive us into believing that we can not escape his grasp. But the only power Satan can have over us is the power we give him. When we understand that we belong to God, Satan knows his time is short; it will only be a matter of time until we confess our sins, receive God’s forgiveness, and claim God’s promises. At that point, Satan’s grip is completely lost. Please repeat after me, “I belong to God!” Amen.

IV. Small Group Questions:

1) Read Genesis 1:26. Satan hates that we were made in the image of God. How does he try to attack this identity in people? After the prodigal son had fallen in sin (Luke 15:18-19), how does his identity, in relation with his father, change?

Tries to make us feel no better than animals in our sin, tries to make us believe the Father will not accept us again, tries to make us believe we evolved from monkeys. Satan tries to devalue us and turns us from sons to servants to slaves to completely unworthy

2) How does God’s first question in Genesis 3:11 relate to how our identity is shaped, either by God or by the world and Satan? What are some ways that commercials and advertising shape a child’s identity?

Adam&Eve were told by Satan they were naked and told they should be ashamed and they believed it... they were now under the influence of Satan and because of that they were plagued by shame and condemnation. The world tells us we are too fat, not athletic enough, not smart enough, not attractive enough

3) Read Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9-10. What is taken off and what is put on? How have you changed since accepting Christ? How do you actively put on the new self?

**Our old identity must be taken off. Our new identity must be put on. We do this by confessing and turning from our sins and then through proclaiming who we are in God. As we speak His truth over us we are cleansed from the words and accusations of the enemy and we are filled with faith and hope.

4) After reviewing what Jesus endured for us on the Cross, what are some of the things in your life that you want to give to Him (such as a certain sin, poverty, shame, a scar)? After sharing, pray for each other.

Memory Verse of the Week – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Bibliography

Prince, Derek. Blessing or Curse: You Can Choose. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Chosen Books, 2006.