Our Global God

A Biblical Theology of the Gospel
Charting Our Path

Where do we begin? The foundations for our mission.

What is the story? The unfolding historical-redemptive plan of God.

How do we process all this? Our Theology of Salvation.
Where Do We Begin?

The nature of our life and mission finds its roots in the nature of God. When we bring the lens of creation as far back as it goes, we can see that everything begins with God. “From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever” (Rom.11:36). Thus, God loves God more than he loves anything, and His glory is the driving force behind everything He does. He is infinitely more glorious, beautiful, and desirable than anything that can be imagined. Creation is, then, designed to demonstrate and reflect His glory and beauty in all its manifestations back to Him like a mirror, so that He can receive maximum delight in Himself.
Where Do We Begin?

Because [God] infinitely values his own glory, consisting in the knowledge of himself, love to himself, [that is,] complacence and joy in himself; he therefore valued the image, communication or participation of these, in the creature. And it is because he values himself, that he delights in the knowledge, and love, and joy of the creature; as being himself the object of this knowledge, love and complacence.

-Jonathan Edwards

cited from *The End for Which God Created the World*
Where Do We Begin?

The chief end of God is to glorify God by enjoying himself forever.

—John Piper’s rewording of the Westminster Catechism
God loves himself more than he loves anyone or anything. God finds himself so satisfying, that it spilled over into the creative fiat. God created the world so that he could experience his own delight and glory. In order to express all of his glory, his love, beauty, holiness, infinitude, eternality, righteousness, justice, wrath, knowledge, and wisdom, all the manifestations of his glory, he created people whom he would bless and people whom he would curse. This was based upon nothing that they would do, but solely on his choice. He made people whom he would bless so he could demonstrate his love, mercy, imminence, kindness, care, trustworthiness, and peace. He made people whom he would curse so he could demonstrate his holiness, righteousness, wrath, and transcendence. He has woven and integrated his creation such that all would demonstrate his wisdom and beauty as a whole picture of himself.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

From the beginning of time, God has chiefly been a kingdom God. That is to say, God’s prerogative from all eternity has been to establish a kingdom over which he would reign as king. This is evident in our confession when we say that God is sovereign or that we have a sovereign God. To be sovereign is to reign as king and to exercise dominion.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

 Kingdom Beginnings: Pattern. Although Genesis 1-3 has been the firestorm of controversy in the creation debate, what often gets left in the dust is the richness of the kingdom foundations for biblical theology. It is in these chapters that we see the building blocks for the Kingdom of God in the rest of Scripture. There is much to notice, but I will only point out a few elements.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

In these chapters we first see a kingdom/king structure. For each sphere of the heavens and earth that God creates, he sets a ruler over each one. On creation day one he created the day and the night, then on creation day four he created the Sun to rule over the day and the Moon to rule over the night. On day two, he created the sky and the waters, then on day five he created birds to rule the sky and sea creatures to rule the sea. On day three, he created dry land and vegetation, then on day six he created land animals and creatures to rule over the it.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days of creation</th>
<th>Kingdoms</th>
<th>Kings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Day 1</strong></td>
<td>Light (day) and darkness (night)</td>
<td><strong>Day 4</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Day 2</strong></td>
<td>Sky to separate the atmospheric waters from the terrestrial waters</td>
<td><strong>Day 5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Day 3</strong></td>
<td>Dry ground b) Vegetation</td>
<td><strong>Day 6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Day 7</strong></td>
<td>God rested from his work.</td>
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</tbody>
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Twelve Observations

1. Mankind and Kingsship
2. Heaven and Earth
3. God and His Works
4. God and His Rest
5. God and His Creation
6. Man and His Responsibility
7. Man and His Potential
8. Man and His Sin
9. Man and His Redemption
10. Man and His Kingdom
11. Man and His Populations
12. Man and His History
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

As the climax of creation, God created man in his image “to rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth” (Gen.1:26). Man is charged to “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion” (Gen.1:28). It is after God is done creating and orchestrating that he rests from this kind of creative work and enters into Sabbath rest.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Here, so far in Genesis 1, all we have is kingdom language. Along with this kingdom/king structure, there is also the placement of temple and covenant. God set Adam in Eden, which by its dimensions and description elsewhere in Scripture, we can define as a mountain temple. It was a city with water flowing out it, serving as the dwelling palace of God. The concept of covenant appears here as Adam is charged to work and keep it and not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

“Covenant” = “an elective, as opposed to natural, [family-like] relationship of obligation established under divine sanction”

Courtesy of Gordon Hugenberger
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

A covenant is a binding oath maid by two parties where one agrees to abide by certain conditions in order to obtain certain blessings from the other. The breaking of the covenant would result in the guilty party facing the curses listed in the agreement. Obviously, Adam and Eve broke their covenant with God and were cast out of the garden, experiencing the first exile from God. In grace, God promised to give a seed, a child to the women to crush their enemy, the serpent Satan.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Genesis 1-2 gives us the pattern of the kingdom—Eden is God’s Garden kingdom, this is the first place we see God’s people, in God’s place, under God’s rule. The first 2 chapters of the Bible actually establish the pattern for the whole rest of the Bible in terms of what it’s going to be about.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The Bible

The Kingdom of God

God’s People

God’s Place

God’s Rule

Jesus Christ

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Kingdom Beginnings: Perished. The created beings reject the rule of the Creator King, they try and make God subject to them, and yet they themselves are actually now subject to the created order, obeying a snake. It was meant to be God rules people who rule the creation...but Genesis 3 is creation ruling people trying to rule God, the entire order is inverted: that’s sin. It’s why in Romans 1 we repeatedly get the fall described as humanity ‘exchanging’ - taking what should be and exchanging it for the upside down back to front version.

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
## The Historical-Redemptive Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOD’S BIG PICTURE</th>
<th>God’s People</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The pattern of the kingdom</strong></td>
<td>Adam and Eve</td>
<td>Eden</td>
<td>God’s Word</td>
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<td><strong>The perished kingdom</strong></td>
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<td>Curse and judgment</td>
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Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

*Promised Kingdom.* The rebellion of mankind culminated in the building of the Tower of Babel. This was direct disobedience to God’s command to spread out and subdue the earth. God judged mankind by confusing their speech, such that different groups started to speak different languages. This resulted in the spread of mankind to outer reaches of the planet.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

It was immediately following this judgment and spreading of all mankind across the globe, that Scripture records the calling of Abraham. God calls him to what we now call “Israel,” promising him to make his name great, and to make him a blessing to the nations.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Genesis 12:1-3  Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
That this is an act of a this *reverse-of-the-curse* is also seen in the repeated use of the language of blessing in this episode. Thus, the promise of blessing to Abram’s seed suggests that through him the curses of Genesis 1-11 will be undone. God’s promises to Abram in Genesis 12:2-3 suggest blessings that one great suzerain might confer upon another. As Gordon Wenham suggests, “What Abram is here promised was the hope of many an oriental monarch.” He will become a great nation, blessed by his divine Suzerain, including the blessing of the common royal aspiration of a great name and becomes “the mediator of blessing for mankind.”
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

In fact others will be blessed or cursed depending on their relationship to Abram, as to a suzerainty treaty to which they are accountable. God’s intention to bless all nations through Abram confirms the other indications that his calling of Abram did not entail an abandoning of his original intention to govern a world through a human vice-regent who would bring blessing to his creation, but a strategy of realizing that very intention.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

*Partial Kingdom.* Now that we’ve looked at the promise of the kingdom what we’re going to do is simply trace the fulfillment of those promises through the rest of Israel’s history.

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The Kingdom of God

Promised

Partial Fulfilment

Gen 3, 12

Genasis 12- 2 Chron
Abraham - Solomon

Perfect Fulfilment

Mark 1:15
Jesus Christ

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

From Genesis 12 - Exodus 1 the focus is on the gradual fulfillment of the promise that Abraham’s descendants would be a great nation—we see the line from Abraham traced all the way down to Jacob and his twelve sons, and Exodus ends with the whole family line in slavery in Egypt.

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
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Remember the promise to Abraham “I will bless you” - well when we get to Exodus 3:7 the people of Israel seem far from experiencing God’s blessing, So now we get God acting to bring his people back under his blessing, his good rule. And from here on we begin to see God’s blessing in a number of ways:

- Exodus 12:23 - Salvation by substitution (Passover)
- Exodus 14 -15 -Salvation by rescue/conquest (Red Sea)

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
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The next key way we see God’s rule and blessing is the giving of the law at Sinai. With the giving of the law this is God’s people living under God’s rule, isn’t it. But we must see that actually the law is only ever meant as a response to God’s blessing, God’s salvation. So do you see what’s happening - the law is never a means to earn God’s blessing, God’s favor; it is simply a response to the salvation that has already been given. The Sinai situation is this: God’s people have experienced God’s blessing by his redemption and rescue - now how are they meant to carry on experiencing his blessing? By the law - look back at 19:4. If the people keep the law, they will experience God’s blessing.

Courtesy of www.beginningwithmoses.org
In the rest of Exodus what we have is the people experiencing God’s rule and blessing by means of the tabernacle—this is how God dwells among them, it’s the experience of God’s blessing by his presence among his people. But in the middle of all the tabernacle material we have chapter 32 - the golden calf incident. This is simply the problem of the perished kingdom repeating itself again isn’t it - God’s people rejecting God’s rule and blessing. So how can a holy God have his presence among his people - well the answer of course is Leviticus isn’t it, and the sacrificial system, that’s why Leviticus is there - to show us again that the only way to experience God’s blessing is by sacrifice.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The redemptive event which initiated the fulfillment of the promises of deliverance, together with the promises given to Abraham and passed on to his children, the reference point for Israel’s self-understanding from that time on. It was the foundation for the Mosaic covenant with it’s promised blessings and curses. Perhaps the greatest of the blessings given to Israel was the land itself in which the other blessings were to be experienced. The official entry into the land followed a period of oppression redemption from which formed the essential background for the establishment of the Mosaic covenant (cf. Deut 15:15; 24:18).

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The pre-exilic history of Israel is told in the biblical narratives as a story marked by both the blessings and curses of the covenant, with the greatest blessings being experienced under David and Solomon. It is also during the glory years of David’s reign that a clear development in God’s intention to realize his original intention for humanity and creation is revealed, by way of the promises of an unending Davidic Kingdom, associated with the anticipated establishment of God’s presence in the midst of his people through the Temple in Jerusalem.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Prophetic literature tends to dwell on upcoming or present exile and on the hope of future salvation and restoration. There are over sixty references to the scattering and gathering of Israel in the prophets alone! And that, of course, is only one of the ways in which the motif is reflected. While it would be impossible to touch on all the ways the theme of exile and restoration is developed in the OT, a few of the ways that seem most important to NT authors deserve special mention. Among those themes we will touch on the second exodus, the new creation, new covenant, the restored Davidic kingdom and the restored temple.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Isaiah describes the future restoration event as a second exodus (Isa 40-55 [esp. 40:3-5, 10-11; 43:19; Is 51:9–11; 52:7-12; 62:10]; cf. Jer 23:5-8; Hos 2:14-23; Zech 1-8; Ezra 6:19-21) as God is the divine warrior who leads Israel back to her promised land again. The concept of the second exodus serves to associate the redemption of post-exilic restoration with that of the original exodus event. Of course the original exodus event, with it’s clear depiction of Yahweh’s victory over Pharaoh, came to be understood in terms of a repeat of God’s original victory in his conflict with the chaotic power of the sea.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The establishment of creation and the victory of the exodus, the future eschatological salvation of Israel is also described in terms of a military victory over the enemies of God and his people (Hab 3:2–19; Isa 52:7–12). So restoration is a heightened recapitulation/restoration of the victory of the exodus which was intended to be a recapitulation and restoration of the primordial victory of God achieved at creation.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The motif of the restoration of Israel is also described as a new creation in several prophetic texts. Exile is described as a return to chaos and an undoing of creation (Jer 4:23-27) and restoration is an undoing of the curses of Genesis 3 and of the Mosaic covenant and a reestablishment of the blessings experienced in the garden of Eden (cf. Isa 51:3-13 (esp. 3); 65:17-25; 66:22-23; Jer 31:12; Ezek 31:16–18; 36:35; Hos 2:18-22). The theme of new creation is also evoked through the imagery of the role of the Spirit in creation, echoes of the restoration of the river flowing in the garden (Ezek 47:1-1211; Joel 3:18; Zech 14:8), and the establishment of Adam’s role as vice-regent over the rest of creation.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Ezekiel’s description of the restoration of Israel in terms the resurrection of human bodies which require the breath of life before they actually come to life (Ezekiel 37) and Daniel’s description of the human figure who is made to reign over a world previously dominated by beastly kingdoms are two different ways of hearkening back to the first two chapters of Genesis for the appropriate window for understanding the nature and meaning of Israel’s restoration.

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
**The Historical-Redemptive Plan**

**Kingdom Fulfillment.** As we look back on both the promises to Adam and Israel, and their respective failures/exiles, God, we must remember that this did not thwart God’s purposes. God has promised the fulfillment of his kingdom promises for the end-times people of God. The end-times is the context for the gospel as we know it.
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

The word itself means “good news” (Greek euangelion) and was used in Greco-Roman times/literature for announcements.

In the Epistles of Paul, the noun “gospel” often meant the message about the coming, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (Rom 1:1-4, 16; 1 Cor 15:1). The verb is used for announcing the message orally (Rom 1:15; 1 Cor 1:17; 9:16).

Courtesy of Josh Otte
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

In the OT, the cognate of the Greek verb (euangelizomai) is used to announce the hope of Yahweh’s coming to save his people (cf. Isa 40:9; 41:2; 52:7; 61:1; Joel 2:32; Nah 1:15).

Isaiah—the gospel in the OT

Courtesy of Josh Otte
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Mark 1:1—“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ…”

Not a title, as though Mark was referring to what he was writing as a gospel.

In order to understand the coming of Jesus the Christ, Mark demands that we understand it in the context of Isaiah 40 (and beyond).

Courtesy of Josh Otte
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

**Isa 40:3-5** A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God." "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley;

Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

**Mar 1:1-3** The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

"BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Isa 40:9 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

Isa 52:7 How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Mar 1:1-3 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY; 3 THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

Isaiah uses “bearer of good news” or “to proclaim good news in a profoundly theological manner to herald the coming kingdom of Yahweh and his dominion.

Mark thus grounds his presentation of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection within the Isaianic expectations of hope, restoration, and coming salvation!

Courtesy of Josh Otte
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

To believe the gospel then requires to re-orient your life according to this reality:

Mark 1:14 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Courtesy of Josh Otte
The Historical-Redemptive Plan

An Overview of the Biblical Narrative

- Creation/Covenant/Dominion
- Sin
- Exile
- Restoration (New Creation/Covenant/Kingdom/Righteousness)

Creation - Covenant

Adam

Sin

Israel

Return of Nation

Death/Exile (Garden/Land/God)

Resurrection/Restoration Kingdom/Right-ness

Courtesy of Roy Ciampa
Our Theology of Salvation

Creation of Man/Women. As the capstone of his work, God created man in his own image, dignified and reflective of God’s creative fiat, from the dust of the earth. Man was created as both a physical and spiritual being to rule over the creatures and fill the earth with his offspring. God created woman from a rib of the man in order to be a helpmate suitable to the man for his duty and become bearer of future offspring. Thus, man and woman are distinct in their roles, but equal in their covenantal standing before God.
Our Theology of Salvation

The Fall. God created the man and women, Adam and Eve, and placed them in the temple-garden Eden, commissioning them as kings and priests, to rule and guard the garden. He placed two trees in the garden to test them, charging them not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or else they would die. Adam and Eve failed in their duties and transgressed their covenant with God by allowing the fallen angel Lucifer, in the form of a serpent, to enter the garden where he persuaded them to eat from the forbidden tree, subjecting them to immediate spiritual death and imminent physical death.
Our Theology of Salvation

Original Sin. Man’s nature was corrupted by the sin of their first parents Adam and Eve (Gen.3). It is through their fall that this corruption spread to all people (Rom.5:12). Therefore, all human beings from birth (Psalm 51:5) are spiritually dead (Eph.2:1-3), having every part of their being tainted with sin (Rom.1). This renders man incapable of coming to God (Rom.3:10-11; 8:5-7) and helpless (Rom.5:6-8), only to expect judgment (2 Thes.1:6-10; Rev.20-21).
Our Theology of Salvation

**Person of Christ/Two Natures.** Jesus of Nazareth was miraculously birthed by Mary who, as a virgin, conceived him by the Holy Spirit. Jesus was born as the only God-man, fully God, and fully man. Thus, he experienced the fullness of life as a man without forfeiting any portion of his divine nature as the incarnate Son of God.
Our Theology of Salvation

The Mission of Christ. Jesus was the fulfillment and consummation of the redemptive plan of God, sent as both the Redeemer of man and the Messiah of Israel. He was the “seed of the women” prophesied in Eden who would judge Satan and his offspring and bring victory to his own offspring. He covenanted with the Father, swearing to keep the law of God and fulfill all righteousness in order to inherit the throne of God.
Our Theology of Salvation

The Atonement. The covenantal allegiance of Jesus led him inextricably to die on the cross of Golgotha. His death was prophesied and typologically prefigured in the Hebrew Scriptures to bear and appease the wrath of God, and thus forgive the sins and the absorb the depravity of people from every tribe, nation, and language. God vindicated Jesus from the shame of the cross by raising him from the dead three days later and seating him at the right hand of his throne. The Cross is the ratification of God’s new covenant with his people and the most precise demonstration of all the glory of God.
Our Theology of Salvation

**Regeneration.** In order to overcome the will of man which is hopelessly enslaved to sin, the Holy Spirit graciously reveals the irresistible glory of Jesus Christ to individuals who were determined by God from all eternity. In doing so, the Spirit quickens, recreates, and renews the soul to be alive to God by writing the law of God upon it and generating faith in the person and work of Christ and repentance of sins.
Our Theology of Salvation

Justification/Sanctification. The initial faith that the soul exercises in the gospel of Christ is the means through which God forgives all sins of the individual, past, present, and future, and unites him with the righteousness of Christ, declaring him righteous in the sight of God. Upon receiving this gift of righteousness, the benefactor also receives sonship status as a child of God, standing to inherit infinite blessing and satisfaction from God in their imminent resurrection. The continuing faith of the newly righteous one is instrumental in conforming him to the image of Jesus Christ as future grace leads him to obedience of the law of God.
Our Theology of Salvation

**Perseverance.** Those whom God has chosen, purchased, justified, and is sanctifying will be preserved by God in their faith all their lives. Only those who persevere in Christ to the end will experience eternal life and prove themselves to have been genuine children of God.
Our Theology of Salvation

Doctrines of Grace: TULIP

Total Depravity. Essentially the doctrines of Grace affirm the holistic sinfulness of humanity and their inability to come to God in their sinful nature.

Unconditional Election. Since we can not choose God, if anyone is going to be saved, God must choose them.

Limited Atonement. Since God has chosen some for salvation, he took on flesh and became a man as the person Jesus Christ. By the death of Jesus, he purchased all those whom were chosen.
Our Theology of Salvation

- **Irresistible Grace.** He then, through the power and regenerating work of the Spirit of God, draws them to his beauty and glory in the message of Jesus Christ and generates faith in them for God in Jesus Christ.

- **Perseverance of the Saints.** Since God has chosen, purchased, and drawn them to and for himself, he preserves them in this grace through their lives.