



Christmas: The Epic Adventure Begins!

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!

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

CHRISTMAS – The Epic Adventure Begins!
 We need to understand the story of Christmas as the beginning of a Larger Story—an Epic Adventure—and how you have a crucial role to play.

Dec 14, 2023

Scripture: Genesis 1:26-28, John 10:10, Proverbs 4:23, Colossians 1:13, 14, Isaiah 54:4-8, Jeremiah 31:31-34
Music: Take The Challenge And Try Not To Cry Happy Tears - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnEnhmrQHwk>
Video: The GREAT RAID: 40 Filipino Guerillas versus 1000 Japanese Soldiers - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_MLEL8HJ6Y
Resources - EPIC – The Story God is Telling by John Eldredge

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

- _____ → 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.
- _____ → 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.

- _____ → 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.
- _____ → 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.

- _____ → 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.
- _____ → 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.

ACTION: Journal This!

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



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SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-28 - 26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."**27** So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**28** God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

John 10:10 - 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Proverbs 4:23 - 23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

Colossians 1:13, 14 - 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,**14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Isaiah 54:4-8 - 4 "Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood."**5** For your Maker is your husband— the LORD Almighty is his name— the Holy One of

Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.**6** The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit— a wife who married young, only to be rejected," says your God.**7** "For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back.**8** In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you," says the LORD your Redeemer.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - 31 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.**32** It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.**33** "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."**34** No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

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