

The



Navigator's Compass

**A biblical framework
to help guide us in life**

Glen Morris



Table of contents

Introduction	3
1. Creation	6
2. Fall	10
3. Future Hope	14
4. Redemption	18
Examples	22

THE NAVIGATORS

This material has been created by The Navigators of NZ and is available to be used freely by you for personal use. However, if you wish to use any part of it in another publication we would ask that you seek permission. For this, contact Glen Morris: glen@navigators.org.nz

The Navigators of NZ is a non-profit (and non-denominational) organisation that aims to help people find Good News for their life through the story and life of Jesus. We try to help people connect their life and faith in practical ways, and in the process help them to live well and make a difference in their worlds.

The Navigators of NZ is also part of an international organisation - The Navigators - which is involved in over 100 countries around the world. If you'd like any more info on this, just make contact with us: info@navigators.org.nz.

Introduction



Think back to yesterday. (It seems so long ago!) What did you do with your day? How did you decide what to do? Was it a good day? What criteria did you use to decide?

These questions all come down to your worldview, or as I like to think of it, the picture in your head that makes sense of life. We all have a picture (worldview), but we don't often clearly know what our own one is.

So, how does this relate to the Godstuff? Well, the bible offers us a good picture (or worldview), but to be honest I think we struggle to see how this is actually relevant to us on a daily basis – this is not often what we use to make sense of life as we experience it.

But it doesn't need to be this way.

We *can* find connections between the big story of the bible and our own story as lived out right here and now. The major themes of the big biblical story - **creation, fall, redemption** through Jesus, and the coming **future hope** - help us understand where we are and which direction we should be moving towards. And I believe we can see all the aspects of these big themes playing themselves out even in just one of our ordinary days. The thing is, it just takes a bit of practise seeing the world through this set of lens.

This framework—the navigator's compass—is a tool to help you see the world this way. The following pages give some explanations and thoughts on how to do this, but the real gains will come as you try it out in your own life.

So it will require work on your part, but I believe it will be worth it, because when you start to see how the 'small' story of your life is connected to the 'big' story of God, you are a long way towards integrating faith and life...and when those 'lights' come on, you can really see a way ahead to live a life of difference that is truly good news.

***“A wise friend said to me:
‘Stop asking God to bless
what you’re doing, Bono.
Find out what God is
doing, because it’s
already blessed”***

Bono from U2

Glen Morris



Introduction...

Some questions to start with... Identifying what you do

- Think back to any day last week and note down ONE major thing you did on that day.
- Why did you do that thing?
- Were you successful in doing it? What criteria did you use to decide?
- In your mind, how did your faith make any difference to the thing you did and how you evaluated your success in doing it?

Self-Critique

- In thinking about your answers above, were you happy with the way your faith had an impact on the thing you did on that day?
- Generally speaking, what from your past or history or society is influencing you to make the connections between life & faith in the way you do?
- Is there anything you'd like to change with the way your faith impacts your daily life?

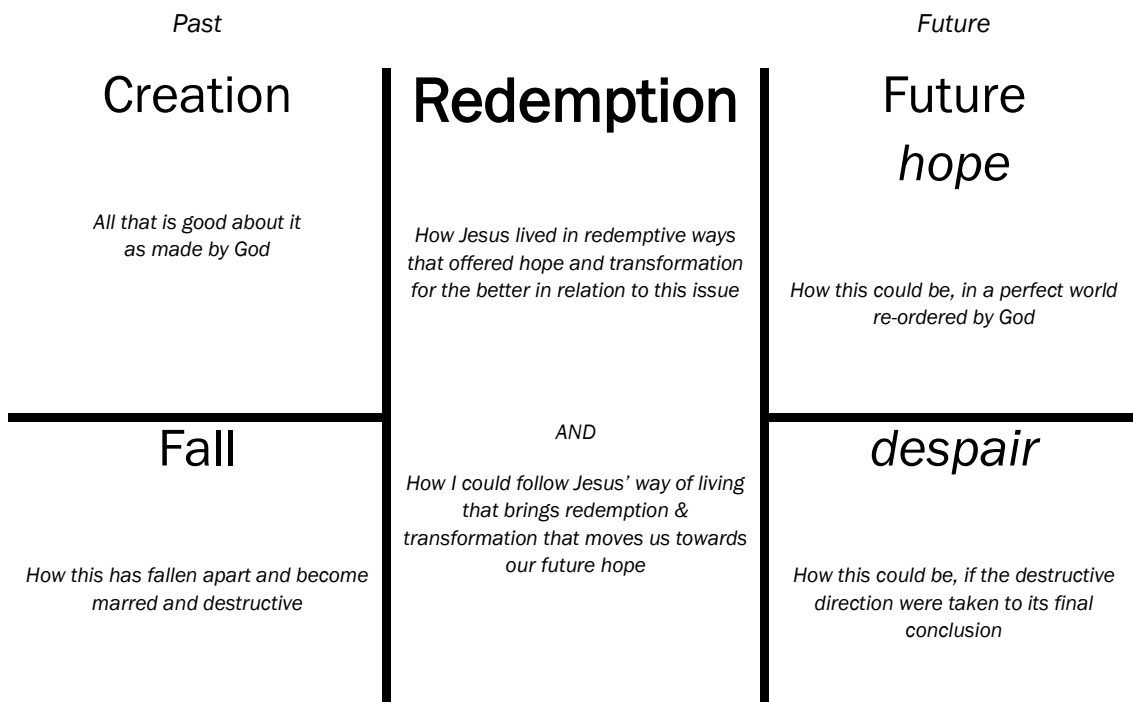


Introduction...

The navigator's compass

When there is no map to tell us which way is up, a compass can be helpful. The following framework can work like a compass, helping us make sense of our life in light of the major themes of the bible: creation, fall, redemption and future hope...

Issue: *the issue could be a thing, an idea, or an action on a personal or global level. ie it could be anything!*



Hopefully it will make sense as we go, but for the moment, can you...

Identify ONE issue that you would like to better understand from a faith perspective.

This could be something on a personal level, an interpersonal level, or even a national or global level, and it could be something to do with how you think, feel or act (or a combination of these).

Whatever you chose, we will use as an example as we work through understanding the different major themes of the bible.

To illustrate how we can use this framework, we will pick the item: *moving to a different city/location*. Note your issue below...

1. Creation



“In the beginning God created...”

The other week I went to the beach with the kids and together we built the best sandcastle ever! (well, we thought it was good anyway) We built it in the full knowledge that in a few hours it would be destroyed – either by the tide, an enthusiastic toddler or a passing dog. And yet that did not slow us down in our attempt to create a well-structured castle of beauty.

It doesn't make sense, really. Why bother when it will only be destroyed and our efforts wasted?

The answer for me has to do with us being a 'chip off the old block': God made you and me in the image of God. At the very beginning we are told “God created...” He started with raw material that was formless and empty and dark and he set about creating a world that was beautiful, functional, well-balanced and relational. And just consider the job titles that God could put on the business card: architect, engineer, artist, landscape designer, vet, microbiologist, astronomer, gardener, project manager, genetic engineer(!),...to name a few. So we are only being true to our human nature (and 'God-likeness') when we create.

But we don't just create for our own benefit; we also create as part of what God wants to do in the world. When God made the first people he called them to work with him. God made the garden but his co-workers were to 'work it and take care of it' in order to see the growth continue. God made the animals but the co-workers had the job of naming them (- without names the animals would not be complete). In true power-sharing style, God gives us significant creative work to do that is a part of God's ongoing creative acts in the world.

And God is interested in the details. So when you cook dinner, tidy your room, sing a song, complete a work project, write a letter, enjoy time with a friend, organise a party, wash your hair, pull out a weed or feed the cat...in a profound way you are participating with God in making a world that is beautiful, functional, well-balanced and relational. That's why you get that 'satisfied feeling' when you do these things. It's crucial you make this connection.

Creation carries on despite the onset of the fall. Random acts of beauty and creativity are not wasted! This is the stuff that God is on about, and together with God you share in the important ongoing work of creation. 😊



1. Creation...

Some additional thoughts from Genesis on Creation

- In Gen 1:2, the 'chaos' or 'formless void' is the raw material that God uses to create. When God begins, that chaos ceases to exist.
- God's work isn't just to do with humans; most of Gen 1 shows the creation of non-human entities. And all that God made was 'very good' (1:31) - nothing is intrinsically evil.
- God also uses things already created as a means to bring about further creations: for example, the earth brings forth vegetation (1:11-12), and man is formed from dust while the woman is formed from the side of the man (2:7,22)
- In 2:7 God 'the potter' works the clay of the ground to form the first person; this is a Creator who gets his hands dirty.
- Being made in God's image is for everyone, not just kings and 'important' people.
- The divine naming (1:5-10) stops with the earth's appearance and people pick up the task in 2:19. This naming is a discerning of each creature's place within the creation, not authority (so Adam's naming of Eve doesn't mean subordination cf Hagar naming God 16:13).
- 'Whatever the man called each creature, that was its name' 2:19 – shows the power-sharing God who delegates significant work to people that really counts.
- Rivers flow from Eden to give water to the world outside Eden (2:10-14), so when Adam & Eve are excluded from the garden they don't move from a place full of blessing to one totally without blessing; rather it's from total blessing to partial blessing.
- In 2:15-17 God gives vocation (work the garden & take care of it), broad permission (may eat from any tree) and limitation (except *that* tree). Vocation, permission and limitation need to be held in balance to live well.
- male & female were given God's blessing & command to fill, subdue and rule the earth Gen 1:28 – to God this meant working and taking care of it Gen 2:15
- If everything is made by God, then a connection & affinity exists between all parts: people, animals, nature.
- God was at work before the arrival of Israel (and us) onto the scene. Israel didn't bring God with them to a place; rather, God was already there to meet them (and us).
- God is creator; everything else is created; everything and everyone is reliant on God.

1. Creation...



Using the compass

- Thinking about the issue you identified earlier, note down in the space below some of the positive things about it that are in line with how God created things to be. Feel free to use a combination of biblical texts and your own general understanding of the creation theme. (You can get an idea of how this works by looking at what we have done with our illustration of *moving to a different city*.) For now just bullet point your ideas. We will put it together in the 'compass format' later.

Issue: moving to a different city/location

Creation

- *In the garden God gave broad permission to do a lot of things (with only one limitation) (Gen 2:16); likewise, God gave Abraham the land of Israel and told him to wander around in it; Abraham then chose for himself a place to stay (Gen 13:14-18) - broad guidance but specifics left to people*
- God made everything, so God is in both the location you have come from and the place you are going to—neither is godless, and God is already there before you get there
- When all the so-called 'important' people were in the 'right places', the word of God came to John in the desert (Luke 3:1) - you can encounter God and accomplish great things for God from the most unlikely and obscure places
- As for Moses, life is a journey of many steps and locations

Fall

Redemption

Future hope

despair



2. Fall

“and then the wheel fell off...”

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised they were naked...”
Genesis 3:6

And I always thought fruit was meant to be good for you.

Anyway, Genesis 3 tells us how ‘badness’ entered into our world. Things started well. God gave Adam & Eve **a job** to do (to take care of the garden), he gave them **lots of freedom** (“you are free to eat from any tree in the garden”) but he also threw in **a limitation** (“but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”). There was no explanation as to *why* they’d die if they ate it. That was just part of the deal.

One day a snake came along and threw in a doubt: “Did God really give you that limitation for *your* benefit? Surely he’s just keeping something good back from you.” Here’s the crunch: Would they trust that God was doing things for *their* best interests or would they ‘break free’ and determine their own boundaries? Option B seemed good at the time, but the consequences were disastrous. They placed themselves in the driver’s seat of this thing called ‘life’ but they didn’t have an instruction manual, they didn’t know where they were going, and they couldn’t drive. They thought they could do it on their own. They were wrong.

Total collapse soon followed: within themselves, with their relationships with others, with their abuse of the world and with their life with God. The harmony, beauty and balance of creation were marred by guilt, shame and fear. And through the ages, this ‘family likeness’ has been passed on to us.

I live with the consequences every day – being fearful that something nasty might happen to me; treating people as objects; being miserly and un-sharing towards those who could do with help. This is just the tip of the iceberg. And I’m probably at my most dangerous when I think I’m not actually doing too bad. From within each of us there is a poisonous gas leak just waiting for a match. When the right opportunity comes along to meet my corrupted desire...I’m sure I would surprise myself as to how low I would go.

The Fall is a crippling disease that slowly kills us from the inside out. We’re all infected, we all need help, we all need some good news. ☹

2. Fall...



To do

- Read through Genesis chapters 3-4 and 6:1-8.
- Note down any negative occurrences following on from the first sin
(eg fear, sense of exposure, and hiding 3:10)

- In what ways or situations do you feel you most experience this 'fallenness'...
 - as someone who creates chaos and brokenness
(eg when doing the tall poppy syndrome, cutting someone down to size with negative words)

 - as someone who experiences chaos and brokenness at the hands of others
(eg when my boss puts the blame on me for a mistake he made)



2. Fall...

Some additional thoughts from Genesis on the Fall

- Gen 3 describes a setting whereby options are presented to the humans (by a snake); 'choice' is a God-given characteristic of humanity but it presents the opportunity to lead people away from God.
- In Gen 3:5 the snake makes the humans aware that 'God knows' these things that they don't. Adam and Eve then have to decide whether they can trust the God who has told them some things but not everything. ie does God really have their best interests at heart? And do they have to know everything? Trust is a central issues in the first sin.
- In considering what the snake said (3:5-7), they did not consult God but in silence merely thought about what the tree had to offer without obviously considering God's prohibition.
- The description of the temptation in 3:6 matches a description of 'worldliness' in 1John 2:15-16: 'the woman saw the fruit was good for food ('cravings of sinful nature'), pleasing to the eye ('lust of the eyes'), and desirable for gaining wisdom ('boasting of what you have').
- The snake said there eyes would be opened (3:5), which they were (3:7), and they now saw themselves and their world differently: naked and in need of external resources. Already they could not handle their new knowledge
- The immediate fallout is broken relationship with God (hiding – 3:8), brokenness inside (fear and shame –3:10), broken relationship with each other (blaming –3:12) and broken relationship with their world (cursed is the ground because of you –3:17)
- Gen 3 describes the first sin, but that is not where it ends. The chapters following on from ch3 show the process whereby sin infects everything and everyone: family relationships (conflict between Cain & Abel –4:8), family structure (Lamech marrying two women –4:19), inter-tribe rivalry (Lamech killing a man for wounding him –4:23), the earth (being flooded in judgement –6:7) and the cosmic sphere (the Nephilim 6:1-5).
- Some of the words used in chapters 3-6 give a feel for the effect of the fall: afraid, naked, hid, deceived, cursed, crush, pain, toil, banished, driven out, anger, downcast, killed, restless wanderer, vengeance, death, great wickedness, evil, grieved, filled with pain.
- The 'fall' is really a falling out and a falling apart.

2. Fall...



Using the compass

- Thinking about the issue you identified earlier, note down in the space below some of the negative things about it that are in line with how, after the initial 'fall' of Adam and Eve, everything continued to fall out and fall apart.
(again, we have done this with our illustration of *moving to a different city/location.*)

Issue: moving to a different city/location

Creation

Future hope

Fall

- God banished the man and woman from the garden after their fall (Gen 3:23); likewise, Cain became a 'restless wanderer' because he murdered his brother (Gen 4:10-16)
- God scattered the people (and changed their languages) in order to stop them in combination doing greater evil (Gen 11)
- God let the first exodus generation wander around the desert for 40 yrs because they didn't trust God (Num 14:26-33)
- God sent the Israelites into exile for their sin (2Ch 36:14-20)
- Movement from a location can be used by God to disrupt your bad patterns/evil
- Some moves are motivated for the wrong reasons eg wanting to seek out importance (see 'creation' point on Luke 3:1)

Redemption

Despair



3. Future Hope

“the day when Death gets eaten alive”

Game over. The great winding up of everything. Judgement day.
The start of New Life.

This is the Day the proverbial caterpillar comes out of the chrysalis to emerge as a previously unseen beautiful butterfly. The Story of human history finally has a happy ending (and new beginning). But what does this look like?

Jesus paints evocative pictures of what the future with God holds, even if he is light on details.... growing trees, hidden treasure and great banquets all feature. In a proverbial-like way Jesus also gives some thoughts on what we have to hope for in the beatitudes... the poor and persecuted will receive the kingdom of heaven, there will be comfort and mercy and filling with righteousness and peace. But perhaps for me the most ‘hope-filled’ passage is in Rev 21:4 “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

All the pain and angst and fear and brutality and loneliness and poverty will be no more in God’s new world order. Instead there will be love and comfort and belonging and fair justice and partying! And the only tears will be those of joy.

This will be the work of a God rich in compassion and reckless in generosity. Things will be how they always should have been. All my shortcomings—and yours—will be lost in a great homecoming. Surely this is a Day worth looking forward to.

In the present, then, it places things like fame, money, job titles, new houses, overseas trips and ‘winning’ in a whole new light. Because if these things take me away from the direction of God’s future world order, then I’ll be swimming against an unstoppable tide. If I *really* believed in God’s Day of winding things up, I think I would hold my possessions more lightly; I’d share more. I would be less interested in making sure I was better than my peers/rivals/competitors and more interested in helping them and working with them. I’d take more time to talk with the people in my world – *really* talk, not just fluff around continually with superficial one-liners. I’d sit and enjoy just *being* in the company of my family and good friends. I’d be more honest with people, telling them what I think and what I believe to be true, rather than just spinning them a line that I know they want to hear. And I couldn’t in good conscience be backward or totally quiet about my faith with those around me. What would be different for you?

3. Future Hope...



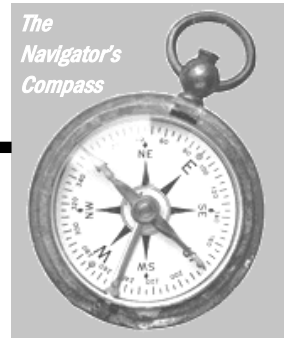
To do

In this section, looking to the future, the point is to get a feel for where God is taking things. Once this is done, we're able to get a better idea of how this might apply to the specific issues we're looking at.

- The passages on the next page give some different slants on our future hope. From these passages, as well as any others you know, note down some of the themes and ideas of what the future with God will be like.

- What are some of the things that you are particularly looking forward to about the arrival of God's kingdom?

3. Future Hope...



Some passages on Future Hope

- Rev 21:1-5
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; 4 he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." 5 And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."
- John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."
- 1Cor 15:42-58
42 So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body... 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven... Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed... 54 When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." 55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.
- Matthew 5:2-12
2 Then (Jesus) began to speak, and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

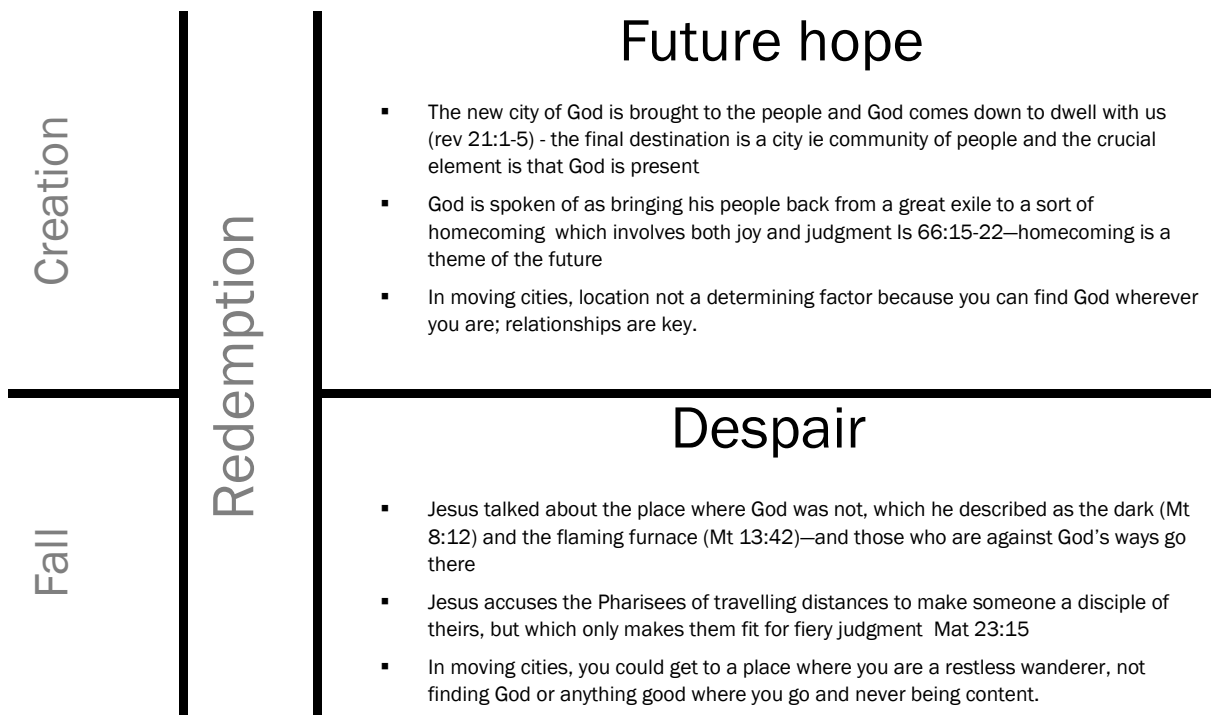
3. Future Hope...



Using the compass

- As we think about our issue in relation to the future, the idea is to gather any bible passages or ideas that help paint a picture of what things would look like if they were perfect, in the light of God's plan (under the heading 'future hope'). Also, we want to paint a picture of what things would look like if they got to a stage of 'hell on earth' (under the heading 'despair'). With your issue, note down any points relating to 'future hope' and 'despair'.

Issue: moving to a different city/location





4. Redemption

and God said “Let there be life (take2)”

When we looked at the Fall, brokenness was the dominant theme and Gen 6:6 summed up God’s view: “The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain”. Everything was falling apart.

But amazingly the story didn’t end there. For some reason, God had not given up on people. He resolved to restore the relationships and fix what was broken, at whatever personal cost to him.

To make it work God had to *absorb the pain* and this is what it meant for Jesus – God himself – to die in the most humiliating of ways.

Suddenly, we’re given a second chance. Isaiah likened our position to being blind captives sitting in the darkness of the dungeons. But God stepped in and began the process of saving, recycling, healing, ransoming, reconciling, re-creating, and bringing peace to us! We have been redeemed.

This is no small thing; we are new people... Jesus changes everything. God lives in us (whether we *feel* it on any particular day or not) so we have hope for today and the future. Therefore, it seems to me that a **dominant theme for our lives today should be this *redeeming* characteristic.**

We encounter brokenness every single day of our lives – in our families, amongst neighbours and friends, at workplaces, in our communities and national institutions. In small and big ways we need to work with God to restore life out of the chaos and brokenness we meet. Maybe it’s taking the time to hang out with a lonely friend; or helping a neighbour fix his vandalised fence; or joining Greenpeace and sending anti-whaling messages to the Japanese; or saying sorry to the family member you screamed at this morning. All these things will cost us personally and to some extent require us to absorb some pain in order that we may be part of the process of bringing restoration. And surely God’s heart must race with joy when he sees us getting involved with him in this great work.

The lesson from God is that nothing is so broken that it can’t be fixed. Through Jesus’ life and power, things can be redeemed. In everyday ways, you can live out this *redeeming* characteristic, bringing the beginnings of hope and restoration to yourself and those who need it. The gift of costly redemption is in our hands. The question is: what will we do with it?



4. Redemption...

To do

- Read the 'additional thoughts on redemption' over the page.
- For you at present, which aspects of the good news are particularly meaningful?

- How is this current experience of the good news working its way out into the way you think, feel, relate and/or act? ie how is redemption coming to life in and through you?



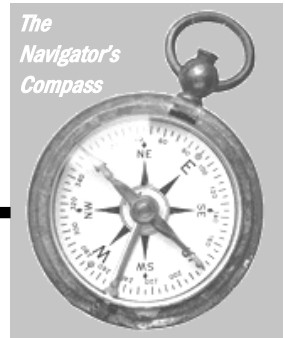
4. Redemption...

Some additional thoughts on redemption

The world has been lurching and stumbling under the effects of the Fall, but the Good News is that, through Jesus, God has redeemed it. However, one of the difficulties we face is knowing what difference this good news of redemption really makes for us. Intuitively we may know that God is at work and has been changing us for good. However, when we have to pinpoint some of the ways those changes take effect, we can struggle to give details. The table below gives some thoughts on different ways the good news of God's redemption makes a difference...

Good News is...	NOT...	What it means	NT examples
Hope	despair	A better future in this life and the next, where death no longer holds power as the ultimate ending; also, with hope we are able to move towards redeeming what seems hopelessly broken (eg relationships)	Lk 23:39-43 Jn 11:21-44
Belonging	Alone or loneliness	Solitary confinement drives people insane, and yet too many suffer their own personal isolation. Life was meant to be lived in community. God gives us a sense of belonging – we all rightfully belong in this world, it is not owned by the rich and powerful. God's acceptance of us opens the door for our acceptance of each other – a powerful force for good	Mk 5:24-34
Ability to change	Being stuck in helpless repeating patterns	We all recognise aspects of ourselves that we don't like, but it is so hard to change things. The good news offers us power to be transformed – slowly but surely, not in surface issues but in deep ways that really matter	Jn 4:9-26
Contentment & peace	Restless searching for more	We search for meaning happiness & a sense of accomplishment. We spend our lives pursuing the many things that promise (\$, job, beautiful house, beautiful clothes...) but ultimately none deliver. The good news offers a contentment that money cant buy	Lk 19:1-10
A life of value	worthlessness	People & 'the system' have a way of making us feel lowly valued. But we are greatly valued by God: we're not losers or hopeless – we are special. And that is good news.	Lk 5:27-32
Love	Indifference or hate	Hate is the extreme form, but indifference or apathy is more common – a not caring enough to even get angry	Mk 1:40-42
Meaning & purpose	Chaos & rat race	Life without purpose is death; we need to be able to make sense of life, otherwise there appears to be no point to anything. Meaning & order are crucial	Mk 5:1-20
Forgiveness	Guilt	Guilt is a crippling weight that often goes unarticulated. We experience the pain of knowing we have done wrong, but are unable to do anything to make that pain go away apart from trying to shut it out (which we can do for a while, but not forever). Forgiveness comes from the One who has ultimately been wronged; if God says we are forgiven then we are truly free from the weight of that burden. Gaining forgiveness is more freeing than being let out of a prison – don't underestimate its positive effect on us even now.	Jn 8:3-11 Mk 2:1-12
Healing	Brokenness	We have all experienced brokenness and carry around various forms of pain and handicap. God is able to take our brokenness and make something of beauty and meaning out of it. In the good news the healing process has begun.	Jn 9:1-7

God is doing these things in us and in our world. For us to join God in this redemptive work would mean that we too would do all we can to promote and bring about love, meaning and purpose, hope, belonging,...etc. To do this we need the life-changing power of Jesus to be working in us and through us. And as God's agents we can then start to move things ever closer to the future God has planned for us all.



4. Redemption...

Some additional thoughts on redemption... the place of Jesus

Time to pause and remember the basics.

When we talk about taking redemptive actions in our world, and about being God's agents of change for the better, there is something that needs to be kept in mind: the crucial place that Jesus has in all of this—not just in the past but also now in the present.

Without doubt, in our own strength we can take steps to improve things in our world and make a difference in our relationships. But we will only go so far and only for so long! If we want to participate with God in transforming the world towards the future he has in mind, we will need more.

Through the Spirit of God, Jesus miraculously lives in us, to empower us to live a life of reckless generosity and love as strong as death. It is the energy of God that enables us to persevere despite major setbacks. It is the love of God within that is able to absorb the pain, to break the chains of revenge, and to help us walk in freedom to help others out of their chains. To live like this is to step off the ledge and to move into miracle territory. But it is only out there, in utter dependence, that Jesus comes through.

So, it seems to me that there are two important things to remember: first, we need to be totally reliant on Jesus to come through for us, because in reality we ARE totally reliant (and he will come through); and secondly, as we consider our friends, we need to help them find their way out into miracle territory with Jesus, because there is nowhere else to go for the help they really need. ☺

"I am the light of the world whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" John 8:12

"I am the bread of life he who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty" John 6:35

"I am the Good Shepherd the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" John 10:11

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the father except through me" John 14:6

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies" John 11:25

"At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard; The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy' are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." Luke 7:19-23

Jesus' opponents question a man born blind who was healed. The man answered them... "Whether he is a sinner or not I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" John 9:25

A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said "Lord if you are willing, you can make me clean" Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing" he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cured of his leprosy. Mat 8:2-3

Jesus called in a loud voice "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them "Take off the grave clothes and let him go!" John 11: 43-44

The angel said to the women "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." Mat 28:5-6

"For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" Mark 10:45

4. Redemption...

Using the compass

The work we have done thus far on the compass has given us a better understanding of where we are (creation and fall) and where we are heading (future hope and despair). We are now at the crucial point of understanding what it means to think and act *redemptively* with regards to our issue. This is the place where, through the life, power and example of Jesus, we can choose to move away from the brokenness of the present towards a better, God-filled future hope. The emphasis here is what we do *now*.

So, keeping in mind the biblical understanding you have gained on the issue of where you are and where you want to get to...

- First, note down any relevant redemptive stories from the bible that may help shed light (-pay special attention to Jesus)
- Then, applying these stories and 'good news' ideas, decide what practical things could be done so that you move redemptively towards the future hope, bringing you closer to 'heaven on earth'

Put all this together in the table on the next page (see page 23 for an example) and you have done it!

YOU have developed your **own** view of your issue, based on your **own** understanding of the BIG biblical story that we are a part of.

What you have done is important stuff. This is theology for everyday life, and as you apply it you can change not only the small details but also the big themes that shape who you are and how you interact with the world.

Examples

The following pages give some examples of how this can be used with regards to different issues. In all of these, you can put as much or as little time into it as you have got. But even if you don't have much time to put into it, at least you can begin an outline of the issues involved in thinking and acting biblically in a whole range of situations.

Enjoy

Issue:

Creation

Redemption

Future hope

Fall

Despair



Issue: moving to a different city or location

Creation

- o *In the garden God gave broad permission to do a lot of things (with only one limitation) (Gen 2:16); likewise, God gave Abraham the land of Israel and told him to wander around in it; Abraham then chose for himself a place to stay (Gen 13:14-18) - broad guidance but specifics left to people*
- o God made everything, so God is in both the location you have come from and the place you are going to—neither is godless, and God is already there before you get there
- o When all the so-called 'important' people were in the 'right places', the word of God came to John in the desert (Luke 3:1) - you can encounter God and accomplish great things for God from the most unlikely and obscure places
- o As for Moses, life is a journey of many steps and locations

Fall

- o God banished the man and woman from the garden after their fall (Gen 3:23); likewise, Cain became a 'restless wanderer' because he murdered his brother (Gen 4:10-16)
- o God scattered the people (and changed their languages) in order to stop them in combination doing greater evil (Gen 11)
- o God let the first exodus generation wander around the desert for 40 yrs because they didn't trust God (Num 14:26-33)
- o God sent the Israelites into exile for their sin (2Ch 36:14-20)
- o Movement from a location can be used by God to disrupt your bad patterns/evil
- o Some moves are motivated for the wrong reasons eg wanting to seek out importance (see 'creation' point on Luke 3:1)

Redemption

- o God's redeeming of the Israelites from Egypt involved them making a journey away from the place of their oppression (Ex 3:7-12)
- o God used the persecution in Jerusalem to spread the believers throughout the region (Acts 8:1) -what looked like a bad move was used for good
- o Jesus opted to keep moving to spread his message rather than stay comfortably in popularity (Mk 1:35-38) - movement governed by task
- o In Mark 5:8 Jesus told the healed demoniac not to come with him but to stay with his own people and tell them about Jesus—he had been given a role that was location (& culture) specific.

For me, some helpful questions...

- o Location doesn't determine 'greatness', so am I motivated to move in order to be in a more important place? This is no basis to go
- o Moving and/or staying put are both possible, but important factor in deciding is how does it fit with my sense of call or direction in life?
- o As with the healed demoniac, does the new location offer opportunities to live out the good news with people I could potentially relate well to?
- o Am I moving as a restless wanderer? What's the pattern?

Future hope

- o The new city of God is brought to the people and God comes down to dwell with us (rev 21:1-5) - the final destination is a city ie community of people and the crucial element is that God is present
- o God is spoken of as bringing his people back from a great exile to a sort of homecoming which involves both joy and judgment is 66:15-22—homecoming is a theme of the future
- o In moving cities, location not a determining factor because you can find God wherever you are; relationships are key.

Despair

- o Jesus talked about the place where God was not, which he described as the dark (Mt 8:12) and the flaming furnace (Mt 13:42)—and those who are against God's ways go there
- o Jesus accuses the Pharisees of travelling distances to make someone a disciple of theirs, but which only makes them fit for fiery judgment Mat 23:15
- o In moving cities, you could get to a place where you are a restless wanderer, not finding God or anything good where you go.

The Navigator's Compass



Issue: money & poverty

Creation

- o God placed all resources in the care and stewardship of people - the eco-system was complete
- o There was enough of everything to go round

Redemption

- o Jesus says it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God - money had image of Caesar, people have stamped on them the image of God - therefore give selves to God. Jesus says: Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven ! and woe to you who are rich for you have already received your comfort! Lk6:20, 24
- o Jesus says: The Spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me, bec he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor Lk 4:18
- o Tho' being rich, he made himself poor so that others through his poverty might become rich

Possible actions...

- o sponsor a World Vision child and send any tax return refund to a charity
- o Get involved in political action with power-brokers
- o live generously - be the first to buy a round of drinks!
- o Pray and pay for your solo mum friend to have a decent holiday,
- o give food to foodbanks,
- o always give paper money to people who come collecting at your door

Fall

- o at the fall people started to seek domination of others and to find their value as people in things other than God - material wealth featured highly as an area to achieve this in

Examples...

Future hope

- o To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life Rev 21:6 - eternal life and its acquisition has nothing to do with money
- o all things come from God & he will equitably distribute resources in the new kingdom, therefore money has no lasting value. Jesus also praised the shrewd manager for working his financial affairs in order to improve his relationships with others Lk 16

Despair

- o Lk 16:19-31 the story of Lazarus: he suffered in this life and would be comforted while the rich man would suffer in the next
- o Mt 19:24 financial riches are not legal tender in God's kingdom—money will not get you into heaven



Issue: taking a lunch break

Creation

- *In the garden God provided good things to eat (2:16)*
- *People were given meaningful jobs of looking after the garden, and therefore co-working with God to provide food for themselves (2:15)*
- *God stopped to rest and reflect on what had been made (2:2)*

Redemption

- Many of Jesus' interactions with people happened around food eg Lk 7:36ff
- Mat 9:10-13 Jesus ate with people who benefited from his presence
- Jesus encouraged people not to worry about what they'd eat, but rather to value life and entrust their needs to God Mt 6:25

For me some possible things to do...

- Choose to make my lunch at least once a week and/or have fast foods no more than once a week
- Resolve to take a lunch break and spend at least 1-2 lunches a week with people—promoting relationship
- Take one lunch break a week to do something that I find truly restful

Fall

- We don't always take a lunch break and thereby fail to benefit from God-given rest, perhaps showing too that 'work' has too dominant a place in our life (note: Israelites in desert given manna to eat but if didn't collect it early it would disappear cf us: if don't take God's provision of rest at right time it goes)
- Sometimes treat lunch as purely functional (fuel for body) rather than also opportunity for relationship, thereby diminishing our humanity
- We tend to be lazy (don't want to work to make our lunch) and liable to want to eat an unbalanced diet (fast food etc). Money spent on this could be put to better use; note also environmental issues associated with multinational fast food co's),

Future hope

- Jesus told parables of the End being like a banquet Mt 22, Lk14 –celebration
- The LORD has given his word and made this promise: "Never again will I give to your enemies the grain and grapes for which you struggled. As surely as you harvest your grain and grapes, you will eat your bread with thankful hearts, and you will drink your wine in my temple." Is 62:8-9 —plenty to eat with thankful hearts in good relationship with God
- Whether you eat or drink do it all for the glory of God 1Cor 10:31. —remembering God key rather than specifics of how you eat

Despair

- 'You harvest less than you plant, you never have enough to eat or drink, your clothes don't keep you warm, and your wages are stored in bags full of holes.' Hag 1:6—those against God's ways get no satisfaction cf Amos 5:1,1, and Heb 4 'not entering God's rest'



Examples...

Issue: fashion accessories

Creation

- o In the beginning God 'the artist' created beautiful harmonies of colours and shapes
- o People were also given unique individual characteristics and flair

Redemption

- o Jesus challenged prevailing social system - woman with bleeding (Mk 5) made to feel human again both by Jesus treating her with dignity and his healing her
- o Woman with the expensive perfume scooped at by others but Jesus vindicated her using this expense on him Mk 14.
- o Jesus teaching on clean and unclean based on the heart not outward appearances Mk 7
- o also the place of trusting God for these things Mat 6:25ff

Possible actions...

- o buy items because of style rather than label
- o snob value
- o use TradeAid shops/don't buy labels made in sweat shops
- o create your own items
- o buy an item for someone too poor to afford it
- o choose to buy less
- o limit yourself to the number of shoes you have at any one time
- o for every dollar you spend on yourself give the same amount away
- o have regular days when you don't use accessories/labels/make-up to test yourself making sure you don't become reliant on them

Fall

- o beauty gets marred by excesses eg extremes today of face lifts attempting to retain beauty but in reality creating ugliness (Michael Jackson, Cher?)
- o excessive emphasis on appearance over substance/personality
- o fashion accessories become social class barriers because of cost - creating competitiveness and judgmental attitudes based on appearance
- o items bought in the West at the expense of sweat shop workers in Asia

Future hope

- o God will restore beauty and dignity to one and all.
- o Difference will be admired rather than seen as point of competition

Despair

- o Surface appearance becomes everything - plastic surgery becomes normalised and what you wear is who you are



Examples..

Issue: world cup soccer

Creation

- o The game is one of creativity, beauty, a reminder of shared humanity, pursuit of excellence, teamwork

Redemption

- o Promote fair team and fairplay awards;
- o team can bring hope and lift spirits of a nation with little else to hope in (eg Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, ...),
- o individual players showing courageous acts of kindness to opposition at potential cost to themselves,
- o teams learning to lose and win graciously and not lay blame on individuals

Possible actions...

- o don't support a team just because they're more likely to win;
- o ask yourself: Do you spend too much time watching sport on tv?
- o Use the opportunity to watch *with* others;
- o don't slag off at players because they make a mistake – be gracious in defeat and victory

Fall

- o petitive selfishness, breaking rules and physically injuring opponents to make things easier for your team,
- o over-emphasis on winning (pride) at the expense of losers, arrogance,
- o corruption of some players and officials for money
- o obsession with the game by fans at the expense of more important things

Future hope

- o remember that the 90 minute game is not the all-important thing but rather that there is another Game which can have multiple winners and the result is not about how many goals you score but rather how you play the Game.
- o In parable of talents the servants are not compared with each other but rather are treated on their own merits – emphasis on being faithful and using what they had rather than achieving a certain result Mat 25

Despair



Issue: free market political system

Creation

- we were made by God to exercise our rights to choose and to use our creativity, which is encouraged in Free Market

Redemption

- Jesus treated with dignity those who didn't make it in their economic system; he also encouraged sharing and trusting God to meet your needs (Mat 6:33).
- Need to encourage a measure of Free Market so as not to stifle our positive creative human attributes but also place checks against abuses (eg minimum wages & conditions, anti-competitive laws and legal protection for those susceptible to 'sharks').
- Allow people to make their best contribution but supplement income for those whose contribution is not highly valued in dollar terms (eg writers/artists, nurses, mothers....)

Fall

- we are also corrupt and prone to selfishness and abuse of power
- information is not available to everyone, and in practice everyone is not able to participate equally – unfair distribution

Possible actions...

- choose to vote for the party whose policies align closest to the above OR choose to vote for an influential individual who embodies these things (someone who is keeping in the spirit of seeking the common good) rather than someone who would most benefit you directly

Future hope

- One day we will be answerable to God as to how we used what we were given for the common good. (eg Mt 25:31ff parable of sheep & goats, Lk 10:30ff Good Samaritan) Therefore ultimately it's not a legalistic issue but rather one of keeping in the spirit of working towards the common good.

Despair

- Dictatorial leaders and governments lead their people to be responsible for atrocities against humanity eg Nazi Germany, Kosovo..., resulting in death to innocent and loss of humanity (ie failing to be human) to those involved in the crimes

