



THE 5 MINUTE BIBLE

Good day to you. Our apologies for being a bit late with this Post today.

When I speak to a group of leaders in East Africa for the first time, I like to begin with the 5-Minute Bible. People who come to the meetings don't know who we are or whether they should take seriously anything we say.

So I issue this challenge: if I can teach you the whole Bible in 5 minutes, will you listen to the other things we have come to share?

So we check the clock. Can I do it? Let's see.

- With a heart of love and a purpose of love, God created the entire universe---billions of light-years across.
- Then he hung our beautiful little planet up in space near the center.
- Then he filled our earth with every imaginable form of life (and many forms beyond imagination!).
- And as the crown of his creation, he created us – male and female – human beings – people.
- And we are – in all creation – most special because we alone have been created in God's image. We are natural beings and we are spiritual beings – we are the bridge between the seen world and the unseen world – we live simultaneously in both.
- That means many things, but for our purpose today it means we are created for relationship with God – relationship now and forever.

So why did God do this? Have you ever thought about it? Without God's Word we might never know. But the Bible reveals to us God's Big Story. His Story begins in Genesis 1-3 and climaxes in Revelation 20-22. Here it is:

Out of a heart of love, with an intention of love, God is creating for himself a unique People – a People who are called by his name – a People who recognize and reflect his glory – a People in whom he comes to abide – now and forever.

This is the reason for creation and the reason for us. Therefore, the most important thing in life for each of us is to discover why God created us individually for this time in history.

Or said another way, how does my Small Story fit into God's Big Story? How can I become a functioning member of God's Unique People? Now and forever.

That's the Bible in 5 Minutes. Now of course there is much more to the Big Story. And where time permits, we do and we will share more.

Adam and Eve were given everything: a perfect environment, complete health (no sickness, injury, or death), friendly animals, perfect food, abundant water, all wrapped up in a beautiful garden called Paradise or Pleasure.

And most importantly, they enjoyed a peaceful, friendly relationship with their Creator.

God asked them to do only three things: make lots of babies, take care of the garden, and never eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. What could go wrong with this wonderful plan?

Well, that's the next part of the Story. Adam and Eve believed a LIE. The Lie was, "We can get a better deal without God. We can live a better life by being our own gods."

They ate the forbidden fruit and began to judge what was right and wrong with no reference to God.

As someone once said, "The rest is history."

They fell from relationship with God – forfeited their authority to rule the earth – disconnected from eternal life. They were driven from the garden, and God stationed two cherubim with a flaming sword to prevent their return to Pleasure.

Using their rebellion and sin, Satan hijacked their authority and became the Prince of this world – sin soon enslaved humanity – suffering, sickness, and Death became universal -- the environment degraded -- the animal world became hostile – poverty and lack of food and clean water became normal -- relationships broke down -- crime and violence became commonplace.

I can't bear to go on. But you get the picture.

I wish we could blame our corrupted world on the first people alone. But we have all – at some point -- believed and acted on the same Lie. "I can have a better life by doing it myself – without God – without his oversight."

Consequently, we all bear some responsibility for the brokenness of our world:

...for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God... and the wages of sin is death.... **Romans 3:23; 6:23**

If this were the end of the Big Story, we would be utterly defeated. We would exist without hope. We would be forever trapped in demonic darkness with no access to the Light.

This is the reality: Only the intervention of God to rescue us from sin and Satan and suffering and Death will offer us a way out.

But would God intervene? Would God rescue us from our sin and suffering and Satan and Death? And why would why would he bother to do so?

To be continued next week.....

Blessings to you-



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