

# The Bigger Story: Week 45

## THE SEVEN C's IN GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN



**Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross, Completion/New Creation**

### CREATION:

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth"

*How would you explain the creation to others?*

*What does it mean that God is Creator and why is this important?*

*Why did God create people?*

- Day 1: God said, "Let there be light," and there was...He separated the light from the darkness and called the light "day" and the darkness "night." This light came from a source other than the sun...the sun wasn't created until Day 4. *Where do you think the light came from? What other verses does this suggest? What do you see about God here?*
- Day 2: God made an expanse (something "stretched out") and separated the waters above the expanse from the waters below. *Why would God create an expansive space?*
- Day 3: God caused the waters to come together, dry ground appeared and vegetation to grow...after its own kind. *What does this reveal about God? What do you think about the variety?*
- Day 4: God made the sun, the moon and the stars. These were to serve as signs to mark seasons, days and years. God makes *time*. God has no beginning and no end and knows all (Psalm 147:5, Revelation 1:8).
- Day 5: God created the animals that live in water and those that fly in the air. What does it mean that "God blessed them" *What does this reveal about God? The animals and their kind?*
- Day 6: God created the land animals, each made to create more of their own. God also made humanity, made in God's image. *What does it mean to be made in God's image?* When God had finished creating, He labeled all He had done as "very good." Imagine a place with no death, violence, disease, sickness, thorns, weeds, sin, shame, no fear!
- Day 7: God "rested" from (stopped) His work of creation. Today, God upholds His creation (Colossians 1:17). *What does this mean?* God created all things in six days and rested on the seventh. This became the first "week." Adam's first full day was one of rest. *What does this imply? What does it mean to rest? How do you rest?*

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16*

## CORRUPTION:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and everything was very good. ***So what happened?***

“But you shall not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17). God warned Adam that if he ate of the forbidden fruit, he would die.

Romans 5:12 tells us that Adam’s sin (and our sin through Adam) causes us all to die. Eve gave the fruit to Adam, who wasn’t deceived and ate it willingly (1 Timothy 2:14). This caused them both to immediately die spiritually (becoming separated from God) and to begin to die physically.

- Because of his disobedience (sin), all his descendants (you and I) are born with a sin nature
- Because of Adam’s sin, our bodies will die
- Because of Adam’s sin, God cursed His creation

The world today, while reflecting God’s original creation, has been corrupted by sin and death. Lies were introduced, the authority and word of God questioned. There is fear, shame, doubt, deceit and death. It is not as it should be, but God is still good. ***See*** how He seeks us (Genesis 3:9)...we hide. God is still in control.

***Discuss.***

Additionally, the image of God in us became corrupted (Genesis 5:3, Ephesians 4:22) but, in love, God sent Jesus (John 3:16). Jesus is:

- The uncorrupted (Romans 1:23) image of God, (1 Corinthians 15:45)
- The Way back to God (2 Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15)
- Restoration (2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:10)

Death, disease and suffering are a consequence of sin but these things are not permanent parts of creation. We look forward to when the curse and corruption will be no more, and the last enemy (death) will be overcome!

- God creates us in His image
- Sin corrupts that image
- So Jesus saves, restores, renews, reconciles and recreates us

Genesis 3:15:

“He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel”

Our loving Creator God did not abandon His creation after Adam’s sin! He promised that one day He would send a Savior, the “seed of a woman,” to “bruise” (crush, break) the head of the serpent. This Savior, Jesus, was born of a woman without a human father, around 4,000 years later. He died on the cross, and then rose again to save His people from their sins...dealing a death-blow to (crushing the head of) the devil (serpent)!

***How does this show God’s bigger plan? Why is this important? Why do we need salvation and from what?***

***Is there another way to salvation?***

***What did you learn about our Creator God?***

***Where did you see / What did you learn about King Jesus?***

***What did you learn about man?***

***Is there any action to take?***

***How can you share what you read today?***

### This Week’s Readings

Jeremiah 43-44, Hebrews 3	Jeremiah 45-48, Hebrews 4-5	Jeremiah 49, Hebrews 7	Jeremiah 50, Hebrews 7	Jeremiah 51-52, Hebrews 8	Lamentations 1-2, Hebrews 9
Revelation 7:9—17, Psalm 149, Hebrews 11:32-12:3, Matthew 27:50-54					

# The Bigger Story: Week 46

## THE SEVEN C's IN GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN



Creation, Corruption, **Catastrophe**, **Confusion**, Christ, Cross, Completion/New Creation

### CATASTROPHE

Genesis 7:23: “He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.”

After the fall, when sin, corruption and death were brought into the world, Adam’s sin passed to his children and all the future generations (Romans 5:12). In the days of Noah, there was great wickedness (Genesis 6:1-2 and 5-8) yet God would not allow humanity to stay in this rebellious place forever (Genesis 6:3). **What does this reveal about God? His plan? About man? Sin’s power?**

Genesis 6:5: “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

- Every intention means there was no aspect of man’s nature that wasn’t corrupted by sin
- Jesus mentioned the days of Noah in Matthew 24:37, comparing it to just before His Second Coming (see also 2 Peter 3:1-7) in which there will be
  - Sexual perversion (Genesis 6:2)
  - Demonic activity (Genesis 6:2)
  - Constant evil in the heart of man (Genesis 6:5)
  - Widespread corruption and violence (Genesis 6:11)

God was “sorry that He had made man” (Genesis 6:6) this does not mean creation was out of His control. **What does it mean? Why would God create us, knowing what we would do? How we would require Jesus?**

About Noah:

- He wasn’t perfect and didn’t *earn* grace, but *found* it in the eyes of the Lord.
- God didn’t tell Noah why he must build the ark, but he obeyed anyway (Genesis 6:22, 7:16)
- He is commended in Scripture (Ezekiel 14:14, Hebrews 11:17, 2 Peter 2:5)

About the Ark:

- It was about **450** feet long, **75** feet wide and **45** feet tall
- It was more of a barge than a boat and had only one opening, it took **120** years to build
- Genesis 6:20 implies the animals come to Noah – **What does this show about God?**

About the Flood: **What do you learn about God as creator here?**

- It was a global flood (see Psalms 104:5-9, 2 Peter 3:5-6)
- Previously there was no rain and the flood lasted **150** days without receding (Genesis 7:24)

God offers safety, security and rescue:

Genesis 7:1: “Then the Lord said to Noah, ‘come into the ark, you and all your household...’”

**Notice** that the Lord did not say to Noah, ‘Go’ but ‘Come’ implying that God was in the ark, waiting to receive Noah and his family and acting as their place of refuge...

Genesis 7:16: **Notice** it is God who shuts Noah in... Noah didn't shut the door on anyone's salvation. God did. **What does this mean? How can you see roles here?** The ark was salvation for Noah, but condemnation for the world. **Where do you see Jesus in the story of the ark? How do you connect God's actions here with what we learned last week?** Read Genesis 3:15. God's response to the brokenness of people, the problem of sin, by promising redemption and entering into a covenant (a word used **300** times in the OT!)

God kept the door open until the last possible minute, but there came a time when the door had to shut. When the door is open, it is open, but when it is shut, it is shut (see Revelation 3:7). **What action does this encourage?**

In Genesis 8:20, Noah builds an altar and offers a valuable sacrifice. Sacrifices we give to God should cost us something. We should present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1), our resources (Philippians 4:18), and our praise (Hebrews 13:15).

Without a sacrifice (Jesus), sin clamors for vengeance, and God sends a destroying flood (judgement). The sacrifice offered by Noah showed the coming sacrifice of God's only begotten Son...and the atonement provided for human sin. He takes all our sin and gives His righteousness. **How do we respond to God's offer of salvation?**

### **CORRUPTION:**

Genesis 11:7-8: "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city."

The descendants of Noah disobeyed God, they were told to "fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1) but they rebelled against Him. The materials they used were for waterproofing, indicating they didn't believe God's promise to never again flood the earth. They didn't trust Him. **How were they placing self above God. How do we act similarly today?**

Genesis 11:5: "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower..." The personal language here may indicate God coming down in the form of a man. **Can you see Jesus here?**

Genesis 11:7: "Come, let us go down and confuse their language..." The plural references the trinity. **Compare and contrast** this "us" with the "us" used before, describing the actions of men ganging together. **What does it show about God? About man? How can you see the potential for harm the fallen man has** (see verse 6) **and how does God's scattering show His mercy? Plan? Judgement?**

Most astrological and occult practices have a history back to Babel, trying to reach "unto the heavens." **Why is this against God?**

*What did you learn about our Creator God?  
Where did you see / What did you learn about King Jesus?  
What did you learn about man?  
Is there any action to take?  
How can you share what you read today?*

<b><u>This Week's Readings</u></b>					
Lamentations 3-5, Hebrews 10	Ezekiel 1-3	Ezekiel 4-6, Hebrews 11	Ezekiel 7-10, Hebrews 12	Ezekiel 11-12, Hebrews 13	Ezekiel 13-15, James 1
Amos 5:18-24, Psalm 70, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Matthew 25:1-13					

# The Bigger Story: Week 47

## THE SEVEN C's IN GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN



Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, **Christ**, **Cross**, Completion/New Creation

### CHRIST

God's perfect creation was corrupted. Adam's disobedience brought sin and death into the world. Because of this, and because we have all sinned, we are all deserving of the death penalty and therefore need a Savior (Romans 5:12). God, in His mercy, promised to send One who would take away the death penalty for sin (Genesis 3:15, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23). ***Why do we need Him? Why can't we save ourselves?***

God killed an animal in the Garden of Eden because of the sin of Adam. After this, Adam's descendants sacrificed animals. But these sacrifices could only cover sin...they couldn't pay the penalty owed. They couldn't clean us from sin. They pointed to the ultimate sacrifice would be made by the One whom our Creator God would send (Hebrews 9).

***Why don't we have to make sacrifices anymore?*** Because the Lamb of God (John 1:29, Revelation 5:12) was sacrificed once for all (Hebrews 7:27). Jesus bore God's wrath on our sin by dying in our place (Isaiah 53:6). So all those who believe in Him will be saved from the ultimate penalty for sin (eternal separation from God) and will live with Him forever!

Likewise, when God gave Moses the Law, it was a tool but not something that could offer salvation. ***What was the law's use?*** Through the law, people began to see that they could never measure up to God's standard of perfection (Romans 3:20, James 2:10). The law is a thermometer, but not the cure. Jesus is the cure. We all need the One to take away our imperfection and present us faultless before God's throne (Romans 5:9, 1 Peter 3:18). ***What do you learn about God here?***

Because we are all born in sin (Psalms 51:5) with a sin nature (Romans 7:19) our Savior had to be perfect, as well as infinite, to take away the infinite penalty for sin. Only God is perfect and can pay this due. The Creator of the universe (Genesis 1:1, John 1:1-3, 14) became part of His creation so that He might save His people from their sins! ***Why would God do this?***

God sent Jesus, in accordance with His plan and promise and in His perfect timing (Galatians 4:4). Jesus was born to a virgin over **2,000** years ago in Bethlehem, as the prophets Isaiah (7:14) and Micah (5:2) foretold **700** years previously!

- Jesus fulfilled **50+** prophecies made about Him centuries before, including the first promise God made over **4,000** years before (Genesis 3:15).

Jesus is called the "Last Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45) as He came to restore the fellowship with God which was broken by the first Adam's sin.

- The first Adam brought death into the world through his disobedience.
- Jesus, the Last Adam brought eternal life with God through His obedience (1 Corinthians 15:21-22). Jesus fulfilled the Creator's purpose that He die for the sin of the world.

## THE CROSS

“Christ Jesus ... who, being in the form of God..., was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”  
([Philippians 2:5-8](#)).

Jesus was not defeated by death. He rose **3** days after He was crucified, proving He has power over all things, including death, the “last enemy” ([1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 26](#)).

“O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? ... But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” ([1 Corinthians 15:55, 57](#)).

### *Why is the cross and the physical death and literal resurrection of Jesus essential?*

Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sin. When we believe in Christ and understand what He has done for us, we are passed from death into life ([John 5:24](#)). The names of those who receive Him are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life ([Revelation 13:8, 17:8](#)), so when we die, we will go to be with Him forever ([John 3:16](#))!

The Bible is **66** Books, written in **3** continents in **3** languages... yet it is all harmonious...all pointing to Jesus.

- *How can you see Jesus throughout the Bible?*
- *How can you see God as Creator and Covenant keeper?*

*What did you learn about our Creator God?  
Where did you see / What did you learn about King Jesus?  
What did you learn about man?  
Is there any action to take?  
How can you share what you read today?*

### **For Further Study:**

- [Genesis 3:15](#): This is the first Messianic prophecy in the Bible. God announced that the serpent’s head (Satan) would be crushed by the seed of woman: Jesus.
- [Genesis 12, 26, 28](#): The “seed” promise referred to the eventual coming of Jesus.
- [Genesis 22](#): **Compare** the sacrifice of Isaac to the sacrifice of Jesus (see [Hebrews 11:17-19](#)).
- [Genesis 28](#): **Compare** Jacob and the ladder with Jesus (see [John 1:49-51](#) and [Luke 9:58](#)).

### **This Week’s Readings**

Ezekiel 16-17, James 2	Ezekiel 18-19, James 3-4	Ezekiel 20-21 James 5	Ezekiel 22-23 1 Peter 1	Ezekiel 24-25 1 Peter 2	Ezekiel 26-27 1 Peter 3
Zephaniah 1:7-16, Psalm 90:1-12, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Matthew 25:14-30					

# The Bigger Story: Week 48

## THE SEVEN C's IN GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN



Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross,  
**Completion/ New Creation (Consummation)**

### NEW CREATION

The current heavens and earth have long been subject to God's curse because of mankind's sin, "groaning as in the pains of childbirth" (Romans 8:22). *How have you seen this? Despite this, where do you root your hope? How do you stay steadfast in turbulent times?*

Indeed, heaven and earth will pass away (Mark 13:31). They will be replaced by the new heavens and the new earth as God "makes all things new" (Revelation 21:5). In the new creation "there shall be no more curse" (Revelation 22:3) (see Isaiah 65:17, 66:22).

The Bible says, in the new heavens and new earth, there are seven things notable for their absence:

1. No more sea (Revelation 21:1)
2. No more death (Revelation 21:4)
3. No more mourning (Revelation 21:4)
4. No more weeping (Revelation 21:4)
5. No more pain (Revelation 21:4)
6. No more curse (Revelation 22:3)
7. No more night (Revelation 22:5)

No more of these things, *but what will there be?* The new creation will be "where righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). Eden restored.

The creation of the new heavens and new earth brings the promise that God "will wipe every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 21:4). It is the completion of God's longest promise in Genesis 3:15 and the eternal life mentioned in John 3:16. But this hasn't happened yet... *So, how do we wait well? How are we ready for His return?*

If we are to be ready for Christ's return, we must be born again through saving faith in Jesus Christ... His death, burial and literal resurrection from the dead (John 3:16, 14:6, Romans 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Ephesians 2:1-10). *How will faith in Jesus show in our lives?* (consider Galatians 5:22)

Believers in Jesus Christ are the bride of Christ, and we wait with great anticipation for the day when we will be united with our Bridegroom. Until then, we remain faithful to Him and say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20).

- *Has there ever been a season in which it is hard to pray, "Come, Lord Jesus?" Discuss.*
- *How can we be prepared and ready for His return and yet ready to wait at the same time?*
- *Discuss trust in God and His plan.*

**Being a new creation is a gift from God, received by faith:**

**Consider 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.”

- “Therefore” refers to verse 14-16 which tell us that all believers have died with Christ and no longer live for themselves (see Romans 6:4) but it is the Resurrection life of Jesus gives us new life...
- If “anyone”: Anyone can be a new creation in Jesus Christ! If they are “in Christ”
  - This is not a promise for those who are in themselves, or in works or something else. This is for those in Christ. **What does it mean to be “in Christ”?**

To understand this new creation, we first must *recognize our Creator...* Genesis 1:1! (see John 1:13).

- The new creation is us is something created by God (not our own doing, not our parents or hereditary but new birth brought about through God’s will (see Ephesians 4:22-24)
- It is not something cleaned up, but something entirely new, brought about from nothing, like the universe was created by God ex nihilo, from nothing. Only the Creator could accomplish such a feat.
  - **What do you learn about our Creator God here?**
  - **About man?**

Jesus changes those who come to Him by faith, those who are in Christ so we are not "just forgiven" but are a new creation.

- We “put off the old man with his deeds” (Colossians 3:9), and put on the “new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ephesians 4:24) (see Romans 6:11-12)
- **How have your interests, habits, languages, prayers changed over your faith journey?**
- Yet, being a new creation doesn't mean that we are perfect... but that we are changed and that we are being changed...

Living as a new creation is something God works in us, while using our will and our choices.

- We must both receive the gift of being a new creation and be challenged to live the life of a new creation, submitting to God's work in us.
- Christianity is all about what God did for us, not what we can/should do for God.

**How** can you understand the tension regarding “the new has come” understanding the “now” and the “not yet” of God’s Kingdom? **So...what do we do until He comes?** (Consider Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Timothy 4:5, Ephesians 4:17-32, Jeremiah 29:5)

**What did you learn about our Creator God?**  
**Where did you see / What did you learn about King Jesus?**  
**What did you learn about man?**  
**Is there any action to take?**  
**How can you share what you read today?**

<b><u>This Week’s Readings</u></b>					
Ezekiel 28-30 1 Peter 4-5	Ezekiel 31-32 2 Peter 1	Ezekiel 33-34 2 Peter 2	Ezekiel 35-36 2 Peter 3	Ezekiel 37-39 1 John 1	Ezekiel 40 1 John 2
Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24, Psalm 95:1-7a, 1 Corinthians 15:20-28, Matthew 25:31-46					