Who is God?

GOD'S CREATION AND THE PROBLEM OF SIN

INTRO

Once upon a time there was a toad. After being coaxed out of the comfort of his hobbit hole by Gandalf the wizard, Toad went on a long journey with a talking donkey to find his pride (pack of lions) and become their king.

You see Toad though he had killed his dad, but it was Mufasa who did it! When he became king, a princess kissed him, and he became a wooden puppet, but in the end, the fairy godmother made him a real boy…and he lived happily ever after.

Notice anything strange about the story? There was no real beginning. No end. No meaning. It was just random images and events pieced together. You would wonder if the author was even awake while writing or if the story just kind of wrote itself…

That's life without God.

If there is not intelligent mind behind life, then the story of human history and each life in particular is no more than disjointed events thrown together by chance.

Thankfully, there is more. There is an overarching story that the creation of the universe, the events of human history, and the story of your life fit within. It's written by the hand of God. It has a happy ending and every person is a key player.

RECAP

Explain: Last week, we looked at God as "Father" and as "the Creator" of everything. Two of the important principles that we learned about God is that, First, as our Heavenly Father, God has an infinite unconditional love for us and, second, as the Creator of all things, God made his creation good and holy, just as he is completely good and holy.

However, a problem arises when we realize that if God created everything good, then why is there so much evil in the world? Did God create evil? If not, where did evil come from? Write down what you think.

Read catechism questions 47-48

Explain: This week we're going to look at God's creation and the problem of sin

Creation

One Hebrew word sums up the picture of Genesis 1 and 2: shalom. Peace. Earth was full of God's shalom, the kind of peace in which everything works according to God's intention. God called his creation "good." The world was made for human flourishing, there we could live in joy in the presence of our Maker, worshiping God by loving Him and one another forever.

God created human beings in his image, gave them the world as their home, and work to do, so we understand ourselves to be God's children (Genesis 1:27). We relate to God the way children relate to their parents, relying on God to give us wisdom, health, and joy. Yet, if God created a world of goodness and peace, why is there so much evil in his world?

Fall

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden shows us how human beings fail to obey God (Genesis 3). Adam and Eve rejected God's rule over them. We refer to their rebellious choice as "the fall," and because the represented all of humanity, their action affects us too.

We sin; that is, we fail to perfectly holy live lives as God does. Whenever we sin, we hurt ourselves and others, and we hurt our relationship with God. But God wasn't done with Adam and Eve when they sinned, and he's not done with us when we sin. From the very first moment sin entered the world, God began his plan to heal the broken relationship between Him and His people.

The Promise of Redemption

Reconciliation, however, is not as easy as forgiving and forgetting sin ever happened. God's plan to restore His creation included using his people to take part in redemption

process. Genesis tells how God called Abraham and Sarah, sending them to a new land and promising them they would begin a great nation that would be a blessing to all the people of the earth (Genesis 12). God made a promise to Abraham (a covenant) that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars and would live in the promised land (Genesis 15:1-21). Eventually, these people became known as Israel and then later, Jews.

Through the descendants of Abraham, God was able to reveal Himself. On Mount Sinai, God gives Moses and the people the Ten Commandments, laws that tell us how to live in right relationship with God and our fellow human beings. This gift, the law, tells us God's will for us, how God wants us to live. With the giving and receiving of this gift, God promised to be present to his people, and the people promised to love and obey God (Exodus 19-24). God's people, however, failed again and again to follow the law. The Old Testament stories show how they stray from the path God asks them to follow and God calls them back through the work of prophets, judges, and kings. Though the people break their promise to obey God, God remains faithful to his people. God made a covenant with his people in order to save them and keep them in relationship with him.

Thankfully, God, who rightly shows Himself to be wrathful toward our sin, is determined to turn evil and suffering into good. The New Testament shows God implementing His master plan for redeeming His world and rescuing fallen sinners. In the person of Jesus Christ, God Himself comes to renew the world and restore His people. The grand narrative of Scripture climaxes with the death and resurrection of Jesus, God the Father's Son.

Show the video, "What's your story, God? A look at salvation history."

CLOSE IN PRAYER

O God our heavenly Father, you have blessed us and given us dominion over all the earth: Increase our reverence before the mystery of life; and give us new insight into your purposes for the human race, and new wisdom and determination in making provision for its future in accordance with your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

-BCP 828

Challenge of the Week

What is your favorite movie? What makes it a good story? (e.g., theme, plot, story structure, characters, setting, style)

How would you sum up the story of the salvation?

How does the story of salvation impact the story of our own lives?

Read Ephesians 2.1-3 and Galatians 5.19.

- What impact has sin had on us?

Read Colossians 1:15-23 and Romans 6:1-14.

- What is God doing to restore what sin has spoiled?