

## REVIEW

- In this series, we're looking at issues that are a little uncomfortable or the church doesn't talk about much.
- Our goal: to be equipped and ready to engage with our friends, kids or grandkids, co-workers, neighbors, etc.
- These conversations are an opportunity to present truth in a way that shows others the love of Jesus.

**Week 1: "The Truth about Truth"** There is an absolute truth, and we find it in God's Word (the Bible) and in Jesus.

**Week 2: "Gender & Sexuality with Sean McDowell"** What the Bible says, and how we should handle this topic.

**Week 3: "Abortion"** We talked about abortion, how God values human life, and that life begins with conception.

**This week: "Creation Care"** What is our responsibility as followers of Christ to take care of God's creation?

## THERE ARE VARIOUS OPINIONS ON WHAT WE NEED TO DO OR NOT DO IN ORDER TO PROPERLY TAKE CARE OF THE PLANET.

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| o Plastic straws/Plastic bags  | o Logging                                       |
| o Vegetarians/Vegans   | o Climate change/global warming debate          |
| o PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals): We are all animals and no animal is better than another. | o Global "First Youth Climate Strike" last week |
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## NO MATTER THE VOLUME OF ALL THE OTHER VOICES, WE NEED TO FOCUS ON GOD'S VOICE, FIRST.

**John 10:27** (NKJV) My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

## WHAT WAS GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN FOR CREATION?

**Genesis 1:1** (NIV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- o God created, not random chance, not on accident, and created *with purpose for* a purpose.

**Genesis 1:26-28** (NIV) <sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup>So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup>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."

**Genesis 2:8-9,15** (NIV) <sup>8</sup>Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... <sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

- o We are supposed to increase in number, fill the earth, subdue it, rule over it, and take care of it as God's stewards—as God's managers.

## WHAT WENT WRONG? GENESIS 3.

- Adam and Eve didn't obey God, chose to eat of the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- Sin entered the equation.
- Because of sin, all creation is decaying, winding down, and eagerly waiting for Christ's return. (**Romans 8:19-22**)
- Ever since, there has been a battle for people's worship between God and God's creation. (**Romans 1:18-25**)

## WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

### 1. DON'T FREAK OUT!

**Colossians 1:15-17** (NLT) <sup>15</sup>Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, <sup>16</sup>for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

- God is ultimately in control of everything!
- How should knowing that God is in control change how we live?

- o None of this catches Him by surprise. He knew this would all happen. His plan will not be thwarted. God is still on His throne. I'm still His child. He still loves me. I am on the winning side.
- We don't need to freak out like the world freaks out. We can have peace. (**John 14:27**)

## 2. BE A GOOD STEWARD.

- God has made us stewards, managers of all that He has given us.
- Ultimately, we don't own anything that we have. Everything we have is God's, and He's letting us borrow it.
- This includes the planet, our bodies... (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**)
- We have a responsibility to take care of ALL God has given us...
  - o If we *worship* creation, that is *idolization*.
  - o If we *ignore* creation, that is *consumerism*.
  - o If we *take care of* creation, that is *stewardship*.

## 3. FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT THING THE RIGHT WAY.

- How do we engage those with other views? How do we have this conversation without fighting with each other?
  - Remember what the most important thing is: people. Our main goal is to love people.
  - "Does my desire to take care of the planet outweigh my desire to love people?"
  - "Does my desire to win an argument outweigh my desire to love people?"
  - We have to remember that the "other side" is not the enemy. (**Ephesians 6:12**)
  - Fighting with each other about who is right or wrong takes time away from us engaging in the fights that matter: for people's souls, for relationships, for unity, and for loving others as Christ loved. (**2 Timothy 2:23-26**)
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## NEXT STEPS

- o Do you need to have a conversation with the Lord and repent of freaking out over something in your life that is stressing you out? Do you need to give it over to God and ask Him to help you trust Him?
  - o Do you need to be a better steward of the things God has given you?
  - o Is there someone you need to apologize to for how you handled a conversation?
  - o Maybe you are here today and you have never trusted Jesus with your life, and you are ready to trust Him today... Pray with someone, fill out a card...
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## QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

**Passages to consider:** Genesis 1 & 2, Psalm 8

1. Share from the sermon something that challenges you. How will you respond?
2. Read Genesis 1, Matthew 28:18, and/or Psalm 8. How does the thought that God created all of creation and Jesus is king over everything impact how you approach this topic? A) How does this perspective impact both stewardship of and fear about the earth?
3. What have been your thoughts about climate/environmental/creation concerns? A) How does the idea of being a steward of God's creation impact your thinking?
4. How can you represent stewardship of God's creation best?
5. How do you respond to others with differing views and perspectives? A) What do you need in order to be able to have a conversation about climate/environmental/creation concerns, while being aware of God's part and the real concerns of our current world?
6. Where might God be challenging you in stewarding His creation and representing His heart to others?

**Next Week:** New Sermon Series: "Ever Wonder Why?"

**Passages to prepare:** Acts 2; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 10:19-25