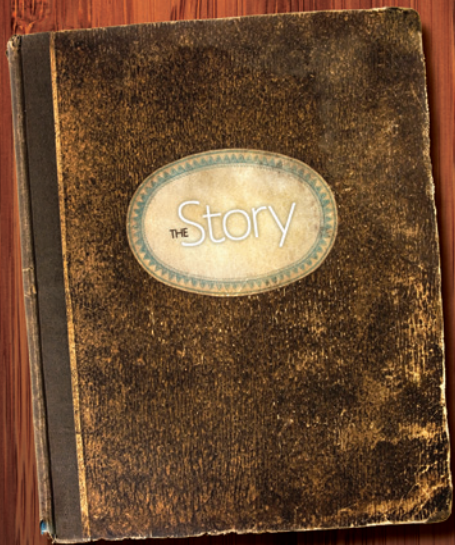


THE Story

*How it all began and
how it will never end...*



ViewTheStory.com



The following pages are the summary of a true story. It is like many good stories you've heard or read, but the more you read, the more you'll realize this is not just another story—it is *the story*. It defines us all. It makes us think about who we are and who we can become. *And so...*

How did it all begin?

Creation

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED
THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH."
GENESIS 1:1 (NIV)

God

The story begins with God, who has always been. He has always existed, and He has always existed exactly as He is now. If it seems confusing, it's because He's beyond what anyone can fully comprehend.

Creation

In the beginning, God spoke and everything came into existence. By His command, the entire universe was created and filled with a dramatic display of galaxies, stars, and planets—including Earth, on which was a perfect garden of paradise called Eden. Of all the beauty He created, the masterpiece was a man and a woman. God made Adam and Eve in His image to reflect Him. They were created with the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying relationship with Him.

Harmony

By God's design, all of creation was in harmony and was exactly the way it was supposed to be. During this time there was no pain, suffering, sickness or death. There was complete love, acceptance, and intimacy between God and man, between Adam and Eve, and throughout creation. *But something tragic happened...*

"BEFORE THE MOUNTAINS WERE BROUGHT FORTH, OR EVER YOU HAD FORMED THE EARTH
AND THE WORLD, FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING YOU ARE GOD." PSALM 90:2 (ESV)

WHAT WENT WRONG? THE FALL



DISOBEDIENCE

Adam and Eve were far from being equal to God, yet He lovingly placed them in charge of all He had created in Eden. He gave them the freedom to make decisions and govern the earth with one rule: not to eat fruit from a specific tree. One day, God's enemy, a fallen angel named Satan, wanted to overthrow God so he took the form of a serpent and lied to Adam and Eve. He deceived them into thinking God was not good and did not have their best interest in mind. As a result, they knowingly disobeyed God. In rebellion, Adam and Eve ate the fruit, deciding that they, not God, would determine right and wrong.

**"NONE IS RIGHTEOUS, NO,
NOT ONE." ROMANS 3:10 (ESV)**

CONSEQUENCE

The consequences of their actions were devastating! Like a virus, sin entered into all of creation and into the hearts of Adam and Eve. Sin, suffering, and pain were passed down from generation to generation; all of creation was distorted from its original design. We have all read or heard the stories of war, poverty, disease, greed, and scandals that plague our world today. Those are all a result of sin.

**"THE ENTIRE WORLD IS GUILTY
BEFORE GOD." ROMANS 3:19 (NLT)**

NEED

When we think about the perfection and love that existed at the beginning of creation, we realize "we are far more flawed and far more sinful than we can dare imagine."¹ Just think of the grudges we've held, the lies we've told, the thoughts we'd never dare say aloud. An honest glance into our own hearts reveals the truth: we are all guilty. Everyone has sinned, and the ultimate consequence, even worse than physical death, is eternal separation from a loving God, in terrible misery and unhappiness. Because of all this, we need to consider the questions: *Can anything be done? Is there any hope?*

Is there any hope?



therescue

Promise Made

God removed Adam and Eve from Eden as a result of their sin but left them with a promise of rescue and hope. He promised them one of their descendants would someday rescue mankind from sin. Over the next centuries, God prepared the way for this person who would become the Savior of the world. Exact details of His birth, life, and death were recorded in the Bible many centuries before His coming. In fact, the whole Bible ultimately points to this one person as the focal point of all human history. His purpose in coming was “to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10).

So who was He?

PROMISE KEPT

The promised Savior, simply, was God. God became human in the person of Jesus Christ almost 2,000 years ago, fulfilling all the predictions in the Old Testament. Jesus' birth was miraculous since His mother was a virgin. His life was unique: He perfectly enjoyed and obeyed God without sin. This ultimately led to His agonizing death on a cross as He willingly, obediently, and sufficiently died to pay for the sins of mankind, according to God's plan. In the greatest display of mercy and grace the world has ever known, Jesus' life and death became a substitute for all who would trust in Him. The perfectly innocent died to rescue the hopelessly guilty from sin and Satan.

But the grave couldn't hold Jesus. Three days later, Jesus emerged from His tomb, fulfilling His earthly mission to defeat sin by dying on the cross and to defeat death by rising from the dead—just as God promised. Forty days later He returned to Heaven where He reigns as the rightful King.

But the story doesn't end there...

"FOR CHRIST ALSO SUFFERED ONCE FOR SINS, THE RIGHTEOUS
FOR THE UNRIGHTEOUS, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD."
1 PETER 3:18 (ESV)

"JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE FOR OUR SINS, JUST AS GOD OUR FATHER
PLANNED, IN ORDER TO RESCUE US FROM THIS EVIL WORLD IN
WHICH WE LIVE." GALATIANS 1:4 (NLT)

What will the future hold? the Restoration

ALL THINGS NEW

For all those who trust in Jesus alone, God has also promised He will make all things new. The new heaven and new earth will be completely free of sin and selfishness—a place of perfect friendship with God, others, and all creation. No more shattering earthquakes, devastating tsunamis or violent storms will plague the earth. No more pain, broken hearts, sickness or death to trouble us. Everything will be restored to the way it was meant to be. The new earth will once again be the perfect home God intended for His creation. God's original purpose will flourish, as those who trust in His rescue will enter into the grand purpose of worshipping Him by loving Him, serving Him, and enjoying relationship with Him forever.

FOREVER WITH GOD

The most wonderful part of this new world is that we will be with God forever, experiencing complete joy. We will be restored to a perfect relationship with the One who created, loved, and died for us. C. S. Lewis, scholar and children's author, compared the first step into this new world as "Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before."²

"THEN I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH.... GOD HIMSELF WILL BE WITH THEM AS THEIR GOD. HE WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR FROM THEIR EYES, AND DEATH SHALL BE NO MORE, NEITHER SHALL THERE BE MOURNING, NOR CRYING, NOR PAIN ANYMORE, FOR THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY." REV. 21:1, 3-4 (ESV)

What's your part in the story?

God is writing an amazing story from creation to restoration. He created you to be a part of that story to worship Him, serve Him, and enjoy relationship with Him. By joining God in His story, you will find forgiveness, purpose, and satisfaction as you come to know the Author of life.

Rescue by Faith Alone

Faith is simple trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you. It means instead of believing you can rescue yourself from the consequences of sin, you transfer your trust to the rescue He purchased for you by His death. Your allegiance is now to Jesus, the King. Those who place their trust in anything other than Jesus will find themselves forever separated from the loving God who gave His one and only Son to set us free from the bondage of sin. This painful separation is called Hell.

"FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH. AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD, NOT A RESULT OF WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST." EPHESIANS 2:8-9 (ESV)

Recap



The Creation: In the beginning, God created everything to be perfect.



The Fall: Man rebelled against a loving God & believed Satan's lie. Sin entered into the world & into every human heart. Everything is now distorted & broken. Everyone is guilty before God.



The Rescue: Jesus, who is God, came to rescue people by His death & resurrection. By faith alone in Him, all who are separated from God can have their sins forgiven & enjoy eternal life with Him.



The Restoration: God will restore everything to the way that it was supposed to be, and those who trust in Jesus will get to enjoy eternity with God in the new heaven and new earth.

Response

God is inviting you to be part of the story He is writing throughout the ages to come. He is offering salvation to you today, which is your invitation to the rescue God offers. You can embrace the rescue of God by simply:

- Admitting your need to God
- Asking Him to forgive you and help you turn from sin
- Trusting in Jesus Christ alone to rescue you
- Following Jesus Christ, the King of your life, in faith from this day forward

"Truly, truly, I
say to you,
whoever believes
has eternal life."

John 6:47 (ESV)

The **MOMENT** you trust Jesus Christ, you become a CHILD of God and **His Spirit** BEGINS to LIVE inside of **you**. You have become part of **His story**. The more you **gROW** in your **RELATIONSHIP** with God, the more of **His story** you will begin to see & understand in your LIFE. All of your sin, **past** and **future**, is forgiven, and you now find **TOTAL ACCEPTANCE** before Him. When you begin this relationship, Jesus PROMISES to be with you through all the **UPS** and **DOWNs** and in the **joys** and *difficulties* of this life. He loves **YOU** with an **EVERLASTING, unchanging love**. And not only has He promised eternal life, but He came so that YOU could also experience **purpose, fulfillment, and FREEDOM** in **THIS** life.

Where do I go from here?

Read the Bible

The Bible is the story of God's love and faithfulness to His people. It provides encouragement, instruction, warning, and correction that will help you make sense of your life. As you read it, ask God to show you something you can apply to your life. If you're not sure where to begin, start with the Gospel of Mark in the New Testament.

Find Community

Getting connected with others who have trusted in the rescue of God is essential. A "church" is a community of Christians gathering regularly to worship God as His family. Each member of the family plays a vital role: Similar to the human body, each part helps the whole body function properly. The church is the Body of Christ.

Talk with God

Talking with God is another way you will get to know Him. He is always ready to listen and spend time with you, so you can always speak with Him. He invites you to share all your burdens and joys with Him; this is prayer.

Tell your Story

Share this news with everyone! Let them hear the amazing story of God's love and rescue and how it's changed your life.

Ask a question or tell us your story at: www.ViewTheStory.com

¹ Dr. Tim Keller, "The Centrality of the Gospel," Redeemer Presbyterian, NYC.

² C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (New York: Collier/Macmillan, 1977, ©1956), 183–84.

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THE Story



How did it all begin?
Creation



What went wrong?
THE FALL

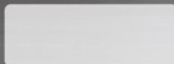


Is there any hope?
therescue



What will the future hold?
Restoration

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