



"The Five-Minute Bible"

African Post 9

8-15-24

Good morning to you. I hope you're having a nice start into the day.

In our earlier Africa Posts we discussed the Jesus-Who-Is. And we have only begun to explore the riches of the Jesus-Who-Is! God willing, we shall soon return to this topic.

But now I'd like to pause to explain why we are doing this.

When I teach in Africa I like to begin with the "The 5 Minute Bible".

Many people who come to hear me speak don't know me. They come for different reasons. Out of curiosity. Because people they know are coming. Because they don't have anything else to do that day. Maybe for the free lunch!

But we believe most are coming because they are being drawn by the Holy Spirit.

But why should they listen to me? Why should they listen to this white man from America? What could he possibly say that is relevant to African men and women struggling to bring others out of Darkness into Light – while struggling to feed their families?

Good questions. So I address them first with this: "If I can successfully teach the entire Bible in 5 minutes, will you listen to the other things I have come to share?" That challenge provokes many smiles but the gracious listeners always give me permission to try. Check the time on your watch. Let's see if I can do it. Here we go....

"The Bible is a long book – about 1000 pages in most editions. Within the Bible are 66 smaller books: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years – by a score of authors – in several countries – in three different languages.

"The Bible contains many types of literature: history, poetry, songs, prophecy, moral teachings, wisdom, allegory, revelation, and others. The Bible is challenging to read. Some parts aren't even arranged in chronological order.

"So what turns these 66 diverse writings into One Byblos – One Book – One Holy Bible? What is the unifying theme from Genesis to Revelation that produces the Great Story God is trying to tell us?

"Here it is. See if you agree.

"Out of a heart of love, with an intention of love, God created the entire universe. Then he hung our beautiful little planet up in space somewhere near the center of this ocean of stars and planets and galaxies.

"And then he filled little planet Earth with every imaginable form of life as well as many unimaginable forms of life.

"And then as the climax of his creation, he created us – people – humanity. We are the pinnacle of his creation because, as far as we know, we are the only thing in the universe created in the image of God himself.

"Being created in God's image means many things. We are designed as the bridge between the seen natural world and the unseen spiritual world. We are created to live in both simultaneously. We are made to oversee the natural world. We are made to live eternally in the spiritual realm.

"So – ask yourself this – "Why did God invest so much time, energy, and matter into this project?"

"The Bible tells us the answer – see if you can recognize the threads running from Genesis to Revelation.

“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.

“That’s The Great Story. That’s what God is doing in the world. That’s what the Bible reveals to us. God is moving heaven and earth to create a People for himself – a People who know Him – love Him – worship Him – obey Him – serve Him – represent Him – and enjoy Him – now and forever.

“That’s it. God created everything else so that he could create us. So we could live in relationship with him. So we could be his People. Now and forever.”

There is much more to The Great Story. And in the weeks ahead we shall enjoy unpackaging this amazing Story.

But for now, check your watch. See if I did it in 5 minutes. 😊

Blessings to you in Christ-

Douglas

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