

**Seven Words to Life**  
**Incarnation**  
**Various Texts**

We are constructing a Christian worldview, a way to see the world and interpret our existence. The Bible tells us who we are, why we are here and what we should be doing.

### 1 – Creation

- A good and great God created everything
- He created us to image/represent him on the earth
- He is moving every created thing toward Shalom (as demonstrated in his rest on the final day of the first week)

Shalom = peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, tranquility, integrity, prosperity

We are God image-bearers who work with God in creating Shalom throughout the world

After A&E's failure, God intended for Israel to demonstrate what it means to live in God's kingdom, to walk with God, to know his Shalom. Israel tragically failed.

- The nation failed to image God
- The nation failed in relationships with unbelievers
- The nation split
- The nation was carried into captivity

The first, primary and fundamental way in which God's grace/love/mercy/Shalom is demonstrated is in relationships. When we fail to image God in the creation of Shalom, our relationships fail and much else of life falls into disarray.

**APP:** We should apply this to ourselves, marriages, families, workplaces, sports, hobbies, etc.

### 2 – Fall

- Through willful decisions contrary to God's character and will, Adam and Eve thrust all creation into derision and sorrow
- It is our nature to also disobey God and cause harm to ourselves and others

### 3 – Israel

- In great grace, God continues to work toward Shalom by creating a people for himself with whom he can dwell
- Like Adam and Eve, Israel continually rebelled against God and suffered the consequence yet,
- God remains faithful to his people and his redemptive agenda to reconcile all things to himself

#### 4 – Incarnation

- Ultimately, God himself came to earth to demonstrate shalom and encourage us to walk with him
- People so despised Jesus that they killed him.

There is something very wrong with that sentence.  
But that's because there is something very wrong with us.

- In God's eternal providence, Christ was raised from the dead and promises ultimate, eternal Shalom to all those who repent and believe
- Repentance is essential because to walk with God you have to  
Stop walking your own way. You don't add God to your walk.
- Faith is necessary because it demonstrates belief in an unseen world yet to come which, because we believe it, nonetheless dominates our worldview and changes everything about our existence. We pledge allegiance to Christ above all things.

This is God's story.  
This is the Bible's story.  
This is your story.

**GOSPEL:** You may be an unbeliever and think you are not involved or can avoid interaction with God. But God's reconciliation is comprehensive. It includes everything and everyone.

*Philippians 2:6-11 - though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*Romans 14:11 - As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* (God has staked his existence on this reality coming true)

Let's talk about the Incarnation

**First: The Incarnation was a Review of Eden / Original Shalom**

**John 1:14 - the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us**

What has Jesus come to do? He's come to establish God's heavenly kingdom on earth, to reverse the curse, to cure all that is wrong with me, you and the world; all the bad that started when A&E disobeyed God and death entered the world

*Genesis 2:17 - ... of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*

We read the sad record of death that permeates the Bible from Gen 3 to 10.

Did you know that the Scripture doesn't record one death in the presence of Jesus? In fact, everywhere Jesus went, the world returned to Eden.

### Miracles in the Gospel of Mark

#### Nature Miracles

Jesus calms the storm (Mark 4:35–41)

Jesus feeds five thousand (Mark 6:30–44)

Jesus walks on water (Mark 6:45–52)

#### Miracles of healing – mental illness

A man with an evil spirit (Mark 1:21–28)

A man with evil spirits (The Gerasene Demoniac) (Mark 5:1–20)

The Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter (Mark 7:24–30)

The boy with the evil spirit (Mark 9:14–29)

It is important to search for faith and to pray for faith, rather than to pray for miracles.

#### Miracles of healing – physical illness

Jesus heals a man with a dreaded skin disease (Mark 1:40–45)

Jesus heals a paralyzed man (Mark 2:1–12)

The man with the paralyzed hand (Mark 3:1–6)

Jesus heals the haemorrhagic (Mark 5:25–34)

Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21–42)

Jesus heals a deaf mute (Mark 7:31–37)

The blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8:22–25)

All of these miracles led the disciples to confess –

#### **Mark 8:29 - *You are the Christ***

Even though they lived in a fallen world, all of those who confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior walked with God just as Adam and Eve had done in Eden. And, they witnessed what it meant to know, love and obey God. Nature obeyed God. The spiritual world obeyed God. Humans obeyed God.

#### **Second: The Incarnation was a Preview of the New Jerusalem / Ultimate Shalom**

See how these verses reflect the incarnation

Revelation 21:3-5 - *I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place<sup>is</sup> of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and 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.'" 'And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."*

Do you see what Jesus did? He gave us a preview of what it means to live in God's kingdom, by God's grace, cooperating with God's redemptive agenda and experiencing God's Shalom.

IMP: We have a tendency to think that Jesus's miracles are exceptions to nature. But miracles are the restoration of the norm. They are not the exception, but a return to the rule. All the suffering that creation and we endure is the exception and not the norm. In Eden, nature was never out of bounds. In Eden, humans didn't suffer. The New Jerusalem is the restoration of all

God intended in Eden. Miracles are glimpses of Eden and the New Jerusalem, the reconciliation of all things to God wherein nothing can hurt and nothing dies because nothing hurts or dies in God's presence.

This is how the OT prophets saw it -

**Isaiah 11:1-9** - *There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

What would that world look like? How would we experience that world?

Some of you are concerned about the timing of this text. Is it pre, post or Amillennial? As a pastor, I'm concerned with the truth of it. It will happen.

#### Band Returns

#### Conclusion:

The incarnation demonstrates what Eden was and the New Jerusalem will be. It also invites us to participate in that grand, eternal story.

*"The castle of Cair Paravel on its little hill towered up above them; before them were the sands, with rocks and little pools of salt water, and seaweed, and the smell of the sea and long miles of bluish-green waves breaking for ever and ever on the beach. And oh, the cry of the seagulls! Have you ever heard it? Can you remember?"*  
*C.S. Lewis in The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*

#### Community Groups:

- 1 – What are the first four words to understanding God, ourselves and the world?
- 2 - Give your own definition of Shalom
- 3 – What does it mean to be an image bearer?
- 4 – Why can unbelievers not avoid God's plan?
- 5 – The incarnation was a review of what?
- 6 – How did Jesus' life, review Eden?

7 – Discuss some of the miracles Jesus performed in the Gospel of Mark.

8 – Why did Jesus perform these miracles?

- They proved who he was
- They demonstrated God's kingdom on earth

9 – Read Rev 21:3-5 and point out how Jesus's incarnation demonstrated that world.

10 – How are Jesus's miracles not exceptions but the restoration of the norm?

11 – Read Isaiah 11:1-9 and discuss how this new world comes about and what it looks like