

Let's Talk About...How the Bible Puts Together the Puzzle of Life

Introduction

- The definition of a good sermon: It should have a good beginning. It should have a good ending. And they should be as close together as possible.
- Our series, "Let's Talk About..." continues today
 - In this series, we are going to explore the answers to many challenging questions of today's culture.
 - All of the questions we are going to explore have answers but how do we come up with the right answer?
 - What makes one answer better than another answer?
 - Isn't all truth relative? Is there an objective standard of truth?

- **The Bible is foundational**

- **Psalm 119:89 Your word, Lord, is eternal;
it stands firm in the heavens.**

- **Psalm 19:7-9 The law of the Lord is perfect,
refreshing the soul.**

**The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.**

**⁸ The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.**

**The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.**

**⁹ The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.**

**The decrees of the Lord are firm,
and all of them are righteous.**

- The Bible is the best-selling book in history

- According to Guinness Book of World Records, more than 5 billion copies!
- Why?
 - Because people throughout history have found the Bible to contain the answers to life's biggest problems. Answers that work and give you hope.

○ Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

- It is mission critical to get this right!
 - Our nation recently commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing.
 - If you are going to the Moon from Earth and you are only 1 degree off on your trajectory, you will miss the Moon by 4,169 miles.
 - If you are off-course, the longer you go in life the further away from the target you go
 - Today, some of us need a course correction and the true course is found in the Bible
- Have you ever had a bunch of puzzle pieces without the picture on the box to help you solve it? Sometimes life seems like a puzzle and you don't have the picture on the box to help you solve it. (Intimidating!)
 - The Bible gives us the way to see how the pieces of life fit together so that we can experience true joy in living.

• Puzzle Piece #1 Identity - The Bible Tells Us Who God Is and Who

We Are

- Whether we recognize it or not, who is God is the main question of our lives!
 - What captures our heart is what we worship
 - Following the wrong god leads to disappointment and disaster

- This could be success, money, hobbies, fame, other people, even ourselves.

- **“The funny thing about having all this so-called success is**

- that behind it is a certain horrible emptiness.” – Sam**

- Shepard**

- Following the wrong god is what caused the first people, Adam and Eve, to fall away from God.

- So, it is important to get this right!

- So, how do you know if you are worshipping the right god?

- **The Bible helps us understand who God is in ways we can understand**

- Creator – The Uncaused Cause

- **Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning God..."**

- What is He like?

- Present everywhere

- Knows everything

- Can do anything

- Loves everyone

- **1 John 4:16 "...God is love."**

- You might say, “It’s great that the Bible tells me who God is, but my problem is figuring out who I am!”

- Many of the issues of our day relate back to a lack of understanding of who we really are as humans. Many people have an identity problem.

- **Because the Bible tells us who God is, it helps us understand who we are**

- The Bible says we are made in the image of God

- Genesis 1:27

- ²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image,

in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them.

- God gave us another example, the best one ever, by which we could know what it really means to be human – Jesus of Nazareth

- Colossians 1:15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

- We can know our identity by knowing Jesus

- Jesus is a real person we can look to and pattern our lives after

- Romans 8:29 [NLT] For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

- Story of Chelsea when she met her biological father. She found someone in whom she could see a resemblance and to whom she could belong.

• Puzzle Piece #2 Worth - The Bible Shows Us God's Focus is

People

- The first couple of chapters of the Bible and the last couple of chapters are about what God created. The rest of the book is about people and their stories.

- Creation was not complete until God created people

- God called all of His work of creation as good, but He only called His work very good after creating people

- **Genesis 1:31** God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.
- So, what happened? That world God called very good is sure messed up now!
 - **The Bible tells how our world got so messed up.**
 - **Genesis 3** tells the sad story of our decision to rebel against God. That decision set us on a path of self-destruction and death.
 - But God went to great lengths to provide a way for us to come back into relationship with Him.
 - **John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
 - **God sent Jesus, His Son, in human form to live a perfectly sinless life so that He could pay the penalty for our sins.**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - The Bible is one big story.
 - **God is on a mission to make sure every single person has the opportunity to come into a relationship with Him.**
 - Ravi Zacharias – Hiem Pham story
- **Puzzle Piece #3 Fulfillment - The Bible Shows a Relationship with God Brings Growth and Fruitfulness**
 - **Psalm 92:12-15 [ESV]** The righteous flourish like the palm tree and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
¹³ They are planted in the house of the Lord;

they flourish in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They still bear fruit in old age;

they are ever full of sap and green,

¹⁵ to declare that the Lord is upright;

he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

- **Creation**

- God's first action after creation was to bring order and fruitfulness out of the chaos and confusion. Genesis chapter 1

- **People**

- God's command to the first people was to be fruitful and increase in number.

- **Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."**

- **The Bible says that God is the source of abundant life**

- **Real life, abundant life, is only found in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.**

- **John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.**

- **John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.**

- **John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."**

- **Application:**

- **Story of Cindy and her touch with flowers**
- **Some of you may feel like you are full of emptiness, chaos and confusion.**
 - **The Bible tells us that a relationship with God through Jesus Christ brings flourishing and fruitfulness to your life as you give Him control of your life and find a life of fulfillment in Him.**

• **Puzzle Piece #4 Purpose - The Bible Shows that God Lets Us in on the Action**

- **Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

- But if God is all-powerful, why does He need my help to do anything?

- He doesn't. But He wants us to work alongside Him (Add a verse here?)

- This give our lives purpose and meaning

- Tell the story of Dad and teaching me about the store story here.

- **What action does God want you to be a part of?**

- **(1) Bringing God's blessings to your world.**

- In Genesis 1, the declaration that work is good comes before people fall into sin.

- God wants to use what brings life to you to bring blessing to others

- **(2) Modeling for people what God is like**

- **John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."**

- **(3) Helping others discover a right relationship with God.**

- God wants a relationship with every human being because His focus is on people.

- Jesus said in **Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."**

- He wants us to continue to grow and discover your specific purpose

- Push CMS here

• **Conclusion**

- **Leaning Tower of Pisa Illustration (Show Pic)**

- What is wrong with this picture? Foundation issue.

- Just like the Tower of Pisa, if you have a house, you know how strong foundations are important.

- This same is equally true but much more important for you as you build your life.
- The first step to putting all the puzzle pieces of life together is to begin a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- The next important step is to make reading the Bible a daily practice of your life.
- 21-Day challenge to read the Gospel of John (Show pic of postcard)