

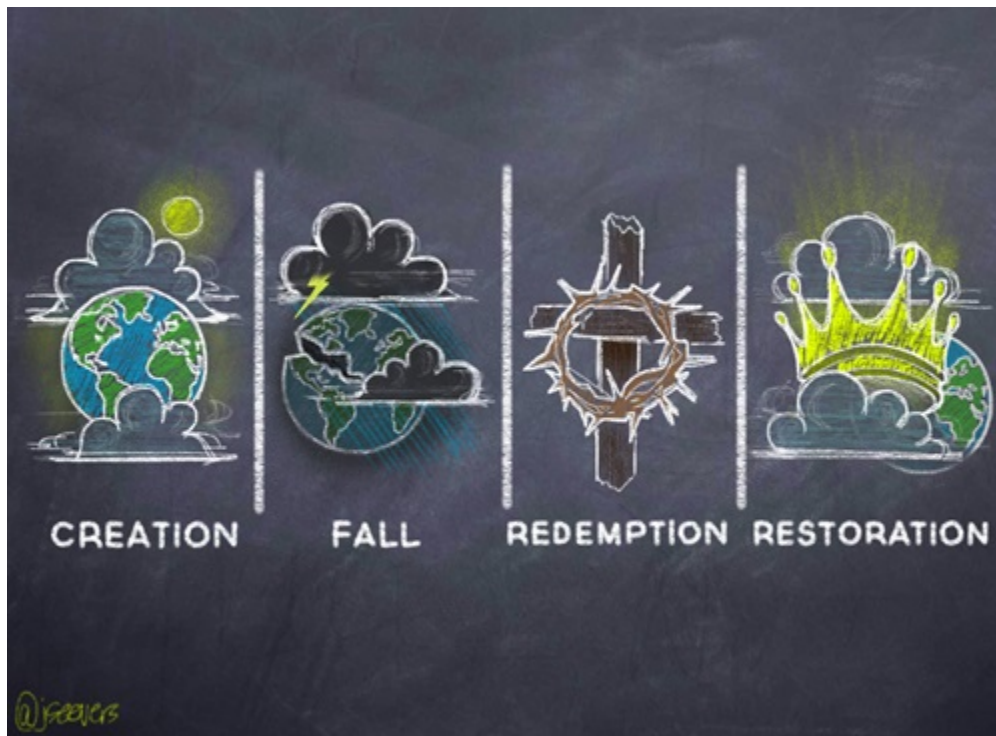
## Week 2: The Arc of God's Story

We spoke last week about God's story—about His truth and character revealed to us in the Holy Bible. We began this class asking—what is human flourishing? How do I become a better person in all areas of my life? We spoke about the need for transformation. We pointed to the importance of God's Word in this process. So, if you ask—well how do I become a better parent? How do I become a better employee? A better husband or wife...better friend. To help us answer these questions, we can turn to the Bible.

But before we jump in and start asking about these specific questions—we have to step back and understand the overall story—the arc of the Bible.

People often divide the story of the world into four parts: Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.

This image by Jeff Seevers helps capture those four stages.



In his book *Counterfeit Gospels*, the managing editor of The Gospel Project, Trevin Wax, explains this storyline as follows:

**Creation:** One Hebrew word sums up the picture of Genesis 1 and 2: *shalom*. Peace. Earth was full of God's shalom, the kind of peace in which everything works according to God's intention.

The world was made for human flourishing, there we could live in joy in the presence of our Maker, worshiping God by loving Him and one another forever.

**Fall:** Adam and Eve rejected God's rule over them. We refer to their rebellious choice as "the fall," and because they represented all of humanity, their action affects us too. We have-- through our attitudes and actions-- declared ourselves to be God's enemies. This rebellion results in physical and spiritual death.

**Redemption:** Thankfully the loving Creator who rightly shows Himself to be wrathful toward our sin is determined to turn evil and suffering we have caused into good that will be to His ultimate glory. So the next movement shows God implementing a master plan for redeeming His world and rescuing fallen sinners. In the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself comes to renew the world and restore His people. The grand narrative of Scripture climaxes with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

**Restoration:** The story doesn't end with redemption. God has promised to renew the whole world, and the Bible gives us a peak into this glorious future. The restoration of all things will take place in two ways. Christ will return to judge sin and evil, and He will usher in righteousness and peace. God will purge this world of evil once and for all.