

Lecture 7 – The Biblical Storyline

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

Key Terms

Structure, direction

Objectives

- *Discuss the biblical storyline in terms of historical categories.
- *Describe how the story of redemption involves God’s interaction with people both in the context of a group as well as individuals.
- *Explain the implications of seeing the biblical storyline in terms of human history.

The Biblical Storyline

I. What is Christianity All About?

The narrative skeleton of Scripture

A. What holds Scripture together, making it a coherent, unified revelation?

B. Major narrative elements

1. The fundamental elements of story:
 - a. Introduction: The setting of the context of the story
 - b. Conflict: The dramatic problem of the story
 - c. Resolution of the conflict
 - d. Conclusion
2. The biblical story line:
 - a. Creation
 - b. Fall
 - c. Redemption
 - d. Consummation

C. Calvin’s 2 orders:

1. The order of creation
2. The order of sin and redemption

D. The importance of the sequence

II. Structure and Direction: The Fundamental Goodness of Creation and the Badness of Sin

A. Structure: what God has made; God’s intention for His creation

B. Direction: the response character of what God has made

1. Sin does not belong to the structure of things.
2. Sin attaches to structure and misdirects it.
3. Though fallen, the world (as God’s creation) remains good.
4. Sin is an alien intruder, a parasite.
5. Sin is a missing of the mark.

III. The Fall Story

A. Man is guilty.

B. God is not to blame.

C. “But God foreknew that they would sin.”

1. The objection is a thinly-veiled reproduction of Adam’s response in the Garden.
2. The objection is eisogetic.
3. The objection misapplies divine omniscience.
4. Divine omniscience can never be appealed to as a universal answer key for historical

causation.

5. The objection suggests that we seek an explanation for the fall in some realm beyond Adam and Eve's disobedience.

D. Creation is cursed.

1. Sin is not an isolated event.
2. Man is the representative head over the earthly creation (the *imago dei*).

E. Man is cursed.

F. The antithesis

G. Total depravity

1. Our loss of original righteousness
2. Total depravity does not mean that God has surrendered His rights over creation, or that people are absolute depraved.
3. The doctrine of total depravity entails spiritual inability. We are unable to reach God because all of our capacities and faculties have been overturned in the corruption of sin.