***Big Questions: Looking to God’s Word for Answers
“…always being ready to make a defense…” I Peter 3:15***

**Does My Behavior Matter? Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 3:1-7, II Corinthians 4:3-4**

**Overview of Prior Questions**

**I. God is and He created all things for His glory**

**II. God reveals His glory by demonstrating His Attributes to all humanity through His Creation**

**III. However, humanity rejects the God who is and replaces Him with a God in our own image**

**IV. The pinnacle of God’s creation is men and women made in His image, invested with infinite instrumental and intrinsic value**

**Background: Instrumental value versus intrinsic value**

**Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 3:1-7 and II Corinthians 4:3-4**

**I. Cosmic Testing:**

* **Worship and serve the Creator OR**
* **Worship and serve the creation, Genesis 2:15-17**

**II. Cosmic Treason: The quest for autonomy, Genesis 3:1-5**

**III. Cosmic Fall: Opening eyes to shame, Genesis 3:6-7**

**IV. Cosmic Consequences: Closing eyes to glory, II Corinthians 4:3-4**

**Conclusion: Our behavior matters because human sin destroys our instrumental value. Sin is an act of cosmic treason against our Creator and prevents us from being able to do what we were created to do, to see and reflect the glory of God.**

**Next week, “What do Christians mean when they talk about salvation?” II Corinthians 4**

Genesis 2 **15**Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.  **16**The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;  **17**but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

**Genesis 3:**

 **1**Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"  **2**The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;  **3**but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"  **4**The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!  **5**"For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."  **6**When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.  **7**Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.  **8**They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.  **9**Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"  **10**He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself."  **11**And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"  **12**The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."  **13**Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

II Corinthians 4:3-4

 **3**And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,  **4**in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

**I. Scripture Reading**

* We will anchor ourselves in this text in II Corinthians 4 for the next few weeks
* Today we will primarily be in Genesis 2 and 3, but will look briefly in II Corinthians 4 at the implications of Genesis 3 on humanity
* Today we are answering this question, “Does My Behavior Matter?”
* I am going to try and make the case today, that our primary purpose for living is seeing and reflecting the glory of God
* Our behavior, our actions, our words, our thoughts, our motives, all of these either reflect or diminish the glory of God
* We either can see His glory more clearly or less clearly
* We either reflect the glory of God more clearly or less clearly
* Stand to read
* **Read II Corinthians 4:1-18 (Slides)**

**Overview of Prior Questions**

**I. God is and He created all things for His glory**

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**IV. The pinnacle of God’s creation is men and women made in His image, invested with infinite instrumental and intrinsic value**

**Background: Instrumental value versus intrinsic value (Cover slide)**

* Last week we discussed the difference between intrinsic value and instrumental value
* Instrumental value is the value of an object based on what it can do with the example being – a hammer, a nail, a screwdriver
* Intrinsic value has to do with the inherent value of an object based on its beauty imparted upon it by its creator or designer or artist – like a painting by Monet
* Some things have both instrumental value and intrinsic value
* You might argue that a bridge that has incredible design beauty such that people take pictures of the bridge is also instrumental in allowing people to cross a large waterway – something like the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco
* There might be a car, most of us view the car as being primarily instrumental only, but there are some that just love classic cars – 1965 Mustang for example
* In the creation, God has placed several objects that have instrumental value
* There primary instrument value is that they give glory to God
* To the extent that the stars exist, they are instrumentally valuable because they accomplish what they have been made to accomplish
* If a star ceases to shine then its instrumental value goes away
* Other than humans, all other created things have only or primarily instrumental value
* You might argue, don’t the mountains have intrinsic value as they are beautiful in and of themselves–no because their beauty was never intended to be terminal
* From the beginning, the beautiful objects of creation were intended to point back to the creator and the value of the mountain exists only when doing that
* This discussion really does matter – my Facebook discussion with high school friend

**Exposition of Genesis 3:1-7 and II Corinthians 4:3-4**

**I. Cosmic Testing:**

* For people, this dual value, intrinsic and instrumental, comes in this one moment in the initial creation story
* **Read Genesis 2:15-16 (Slide 2)**
* **Worship and serve the Creator OR**
* **Worship and serve the creation, Genesis 2:15-16**
* This is THE choice of every moment of our lives: God or self
* If self, this instrumental value is immediately lost because it violates the reason we have been created
* However the intrinsic value is still possessed because they still bear the image of God
* Even the angels which is why angels are not redeemed, they possess no intrinsic value for they have not been made in the image of God – one sin and they are doomed because the only value they possessed was instrumental value
* Difference between angels and humans, angels have only instrumental value so that when they rebelled there was nothing redeeming about them.
* Humans have both instrumental and intrinsic value so that when humans rebelled against God, there was still the image of God resident within the person despite marring the instrumental value of their creation.

**II. Cosmic Treason: The quest for autonomy, Genesis 3:1-5**

* This brings us to this cosmic event, pitting God’s intent with human desire
* **Read Genesis 3:1 (Slide 3)**
* Can you really be free if God has put any restrictions on you?
* **Read Genesis 3:2-3 (Slide 4)**
* Satan says, “You will not die.” a refrain he still articulates today
* **Read Genesis 3:4-5 (Slide 5)**
* Auto – self and Nomous – law: A law unto ourselves
* All of this discussion in America about self-governance is fine with reference to earthly rulers but it doesn’t work with regard to self versus God

**III. Cosmic Fall: Opening eyes to shame, Genesis 3:6-7**

* **Read Genesis 3:6-7 (Slide 6)**

**IV. Cosmic Consequences: Closing eyes to glory, II Corinthians 4:3-4**

* Their eyes were open to their own shame, but simultaneously their eyes were closed to glory
* **Read II Corinthians 4:3-4 (Slide 7)**
* One more verse, famous verse, Romans 3:23
* **Read Romans 3:23 (Slide 8)**
* This is why Paul describes sin or our behavior in rebellion against God in these terms
* Sin is not primarily the breaking of an impersonal moral code, sin is the diminishing of the very purpose for our creation, to see and exalt in the glory of God

**Conclusion: Human sin destroys the instrumental value of humans because it is an act of cosmic treason against our Creator and because it prevents us from being able to do what we were created to do, to see the glory of God. (Blank slide)**

**Next week, “What do Christians mean when they talk about salvation?” II Corinthians 4**