

The Big Picture

GOD IN THE CENTER FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

Glory Exchanged

A Deeper Look - Study Guide Companion

Day 1 - When Humanity Questioned the Creator

Read Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Before the serpent ever speaks, Genesis shows us what God had already given Adam and Eve. Look carefully at Genesis 2:15-17 and then compare God's words with the serpent's words in Genesis 3:1-5.

1. What had God provided for Adam and Eve before giving the command concerning the tree?
2. Compare Genesis 2:16-17 with Genesis 3:1-5. How does the serpent question, distort, and finally contradict what God had said?
3. According to Genesis 3:6, what did Eve see when she looked at the tree? Compare this with the description of the trees God had already provided in Genesis 2:9. What do you notice?
4. What ultimately determined Adam and Eve's actions: what God had said or what appeared good and desirable to them?

What does this reveal about God?

What had God already revealed about His goodness, provision, authority, and trustworthiness before Adam and Eve chose to disobey Him?

Day 2 - Glory Exchanged

Read Romans 1:18-25

Paul helps us see the Fall within the larger story of humanity's relationship with its Creator. Pay particular attention to the words *know*, *honor*, *give thanks*, *glory*, *exchanged*, *worshiped*, and *served*.

1. According to verses 19-20, what has God made known about Himself through Creation?
2. According to verse 21, how should humanity have responded to what God revealed? How did humanity respond instead?
3. What two exchanges do you find in verses 23 and 25?
4. Compare Romans 1:25 with Revelation 4:11. Who deserves the worship and service of Creation, and why?
5. Romans 1:25 ends by describing the Creator as "blessed forever." What does this tell us about God even when His creatures refuse to honor Him?

What does this reveal about God?

How does Romans 1 help you understand why exchanging the glory of the Creator for something He created is such a devastating exchange?

Day 3 - The Exchange Continues

Read Psalm 106:19-21 and Jeremiah 2:11-13

Both passages describe God's people turning from Him toward something far less.

1. According to Psalm 106:20, what did Israel exchange God's glory for?
2. Verse 21 says, "They forgot God, their Savior." Read Psalm 106:7-12. What had God done for His people that made this exchange especially tragic?
3. In Jeremiah 2:11, what had God's people exchanged? What does the passage suggest they lost in making that exchange?
4. What two pictures does God use in Jeremiah 2:13? What is the difference between a fountain of living waters and a broken cistern?
5. Compare Psalm 106:20-21 and Jeremiah 2:11-13 with Romans 1:23-25. What pattern do you see?

What does this reveal about God?

Instead of focusing only on the worthlessness of what Israel chose, look at the One they forsook. What do these passages reveal about His worth?

Day 4 - The Exchange Comes Closer

Read Colossians 3:1-5; Matthew 6:19-24; James 4:1-10

Scripture does not allow us to leave idolatry in the ancient world.

1. According to Colossians 3:1-4, where should the believer's attention and life be centered? What does Paul mean when he says, "Christ...is your life"?
2. What does Paul identify as idolatry in Colossians 3:5? How does this broaden your understanding of idolatry beyond carved images?
3. According to Matthew 6:24, why can't we serve both God and money? What does this reveal about competing loyalties?
4. What desires and conflicts do you see in James 4:1-4? What do they reveal about what can compete with devotion to God?
5. Now read James 4:6-10 carefully. After everything James has said about human unfaithfulness, what does God do? What does He call us to do?

“But he gives more grace.” - James 4:6

What does this reveal about God?

What do you learn about the God against whom we sin from His invitation to submit to Him, draw near to Him, and humble ourselves before Him?

Day 5 - The Direction Reversed

Read 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 and reread Romans 1:21-25

Place these passages beside one another and pay attention to the direction of worship.

1. In Romans 1:25, what direction does humanity move? What is worshiped and served instead of the Creator?
2. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9, what direction do the Thessalonians move?
3. Write down the words Paul uses to describe God in 1 Thessalonians 1:9. How does the “living and true God” contrast with the idols they had served?
4. Their turning involved more than leaving idols behind. According to verses 9-10, what did they turn to do?
5. Who are they waiting for, and what will He do? How does verse 10 begin to point us toward the next movement of the biblical story: Redemption?

Step Back and Look at the Big Picture

Trace the direction you have followed this week:

Creation: God's glory revealed. God at the center. **Worship is our response.**

Fall: God's glory exchanged. God remains at the center. **Repentance is our response.**

Now think across everything you have read this week. Humanity questions God, exchanges His glory, turns from Him, and gives created things the devotion that belongs to the Creator.

Yet who has God shown Himself to be?

What have you learned about God this week that makes exchanging Him for anything created such a tragic exchange?

What does this reveal about why He alone is worthy of your worship?