

# Part 4: Big Themes II

## WITNESS – it's why we're still here

The mission of God is one of the front-runners for the accolade 'Ultimate Big Theme' since it describes what God is actually doing – before creation, through history and on into eternity. A quote or two will help us grasp the idea.

The great commission is not some optional postscript ... it is part and parcel of the whole revelation of God's purpose for his people in time preparing for eternity. Throughout the Bible we find the same theme: God wants to have people the world over drawn into reconciled relationship with himself, and his people are the means by which that message is to be communicated. *Rose Dowsett in 'The Great Commission'*

Mission is not primarily an activity of the church, but an attribute of God ... There is church because there is mission, not vice versa. *David Bosch in 'Transforming Mission'*

Here are the stepping stones that are laid out from the beginning to the end of scripture. They are phrased in terms of why we are committed to mission since this theme, like the others, demands that we see ourselves in a new light and respond with action.

COMMITTED BY GOD'S WORK	COMMITTED BY RELATIONSHIP	COMMITTED BY THE KING	EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT	COMMITTED FROM THE HEART
<p><b>Creation:</b> mission from before the start.</p> <p><b>Incarnation and atonement:</b> mission accomplished in Christ. (Sideline: why we should be culture positive.)</p> <p><b>The 'Eschaton':</b> mission fulfilled in glory.</p>	<p><b>Covenants are 'missional':</b> The promise to Abraham, etc. Celebrated in the Psalms. New Covenant: Prophesied, fulfilled in Christ, completed in Revelation.</p> <p><b>Union with Christ:</b> His life is ours ... He is the one true missionary ... so ours is the 'co-missionary' life.</p>	<p><b>The Royal Co-missions:</b> Matthew: the 'Great' commission 28:16ff (note who said it and when). Luke: preach the gospel to all nations 24:45ff. John: the sent one sends 20:21. Acts: Disciples re-defined as 'witnesses' 1:8.</p>	<p><b>The Sent One was:</b> Isaiah 42:1ff ~ Matt 12:15ff; Is 61:1ff ~ Lk 4:16ff</p> <p><b>He promised the apostles and disciples would be:</b> Lk 24:45ff</p> <p><b>They were:</b> Acts</p>	<p><b>The Holy and Implanted Desires of our Hearts</b></p> <p>Desire to please God. Love for the lost. Zeal for the glory of God.</p>

## WARFARE – it's what life really is

Except that we tend not to think of it in these terms! One of the features of all the Big Themes is that whatever God is or does, he is opposed; yet he always wins! Rev. 12 is a great survey!

Creation in Genesis	The Fall in Genesis	Israel and God I	Israel and God II	Jesus and his Church	In the End: Revelation
<p>God is King over the chaos and the void. The void yields to his creative word.</p>	<p>Satan starts his campaign to be the rival God. Creation is enslaved to his corrupting words.</p>	<p>God's purposes face constant opposition. Warfare is the norm; defeat becomes the rule.</p>	<p>The kings and the people face ultimate defeat with the exiles. God promises a victorious shepherd.</p>	<p>Satan gets beat! Temptations resisted; powers disarmed and humiliated; death defeated.</p>	<p>The death of death; Satan hurled into the lake; all God's martyrs safe for ever. Creation renewed.</p>

# Part 4: Big Themes II

## TONIGHT'S BIG THEMES

- **Worship** – it's bigger than we think
- **Witness** – it's why we're still here
- **Warfare** – it's what life really is just now

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The Bible has a number of major themes that start at or near the beginning and run right through to the end or very near it. They form the plot-line of the whole Bible and give us the links between all the smaller parts.

## WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

- Simply because they are there!
- Without the big themes we tend to misunderstand the smaller details.
- They help us to see how the whole Bible works as one book even though there are so many different elements.
- They connect the Old and New Testaments.
- They show the vastness of the glory of God's purposes and power.

## WORSHIP – It's bigger than we think

If we've been swept up into the current trend which sees worship as big events that evoke, primarily, an emotional response and require a highly professional band on stage and a celebrity 'worship-leader' then we're thinking way too small. Worship is one of the plot-lines that unite Genesis with Revelation. Bigger than the biggest event, better than the slickest performance-centred 'spontaneity', biblical worship is life-embracing, globally all-inclusive and the eternal role of the entire cosmos. It's vital to the Bible's story because it's personally vital to God.

If we pick out the theme as it weaves through the major moments of the Bible, we can see how this works.

Creation in Genesis	The Fall in Genesis	Israel and God I	Israel and God II	Jesus and his Church	In the End: Revelation
<p>Adam and Eve serve God by acknowledging him alone and doing only his will.</p> <p>Worship pre-dates Adam's creation – it was the response of the angelic 'sons' (Job 38:7).</p> <p>All creation – 'sun, moon and stars' – was made to glorify God (Ps. 148).</p>	<p>Adam and Eve choose whose will they are going to follow: the real worship war. First Adam loses out to Satan.</p> <p>Mankind worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:25).</p>	<p>'Let my people go that they might worship me' says God.</p> <p>Their purpose is for worship/service in the wilderness at the mountain.</p> <p>Their destination is the land where they will be united in worship at another mountain.</p>	<p>The worship of God is totally corrupted by the worship of idols – even in the Temple.</p> <p>The people suffer exile and God leaves the Temple.</p>	<p>Jesus brings his Father glory by doing his will and only his will.</p> <p>The central temptation (on another mountain) is over who worships whom. Satan loses out to 'Last Adam'!</p> <p>Jesus becomes the King on <i>the</i> mountain and <i>the</i> worship-leader.</p>	<p>All God's people worship him.</p> <p>All creation worships him and agrees that Jesus is Lord to the Father's glory.</p> <p>The songs of heaven are worship songs sung by all the inhabitants.</p>