

Saviour
Saviour from the Beginning
Genesis 1:1, 26-28, 31

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Text Introduction: Easter is on Sunday, April 16, this year. On the Thursday and Friday of Holy Week, our Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra along with **Ballet Magnificat** will present a musical oratorio titled, *Saviour*. **Ballet Magnificat** is a professional Christian ballet company that has been described as the premiere Christian dance company in the United States. Their professional touring companies have performed both nationally and internationally.

I have been listening to this music in preparation for preaching now through Easter. It is stirring and worshipful. This work is about God's passion for His people. The story, which takes us from creation through resurrection, is a picture of God pursuing His people.

To prepare us for own reflection and celebration of Easter, I want to explore the same theme of **Saviour** for our preaching times between now and Easter. I want to pursue that same idea that we see woven into Scripture that God's passionate pursuit of us did not start at the cross. His passionate pursuit of us that calls us to relationship started at creation. That is why today we turn all the way to the beginning of our Bibles, to the book of Genesis.

Text: ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in His own image;
He created him in the image of God;
He created them male and female.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."

³¹ God saw all that He had made, and it was very good. Evening came and then morning: the sixth day.

Introduction: I don't know how many of you have had the opportunity to see the new basketball court at the renovated Cajun Dome. As you might have heard, the reviews have been mixed. Some like it; others don't. The court depicts a swamp scene. At floor level, this scene can be hard to see. As some have remarked, at floor level, it sort of looks like the painter ran out paint before finishing.

The Bible can seem like that sometimes. That is, the continuous and complete message of the Bible is hard to see sometimes. That is why the continuous and complete message is best seen by seeing the

whole story, not just piece by piece. Over the next weeks, we want to see the message of “creation to the cross.”

Genesis means “origin.” Indeed Genesis is a book about beginnings. The beginning of creation, sin, family life, civilization, and the nations are all captured in the opening pages of the Word of God. In addition and most importantly, the beginning of the story of God’s plan to redeem the world is also present. That’s what makes this so fascinating to me and at the same time so fundamental that we understand. The Bible is not some loosely connected series of random stories about God and those who followed after Him, but instead there is incredible purpose behind the particular series of stories that are revealed. The story of God begins with creation.

Somebody might ask, “Can a person be a Christian—a Christ follower and not believe that God is creator?” That’s a good question and seeing history as God’s story from beginning to end as we mark history actually answers the question. If God is not God from the beginning, that is in control, what makes you think that He is control when History one day will come to an end. The Bible shows us what God did and is doing to reconcile us to Himself. This is why the story of God begins at the beginning. So, let’s consider God’s story in creation.

God is the central character of the creation story.

All throughout chapter 1, God is central. God says what He is going to do. God does what He says He is going to do. In this case, God creates. And by the way, a very special Hebrew word is used for creation. When this word is used in the Bible, God is always the subject. And third, God names what He has created. And, finally, God calls what He made good.

God’s creative activity ought to give us reassurance. We can be reassured that...

1. If He is creator, He cares for what He creates.
2. If He is author, then He has authority over what He creates.
3. If He started it all, He sustains it all.
4. If He is alpha, then He is Omega. That is, He is bringing everything to its appropriate end.

People are the climatic crown of God’s creation.

That humanity is the crowning jewel of God’s creative activity is pointed out in several ways in the Genesis text.

1. A little longer detail especially in the Heavenly court conversation, “Let us...”
2. We are made in His image.
3. A retelling of the creation account in chapter 2 with sole detail about the creation of humanity.

What is the purpose of creation? Creation is chiefly about the creation of humanity above all other created things. Humanity will live in special relationship to the creator—God. Humanity receives along with this privilege, special responsibility over creation.

Perfection is the conclusion of God’s creation.

This is how chapter 1 and 2 end. This is God's ideal. God calls what He made "very good." Until now, all has been "good" and that's good, but now in reference to humanity, it is "very good."

You know what we are supposed to hear in that. God loves us.

The pursuit for purity is the continuation of the story.

The perfection and purity of chapters 1 and 2 comes to an end in chapter 3. The rest of the story becomes a story of pursuit of purity—a story that culminates in the coming of Jesus, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

So What?

Creation points to God's desire for relationship with me. This is the honor. God desires relationship with you. He created you for relationship. Notice Genesis 1:28. After creating Adam and Eve, He blessed them. Think of that! He created you for the purpose of blessing you! You were created to enjoy God's grace in a relationship with Him.

Creation points to God's decree for the purpose of my life. He decides the purpose. Again, notice verse 28. God followed up the blessing with a command. Take my image and multiply that image. This is your purpose! And to miss this purpose is going to miss the whole point of the story.

And what does this have to do with Easter? What does this have to do with Jesus being our Saviour? I want to close with two passages of Scripture—one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament.

Everybody who wants to find purpose in life must surrender to Him.

Listen to what is recorded about God in Isaiah 46:10—

*I declare the end from the beginning,
And from long ago what is not yet done,
Saying: My plan will take place,
And I will do all My will*

You hear that? His plan was from the beginning.

Hear the same thing in the New Testament. Ephesians 1:3-14.

Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens. ⁴For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love ⁵He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to His favor and will, ⁶to the praise of His glorious grace that He favored us with in the Beloved.

⁷We have redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He planned in Him ¹⁰for the

administration of the days of fulfillment—to bring everything together in the Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in Him.

¹¹We have also received an inheritance in Him, predestined according to the purpose of the One who works out everything in agreement with the decision of His will, ¹²so that we who had already put our hope in the Messiah might bring praise to His glory.

¹³When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. ¹⁴He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of His glory.

It's all "In Him."