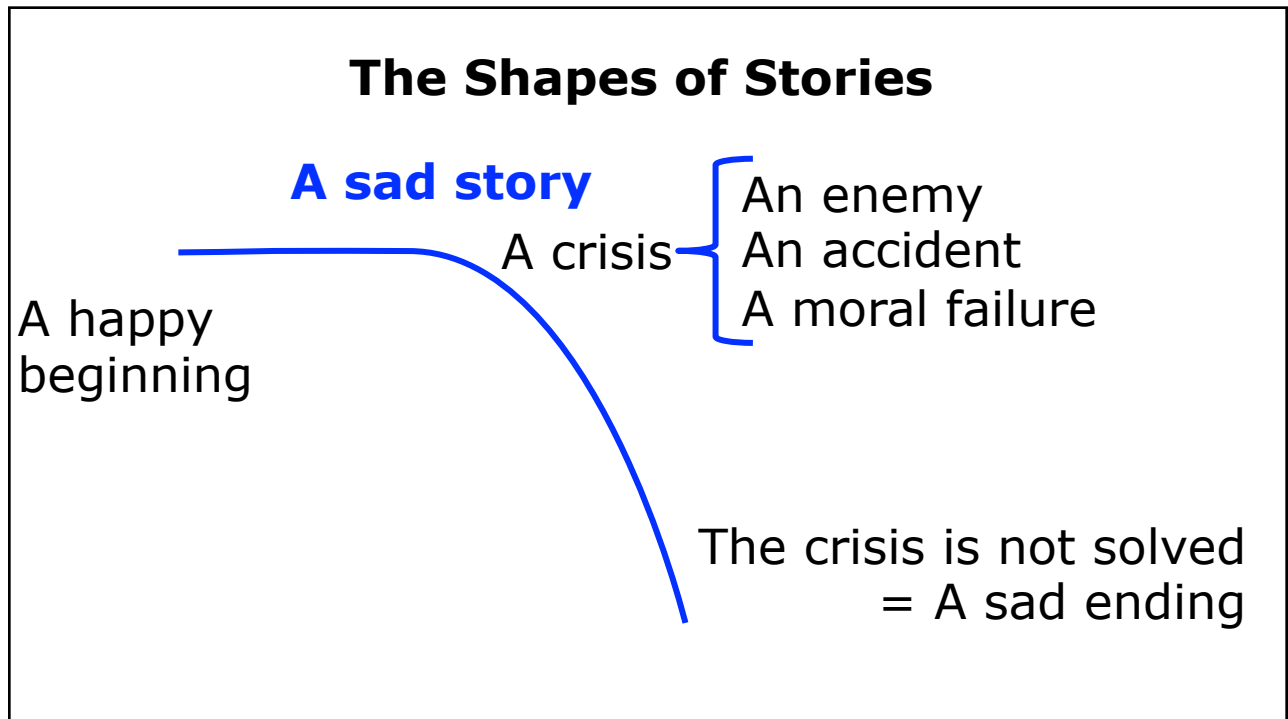


1



2

How We See Life

A sad story
A happy story
Fragile stories

When we hit trouble...

When we anticipate
the future...

Fear? Hope? Anxiety? Joy?

What is the foundation? Is it fragile?

Every real story
has trouble

The difference is,
does trouble win?

3

Our Storyline in God Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

ref.ly/Ecc11;niv



4

Context

"Ecclesiastes is primarily concerned with making us understand...

- that we are mortal (we'll die)
- that our days are few
- that all our works will fade away"

→ **We live in a world of trouble and decay**

5

Ecclesiastes 11:7-8

⁷ Light is **sweet,**
and it **pleases** the eyes to see the sun.

⁸ However many years anyone may live,
let them **enjoy** them all.

But let them **remember** the days of **darkness,**
for there will be many.
Everything to come is meaningless.

Darkness = injustice, decay, death, ...

6

Ecclesiastes 11:9-10

⁹ You who are young, **be happy** while you are young,
and let your heart **give you joy**
in the days of your youth.

Rejoicing is a
command of God!

Follow the ways of your heart
and whatever your eyes see,

but know that for all these things
God will bring you into judgment.

Don't ruin youth
by **fearing**

¹⁰ So then, banish anxiety from your heart
and cast off the troubles of your body,
for youth and vigor are meaningless.

old age

Or by

denying it

=A puzzle. Short lived.

7

Ecclesiastes 12:1-3

Remember your Creator
in the days of your youth,
before the days of trouble come
and the years approach when you will say,
"I find no pleasure in them"—

Decay & death
are inescapable

² **before** the sun and the light
and the moon and the stars grow dark,
and the clouds return after the rain;

For people & nature

³ when the keepers of the house tremble,
and the strong men stoop,
when the grinders cease because they are few,
and those looking through the windows grow dim;

8

Ecclesiastes 12:4-5

⁴ when the doors to the street are closed
 and the sound of grinding fades;
 when people rise up at the sound of birds,
 but all their songs grow faint;
⁵ when people are afraid of heights
 and of dangers in the streets;
 when the almond tree blossoms
 and the grasshopper drags itself along
 and desire no longer is stirred.
 Then **people go to their eternal home**
 and mourners go about the streets.

9

Ecclesiastes 12:6-8

⁶ Remember him—**before** the silver cord is **Death** severed,
 and the golden bowl is broken;
 before the pitcher is shattered at the spring,
 and the wheel broken at the well,
⁷ and the dust returns to the ground it came from,
 and the spirit returns to God who gave it.
⁸ “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher.
 “Everything is meaningless!”

10

Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

Enjoy life...**rejoice** while life is good

But (or maybe "and")...

"let them remember the days of darkness"

"know that ...God will bring you into judgment"

"Remember your Creator"

11

The Main Point

We live in a world of trouble and decay
even with its inevitable decay

Yet our storyline^v is rooted in...

- our wise God who **CREATED**
- our gracious God who **REDEEMS**
- and our almighty King who **RULES**

12

The storyline of humanity

Creation



13

The storyline of humanity

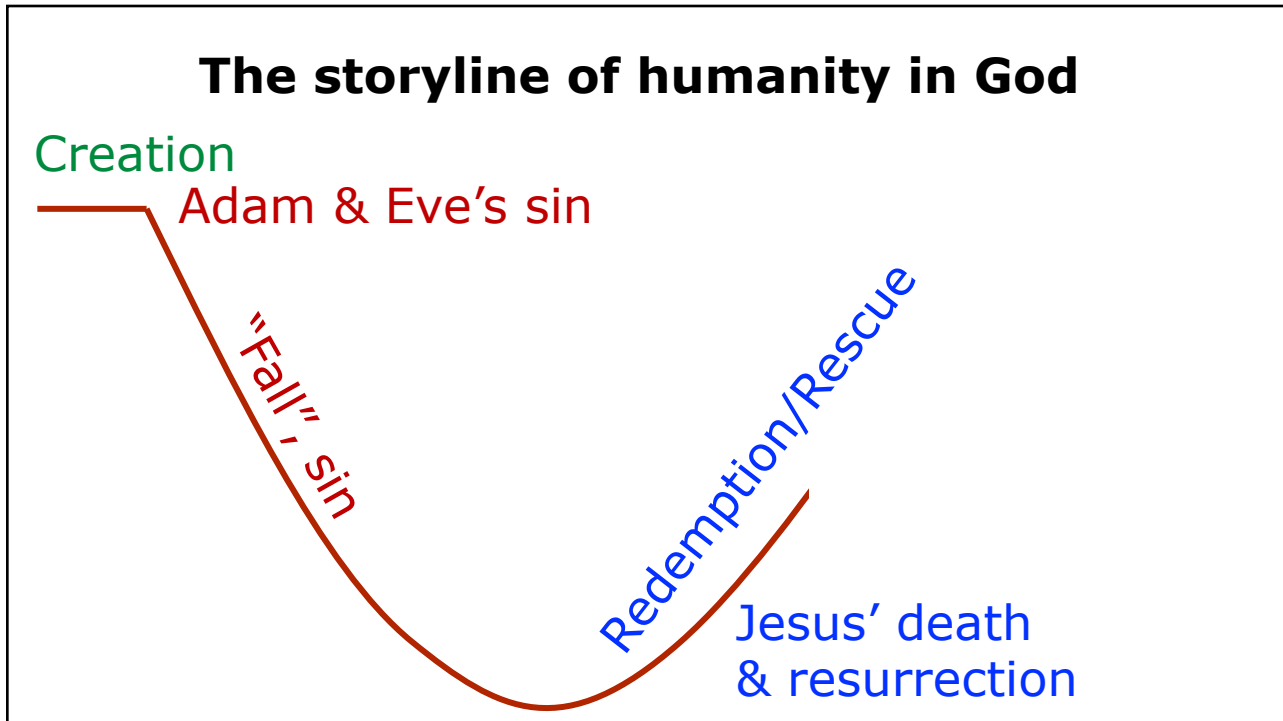
Creation

Adam & Eve's sin

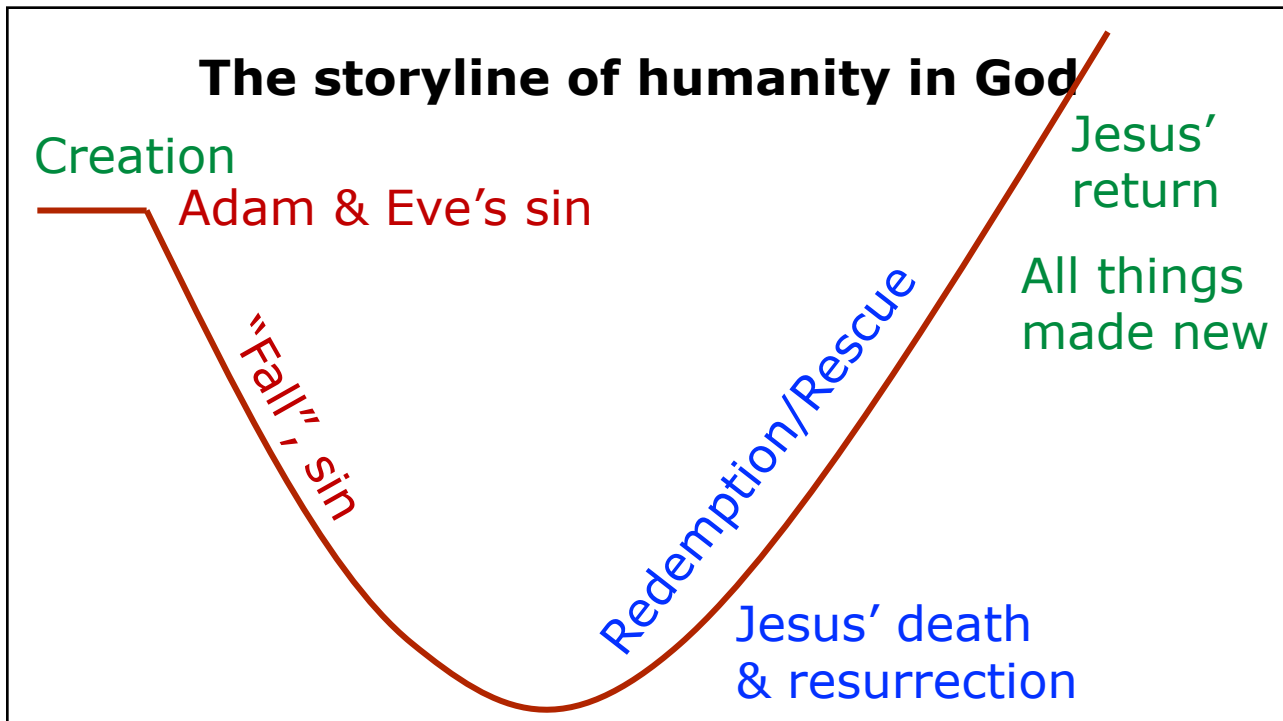
"Fall", sin



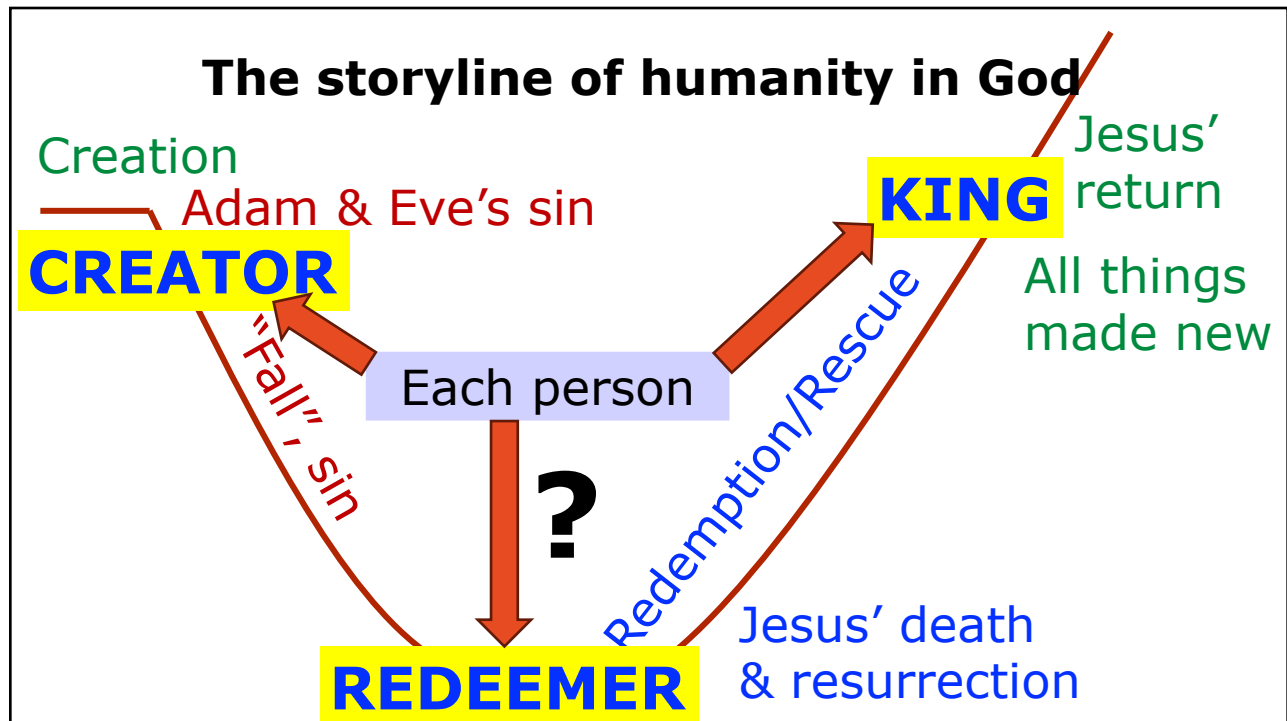
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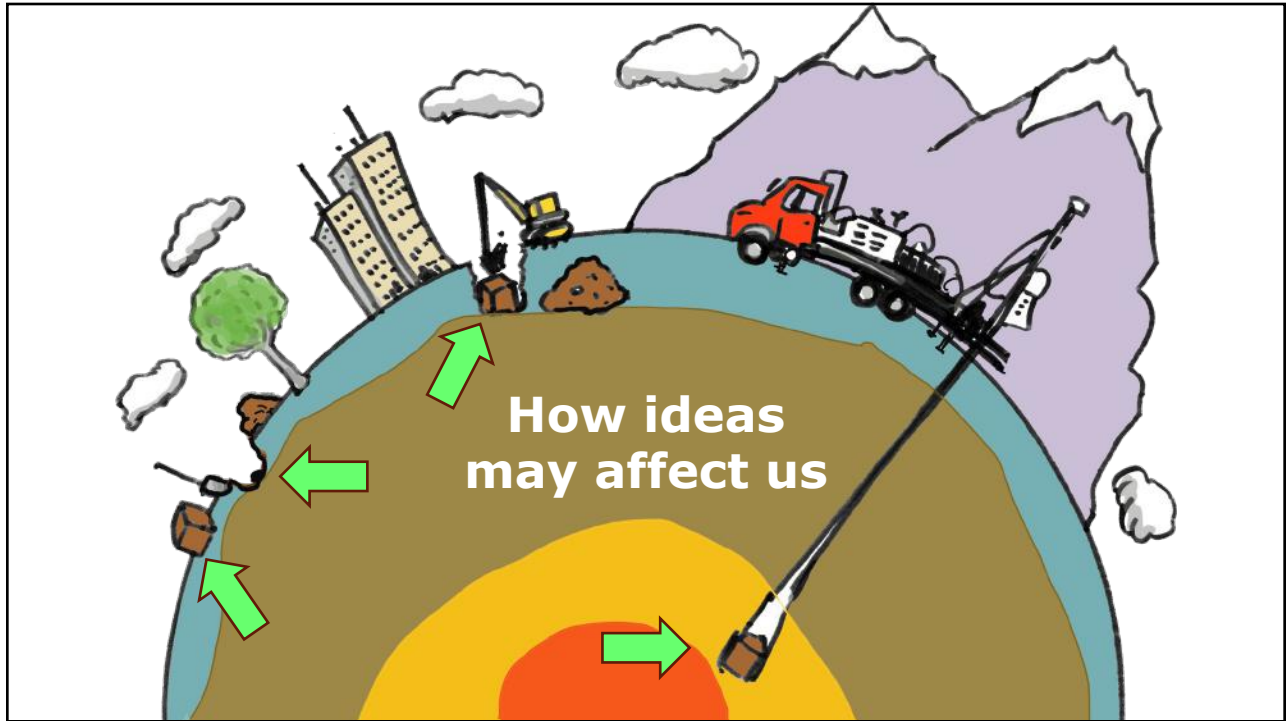
The Main Point

We live in a world of trouble and decay
even with its inevitable decay

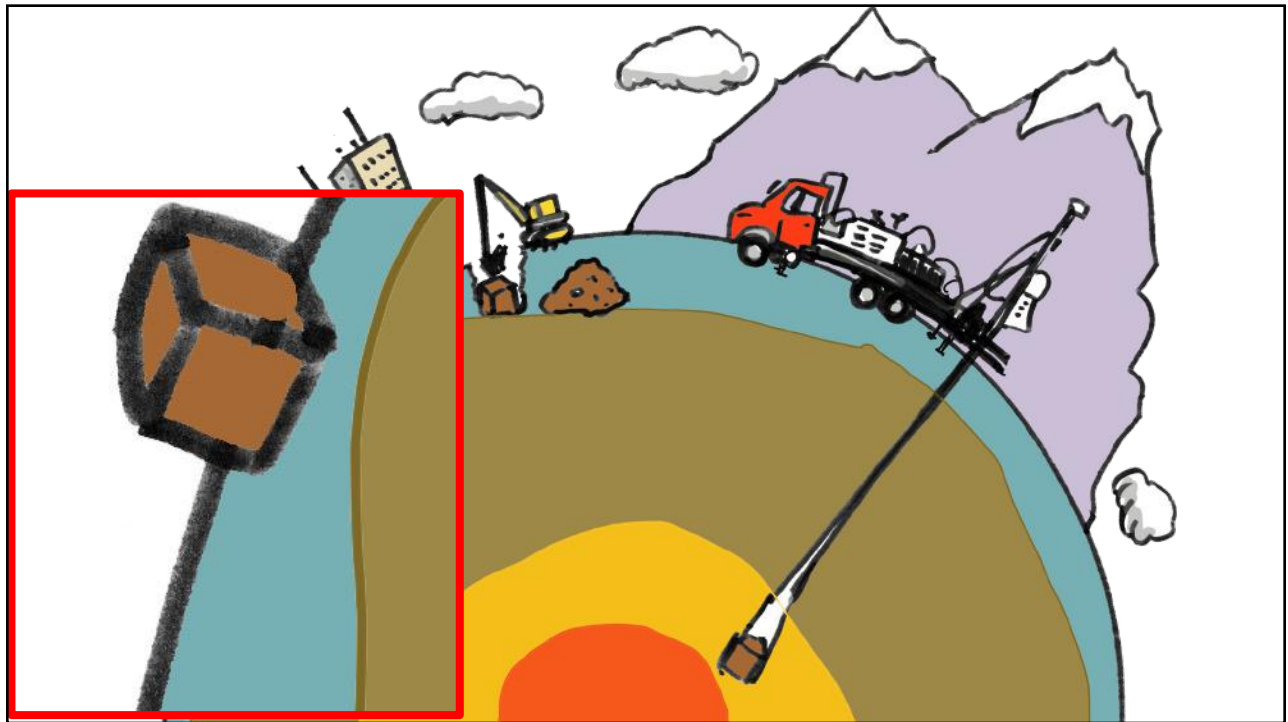
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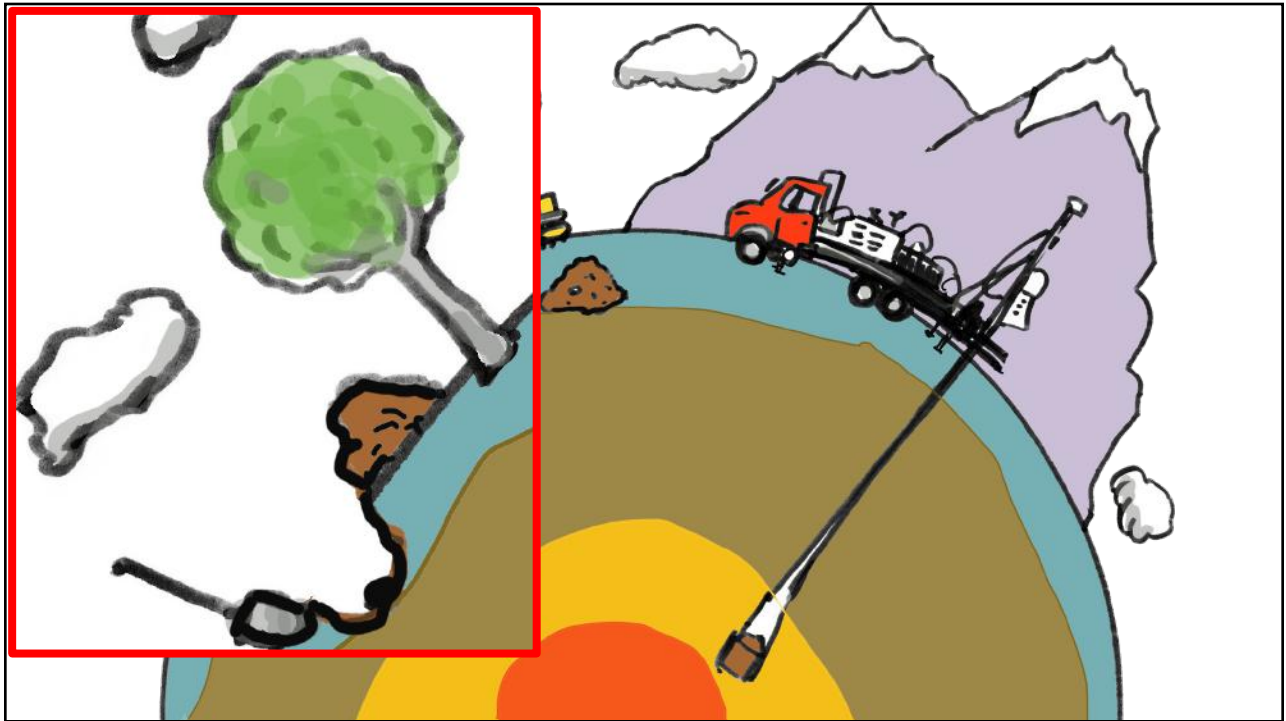
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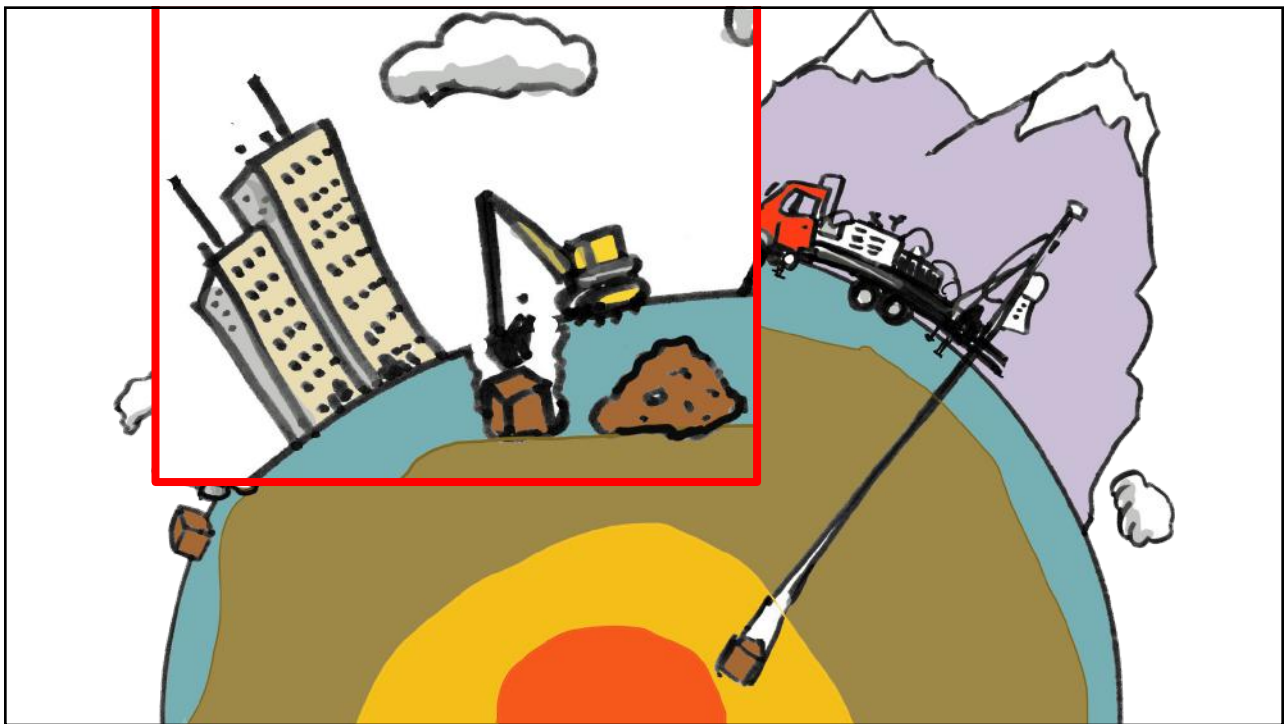
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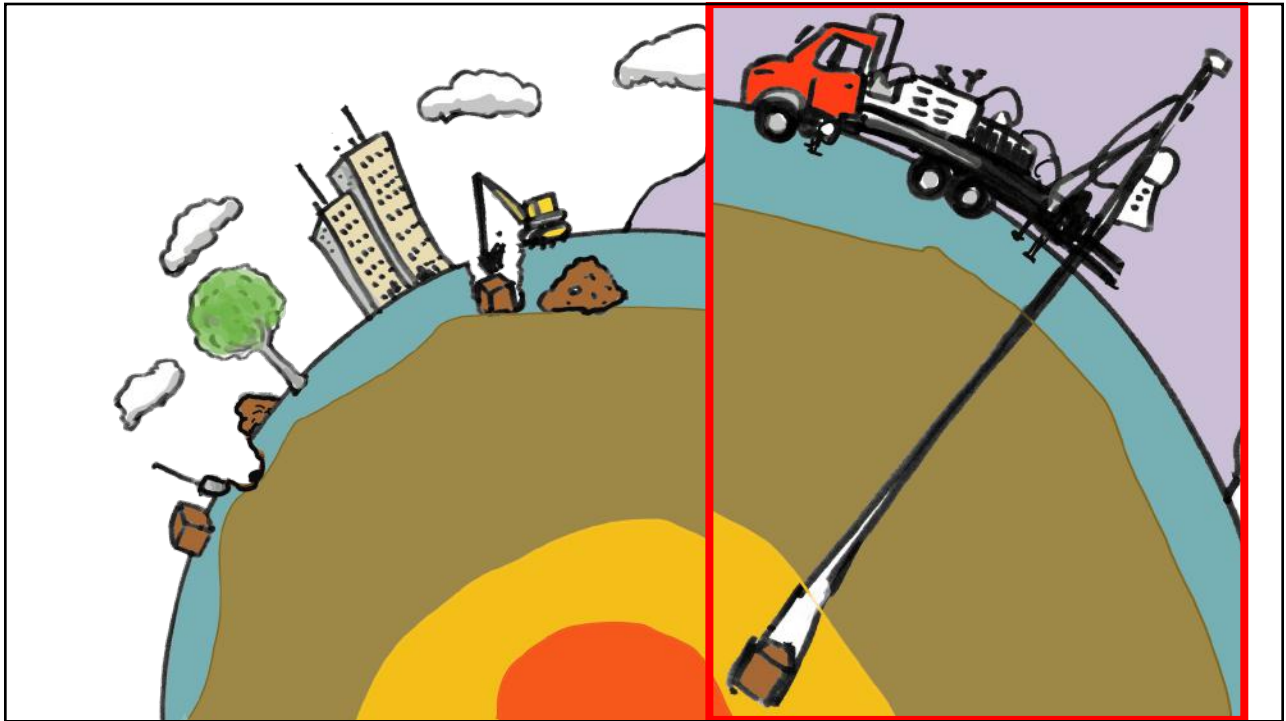
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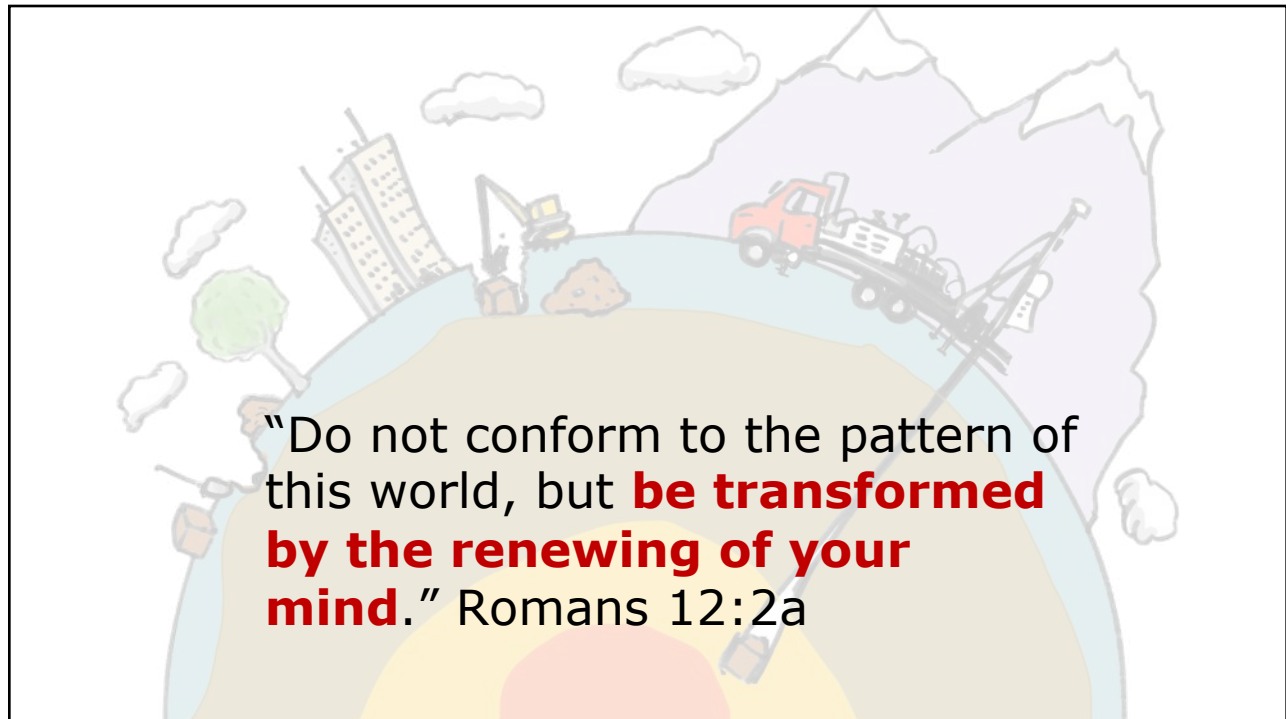
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23



24



25

The Main Point

We live in a world of trouble and decay
even with its inevitable decay

Yet our storyline^v is rooted in...

- our wise God who **CREATED**
- our gracious God who **REDEEMS**
- and our almighty King who **RULES**

Have our inner world **transformed**
by the mighty acts of God,
even in a world of trouble and decay

26

Application

Know...

our storyline in God

- In our broken world,
He **CREATED, REDEEMS, and RULES**
- Which part shapes our inner world most?
- Which part is most obvious to our friends?

27

Application

Know...

Have our inner being transformed by... our storyline in God

- When we ***know*** that...
 - God **CREATED**
 - God **REDEEMS**
 - God **RULES**
- we can ***rejoice***, even when there is trouble and mystery we can't understand

28

Application

Know...

**Have our inner being transformed by...
our storyline in God**

- We can obey the command to rejoice!
 - In the goodness of CREATION
 - In the powerful love and work of REDEMPTION
 - In the joyful reality that He will RULE completely and perfectly and forever
 - **Weak joy crumbles when trouble comes**
 - **Strong joy is anchored in God**

29

Application

Know...

**Have our inner being transformed by...
our storyline in God**

- Be sober in the brokenness of the world that falls short of God
- Be courageous and determined in pursuing God's agenda

30

Application

Know...

**Have our inner being transformed by...
our storyline in God**

This is a story worth telling!

- Hope and joy in the great actions of God
seen in the glimpses we have of His goodness
 - should be told to Christians to give strength
 - and to non-Christians to invite to faith

31

The Main Point

We live in a world of trouble and decay
even with its inevitable decay

Yet our storyline^v is rooted in...

- our wise God who **CREATED**
- our gracious God who **REDEEMS**
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Have our inner world **transformed**
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even in a world of trouble and decay

32

