



In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

- Genesis 1:1-4



In the beginning God...:

- There was darkness and lack of 'form'
- The Holy Spirit was 'brooding'
- God spoke... "Let there be Light.
- There was light
- The light was good – as is everything God creates
- His blessing was upon all the earth



### Begin with God:

- The Holy Spirit is always 'brooding'
- God is always speaking creatively into our lives
  - Jesus – the light of the world
- His light is always shining
- Everything He does is good
- His blessing is always flowing



### The fall may have brought death into the world

- But it did not change who God is
- He still works
- Through the Holy Spirit
- In the world
- And in our lives
- Creatively
- Redemptively – Jesus, the gospel



The LORD bless you and keep you;

the LORD make his face to shine upon you and  
be gracious to you;

the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and  
give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26



Begin with God:

- Every day, every circumstance
  - Is a creative moment in God
- His intent toward us is always good
  - It is His will to bless us
  - He takes the initiative in that



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For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Because His light has shone in our heart we have seen the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6



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Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life...

Phil 2:12-16



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### Begin with God:

- He is always at work in us
- By His Holy Spirit
- His light is shining on us
- His blessing is upon us
- To accomplish His will and His pleasure
- Which is all good
- We work out our salvation in that context



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### Begin with God:

- Focus on His light that is always shining
- Will see what He is doing
- Will work out our salvation in that context



## Begin with God:

- He is working...
  - To reveal Himself and His ways
  - To strengthen us in every situation
  - To provide for us in every situation
  - To bring us through
  - To deliver us
  - To mature our faith
  - To transform us



## What are the stories we tell about?

- Do they begin with God?
- Or do they begin with ourselves?
- Are they about His light shining on us?
- Or are they about the 'darkness'?
  - The 'mountain' in our lives
  - The shadow that casts in our lives



## 2 Corinthians 4:4 – the God of this world works to blind us to the light

- He cannot stop the light from shining
- He will try to take our focus off the light
- Try to get us to put it on ourselves and our difficulties



## If we are honest:

- We often like to talk about how big the mountain is
- How dark the shadow is
- How far that falls in our life
- How hard that is for us



If we lose focus of the light:

- We don't begin with God
- We don't see His creative work in us
- Don't see Him working to bring about His will and His good pleasure



If we keep our focus of Him and His light:

- We can / do begin with God
- We will see His creative work in us
- We will see Him working to bring about His will and His good pleasure
- And we can work with Him...
- We can see His blessing





## When the stories we tell begin with God

- They will be about how his light shone on us
- How His light is shining on the 'mountain'
- How the shadow is there because there is light



## When the stories we tell begin with God

- They are a testimony to:
  - God working in us
  - God working for us
- We can reflect His light in those stories
- This is an attitude / act of worship



## When the stories we tell begin with God

- We can tell of how He is working...
  - To reveal Himself and His ways
  - To strengthen us in every situation
  - To provide for us in every situation
  - To bring us through
  - To deliver
  - To mature our faith
  - To transform us



For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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2 Corinthians 4:4-6



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Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaiah 60:1-3



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Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life...

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