

LIGHT UP YOUR WORLD
Stories for *Easier* Evangelism (Part 4)
“The Story of the Human Condition”

INTRO: Last lesson we studied three parables Jesus told on lostness (sheep, coin, son). All lost for different reasons, often requiring different approaches. To fully appreciate the Good News of the Gospel, we must better grasp the bad news.

All mankind is lost. Look at diagram . . . Since the Garden that has been the human condition. It continues to plague all the human race (Rom. 3:9-20; 5:14-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22). One word, the same word Jesus used in His parables (6 times), tells the story of the human condition, LOST! The better we understand the human condition the more likely compassion will overcome our complacency and passion will win over apathy.

I. CAUSE - HOW DID LOSTNESS HAPPEN?

- A. God’s Plan? Create us in His image and likeness to be in a loving relationship with Him. To know and live in His presence with joy (Jn. 15:11), peace (Jn. 14:27), and fulfillment (Jn. 10:10). His love took risk in giving our original parents freedom to choose – to love and obey or to reject by disobeying (Gen. 2:15-17). Rejecting His love led to a life apart from God, resulting in sin, evil, suffering and death. “Why did God allow this to happen?” That’s what David (Psa. 10:1; 13:1-2; 22:1-2), Asaph (Psa. 73:3-5, 13-14; 77:7-8), Jeremiah (Lam. 3:1-3), John the Baptist (Matt. 11:2-6), those in Hebrews 11, and even Jesus (Isa. 53:3 “man of sorrows acquainted with grief) wondered. Even people of great faith are like us when we complain and question God’s goodness, love, and power. God took a risk in letting us freely choose to accept or reject His love, making suffering and death a reality. God allows pain and suffering for now because He is a loving and good God.

Craig Groeschel, “If we didn’t . . . remove us.”

- B. Man’s Choice? God lets us choose and we did, but not without consequences (Gen. 2:17). Does this mean that the presence of evil and suffering argue against the existence of God or He isn’t good, loving, or powerful? Actually, the opposite is true. *The presence of suffering doesn’t mean the absence of love.* God never promised to shield us from the consequences of choosing sin. He did promise a solution, and one day no more. God is not behind the suffering of this world, much less responsible – People (we) are! Adam and Eve made a choice to disobey God’s instructions and we all know the result.

ILL: Manufacturer’s instructions (NP 133) ...s

- C. Result? Sin entered and eventually death came (Gen. 2:17; Deut. 30:16-19; Jam. 1:15; Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Sin and death entered. Again, who is at fault? Potter or clay? Only ourselves to blame.

II. CONDITION – LOST IN WHAT SENSE?

- A. By Nature – All since Adam born with an innate fallen sinful nature (Psa. 51:5; 53:3; 58:3; Isa. 48:8; 53:6; Rom. 3:23). All from Father Adam and Mother Eve (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21-22). Every body has the virus of sin (no matter how cute). More deadly than COVID. No one has to teach a toddler how to be selfish, how to lie, etc. – all natural. Sinners by nature become sinners . . .
- B. By Choice – Granted, we all choose what our sin looks like – lie, greed, etc. Choices have consequences, don’t they? sin, evil, suffering, pain, death, hell.
- C. The Debate “Why does a good, loving, and powerful God let it continue?” Sin nature. Free choice. Love risks. If love is a choice, suffering is a possibility. But, the presence of suffering doesn’t mean the absence of love. Ex: doctor, physical therapist, etc. Hurt can bring healing. “Why do bad things happen to good people?” They don’t because we are not good people! God is not behind what is tragic with this world, much less responsible for it – people are. G.K. Chesterton story ... J.E. White, “God let us choose ... p. 52).
- D. Explanation and Solution? From the Fall God provided an explanation (sin nature and freedom of choice) and also promised a solution to the helpless human condition. His solution in Christ is far better than any explanation.

CONC: Love risks. God loves us so He took a risk. So where is He? He is with us in all the pain and suffering. He never promised to protect us from the results of our own choices, but He did promise to be with us in this life and will be with Him in the next!

ILL: My role as a father . . . Never a thought of not having them. C.S. Lewis, “To love ...” (JEW p. 55).

We are lost. Apart from Christ that condition leaves us hopeless. That’s why we go and light up our world!