stroyed the wonderful life God made mankind for! This same sinful nature was passed on to every succeeding human descendant of Adam and Eve i.e. every new person is born with a rebel heart that is opposed to God. As a result, we each commit cosmic treason, wilfully rejecting God's sovereignty and authority over us.



Christ the Redeemer

God decreed that the penalty of sin is death. Though modern people regard death as the "natural" end point of life, the Bible says it is unnatural. Death is God's penalty for disobedience to God. But sin - and its disastrous consequences - is ***not*** the end of the story. The Bible reveals that in amazing love and grace, God initiated a rescue plan to save/restore those who acknowledge God's Son, Jesus Christ, as God's solution to the problem of human sin. Jesus came from heaven to earth to redeem God's people i.e. to pay the penalty of their sin and guilt on the Cross, and to enable them to once again live their lives in obedience to God (by the power of God's Holy Spirit). To those who repent of their sin, believing that Jesus is indeed God's solution to their sin problem, God adopts into His new spiritual family, assuring them that as those redeemed by Christ, they are now part of a new spiritual humanity who will live with God in glory forever.



How to Get Right With God

This involves a simple 3 step process, the result of which will profoundly change your life:

- **A**dmit to God that you are what He says you are - a rebellious sinner. Repent of your sin to God to receive God's forgiveness.
- **B**elieve that God's Son, Jesus Christ, is God's only solution to your sin problem
- **C**ommit your life going forward to trust in Him each day, living in obedience to His word, through the enabling of His Spirit.

You might pray a simple prayer like the following:

"Dear God, I confess that I am a guilty sinner. Please forgive me. I believe that your Son Jesus Christ is the only solution to my sin problem. I place my trust in Your provision, Jesus, and I now commit myself to daily living for Christ in obedience to His word. Thank you that you forgive me. Help me to live for You. I ask this in Jesus's name, Amen."



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Repent



Believe

"The time promised by God has come at last!" he announced. **"The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"** (Mark 1:15 NLT).

Creation and Christ

About 2000 years ago God initiated a series of momentous events concerning the coming of His Son, Jesus - the Christ (Messiah). These were the fulfillment of numerous promises that God had earlier made (recorded in the Old Testament, the first part of the Bible: the written revelation of God's truth to mankind). Jesus, who was uniquely God and man, came from heaven to earth as God's solution to the problem of human sin - ***the*** major problem that confronts mankind in every generation.



The opening chapters of the Bible narrate the Creation story whereby God created the entire universe out of nothing, in a sequence of steps, each initiated by God's powerful word of command. Creation climaxed in two interrelated epic events: firstly, the formation of human beings (the penultimate step) and secondly, the establishment of the Sabbath Day (the pinnacle event of the Creation sequence) - which God blessed and consecrated. The Sabbath Day reminded God's human creatures that

God, the Creator, designed and made humans to be His image-bearing creatures who would experience life in all its fullness, in a personal relationship with their Maker. God tasked mankind to manage God's good world for God's glory and man's good.

we are not ultimate - God is! It also highlights two other vital truths: firstly, that in our current time/space dimension, the abundant life that God promised is only experienced as we acknowledge/respond properly to God's sovereign authority, rule and order i.e. daily life is not about merely doing as we please; or constantly working; or manipulating God's world to our ends: true life is a by-

"Then God said, *"Let us make **human beings in our image, to be like us** ... So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God ... **male and female he created them** ... And **God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy,** because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation …* (then) the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person" (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:3,7 NLT).

product of being in submission to God's kingship. Secondly, the Sabbath is a "type" pointing forward to God's ultimate purpose for His creatures. To be fully human is to worship/exalt God: in holiness; in freedom from anxiety/fear; in dependence on our loving heavenly Father, who promised to provide for, guide and protect His children. We find ourselves (our identity and purpose) by losing ourselves in the worship of God.

Human beings are distinct from all the other creatures that God made: we are a unique blend of the physical and the spiritual, created to reflect and mirror the One who made us, and for intimate communion with our Maker. Because of our unique origin as the image-bearers of God, every person is special, unique and important i.e. we inherently possess incredible extrinsic dignity, value and worth. The Bible indicates that God created mankind via a "two stage process," forming the man first, and then the woman from out of the man (Genesis 2:18-24).

The man and the woman were made to complement one another. Together we reflect the image and likeness of God i.e. gender is God's idea, as is marriage. The marriage bond of one man and one woman blends similarities and differences, with different roles, functions, responsibilities. Each is equal in God's sight - the male is not superior! God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve!

It is critical to understand there is a clear distinction in God's created order: God is exalted above all; human beings are next, and then other creatures

etc. Contrast this with secular alternatives. Secular humanism, based on naturalism, also asserts that human beings have great dignity and worth - but without a justified basis for doing so! According to evolutionary theory, mankind originates randomly from "pond scum" supposedly superintended by impersonal "time and chance" processes. But as time and chance have neither power nor being, how can they possibly create anything? Secular worldviews theorise that the cosmos began as "nothing;" and in some unexplained, spontaneous way, "being" somehow begun to exist! Logically, we come from "nothing;" somehow we become "something"; only to finally return to "nothing." Is this truth or is it fairy-tale and myth? Such theories leave mankind with no inherent purpose, meaning or destiny! Is it any wonder NZ has one of highest suicide rates in the world today? It's amazing how irrational people can be in an attempt to avoid being accountable to God, mankind's Sovereign Maker, King, and Judge.

Why do we function this way?

The Bible tells us of an astonishing tragedy that changed everything. Our first parents were seduced by Satan, God's adversary, into committing cosmic treason. They disobeyed God, became sinners, lost their relationship with God, and were cast out of their paradise home. Sin is a terminal, spiritual affliction, which ended the deep fellowship Adam and Eve had enjoyed with God. It also devastated Adam and Eve's relationship, and their relationship with the rest of creation. Sin de-

