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Tim keller creation fall redemption restoration

20 Sunday August 2017 If you are a person who wants to do a mission in the world, you are going to find you are always disappointed because people are not listening to you. You try to work against poverty, and after a lifetime it doesn't seem to be better. The mission can be quite doggone disappointment. However, at the end it says: Then the earth will give its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us. What, then? '... may all nations praise you. Most commentators believe (I'm almost certain they're right), the word then looks the way into the future. They say we don't really build a large community. We don't share the truth well. We are not doing justice, but the time is approaching when the earth will yield its harvest. We are talking about new heavens and a new land. We are talking about the final spring season, after which there will be no more winter, the final harvest, after which there will be no land lying in the fall. He looks forward to a time when God will eventually bless us, renew new heavens and a new earth, and all the nations of the world begin to praise Him. He looks to the very end. I had a lot of experience last June when I was doing one of the little courses we teach in the summer. I had the opportunity to read Tolkien's essay on why fairy tales still move people. Modern critics hate the fact that so many of the biggest films and biggest selling books are still about dragons, knights, chises and things like that. They say, Come on. Let's get realism. Tolkien has this great essay on why we will never stop reading, watching or writing fairy tales. In a book about Tolkien's essay, the writer basically says: Tolkien says that fairy tales propel us in ways realistic fiction doesn't. Even the best realistic fiction moves, but fairy tales propel us in a way that realistic fiction can't. Why? Because fairy tales speak to a few deep human concepts that we are almost ashamed to admit, and that we can never reject. The writer continues: We take a long time to survey the depths of time and space. We take a long time to go beyond time altogether and avoid death. We have long to communicate with other living things like angels. We take a long time to find love that heals perfectly, and from which we can never part, and we long to conquer evil, finally and completely. He concludes: When you are in the midst of a great fairy tale, the tale allows you to live, even briefly, with the dream that love without parting, escape from death, triumph over evil, are real and realized. That's why stories excite us so deeply, and why we'll go on reading and writing them no matter what the critics say. The message of the gospel is that through Jesus Christ, each of these things spoken of by fairy tales is true and will happen. We will hang out with angels. We're going to fly. We there is love from which we have never parted. We will see an absolute triumph over evil. There is a beauty that will kiss you in all your beast, and transform you. There is a prince who will save us forever. May this be your comfort in the mission. Let's pray. Our Father, we thank you that every week when we worship, after we hear the gospel, our names are written in heaven, someday there will be a new heaven and a new earth, all sad will become unkilld, and all our deepest human honors will happen. With this in mind, we can go into the world to serve those who love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, with gratitude. We pray that you will send us today knowing what we are going to do and shining your love on our hearts. And we pray that you will make us, as a church, a church for this city. We pray for it in the name of Jesus, amen. – Tim Keller Words found in Tim Keller's 2008 sermon: Thank God! (Psalm 67) 15 Monday May 2017 Look again at the uniqueness of Christianity. Only the Christian worldview finds a problem with the world not in any part of the world or in some particular group of people, but in sin itself (our loss of relations with God). And she finds a solution in God's grace (our restoration of relations with God through the work of Christ). Sin infects us all, and so we can't just divide the world into heroes and villains. (And if we did , we would surely have to count ourselves among both the latter and the former.) Without understanding the gospel, we will either be naively utopian or cynically disappointed. We will demonize something that is not bad enough to explain the mess we are in; and we will adore that which is not powerful enough to lead us out of it. This is, after all, what all other worldviews do. The Christian storyline works beautifully to understand things and even help us appreciate the truth embedded in stories that clearly come from a different worldview. The Christian storyline, or worldview, is: creation (plan), fall (problem), redemption and recovery (solution): The whole world is good. God made the world and everything in it was fine. There are no partly evil parts of the world. Nothing is evil in its origin. As Tolkien explained about his archaeology in the Lord of the Rings trilogy, at the beginning even Sauron was not so. You can find this creating good in anything. The whole world has fallen. There is no aspect of the world that has suffered from sin more or less than any other. For example, are emotions and passions unreliable and the cause of infaillent? Is there physical bad and spiritual good? Is the day-to-day world blasphemd, but religious observances are good? None of them are true; but non-Christian storylines must accept some of their variations in order to and even demonize some created thing instead of sin. The whole world will be redeemed. Jesus is going to redeem the spirit and body, mind and emotions, people and nature. There is no part of reality that there is no hope for. – Tim Keller 12 Friday May 2017 As a minister, of course, I have spent countless hours with people struggling and struggling with the biggest issue - why the issue in the face of relentless tragedies and injustices. And like all ministers or any spiritual mentors of any kind, I try to say something to answer and I will always walk away feeling inadequate and it will be no different today. But we can't get away from the task of answering that question. Because the best way to honor memories of our lost love is to live a confident, productive life. And the only way to do that is to actually be able to face this issue. We must have the power to face a world filled with constant devastation and loss. So where can we get that power? How do we deal with this issue? I would suggest that while we won't get everything we need, we can get some of what we need 3 ways: recognizing the problem for what it is, and then grabbing both empowering innuendo from the past and empowering hope from the future. First, we must recognize that the problem of tragedy, injustice and suffering is a problem for all no matter what their beliefs. Now, if you believe in God and first feel or see a terrible evil, do you rightly believe that this is a problem for your faith in God, and you are right - and you say: How can a good and powerful God allow something like this to happen? But it is a mistake (albeit a very understandable mistake) to think that if you give up your faith in God, it is somehow going to make the problem easier to handle. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. says in his letter from Birmingham Prison that if there were no higher divine Law, there would be no way to say whether a particular human law was unfair or not. So think so. If there is no God or higher divine law and the material universe is everything, then violence is absolutely natural—silest eat the weak! And yet somehow, we still feel that this is not how it should be. Why not? Now I'm not going to get philosophical at a time like this. I'm just trying to make the problem of injustice and suffering a problem of faith in God, but it's also a problem of disbelief in God—for any set of beliefs. So giving up faith in God doesn't really help in the face of it. Okay, then what's going to happen? Second, I believe we need to understand the empowerment of innuendo from the past. Now at the moment I would like to freely accept that every faith - and we are interfaith gathering today - every faith has great resources to fight suffering and injustice in the world. But as a Christian, I know the resources of my own faith best, so let me just share with you what I have. There are almost always two answers. One answer: Do not interrogate God! He has reasons beyond your skinned little mind. And so just accept everything. Don't doubt it. Another answer: I don't know what God is up to - I have no idea at all about why these things are happening. There's no way to figure it out at all. Now I would like to respectfully offer the first of these answers too hard and the second too weak. The second is too weak because while of course we don't have a full answer, we have an idea, an incredibly powerful idea. One of the great themes of the Hebrew scripture is that God is reldoing with suffering. There are all these great texts that say these things: If you oppress the poor, you depress me. I'm a man for a widow. I'm a father without a father. I think the texts say that God binds his heart so closely to the suffering people that he interprets any move against them as a step against him. This is powerful material! But Christianity says it goes even beyond that. Christians believe that Jesus, god's son, divinity has become vulnerable and involved in – suffering and death! He did not come as a general or an emperor. He came as a carpenter. He was born in a snauce, there is no place in the snak. But it is on the Cross that we see the final miracle. On the cross we suffer, finally, to our shock that God now, too, knows what it is to lose a loved one in an unjust attack. And so you see what that means? John Stott wrote: I could never have believed in God myself if it hadn't been for the Cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship God who was immune to him? Do you see what that means? Yes, we do not know the reason God allows evil and suffering to continue, but we know what the reason is not that it cannot be. It can't be that he doesn't like us! It can't be that he doesn't care. God loved us so much and hates suffering that he was willing to go down and get involved in it. And so Cross is an incredibly empowering hint. Ok, that's just a hint, but if you understand it, it can transform you. It can give you strength. Finally, we must understand the empowerment of hope for the future. Both in the Hebrew scriptures and even more explicitly in the Christian scriptures, we have the promise of resurrection. In Daniel 12:2-3 we read: Many people who sleep in the gunpowd of the earth will wake up... [They]... will light up like the brightness of heaven, and ... like stars at any time. And in John 11 we hear Jesus say, I am the resurrection and life! Now that's what the claim is: God does not prepare for us only some ethereal, abstract spiritual existence, which is only a kind of compensation for our lost life. Resurrection means restoring to us the life we have lost. New heavens and a new earth means this body, this world! Our bodies, our homes, our loved ones—restored, returned, improved, and beautiful! Loyal to us! In the year after 9-11 was diagnosed with cancer and I was successfully treated. But for all this time I have read about the future resurrection and these were my true cures. In the last book Of the Lord of the Rings, Sam Gamji wakes up thinking that all is lost and discovering instead that all his friends were around him, he shouts: Gandalf! I thought you were dead! But then I thought I was dead! Will everything sad come unky? The answer is YES. And the answer to the Bible is YES. If the resurrection is true, then the answer is yes. All sad things will come unky. Oh, I know many of you say: I'd like to believe it. And guess what? This idea is so powerful that you can go ahead with this. Even wanting a resurrection, loving the idea of resurrection, long the promise of resurrection, even if you are unsure of it, is strengthened. And John 3:2-3. Loved, now we are the children of God and what we will not yet become aware of. But we know that when He appears, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is. Even having hope for it clears. Listen to Dostoevsky put it in the Karamazov brothers: I believe as a child that suffering will heal and come up, that all the humiliating absurdity of human contradictions will disappear like a pathetic mirage, like the audacious fabrication of an impotent and infinitely small euclid mind of man, that in the finale of the world, in a moment of eternal harmony, something so precious will happen that it will be enough for all hearts, for the comfort of all grievances, to atone for all the crimes of mankind, all the blood they have shed; and it will not only forgive, but also justify what has happened.1 It's strong and that last sentence is particularly strong... but if the resurrection is true, it is absolutely right. Amen. – Tim Keller *Transcript for Memorial and Peace Service for families of victims 9-11. Ground Zero/St Paul's Chapel Tim Keller September 10, 2006 03 Wednesday May 2017 The power of the king's reign of Christ is now present among the gathered Christians (Luke 17:20-21), freeing people from falsemapans and enslaving idols. Among disciples, the kingdom is a new human order in which power, money, recognition and success are duly reordered in light of the kingdom's register. It's not that these things no longer matter, but that they the solution to Christ's new creation is service, generosity, and humility (Luke 6:17-29). The kingdom of Jesus is not like human realms, for it conquers influence through the suffering of service, not forced power. We enter it not through strength, but because of the weakness of repentance and the new birth (John 3) and become like a child (Mt. 18:3-4). Christ's liberation rule is not to the end. All of His disciples must pray for him to come, according to Matthew 6:10, and at the end of the time we will receive it at completion (Mt. 25:34). But finally, the day comes when the city of God will come down. It contains the throne of God - the place of the kingdom (Ate 22:3), from which the renewal of all things continues (Ate 21:3-6). This is an ecstatic intronomy depicted in Psalms 96-98. When God returns to rule, even rivers will clap their hands, and the mountains will sing with joy that their liberator has finally come (Ps 98:8; Rum 8:21-22). The freedom and joy of the Kingdom of Heaven will come to earth. – Tim Keller 01 Saturday April 2017 Psalm 96:12-13 says: All the trees of the forest will sing with joy; they shall sing before the Lord, for He shall come, He cometh to judge the earth. Isaiah 55:12 says: Mountains and hills break into song in front of you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. If you put the seeds in a pot of soil and then put it in the dark, away from the sun, the seeds go into dormance. They cannot grow to their potential. But if you bring a pot of seeds into the presence of the sun, everything that has been locked inside them pulls forward. The Bible says that everything in this world - not just us humans, but even plants, trees, rocks - is dormant. These things are only shadows of what they were, would have been and would be in the presence of their Creator. When the Lamb of God presides over the final feast and the presence of God again covers the earth, the trees and hills will clap and dance, so alive they will be. And if trees and hills can clap and dance in the future of the kingdom, imagine what you and I can do. – Tim Keller 31 Saturday January 2015 All forms of work are participation in God's work. God created the world with His Spirit (1:1-3) and continues to care for him by His Spirit and sustain it (Ps. 104:30) by watering and enriching it (Ps. 65:9-13) and feeding and sustaining the needs of every living thing (Ps. 145:15–16–147:15–20). Indeed, the purpose of redemption is to restore material creation en masse and definitively (21–22). God loves this created world so much that he sent His Son to redeem him. This world is kind in itself. It's not just a temporary theater for individual salvation. If the Holy Ghost is not only a preacher who condemns people for sin and grace (John 16:8–11; 1:5), but also a gardener, artist and investor in a creation that updates the material world, he could not be more spiritual and God-honored to be a preacher than to be a farmer, artist or banker. To give only one example, evangelism is a temporary job, and musicianship is a constant job. In the new heavens and in the new land, preachers will be without work! Ultimately the purpose of evangelization is to bring about a world in which musicians will be able to do their jobs perfectly. – Tim Keller 27 Tuesday January 2015 Bible describes the creation of the world not only as a building of the house, but also as weaving clothes. God turned chaos into space and also turned the tangle into a tapestry. Woven clothes were long in acceptance and valuable in ancient times, and so they were an apt metaphor for the wonder and character of the material world. The sea (Psalm 104:6), clouds (Eid 38:9), the lights of heaven (Psalm 104:1) and all the forces of nature (Psalm 102:26) are called the garment that God has flown and now wears. As a result, the world is not like a lava cone, the product of powerful random erupts, but rather similar to a fabric. Woven fabric consists of countless threads intertwined with each other. Even more than an architectural image, the metaphor of the fabric conveys the importance of relationships. If you throw thousands of pieces of thread on the table, there are no fabric results. Threads should be fairly and intimately related to each other in literally a million ways. Each thread must pass, under, around, and through others at thousands of points. Only then will you have a beautiful and durable fabric that covers, fits, holds, hides and grabs. God created everything to be in a beautiful, harmonious, interdependent, knitted, spidery relationship with each other. Just as fairly related physical elements form a cosmos or tapestry, so a fairly connected person form a community. This interlacing is what the Bible calls shalom, or harmonious peace. –

Tim Keller 26 Monday January 2015 What is a simple gospel? Simon Gathercole distills a three-point outline that both Paul and the synoptic writers conducted in common. (See The Gospel of Paul and the Gospel of the Kingdom in God's Power to Save, ed. Chris Greene Apollos / Intervariant Press, Britain, 2006.) He writes that paul's good news was, first, that Jesus was the promised messianic king and the Son of God came to earth as a servant, in human form. (Rome. 1:3-4; Fil. 2:4ff.) Second, by his death and resurrection, Jesus thinned our sin and provided our justification with grace rather than our works (1 Cor. 15:3ff). Third, on the cross, Jesus broke the dominance of sin and evil over us (Col. 2:13-15) and upon his return he will complete what he began by updating all the material creation and resurrection of our bodies (Rome. 8:18ff.) 3 evil traces these same three aspects in the training of forecasters on whether that Jesus, the Messiah, is the divine Son of God (Mark 1:1), who died as a substitute for redemption for many (Mark 10:45), who conquered the demonic present age with his sin and evil (Mark 1:14-2:10) and would return to restore the material world (Mt. 19. 19 If I had to put this plan in one finding, I could do so A: Through the man and work of Jesus Christ, God fully achieves salvation for us, saving us from judgment for sin to communicating with him, and then restoring creations in which we can enjoy our new lives with him forever. One of these elements was at the heart of the old gospel messages, namely salvation by grace does not work. It was the last element that usually went missing, namely that grace restores nature, as Dutch theologian Hermann Bivink said. When the third, eschatological element stays out, Christians get the impression that nothing special in this world matters. In theory, by grabbing the full outline, Christians should be interested in both evangelical converts and serving their neighbor and working for peace and justice in the world. – Tim Keller 10 Wednesday July 2013 When we look at the full volume of this storyline, we clearly see that Christianity is not just about getting our individual sins forgiven so we can go to heaven. It is an important means of salvation of God, but not the last end or purpose of it. The purpose of Jesus' coming is to put the whole world right, restore and restore creation, not escape it. It is not just to bring personal forgiveness and peace, but also justice and shalom to the world. God created both the body and soul and the resurrection of Jesus shows that he is going to redeem both the body and the soul. The work of the Spirit of God is not only to save souls, but also to care for and cultivate the face of the earth, the material world. – Tim Keller Keller

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