

Pastor Curt Ogawa at Journey Evangelical Church, March 21, 2021  
curtogawa@gmail.com (408) 889-3983

## **THE GOSPEL: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETERNITY**

Ephesians 1:3-12; John 17:24; Jeremiah 32:40-41

### **SHOULDN'T THEOLOGY EVOKE WONDER AND IMAGINATION?**

#### **BEFORE THE OLD TESTAMENT'S "IN THE BEGINNING"**

A taste of the Gospel told from God's perspective from Ephesians 1:3-12

What was God doing before he created the world?

John 17:24 *"Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world."*

#### **IF GOD IS SO GLORIOUS AND COMPLETE, WHY DID HE CREATE?**

"The mainspring behind all of God's acts in creation and redemption is his benevolent love. God's chief reason for creating and redeeming is to diffuse His glory and goodness throughout all the earth."  
—Jonathan Edwards, *"The End for Which God Created the World"*

"God's most profound self-revelation is seen in the Cross. We usually think the Cross is something God did to "solve" the sin problem that alienates us from God. However, in the Cross we see the manifestation of the essence of God's nature. The Cross reveals who God is, not what God did as an action separate from God's nature." —Robert Mulholland

#### **WHO IS THE GOD WE'LL WANT TO WORSHIP FOR ALL ETERNITY?**

Jeremiah 32:40-41 *"I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. <sup>41</sup>I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul."*

Ephesians 1:3-12

*<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup>even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup>he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup>which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, <sup>12</sup>so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.*

John 17:24

*“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”*

Jeremiah 32:40-41

*“I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. <sup>41</sup>I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.”*

### **SOME QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DEVOTION:**

1. Many Christians find theology boring. Why do you suppose this is? How might theology be taught in a way that would make it more interesting?
2. From your personal Christian experience, what is the gospel? How has it been explained to you and how have you shared it with others? From what you have understood of the gospel, what makes it “good news?”
3. How does knowing that God has planned our salvation from eternity-past bring comfort to you? (Or, how does it bother you, if any?) Why should it be comforting that God doesn’t react to our behaviors but had initiated His great plan of creation and salvation from before time began?
4. Re-read Robert Mulholland’s quote. What does he mean, that the Cross reveals the essence of God’s nature instead of it merely solving a sin problem? Why is this quote important to understand as we think about who God is? How does this affect the way you understand God and His love for you, if any? How can you pray to thank God for His amazing, wondrous, and steadfast love?