

GOD'S PLAN

A GODLY FAMILY



THE
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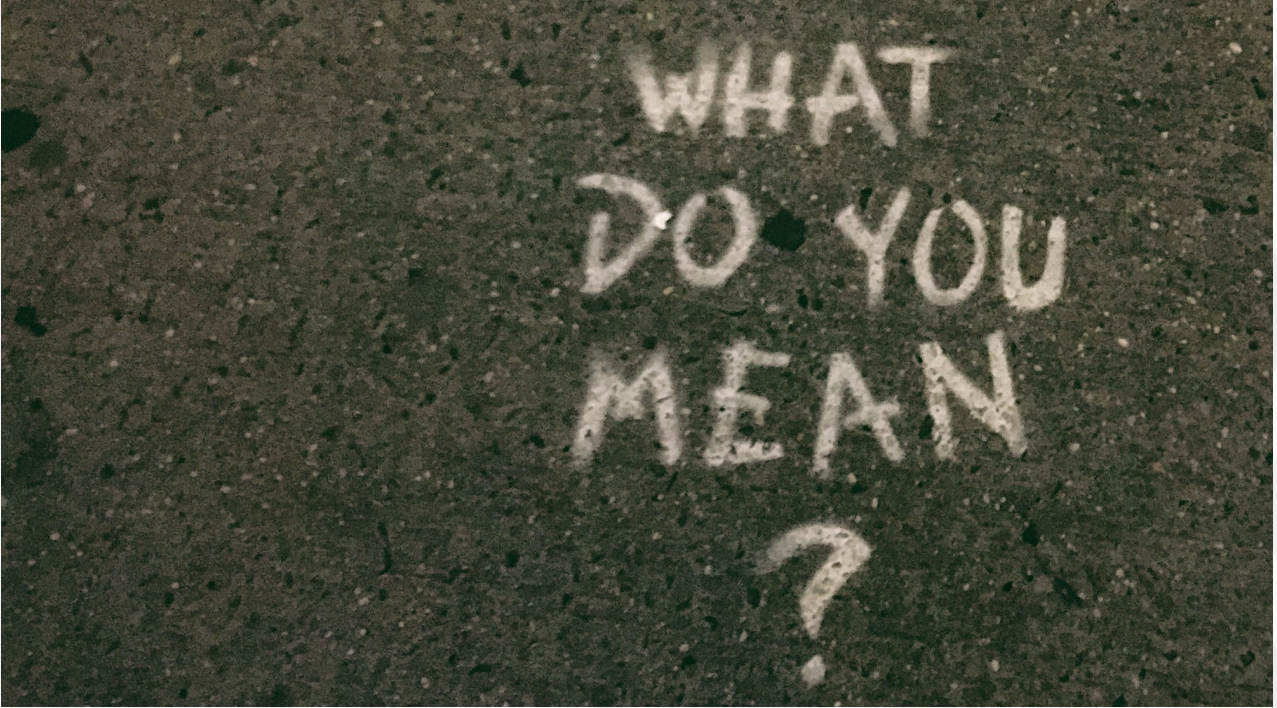
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A COMMON ERROR



Why am I here? What's the purpose of life? These are some of the questions that most people live with. On one hand, societies and cultures tell us how life should be, what a successful life looks like, and how to get there. On the other hand, religion says that we're doomed and that we desperately need to get right with God in order to be saved.

Depending on what we believe, we end up establishing our own goals, purposes, and plans to achieve the perfect life and to make it to heaven.

Many people create their goals from a humanistic perspective, keeping themselves at the center of all things.

“

*And the end of all our
exploring will be to arrive
where we started and to know
the place for the first time.*

—
T.S. ELIOT

”

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

Even those who seek God through religion or an intimate relationship with Him often find themselves without an answer for their purpose in life. Start asking people what they believe God's plan for human kind is and you will find many people saying man's salvation is the ultimate goal.

This misunderstanding comes from a man-centered perspective: Humans messed up, they separated themselves from God through disobedience and Sin, seeking independence from God, and now they need saving. From this perspective, the "Fall" perspective, everything is tainted with the humanistic mindset. Everything is thought, felt, observed, and projected from the creatures point of view instead of the Creator's.

If God's ultimate plan is mankind's salvation, then we could say that God is an accomplice of sin, since Eve's first sin was necessary in order to fulfill His plan. When God commanded "Do not eat the fruit of this tree", he must have secretly wanted Eve to disobey Him and eat from it, so that man would be separated from Him, lost in darkness and dead in sin.



GOD'S DESIRE IS TO SAVE ALL MANKIND.
GOD'S PLAN IS RELATIONSHIP.

WHY GOD CREATED MAN?

The God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

Genesis 1:26

God's deepest longing is relationship: a huge family of sons and daughters made in His own image and likeness; a family that could express His glory and authority.



So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

Genesis 1:27-28

GOD CREATED US FOR A LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

Once Adam and Eve were created in the image of God, the rest of humanity would also be made in the image, likeness, and nature of God.

Adam enjoyed the fullness and wholeness of God, of having a relationship with Him. Truth and Love ruled their relationship, therefore Adam had a complete sense of belonging and dependence on His creator. Even though he was the creature, he was made autonomous (not independent) and with free will.

God's love for man was so deep, that He gave us the choice to love Him back freely. True love is not forced, but gently and slowly cultivated through continuous communion between the lover and the loved one. Think about it!

Would you prefer to be loved by someone who has no choice in the matter? Or would you prefer to be loved by someone who made the free and deliberate decision to love you? Of course we want to be loved by someone that chooses to love us back by their own accord. That is the only condition true love can survive in. God created us, and loved us so much that He gave us the power to choose whether to love him or not.

HOW DID SIN INTERFERE?

The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Genesis 3:6-7

Man's sin was a violent intrusion into God's plan. Through sin, man became separate from God, deserving eternal punishment and dismissal from God's presence. By choosing independence from God, man broke the unity between himself, God, and the rest of humanity.

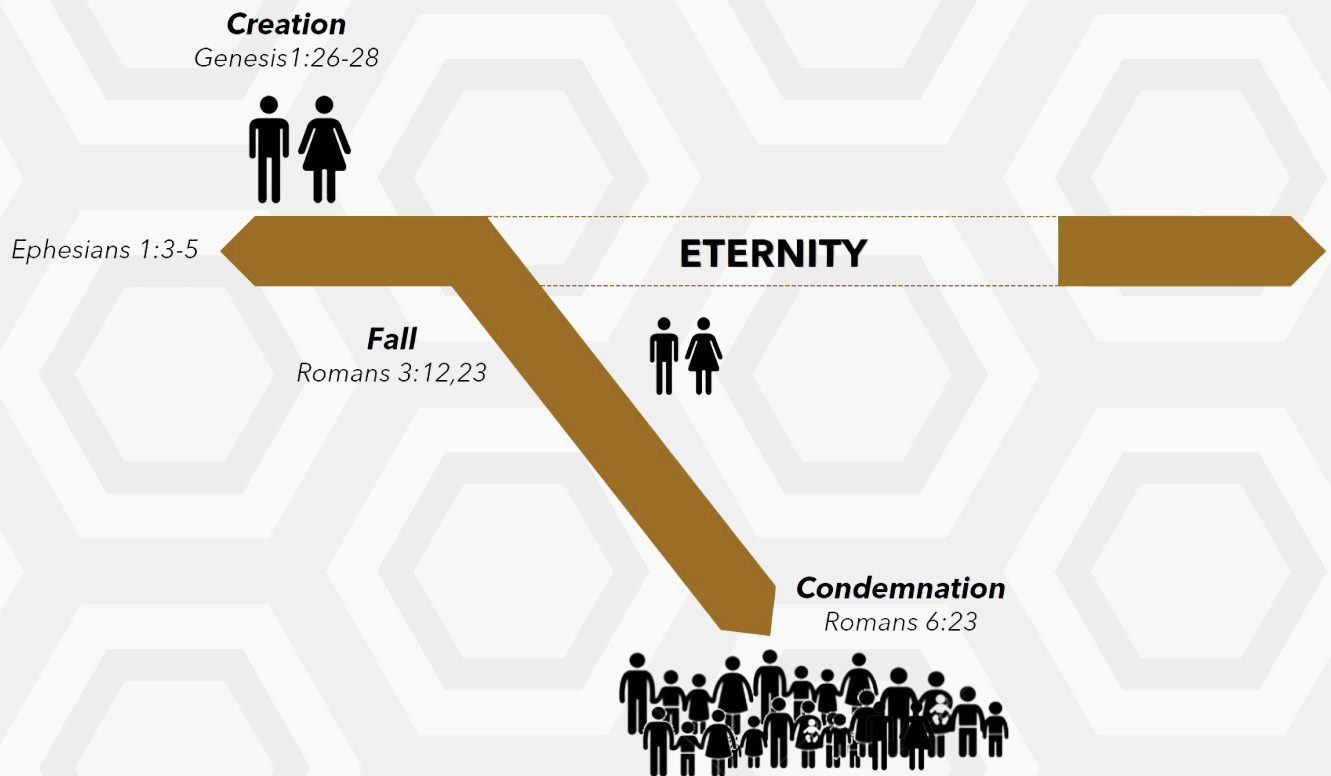
For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

However, the great consequence of Eve's first sin is not only the disunity created between man and God, but also the shifting of human nature away from God's image, and towards a sin nature, destined to be separated from God. Man's nature was corrupted and the creature fell away from God's ultimate plan of eternal relationship with His Creation.

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

When Adam and Eve first sinned, they not only corrupted themselves, but all of their offspring as well. The future of mankind was stained by the original sin, for Adam and Eve reproduced in their own image. (Genesis 5:3; Romans 5:12)



WE CHOSE TO BE
INDEPENDENT OF GOD.

DID GOD GIVE UP HIS PLAN?

God did not change or terminate his plan even though man chose sin and independence. Because of this sin, the descendants of Adam have become useless in God's purpose for creation. God needed to create a new race for humankind.

The Scriptures tell us, "The first man, Adam, became a living person." But the last Adam—that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. What comes first is the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man.

1 Corinthians 15:45-48

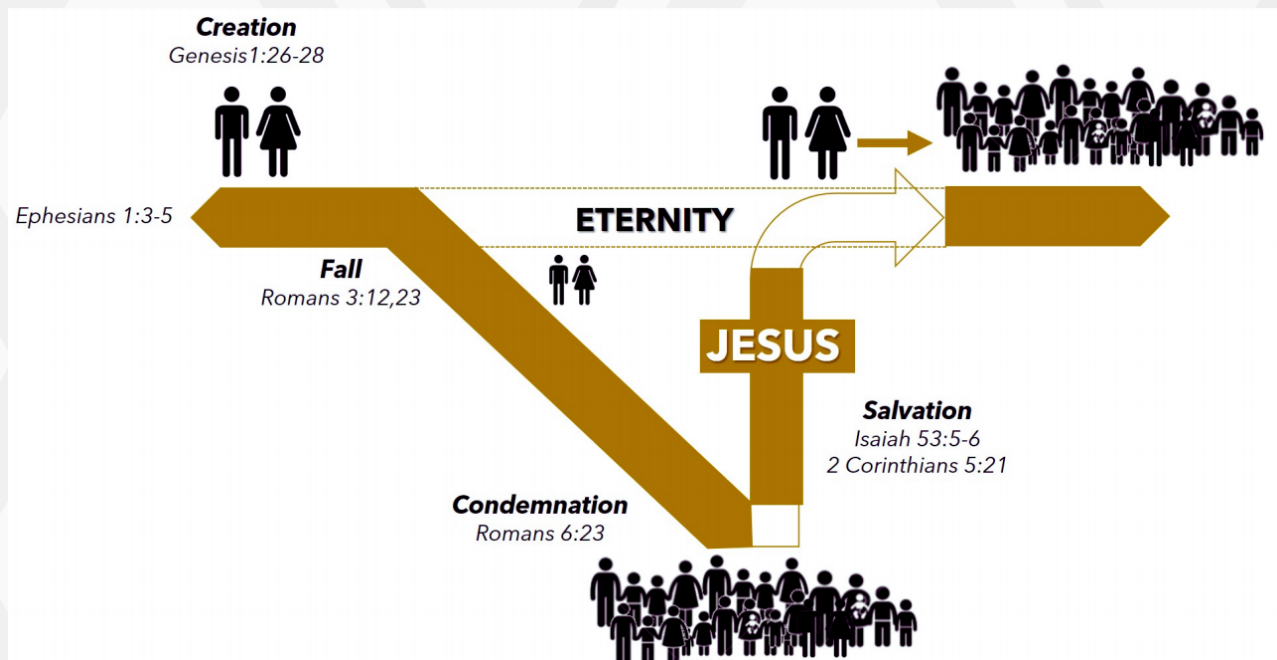
By flesh and blood, we belong to the race of Adam. But by new birth through baptism in Christ, we become partakers of the celestial race.

Adam lost the image of God because he chose independence from God (Genesis 3:1-7). Jesus, who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), always did the will of the Father (John 4:34), and in all things pleased Him (John 8:29), was obedient unto death (Philippians 2:8).

Every man who believes in the one whom the Father sent (John 6:29) denies himself and takes up his own cross (Matthew 16:24), loses his life (Matthew 16:25), receives the lordship of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9) and is baptized in Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16). Then he becomes a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17), receives the nature of God (II Peter 1:4) and receives the image of the One who created him (Colossians 3:10). What is your hope, then? "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27)

SALVATION IS A MEANS, NOT THE GOAL

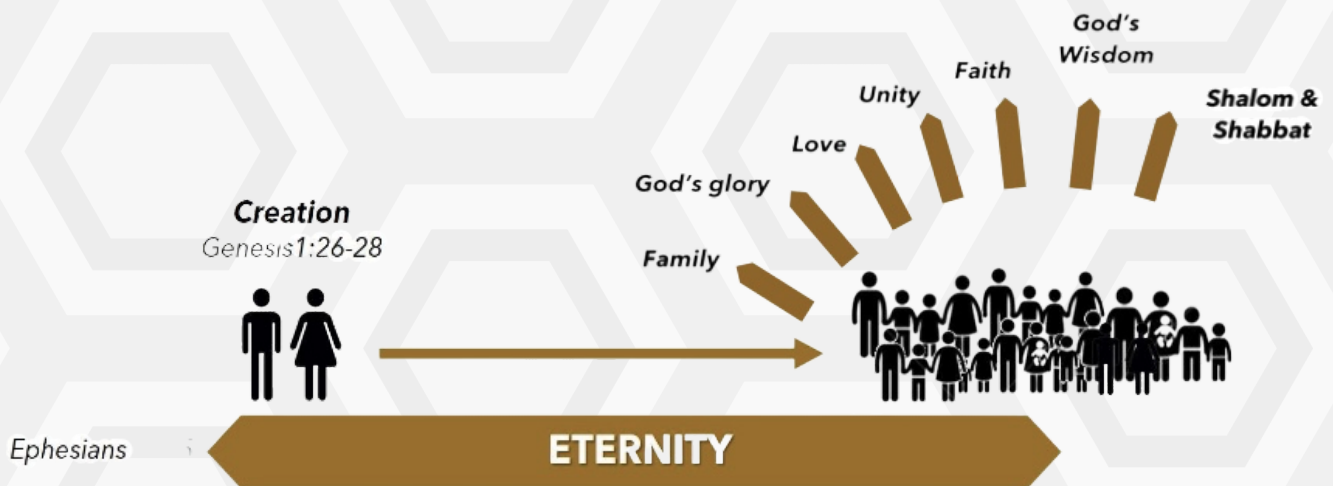
The redemptive work of Jesus Christ is something so tremendous and so wonderful that we often see it as the entirety of God's plan. Salvation is a loving, gracious, and sacrificial act, but it isn't the whole story.



Jesus Christ gave man a new life through His redemptive work on the cross, restoring our communion and fellowship to the Father. The redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ and incarnated by the church is the MEANS for God to restore all things, and thus to complete His plan.

GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

Redemption itself is not the end of the story. It is a wonderful act of God's grace that corrects a great error made by man. For Paul, redemption was never God's full plan. He understood that the God's ultimate purpose for man was the eternal family (Ephesians 1: 4-5; Romans 8: 28-29). A perfect family in Christ (Philippians 3: 12-14). His work for the Lord was not to simply "save" mankind by giving them eternal life, but to restore their image back to that of Jesus Christ, so that they may be presented to God as pure and blameless. (Colossians 1:28).



GOD CHOSE TO RESTORE
RELATIONSHIP WITH US
THROUGH JESUS.



A huge family of sons and daughters in
the image and likeness of Jesus

SUM UP



A Common Error

God's plan is not salvation even though He desires to save all mankind. His plan is relationship.



Why God created us?

God created us to live a love relationship with Him. He wanted a huge family of sons and daughters in the image and likeness of Jesus.



How Did Sin Interfere in God's Plan?

Adam and Even decided to be independent of God and live from their own will. So they choose Sin over Love. That conscious decision led them to be and live a part from God.



Did God Give Up His Plan?

God never changed His plan. He continue to pursue us and a relationship with us. In order to get us back to Him, He gave Jesus, his only Son, to die on the cross for us. Through Jesus we are reunited with the Father, by receiving His own nature and life—Holy Spirit—in our spirit.



Salvation Is a Means, Not a Goal

Jesus work was not to simply save us by giving us eternal life, but to restore His image in us, so that we may be presented to God as pure and blameless.



GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN

A HUGE FAMILY OF SONS AND
DAUGHTERS IN THE IMAGE AND
LIKENESS OF JESUS

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