

# The Christian & The World

## A Theology of the Christian Walk



# Review

## The Christian and the Word

### The Centrality of Scripture in the Life of the Believer

- In Salvation and In Our Christian Walk
- Evidenced in the Reformation (and more importantly!) in Scripture Itself
- General and Particular Revelation

# Review

## The Christian and the Word

### The Goals of Reading Scripture

- doctrinal, ethical, historical, worship, redemptive historical

### Responding to God's Gift of His Word

- thankfulness, committed to regular study, active participants in Christian growth, good students of the Word

# Review

## The Christian and the Community

*Semper reformanda* refers to the Reformation church's charge to the church to be always reforming, by God's grace, through faith, by the Spirit's power and wisdom, through study, and under authority of the Word of God.

# Review

## The Christian and the Community

Sanctification is the redemptive work of God, in partnership with our work in response (Phil 2:1–13), in growing toward maturity in Christ, throughout life and in all ways, making true in us what we are and have according God's declaration and Jesus' completed work for our salvation. It's learning to become who we were created to be.

# Review

## The Christian and the Community

### Learning Barriers

(like individualism, collectivism, & loneliness; anxiety and fear of failure)

To Learn is to Fall Forward Courageously

Tensions in Life, Learning, and Growing in Christ

God Initiates, We Respond

# Overview

- I. The Goodness of God's Created World
- II. Human Rebellion and Creation Groaning
- III. God's Redemptive Goal: Our Salvation and a Renewed Creation
- IV. How Then Ought We Respond to the World?

Introduction:

## Various Meanings of “World” in the Bible

The World as Creation

The World as People

The World in Opposition to God



## A. World As Creation and as People

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,  
the world, and all who live in it;

(Psalm 24:1 NIV)

Let all the earth fear the LORD;

let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!

(Psalm 33:8)

## A. World As Creation and as People

He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:2)

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. (1 John 4:9 )

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. (1 John 4:14)

## B. World in Opposition to God

<sup>15</sup>Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup>For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (1 John 2:15 –16)

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19 )

# Overview

- I. The Goodness of God's Created World
- II. Human Rebellion and Creation Groaning
- III. God's Redemptive Goal: Our Salvation and a Renewed Creation
- IV. How Then Ought We Respond to the World?

# I. The Goodness of God's Created World

A. Psalm 19:1–6

B. Genesis 1:26–31

## Psalm 19:1–4

- <sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- <sup>2</sup> Day to day pours out speech,  
and night to night reveals knowledge.
- <sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words,  
whose voice is not heard.
- <sup>4</sup> Their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.

## Genesis 1:26–31

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion 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.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

## Genesis 1:26–31

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” <sup>29</sup> And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.



## Genesis 1:26–31

<sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

# Overview

- I. The Goodness of God's Created World
- II. Human Rebellion and Creation Groaning

## II. Human Rebellion and Creation Groaning

A. Genesis 3:17–19

B. Romans 8:18–25

C. Ephesians 2:1–3

## Genesis 3:17–19

<sup>17</sup> And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife  
and have eaten of the tree  
of which I commanded you,

‘You shall not eat of it,’

**cursed is the ground** because of you;

in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

<sup>18</sup> thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;

and you shall eat the plants of the field.

## Genesis 3:17–19

**19** By the sweat of your face  
you shall eat bread,  
till you return to the ground,  
for out of it you were taken;  
for you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.”

## Romans 8:18–25

<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation **waits with eager longing** for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was **subjected to futility**, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> **that** the creation itself **will be set free** from its bondage to corruption **and obtain** the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

## Romans 8:18–25

<sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been **groaning** together in the pains of childbirth until now. <sup>23</sup> And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

## Ephesians 2:1–3

<sup>1</sup> And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— <sup>3</sup>among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.



# Overview

- I. The Goodness of God's Created World
- II. Human Rebellion and Creation Groaning

## Pause to Consider the Tensions

- This explains the world we experience  
(and does so better than any other worldview)
- This prepares us for the joys and challenges of  
Christian living
- This would be a disappointing place to stop!

# Overview

- I. The Goodness of God's Created World
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# III. God's Redemptive Goal: Our Salvation and a Renewed Creation

A. Ephesians 2:4–7

B. Colossians 1:15–23

## Ephesians 2:4–7

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

## Colossians 1:15–23

<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.

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## Colossians 1:15–23

<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

# III. God's Redemptive Goal: Our Salvation and a Renewed Creation

A. God is on Mission, and Thus We are Too!

B. The Story of God's Mission (CRRR)

Creation (Genesis 1–2)

Rebellion/Fall (Genesis 3)

Redemption (Genesis 3 – Revelation 20)

Restoration/Renewal/Consummation (Revelation 21–22)

C. The Tensions of Today: Already & Not Yet



## Already...

Saints

United to Christ

Seated with Christ in the  
Heavenlies

The Earth is the Lord's and  
Everything in It

## ...and Not Yet

Not Yet (fully) Sanctified

Not Yet (fully) Dead to Sin  
and Alive to Christ

Not Yet Home with the Lord

The World Still Groans and  
Humans Still Rebel  
Against God

“To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours...”

(1 Corinthians 1:2)

“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Thessalonians 5:23)

## Romans 6:5–11

<sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

<sup>6</sup>We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup> For one who has died has been set free from sin.

## Romans 6:5–11

<sup>8</sup>Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. <sup>10</sup>For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

## Ephesians 2:4–6

<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

## Titus 2:11–14

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

## Already...

Saints

United to Christ

Seated with Christ in the  
Heavenlies

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Everything in It

## ...and Not Yet

Not Yet (fully) Sanctified

Not Yet (fully) Dead to Sin  
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- IV. How Then Ought We Respond to the World?

## IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

- A. The World in Opposition to God
- B. The World as People
- C. The World as Creation

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

## A. The World in Opposition to God

<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

(1 John 2:15–17)

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

## A. The World in Opposition to God

<sup>18</sup>“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup>If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

(John 15:18–20)

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

## A. The World in Opposition to God

<sup>4</sup> For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(1 John 5:4–5)

## Ephesians 6:10–18

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

## Ephesians 6:10–18

<sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of **truth**, and having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**, <sup>15</sup> and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the **gospel of peace**. <sup>16</sup> In all circumstances take up the shield of **faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup> and take the helmet of **salvation**, and the sword of the **Spirit**, which is **the word of God**, <sup>18</sup> **praying** at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

## A. The World in Opposition to God

- Do Not be Attached to the World  
(the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life)
- Be Prepared with a Good Theology of Suffering
- Know That We Have Victory in Christ
- Stand in the Lord's Strength and in Our Position in Christ



# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

A. The World in Opposition to God

B. The World as People

<sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” <sup>37</sup> And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the great and first commandment. <sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

(Matthew 22:36–40)

## IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

(Matthew 28:18–20)

## IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

<sup>9</sup> Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, <sup>10</sup> for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, <sup>11</sup> and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, <sup>12</sup> so that you may **walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.**

(1 Thessalonians 4:9–12)

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

A. The World in Opposition to God

B. The World as People

- Love Our Neighbors
- Join God's Mission
- Make Disciples
- Be Wise How We Live Before Others

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

A. The World in Opposition to God

B. The World as People

C. The World as Creation

<sup>1</sup> The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein,

<sup>2</sup> for he has founded it upon the seas  
and established it upon the rivers. (Psalm 24:1–2)

## IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

<sup>7</sup> Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who dwell in it!

<sup>8</sup> Let the rivers clap their hands;  
let the hills sing for joy together

<sup>9</sup> before the Lord, for he comes  
to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.

(Psalm 98:7–9)

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion 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.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

(Genesis 1:26–28)

# IV. How Then Ought We to Relate to the World?

A. The World in Opposition to God

B. The World as People

C. The World as Creation

- Recognize This is Our Father's World
- Enjoy God's Beautiful Creation... and Worship Him
- Live As Those in God's Image... being Renewed in the Image of Christ
- Care for God's Good Creation



## V. Two Metaphors

### A. Sojourners — 1 Peter 2:9–12

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup>Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

(1 Peter 2:9–12)

And I will give to you [=Abraham] and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

Genesis 17:8

[Abraham said to those in Canaan]: “I am a sojourner and foreigner among you; give me property among you for a burying place, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.”

Genesis 23:4

<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

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(1 Peter 2:9–12)

## V. Two Metaphors

A. Sojourners — 1 Peter 2:9–12

B. Ambassadors — 2 Corinthians 5:16–21

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> 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 Corinthians 5:16–21)

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