

# Progress of Redemption #01

by David Shirley

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*The sermon explores the theme of redemption throughout the Bible, emphasizing Christ's central role in both the Old and New Testaments.*

**Duration:** 1:16:03

**Scripture:** Genesis 3:15, Hebrews 1:1

**Topics:** "Redemption"

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## Description

The video is a sermon on the theme of redemption in the Bible. The speaker discusses the eight major sections of the Bible and their themes, starting with Genesis and the theme of election. The speaker emphasizes that Christ is the central theme of each section and that the Old Testament foreshadows him while the New Testament reveals him. The sermon encourages listeners to study the relationships between these sections to understand God's blueprint for human history.

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## Transcript

Welcome to the Progressive Redemption course. I trust you've read your syllabus, and seen that this is a special survey from Genesis to Revelation. We will study the relationships between significant sections of Scripture, unified by the theme of redemption, in order to see the blueprint of God for human history.

Please read your course objectives, and note that under your course requirements, that your grade will be determined as follows. The weekly worksheet, or your notebook, in which you will be taking notes in class, and your midterm and final exams. Also, there will be a project, or a term paper, in which we would like you to take the eight thematic sections of the Bible, and list within those sections the Christocentric themes of each of the 66 books of the Bible, found in those eight thematic sections of the Bible.

But before we begin, let's just pause for a moment of prayer. Father, we do want to come to you today as your children, born of your Spirit, born of the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, that lives and abides forever. We come as babes in hearts, willing to submit, wanting to believe and trust your Word, so that if you reveal to us your will, our hearts are prepared to do it.

And if not, Lord, we ask that you would change our hearts and make us ready to do your will. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things from thy law. We ask that you would grant us the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of you and of your Son, Jesus Christ, so that we can know the things that you've freely given to us, and that we might make you known.

So we commit this study to you, and ask for your help that we might relate it to your thing, to your plan, to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. To him be the glory, both now and forevermore. Amen.

It is our intention that we would, as Paul said, declare unto you, not shrink from declaring unto you, the whole counsel of God, the whole purpose of God. And to study, to present ourselves, a proof to God, workers that do not need to be ashamed, but rightly dividing the word of truth. And if you could, for a moment, pretend that I have a puzzle in my hand, and this puzzle has 66 pieces to it.

And I'm going to take this puzzle with its 66 pieces and shuffle it like a deck of cards. And I'm going to deal to you a few of those pieces, as there are 66 books in the Bible. Now, I don't know how many books of the Bible you've actually read.

Some of you may have been dealt all 66 books. Some of you may have read half of the Bible. Maybe you have read 30 or so books of the Bible.

Some may have read 10. Some maybe less. Maybe you're here and just getting started in your study of God's precious word.

And we're so glad to have you, if you are. But can you imagine being given only a few pieces of a puzzle and then being asked to put that puzzle together, assemble that puzzle, and then rightly divide and correctly interpret and tell all the intricacies of that puzzle? And yet, many people are trying to rightly divide the Bible and they have not yet first rightly united the Bible. And so we want to look at the theme of both the Old and the New Testaments, the most basic division of the Bible, which is Christ Jesus Himself.

You've no doubt heard that old saying, the new is in the old concealed and the old is in the new revealed. Because what the Old Testament foreshadowed, that is Christ, the New Testament fulfilled and revealed Christ. He was prefigured in the Old Testament, but with the New Testament there is the reality of Jesus Christ.

And God has said that though He has spoken in many and various ways in the past, in Hebrews 1, 1 and 2, in these last days, God has spoken directly through His Son, or more literally, in the Son. That's the message that God chooses to speak through in these last days. And so when we look at the Bible, it is divided up into eight major sections and Christ is the theme of each of these sections.

We first have what we call the Law from Genesis to Deuteronomy. We have that foundation upon which the message of Christ and God's salvation to the world is being built. We see people elected and chosen.

God chooses His people and builds His nation through a man. And the book of Genesis will give us this information. And then we see God redeem His people, bring them out in the book of Exodus, set them apart in Leviticus, make them a special and peculiar people, give them direction for their life in numbers, and instruct them further in Deuteronomy.

But it's all laying a foundation, the Law, the Pentateuch, the Torah. That's one section of the Bible. We will look to see how it relates to the theme of redemption.

And then there's the section of history, from Joshua to Esther, where we're making preparation for the Messiah to come. And under Joshua, the Israelites take possession of the land. And because of their lack of obedience, they were oppressed as a nation.

And we see in Judges that everyone did what was right in their own eyes. But yet, even in that time, there was devotion, true devotion. And we read about that in the book of Ruth.

And then finally, Samuel comes and brings that stabilization to the nation. And he anoints Saul as king. And the nation is stabilized.

David expands that kingdom. And finally, Solomon brings that kingdom into a tremendous glory, a glory that has impressed the whole world. And yet, with all that, Solomon did not follow the Lord as he ought to.

And after his death, there was a division. And his son Rehoboam followed the counsel of the young men rather than the elders, the older men. And there was a split so that Jeroboam became the king of the ten northern tribes and Rehoboam was king of the south, which is Judah, and of course the tribe of Benjamin, those two tribes.

And things just deteriorated. And in 2 Kings we can read about that until finally there was the deportation of the southern kingdom of Judah also. And Chronicles is a review of this prophetic history of Samuel and kings, but it views it from a priestly point of view and showing the destruction of the temple.

And yet we see that in the midst of all this, God's providential hand is still there. He is protecting his people in Babylon if we read the book of Esther. And then he restores them to their temple in Ezra.

He reconstructs the nation in Nehemiah. And they are waiting, this remnant of people. And all this history has been preparing them and getting them ready for the coming Messiah, Redeemer.

And so we call this the section of history. And then there's a third section of poetry, the five books of poetry, in which we see in a special way an aspiration for Jesus Christ is expressed. Even in the book of Job, in Job chapter 9 and verse 33, Job says that he had this aspiration for one who might lay his hand upon us both, that is, upon God and upon man.

We know that that is that one mediator found in 1 Timothy 2.5, that mediator Jesus Christ. And throughout the book of the Psalms, we feel that desire for communion with God. In Proverbs, we see how they aspire for the wisdom of God, that wisdom that's fulfilled in Christ alone, as Colossians tells us in chapter 2 and verse 3. And even when you read Ecclesiastes, you can't help but pick up there's an aspiration for satisfaction, that man can find his ultimate rest in God.

And the Song of Solomon, though, speaks of that marriage, that relationship between a man and a woman. There's that sense there where we can feel the longing for union, for love. And we know that the true lover of our souls is none other than Jesus Christ.

And so throughout these books of poetry, the thing that stands out that they express is that aspiration for Jesus Christ. And then there are the prophetic books from Isaiah to Malachi, in which we see the hope of a national restoration. We see international salvation being brought through Christ.

We see, of course, a retribution upon evil and a judgment upon sinful nations. Jeremiah, one of my favorite books, is about reaffirming the future covenant with Israel. And there's a tremendous expectation in these prophetic books of the Messiah, of Christ.

Ezekiel talks about a glorious restoration by Christ. Daniel deals with the political destination of the people and the time when Christ will come as a stone and be the King of kings and Lord of lords. Haggai and

Zechariah may point to a more religious restoration, and yet it's still through Christ.

And Malachi may look at a more moral reconstruction, but it's by Christ. And so the prophetic books have an expectation of the coming Messiah. Then the next major section of Scripture is the Gospels.

And we've been waiting and anticipating the realization of this coming Messiah. And finally, in the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, He's here, and so Christ is manifest. We see Him.

And in Matthew, He's manifest as the sovereign King to the Jews. In Mark, He's manifest in His ministry as a servant to the Romans. In Luke, He's manifest in His perfect humanity as a man to the Greeks.

And in John, He's manifest in His deity as God to the whole world. And so this anticipation that we've been waiting for culminates and is manifested in the Gospels. And we see Jesus Christ.

John points to Him. Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. And then the next section in the Bible is the New Testament history, which is the book of Acts.

And we read the story of how the Gospel and the good news about Jesus begins in Jerusalem, and then it moves out to the surrounding areas of Judea, and then on into Samaria, and finally, the Gospel is propagated and proclaimed throughout the whole world. And the disciples begin this worldwide proclamation of Christ, and there's a complete history of it in the book of Acts, which history, of course, is also prophetic in the sense that it's still continuing today through you and I. And it will be complete finally at the times of the fullness of the Gentiles, which we'll talk about later. But then there's another section of Scripture we call the Epistles.

And in the Epistles, we see the practical application of what we have in Christ. When we look at Paul's Epistles, where he has used the phrase in Christ so much, we see that Romans tells us that there's redemption in Christ, that in 1 Corinthians, there's sanctification. It's in Christ.

2 Corinthians, there's triumph, jubilant victory, overcoming victory in Christ. Galatians tells us that we're free. We've been emancipated.

It's in Christ. Ephesians says that we've been exalted and brought into union in Christ. Philippians tells us of the joy that we have in Christ and the participation that we have in Christ with the gospel that causes that joy.

And Colossians speaks of how we're complete in Christ, period. 1 Thessalonians, again, there's an expectation in Christ and His return. And as 2 Thessalonians tells us, there's a future glorification in Christ that is coming.

1 Timothy tells the believers that they're to be faithful in Christ. And 2 Timothy, to be sound and steadfast in Christ. So Titus also, to be steadfast and always engaged in those good works in Christ.

And Philemon tells of the benefit and the practical positive help we are in Christ. And then, not only in the Pauline epistles, but in the general epistles, where we're exhorted to follow Christ. Then we see in Hebrews that we're to follow Christ to perfection.

That He is the wisdom that James speaks about. We're to follow Him in submission. Peter talks about an impurity.

John tells us that we're to be in communion with Christ. And that our contributions and the things that we do are to be done for the cause of Christ. Jude says that we are to stand in contention for the faith.

The once for all delivered faith to Christ. And that's in Christ. And so, throughout the epistles, we see that the aspirations that were held in the Old Testament are now met and applied to our lives as we're in Christ.

And then finally, there is that prophecy in the New Testament as the prophets of the Old Testament. So, in the book of the Revelation, we have the consummation of all things in Christ. And it shows how all things are going to find and be filled and summed up in Christ.

And He's revealed as the King. Because in the Gospels, He's been the prophet to His people. In the Acts and the Epistles, He's been the priest for His people.

And now in Revelation, He consummates it all as King of kings and Lord of lords. So, as we study through the progress redemption, we're going to ask that you take these major sections and things of the Bible. These eight divisions of the Bible.

And to find in each of these the books and to list the theme there. Such as, we'll start with Genesis and say that the key verse in Genesis is Genesis 3.15 where it says that God has put enmity between thy seed and the woman's seed. God tells that there's going to be someone born from a woman and of the woman's seed.

And that one will be the Messiah, the Savior of the world. And there will be enmity between that one and between Satan. And if I could sum up the book of Genesis in one word, I would choose the word election.

Because in chapters one through eleven, God selects and elects certain things to tell us. In those first eleven chapters of Genesis, He picks out things. He covers everything from the creation of the universe to the creation of man and the origin of sin.

And how human civilization began. Includes the flood and the destruction and down to the Tower of Babel. And there are just so many things included in that.

And yet He selects only certain things to tell us. I often wish that He would have told us more things. Things that I would like to know about.

But He covers all that in just eleven chapters and then He turns in chapter twelve. And from chapter twelve to chapter fifty. He spends thirty-nine chapters giving details about one man and his family.

And then you wonder as you read through that, and we'll get into that later. Why did He choose this one man? And then why did He choose certain people in this man's family? And through those He brought the Messiah, the Redeemer of the world. And so I think of Genesis, I think of the word election.

And how it portrays Christ. It portrays Him as the seed of the woman. No doubt as we move on into Exodus.

We will see that in Exodus twelve He is the Passover Lamb. And so forth as we go through the books of the Bible. We will find that Christ is the same of each of the sixty-six books of the Bible.

And that they will fit together quite well. Now before we get too far down the line. Let's think about interpreting the Bible.

The meaning that we want to get as we go through the Bible. Is in the mind of the one speaking. God has spoken through His word.

We are the hearers. We want the interpretation. And so we want to follow the rules that God has given within scripture.

To get at the meaning. We want to exegete the word of God. Because Peter tells us that it is very possible if you turn to 2 Peter chapter three.

And look at verses fourteen through sixteen. Here in these verses we see that if you exegete the scripture. If you read into the scripture.

Rather than pulling out and exegeting what is there in the scripture. Then the way you handle that scripture is going to determine whether you have salvation or whether you have destruction. He says in verse fourteen.

Distort or twist. As they do also the rest of the scriptures. To their own destruction.

One of the sure ways of destroying your life is to study the Bible. In the wrong way. To twist.

To distort. Scripture. To read into it.

Things that aren't there. And things that you might feel or see or think are there. But to receive salvation.

We need to get the meaning that's in the mind of God. It's not so much what you often hear people say. What does that mean to you? Well that's not really the issue.

The issue is what has God said and what was in the mind of God when he spoke. And so as we come to the Bible. Realizing that it can bring salvation.

And it has. But it can also bring destruction. We wouldn't handle something so powerful as the Bible.

If it was in the form of dynamite. We wouldn't handle it to our little kids. And then just tell them to go experiment with it and play with it.

Because where as it might could be useful. It could also destroy them. And it is so with the Bible.

It is so powerful. That we need to be careful in the way we handle it. The Bible is.

Jeremiah put it so well in Jeremiah 1. Verses 1 and 2. It says the words of Jeremiah. To whom the word of the Lord came. That is we are dealing with the words of a man.

Jeremiah. But we are also dealing with the word of the Lord. And so the Bible is a linguistic incarnate.

Much as Jesus Christ was the Theanthropos. He was the God man. He was the word made flesh in John 1. Verses 1 and 14.

He had two natures. He is fully God. And he was fully man.

And so we call him the Theanthropos. The God man. Well the Bible is very similar.

It is a linguistic incarnate. In that it is the words of Jeremiah. But it is also the words of God.

And so when we come to the Bible to interpret it. The nature of the Bible will affect our interpretation. Because it has a God nature.

Then we need to know the laws of the spirit. And because it has a man nature. We need to know the laws of human language.

And so as we read in the Bible. That the natural man does not receive the things of the spirit of God. They are just foolishness to him.

And Jesus says that his father revealed to some. But he hid from others. And that Jesus revealed to his disciples.

And God revealed to some by way of the Holy Spirit. To others he did not. And so as we come to the Bible.

We want to realize that we must be as Jesus said. Come to him who is meek and lowly. We must be babes in heart.

Matter of fact one of the things that he really rebuked the people for. Was that they were slow of heart. To believe all that was written in the scriptures.

And often times they just didn't seem to know the power of God. The power of what God had said in his scripture. And so there are some laws.

Of the spirit that we need to follow. Four simple laws for sure. One is that you must be born again.

You must be a child of God. Because the natural man would not be able to. Even begin to understand the things that are revealed by the spirit of God.

They make no sense to him. They are actually foolish to him. Because the Bible is dealing with the things of God.

And these things are consummated in the person Jesus Christ. Who has become a stumbling block to so many. And no natural human can understand these things.

So you must be born again by the spirit of God. Not by the incorruptible seed of the word of God. Which lives and abides forever.

And then you must be a babe in heart. There must be willing submission on your part. You must come to him.

Not wise in your own conceits. But as a babe in heart. And then you must believe and trust God.

That is many people come to the Bible just to get knowledge. And knowledge puffs up. But we are to come to God with trust in God.

But an active faith. Ready to believe. To the end of an objective action on our part.

In other words ready to do. Jesus said any man that is willing to do his will. Will know the teaching.

And we know quite well that not everyone that just says Lord, Lord. Is going to enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that does the will of my father who is in heaven.

And so in the end it is not going to be all the creeds you can quote. But it is going to be the deeds that you have done. And so we must come to God trusting and ready to do the things that he has revealed.

That is the law of the spirit. God will reveal to you if you are ready to do what he reveals. Now lastly the law of the spirit is that we must pray.

As Psalm 119 and verse 18 says. Open thou mine eyes. That I may behold wonderful things from thy law.

Ephesians 1, 17 and 18 we know. That Paul's prayer that we would be granted the spirit of wisdom and revelation. And the knowledge of him.

So we can know these things that are given to us by God. And we can know the hope of our calling. We can know what great inheritance we have.

And what he has in us. And we can know the power of his spirit. The power of the resurrection of Christ.

And we can look with hope. So we need to pray. There is no point in tuning the piano after the concert.

When we come here on Sunday mornings. I notice James doesn't spend a whole lot of time tuning his guitar after the worship service is over. But I have quite frequently seen him get that thing in tune before the worship service starts.

And so it is in the laws of the spirit. Once we are born again and come with willing submissive hearts as a child to the Lord. Trusting and ready to do the things that he said.

And pray and say open my eyes. Show me, give me the spirit of wisdom and revelation. Then we have met the laws of the spirit.

But we also have to deal with the laws of human language. Because this book is a linguistic incarnate. And man has laws in his language.

So the laws of human language would be that we want to first look at the general background. Find out who the author is and what his situation is. The geography.

Where he is at. The customs. The times that he lives in.

And the occasion. Why is he writing? And what is going on during this time? What is the occasion that caused the occasion for this writing? And then look for that theme that unifies the book. That axis that the book turns on.

And then once you have seen a theme. Then check and see if there are any major divisions related to this thing. Is there a plan to this? Is there an outline given within the book? And then study that outline, that plan, within the context.

Within the composites that make up that plan or outline of the book. In other words, context simply means con with text to weave. Hence we have textile mills which weave cloth and string and things like that.

They are woven together. And so the context are those things which are woven together. If you want to, for example, sometimes check out Colossians chapter 4 verses 2 through 6. And compare that with Romans 12, 1 and 2. And you will see that one of them is not woven.

And one of them seems to be woven. There is something woven together. We look for that.

And then after looking for that which is woven together. Then we can get down to the very words. To what I would call the bricks that make up the building.

And then the mortar which is the syntax. We have words but we also have syntax which is the meaning that is between the words. And as we're looking in the words, we'll want to find the etymology and trace the history of the word.

For that might help us. It doesn't mean that that's the meaning of the word. But it will help us to understand where the word came from and how it's developed throughout history.

But what we really want to look for is the use of *loquendi*. That is the use of location. How was this word used on location? Because words are used in different places and at different times in different ways.

When I first got here to England, I heard people say Brill. The only Brill I knew was Brill cream that somebody puts on their head. And then I saw signs that said don't cue here.

And I'm like I don't even know how to cue. I mean I know what a cue ball is. It goes on a pool table.

And I know that sometimes when you're doing a play, they give you a cue when you're supposed to come in and do your part. But I didn't know how to cue here. And then someone handed me something rather large and asked me if I could put it in my boot.

And I thought I don't even have boots on. What do you mean put it in my boot? And they were talking about what I would call the trunk of my car. And so words are used differently in different places.

And some might say well let's take a trip. And it used to be a trip was a trip that you could take on drugs. Or it could be a trip that you took in a car.

Or someone may refer to pot. Do you have any pot? Or to bread. There are so many words that we have to find the *usus loquendi* of the word and not just the etymology of the word.

And then there's meaning in between those words. We're all familiar with the story Three Bears. And we could say let's eat Goldilocks.

Or let's eat Goldilocks. And that syntax, that meaning that's between the words becomes very important. But once we've done all that, we want to follow the most basic hermeneutic principle of all.

And that is to relate this book and the teachings of this book to the whole progressive plan of God. There are two important hermeneutic questions that we need to ask. And to me this is the ultimate hermeneutic principle.

Peter said in 2 Peter 1.9 that if you can't remember this, if you've lost sight of this, then you're blind and you can't see. You're short sighted. And even Peter who was an unlearned fisherman but had revelation from God.

And flesh and blood did not reveal these things to him. But as Jesus said, my father which is in heaven, he got the basics down well. And Peter says that redemption is so important.

And we can't lose sight of that redemption. So two questions you want to always ask is what's the intended emphasis of this part of scripture on redemption? Which is the main theme of the Bible. We want to know that emphasis.

And then how does this part of scripture relate to the other parts of redemption that are revealed in the Bible? Because the Bible portrays Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. And hence the title of this class, The Progress of Redemption. And we'll see that God's had the same plan pretty much since Genesis 15.6 when Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.

We see that Paul in Romans 4.3 says that Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. So from the Old Testament to the New Testament, there's really been no change. God's had the same plan from the beginning that we would believe in Christ.

And the same promise was given to us in Genesis 17 when God promised to Abraham. We see in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 6 and in Revelation 21 we have the same promise. Behold the tabernacle of God is going to be with men and he's going to dwell with them and they're going to be his people.

And God himself will be with them and he'll be their God and they'll be his people. And that's been the promise from the beginning. This Messiah who will be with us and dwell with us and we'll be his people.

And the sign has not changed either because in Genesis 17 the sign of circumcision was given. We have the same sign in Romans chapter 2. Romans 4.11 says that it's the seal of the righteousness of faith. We're talking about circumcision being the circumcision of the heart that's in the spirit.

Not the outward circumcision which was the sign in the Old Testament. But a circumcision of our hearts so that as Philippians 3.3 says we are the true circumcision. We worship God in the spirit.

We rejoice in Christ Jesus. We don't put any confidence in the flesh at all. And we're circumcised with a circumcision that's made without hand.

And so the sign hasn't changed. It's been circumcision and it's the same mediator from the Old Testament. The Passover lamb all the way through to Jesus the one mediator between God and man.

And if you look at 1 Timothy 2.5 and Hebrews 9.24 we see that reiterated. But from Genesis to Revelation there is a connection. In Genesis 1.1 we see in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And Revelation 21.1 I saw a new heaven and a new earth. In Genesis 1.10 there's the gathering of the waters that God calls the sea. In Revelation 21.1 the sea was no more.

In Genesis 1.5 the darkness He calls it night. In Revelation 21.25 there is no night anymore at all. In Genesis 1.16 there are two lights the greater to rule by the day and the lesser to rule by the night.

But in Revelation 21.23 the city has no need of the sun or the moon. Either one of those lights. In Genesis 2.17 He says in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

In Revelation 21.4 He says death shall be no more. In Genesis 3.16 He's going to greatly multiply the pain and the sorrow. And yet in Revelation 21.4 He says neither shall there be pain anymore.

In Genesis 3.17 cursed is the ground for your sake. In Revelation 22.3 there shall be no more curse. In Genesis 3.1 Satan appears as deceiver.

Revelation 20.10 Satan disappears forever. In Genesis 3.22-24 man is driven from the garden from the tree of life. In Revelation 22.2 the tree of life is available for all.

In Genesis 3.24 man is driven from God's presence. But in Revelation 22.4 God dwells in the midst and man shall see His face. And in Genesis we see that man's home is by a river.

When we get to Revelation 22.1 man's eternal home is also by a river. And as we put this puzzle of the 66 pieces together we're going to see that Christ is the theme. And the redemption that's in Christ Jesus is the theme.

We want to always bring all of our interpretation of Scripture back to this theme. And we're going to look at views of the Bible. Some people view the Bible as one program.

The new and the old are the same. The one program from the beginning to the end. Others view the Bible as two programs.

There's an old program and there's a new program. And then there are folks that see the Bible as one program but there are qualitative differences within that program. There is an old and a new that have the same theme, the same plan, the same relationship.

But there are some differences between the old and the new. Now in this class as we go through from Genesis to Revelation our two big objectives will be to see the unity of the Bible as it relates to God's plan of salvation for mankind. That is all redemptive activity being through Jesus Christ by the power of God which is received by faith.

And second to review the general content of the books of the Bible and see the thematic relationships between the books. Now God has a goal. From Genesis 1, 1 and 31 that in the beginning God created until we get to Revelation 21 and see a new heaven and a new earth because the first has passed away.

We realize God has been going with a goal. And we're going to look first at what God has done, what he is doing and accomplishing in history. And then we're going to look at what God has spoken, what he has revealed in terms of scripture.

And so we look first at the works of God and secondly at the words of God. And it is my hope that God will bless you to teach the whole counsel of God. That you will be faithful men who will teach others.

And not shine to declare the whole counsel of God but to rightly divide the word of truth. So first we notice that God is working. God himself without or sometimes in spite of any human help at all is at work throughout all human history.

And this is the first key concept that it's a work. It's not just an idea that ties the books of the Bible together. It's not merely a doctrine but it's a work of God.

And our salvation is based upon a work of God. Read Romans 8 9-11 and tell me what this sounds like to you. Does it sound like that you're saved by the doctrine of atonement or that you're saved by the cross of history? Is it an activity of God? And just listen to Romans 8 9-11.

It says however you're not in the flesh but in the spirit if indeed the spirit of God is dwelling in you. But if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he does not belong to him. And if Christ is in you though the body is dead because of sin yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

But if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his spirit who is in dwelling you. That's an activity of God.

What's going on in you is being done by God. And so when we first look at the fundamental unity of the scriptures we're looking at real historical activity of God. And specifically the work that God's doing concerning the redemption of mankind.

That he's placing his spirit within man. Everything else in the Bible is related to this main theme of both the old and the new covenants. The redemption that's in Christ Jesus.

And so salvation is based on what God does. What he's done in the past, what he's doing in the present, what he will do in the future. I mean what if God quit working? Then it would all fall apart.

But it's a work, not just an idea that ties the books of the Bible together. God is doing something else no doubt. God is speaking.

He's planning, he's explaining, he's predicting. Jesus summed it up in Matthew 11 2-4 when he said, Go tell what you hear, that's doctrine, and what you see, that's deeds. And so both the doctrine and the deeds, the words and the works are summed up together.

God is speaking and as Amos 3 7-8 says, Surely the Lord does nothing, he doesn't get out and start his activities, he doesn't begin doing things, unless first he reveals it to his prophets. Because what God says is related to what God is doing. And we'll get to Psalms and Isaiah, Ephesians, Revelation, all accounts of God speaking.

And they're all related to what God is doing at the time. And so we're going to look at the historical books a lot in the beginning of this class because they have to do with what God is doing. And then later we'll look at many of the other books that have to do with what God is saying.

And the supreme word of God, the person, Jesus Christ, became the supreme work of God. John 1 1-14, the word that was in the beginning that was God became flesh. And so what's God doing now? Romans 11-25 says that God's calling out a people.

We live during the time in which God is bringing about the fullness of the Gentiles. There's another concept besides the fact that God is working and our salvation is based on the work and activity of God. Everything God does, He does progressively.

He begins a plan and unfolds it through a process. And we begin to understand more and more of the ways of God. In Psalm 103 and verse 7 it says that He made known His ways to Moses and His acts to the children of Israel.

We will certainly be focusing on the acts of God in this class but oh may He by His Spirit show you His ways. And as He does, please share it with the class. As we see that God works and does things in certain ways.

Now when God spoke to Abraham, the first thing He simply said to Abraham is, I will bless you. That's very simple. But what's included in I will bless you? Well, it means He's going to have salvation.

He's going to become a great nation. He's going to help provide the Messiah. He is set apart for God.

He is blessed in a special way. But it also includes breakfast. It includes marriage.

It includes glorification. When God says I will bless you, then everything is wrapped up in that first seed. Like in a DNA code.

Or like the color and size and smell and shape of a flower is wrapped up in that seed and unfolds. God simply says, I will bless you. And it unfolds.

And like an acorn becomes an oak tree, like a sperm and an egg become a person, or like Abraham becomes Israel, the nation. Like the disciples became the foundation and the seeds of world evangelism that we're seeing today. God does things progressively.

That's just the way that He does them. And then there's another concept that we want to look at, a third one, and that is that God has a plan and a goal. God's going with purpose towards a goal.

And while God is working and God is speaking and God is doing things progressively, and, you know, He asked the question, can a nation be brought forth in a day? Well, yes and no. It can in the sense that when someone has a little baby, we just rejoiced recently in Rob and Joni's little baby, and now I understand that Anthony and Jenny are going to have a little baby. And we get all excited about the day the baby's born because we can see the baby and it makes such a difference to us and we celebrate that day.

And yet, I think God was excited on conception day. And perhaps only He knows when that day was, when that conception time took place. But even our natural life, God has put it in a seed and caused it to grow and to unfold progressively.

But He's going somewhere with it. He has purpose. And there are two scriptures that stand out concerning God's purpose.

Where is He going with His plan here on earth? In Numbers 14 verse 21 says, Truly, as I live. That is, you could say this is a trustworthy statement or as Jesus said, Verily, verily, truly, truly. As truly as I, God, live.

If I'm God, and I am, then truly all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. And Habakkuk reiterates it in chapter 2 verse 14. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Even during our present time, we know that the things that we suffer, the things that we're going through, they're not even to be compared to the glory that's going to be revealed. There's an anxious longing in us. Matter of fact, all of creation is waiting eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

And we see in Revelation 21 that there's a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth are passed away and there's no sea. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride, adorned for her husband.

And as I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them. God has a

plan with His program of redemption. He's going to fill the earth with His glory.

Now, what's His glory? I like the way Peter put it in 2 Peter 3.13 when he said, We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. And again, in 2 Thessalonians 2.14 and Romans 8.29-30, we're looking at the chief end of man to glorify God and to be filled with the glory of God. It is earth, and not so much heaven, that's going to be the target for the accomplishment of God's plans.

And this goal involves the people who live here on earth. And the realization of this goal will be accomplished when there is a people on earth that are filled with God, as truly as God lives. Now, as we look at the Bible and we go through this plan of God, and we look at the words of God, we look at the works of God, we're going to notice as we go through and we're going to make some comparisons and see some contrasts where there are those who focus on the works of God and the dispensations of God, the equanimia, which is really the word for stewardship or management of a household, the dispensation of the fullness of times, the fact that God is doing things in his house just like you do things differently in your house than other people do in their house.

And there are certain times throughout history when God is doing things one way and then in other times God is doing things another way, even as perhaps throughout the course of your life you may have changed some of the things that you used to do and now you're doing things differently. Well, the dispensationalists look through the history and the progress of redemption in a different way in that they begin in Genesis chapter 1 with a time of innocence, a time when there was paradise, and yet then there was the fall. God dealt one way during that time of paradise and innocence with mankind, but after the fall God dealt another way and in Genesis 4 we begin to see that man has a conscience, he understands the difference now between right and wrong, between good and evil, whereas he didn't before.

And so God deals differently with mankind and we do see the fall, we see the flood as well, and the judgment of God. And then after that flood in Genesis 8 we begin to see another time when God begins to deal with government and human authority. And then in Genesis 12 we see a time of promise when God makes promises to Abraham and all the way from Abraham and the patriarchs to the time of Moses we focus on the promise of God.

And then with Moses in Exodus 19 we start looking at a time of law when God gives the law and from the law right down to Acts chapter 1 really, from Moses to the cross was a time of law, but from that cross of Jesus Christ and his ascension and descent of the Holy Spirit we move on to a time of grace from Acts chapter 2 to Revelation 19 you might say, the first and the second coming of Christ. And then finally in Acts 19 verse 22 we see the millennial kingdom and so there's a seventh period known as the kingdom period. And as the dispensationalists look at the Bible they will see these different times in history where God acted and did things differently because he managed those households.

And so they focus on the things God has done and how he has done them differently at different times. And then you have another group who focus on the words that God has spoken, the things that God has said and that's the covenant theologians who, the word theotheke to cut through, who begin with the covenant of works in the garden of Eden where there was so much freedom to do and God had spoken to Adam and then after Adam had sinned and God made a covenant with Adam in Genesis 3 verse 15 giving him hope, God spoke and told him of the hope of the Messiah.

And then they'll go on to Noah and his time in Genesis 6, 8 and 9 and speak of the Noahic covenant and what God arranged with Noah and then in Genesis 12, 15, 17 and 22 the things God said to Abraham and they'll speak of the Abrahamic covenant and then on to Moses in Exodus and the things God spoke to Moses and then to David in 2 Samuel chapter 7 and 1 Kings and 1 Chronicles and then finally from David to the new covenant in Jeremiah 31 and in Matthew 26 and Hebrews 8 through 10 and so the covenant theologians will focus on the words and the covenants that God spoke to people and focus on how those covenants unfold and how one covenant normally unfolds and is built upon the last covenant and so it's really two different ways of looking at scripture and explaining and putting the thoughts

and concepts of scripture and the relationships of scripture together, one focuses just on the works of God more so and the other one focuses on the words of God and we're hoping in this class as we step back and try to look at the whole forest and not focus on the trees but getting a big view of scripture that we will see that there's not that much of a conflict between the works of God and the words of God but that they agree so perfectly as God is working out His plan as He is progressively unfolding His plan toward the goal that He has in His mind that it's truly as He lives that this earth is going to be filled with a people who are filled with God and so we're going to begin in eternity past and then watch God set the stage in Genesis 1 through 11 for His drama of redemption that He

begins in Genesis chapter 12 when He selects a nation, the nation Israel and then God instructs that nation, prepares them and sends His son and then God establishes His church and God instructs His church and then God comes and culminates history and then we move into eternity future so to speak and we will see the diversity of scripture, the uniqueness of each of the books and the different authors and their themes and their occasions, how distinct even the two major sections of scripture, the Old and the New Testaments are and the types of writing, how different they are from history to law to poetry to sermons to visions and proverbs and with all that diversity we will also notice the unity of scripture, the oneness that's there and how it functions not so much the oneness like the

oneness of a piece of chalk that you can write on this board with but the oneness is more like a ballpoint pen where you have several parts that fit together and they're designed to function as an instrument and so we're talking about a functioning vehicle as opposed to a stable brick building like the church is a body of Christ with many parts but one design and one purpose and so we'll see the words and the works of God, the activity of God in human history and how it's revealed in the light of the works and words of God now, what is grace in light of the works of God? well, throughout history with reference to redemption, grace is simply this, grace is God doing it then what is faith? faith is a response to God doing it and what's the wrong response? to try to do it yourself and so we

see that all the history is brought back to the redemption that's in Christ Jesus and it is progressive and in that progress there are vast periods of time that are passed over silently nothing said at all while there are other things that are recorded in detail and the reason for this is because these historic periods and events are selectively chosen they're not proportionately chosen but they're selected and chosen to show God's sovereign redeeming work and so we will focus on the redemption that delivers us from sin's bondage by the price that was paid on the cross of Jesus Christ and the power that enables us, the power of His cross, His resurrection His spirit coming at Pentecost and ultimately the power of His parousia, His second coming God reinstates fellowship with Himself it's

revealed slowly but progressively through the ages by God and He's preserved this knowledge in the Bible and all redemptive activity is through Jesus Christ by the power of God and it's received by faith and

before we begin our study of the drama of redemption and even the setting of the stage we want to consider the principle of redemption that without the fall then man would have grown in his relationship with God there would have been an upward development with God but the fall came prompted by a temptation without that is God's not the author of sin and man didn't invent sin either but Satan did and when man felt sin he knew it was foreign, he knew it was strange and he covered himself in Genesis 3 and man didn't begin with sin and man's not going to end with sin but sin blinds and

binds so that man can't perceive his corruption but God is calling out a people God gives a deliverer and the deliverance develops from an individual to a family, to a tribe, to a nation to international and universal salvation until there is a new heaven and a new earth and one of the things that we learn about God and that God reveals about himself in the course of this program of God is that he himself is communication he's the model of communication in the ultimate sense Paul said words just can't express even the things that Paul saw in the third heaven but we know this we shall know even as we're known there's a type of communication coming because God is communication and what he reveals about himself is that where there's communication at least on God's part there's a lover and

there's a beloved the one who is loved and there's a spirit of love that is between this lover and this beloved one who is loved and so with a lover and a beloved and a spirit of love we see there's a tri-unity a trinity where love is there's always this tri-unity and it's so neat to know that God in his tri-unity has communicated to us his love through Jesus Christ and this is found so clearly in the Bible God's revelation to man and it reveals his glory the purpose of creation the glory of God but also the love of God do you know what Paul terms the plan of salvation in Ephesians chapter 3 and verse 11 even as in 1 Timothy 1.17 Christ is called the king of the ages again Paul says in Ephesians 3.11 this was in accordance with the eternal purpose which he, that is God carried out in

Christ Jesus our Lord and so all things are of him and through him and to him him who is and who was and who is to come did you ever wonder what God did before he had a job what God did before the foundation of the world we know that there was eternal loving communication and fellowship a mutual responsive communion between the father and the son there was a lover there was a beloved and there was a spirit of love and this always existed even before God created the angels and the stars as Job reminds us when he said to Job where were you when I did this God was settling in his own counsel God was doing a basic writing course because it says that he wrote our names in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world he conceived of the church, his body in Ephesians 3 9 and 6 and

he prepared a kingdom Matthew 25 he says in verse 34 come inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world and God appointed his son Jesus Christ to be the mediator of creation to be the preserver of creation to be the mediator of redemption to be the mediator of judgment upon the world and Jesus Christ was willing and in agreement to come and to carry out this work of redemption and his death on the cross as Hebrews 9.14 puts it in the best words I believe in terms of the eternal purpose of the ages when it says that he was an offering and he offered himself to God that's like worship Jesus in that form of eternal worship offered himself to God through the eternal spirit that eternal spirit who had always been the spirit of love between the lover and the beloved

between the father and his son is that same eternal spirit through which Jesus in his death on the cross was an offering of himself to God through the eternal spirit I do hope that throughout this course we will see the endless flows of eternity into time

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