

Back To The Garden – A God Bathed World

Lesson 2

Part 1

- What was the young man in the story wrestling with? How might you have responded to his question?
- Read the following passages: Gen 1:3-4, Gen 1:10, Gen 1:12, Gen 1:16-18, Gen 1:21, Gen 1:25, Gen 1:31
- There seems to be a pretty obvious desire on God's part that anyone who reads Genesis 1 would know and understand that creation is good. It is referenced 7 times with the last time expressing that it's not just good but very good. How do you see creation? Is it good? Is it great? Is it broken? Is it bad?
- What messages were you taught about creation in the tradition you grew up in?
- Do you think how we view creation around us matters? Explain your answer

Part 2

- Take a moment to read and reflect upon the following quotes:
 - Dallas Willard Quote (speaking about Jesus): “To his eyes this is a God-bathed and God-permeated world. It is a world filled with a glorious reality, where every component is within the range of God's direct knowledge and control—though he obviously permits some of it, for good reasons, to be for a while otherwise than as he wishes. It is a world that is inconceivably beautiful and good because of God and because God is always in it. It is a world in which God is continually at play and over which he constantly rejoices. Until our thoughts of God have found every visible thing and event glorious with his presence, the word of Jesus has not yet fully seized us.”
 - Frank Sheed: The test of anyone's mind is WHAT IS IN HIS MENTAL LANDSCAPE. And it is not even enough that we should see the same thing as other people plus the things the Church teaches. Even the things that we and they both see will not look the same or be the same; because what the Church teaches affects even the things already in the landscape, the things of ordinary experience. It is like a physical landscape at sunrise: it is not that you see the same things that you saw before and now find yourself seeing the sun as well. You see everything sun bathed.
- How might seeing the world as “God-bathed” change or shape the way we experience God in our everyday lives? What does it change?
- How might seeing the world as “God-bathed” impact what you think of as having a relationship with God?

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Part 3

- Pass out a chocolate to each person in the room
 - We are going to practice the art of savoring and delighting
 - Notice the texture. How does it look? How does it feel? Think about how God not only made chocolate possible but that He's literally the energy holding even that chocolate bar in your hand together at this very moment. Consider all the nerve endings in your fingers that allow you to even feel chocolate in your hand. Consider not only the sense of smell you were created with but even the relationship between what you smell and the reaction your brain gives off based on that smell. God created your brain to throw a party when it smells something like chocolate!
 - Place the chocolate in your mouth but don't chew yet. Notice the smell as the chocolate gets closer. Notice how your salivary glands begin to work in anticipation of something wonderful. Notice as you begin to taste the chocolate it begins to dominate your senses. What does it taste like? What happens as it begins to melt?
 - Now, do as you see fit. If it's to chew, then chew. If it's to let it dissolve, keep going. But pay attention to all of it and as you do, reflect on a God who is not only the creator of chocolate, but of each and every process your body went through to experience that taste, texture, smell, consumption, and the corresponding thoughts and feelings that came with it.
- You see God isn't just a part of one thing. He's the creator of everything! That means everything is an opportunity to experience the wonder and presence and brilliance of God. What would happen if we experienced more of our life the way we just experienced that chocolate?
- What is one thing you are going to take away from our time together today? What made that stand out to you?
- What is one area of your life that you see as an opportunity to experience a God bathed world?
- Think back to the story Ryan shared at the beginning of today's lesson. His cousin asked him, "Where is God?" Considering what we talked about today, how might you now answer him?
- Choose one specific moment in the next week where you will practice "delighting" and "savoring" as a way of experiencing God's creation. We will take a moment at the beginning of the next time we meet to share what that was like.