

CHRISTMAS

THE EPIC ADVENTURE BEGINS!



Christmas: The Epic Adventure Begins! – THE GREAT RESCUE!

- Life is a story! Life unfolds like a drama. We **CAN** discover *the* Story! There is a Story that we just can't seem to escape. There is a Story written on the human heart.
- *“He has planted eternity in the human heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT).*
- Christianity, in its true form, tells us there is an Author and that he is good, the essence of all that is good and beautiful and true, for he is the source of all things. It tells us that he has set our hearts' longings within us, for he has made us to live in an Epic Adventure. What IF? – What IF all the great stories that have ever moved you were telling you something about the true Story into which you were born? You need to discover this Epic Adventure for yourself! This study will help you do just that!



**THE
LARGER
STORY – The
Value of
Human Life!
– Genesis
2:26-28 &
John 10:10.**

1. **THE BEAUTY OF CREATION** → Creation unfolds like a great work of art, a masterpiece in the making. And just as you can learn about an author by the stories he tells, you can learn a great deal about an artist from the works he creates. God creates us in his image, with powers like unto his own—the ability to reason, to create, to share intimacy, to know joy. He gives us laughter and wonder and imagination.
2. **HEART – ENDOWED WITH DIGNITY** → God enables us to love. He gives us the greatest treasure in all creation: a heart. For he intends that we should be his intimate allies, who join in the Sacred Circle of intimacy that is the core of the universe, to share in this great Romance. We have forgotten what a treasure the human heart is. All of the happiness we have ever known and all of the happiness we hope to find is unreachable without a heart. You could not live or love or laugh or cry had God not given you a heart. And with that heart comes the freedom to reject him—a will of our own.



**TRUE
IDENTITY
RESTORED –
Proverbs 4:23 &
Colossians 1:13,
14.**

1. **LOSS OF HEART** → Evil was lurking in the Garden. You must understand: the Evil One hates God, hates anything that reminds him of the glory of God ... wherever it exists. Unable to overthrow the Mighty One, he turned his sights on those who bore his image.
2. **GOD'S HEART TOWARD YOU** → The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth answers once and for all the question, "What is God's heart toward me?" At the point of our deepest betrayal, when we had run our farthest from him and gotten so lost we could never find our way home, God came and died to rescue us.



GOD'S INTENTION

– Isaiah 54:4-8;
Jeremiah
31:31-34.

1. **DESIGNED FOR HEROIC INTIMCACY** → Created as Image-bearers, we are designed for a heroic intimacy with God, endowed with dignity, a freedom, and a glory that made a passionate loving relationship with him possible.
2. **PASSIONATE LOVER** → God is a passionate lover who seeks our hearts. As devastating as the Fall was to humanity, God pursued us, inviting us to choose him and the life he offers. He pursues us still! Jesus describes our relationship with him from clay and potter through sheep and shepherd to bride and bridegroom.

A group of approximately 20 people, mostly men, are gathered on a rocky riverbank. They are all wearing red and white Santa hats and red life jackets. Some are wearing sunglasses and casual summer clothing. They appear to be preparing for or participating in a water activity, possibly rafting or kayaking. The background shows a river and a forested hillside.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Tell your story – To what or whom have you given your heart in the past?
2. Tell your story – Why does every great story have a rescue?
3. Tell your story – How has God begun to restore your true identity?

CHRISTMAS

A group of approximately 20 people, mostly men, are posing for a group photo on a rocky riverbank. They are all wearing red Santa hats and red life jackets. The background shows a river with white-water rapids flowing over rocks, surrounded by lush green trees and vegetation. The scene is bright and sunny.

THE EPIC ADVENTURE BEGINS!