

MISSION:
~~IMPOSSIBLE~~

WEEK ONE

Introduction to the mission of God, the *missio Dei*.



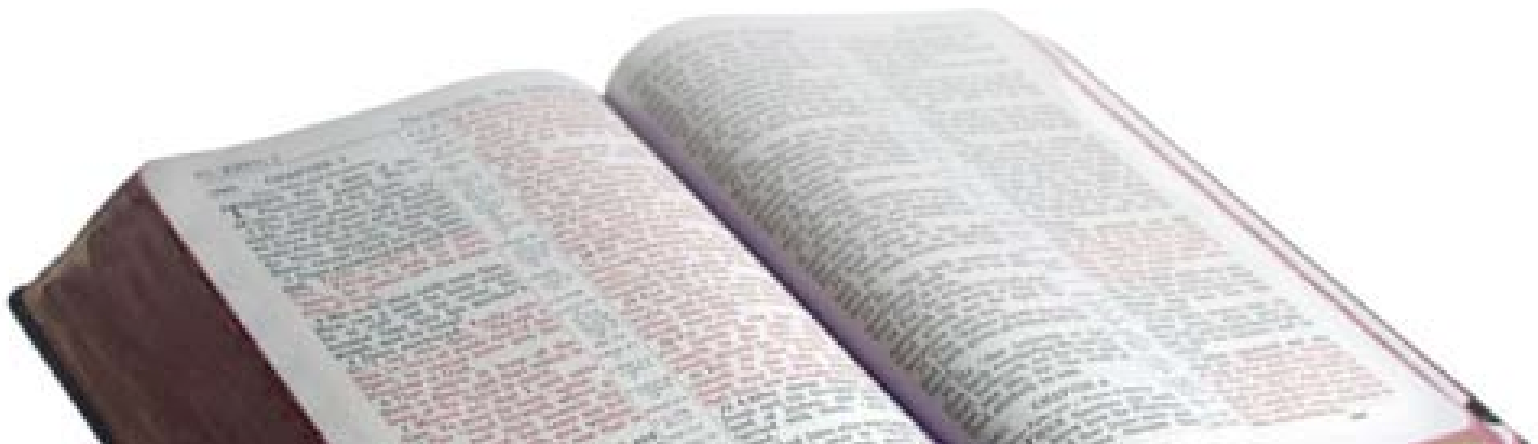
Welcome

We are so pleased that you are taking this course. As it is the first year that this course has run, we are looking forward to hearing your constructive feedback at the end of it.



WE ARE ALL at different stages of our spiritual journey. Some of us know a lot about the Bible; others of us are just beginning to dip our toes into it. Some of us have been Christians for a long time; others are beginning to learn what it means to follow Jesus. While this is a basic course, we hope that there is a simplicity and richness that you are able to connect with.

Continued...



OUR FIVE WEEKS have a deliberate thread running through them. We begin with looking at who God is in Jesus (our Christology), and then look at what is the mission of God that we are called to participate in (our Missiology) and then we will finally look at what shape the church needs to be in light of that mission (our Ecclesiology).

Continued...



OUR HOPE IS that at the end of the course we will see that God is at work in the world and that we are invited be part of that.

God's mission awaits if you choose to accept it....



Missio Dei!

(The mission of God)

In our first week together we are going to be asking ourselves the big question, “What is the mission of God? What is the work of God in the world?” And we hope to find the answer by looking at God’s original intention for

- 1) creation
- 2) humanity and
- 3) us as individuals.



What does the Bible have to say about God's intention for Creation?

Genesis 1:1-2, 24-25

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters...





²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:26–28

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”



²⁷So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸God 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 air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”



When we read this account, how would we answer, “What is God’s intention for creation?”



What is God's intention for God's human creation? Is it the same or different from God's intention for the rest of creation?



A landscape photograph featuring dark, silhouetted mountains in the foreground and middle ground. The sky is filled with heavy, dark, grey clouds, with a bright blue patch of sky visible through a gap in the clouds. A thin, white contrail or streak is visible in the blue sky. The overall mood is dramatic and ominous.

But then something went wrong....

We are now going to read the story from Genesis that has become known as

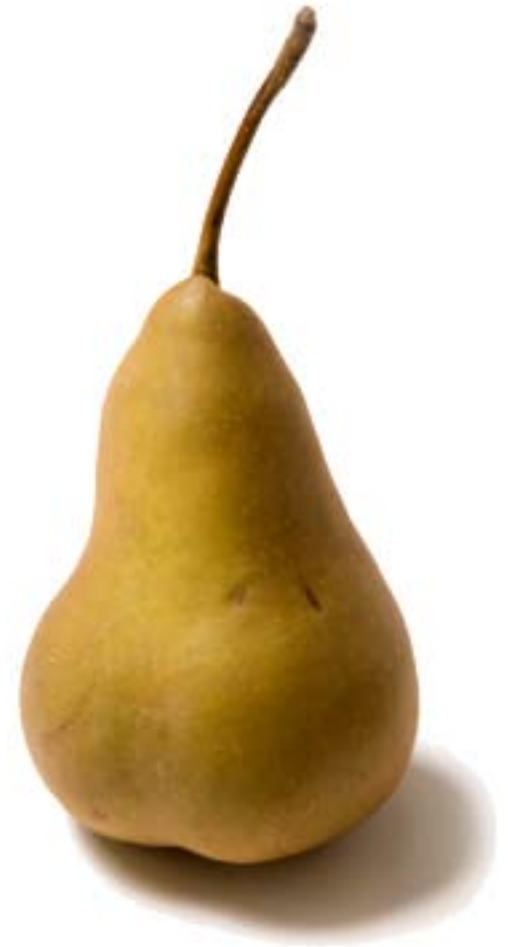
‘The Fall’

Genesis 3:1–21

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

²The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; ³but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden,

nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die; ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”



⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. ⁸They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

‘The Question’

⁹But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” ¹¹He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹²The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” ¹³Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.”



¹⁴The Lord God said to the serpent,
“Because you have done this, cursed are
you among all animals and among all wild
creatures; upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat all the days of your
life. ¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the
woman, and between your offspring and
hers; he will strike your head, and you will
strike his heel.”

The Curse

¹⁶To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷And to the man he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it



shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

²¹And the Lord God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.



So what went wrong?

Who did we get separated from?

Because of the Fall, humanity now finds itself in the natural state of being separated from God. There are divisions between human beings and brokenness between us and our creation.



The brokenness and separation that we all experience in different parts of our lives is a **reality**. Despite this fact, **God's mission remains the same. God's mission, the *missio Dei*, is to bring both humanity and creation back into right relationship with God.**

God still has the same hopes and dreams for our lives.
God still has the same desire for us

- creative
- life/living
- beauty
- wholeness
- “good”

But **NOW** with the important additions of

- Restoration _____
- Recovery _____
- Redemption _____



To accomplish these things, God sent Jesus.



What was Jesus' mission?

John 1:1–5, 9–18

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is 'the incarnation'

...God coming to earth in human form.

God came and dwelt among us as the man,
Jesus of Nazareth, so that we can be led to

- Restoration
- Recovery
- Redemption.

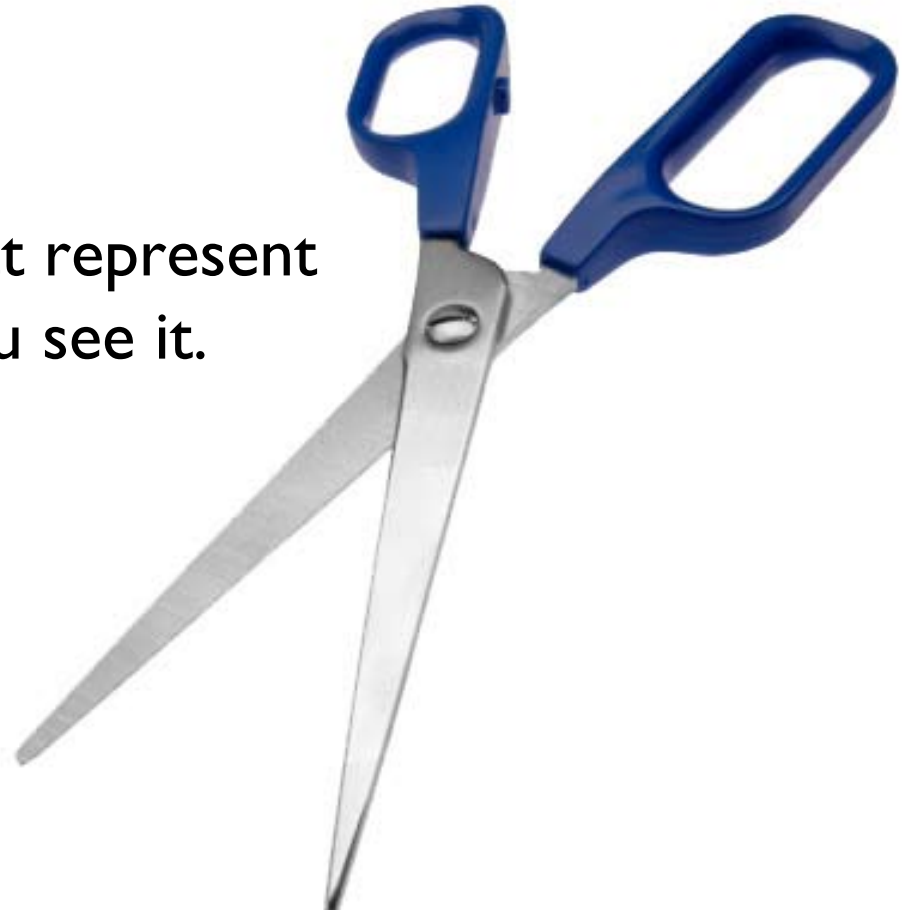


Next week we will discuss more what these three words mean and how they are related to the *missio Dei*. We will look at how Jesus accomplished restoration, recovery and redemption in his life, death and physical resurrection.



For next week

Cut out and bring pictures that represent creation/fall/redemption as you see it.



Closing Prayer

“Gracious God, we thank you for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life. We offer up to you the reality of our broken relationships; with you, with others and with the world you have made for us. Thank you that you desire to heal that brokenness and that your mission is to bring all of creation and humanity back into right relationship with you. We give you thanks in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

