

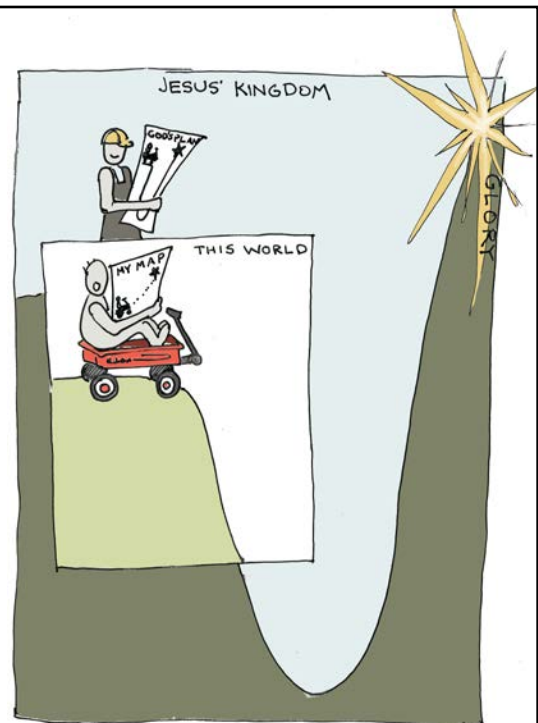
Imagine...

- What would life be like if you **were** a perfect _____?
 - Student – Spouse – Parent – Employee – and so on
 - Teacher – Friend – Child – Boss
- What would life be like if you **had** a perfect _____?
 - Student – Spouse – Parent – Employee – and so on
 - Teacher – Friend – Child – Boss
- Typical reactions:
 - Try harder!** **give up** **Blame myself for trouble** **Blame someone else**
- What would life be like if we were perfect Christians?

The Perfect Life

Matthew 2:13-23

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 Spanish: page 1215
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The “Incarnation”: God in the flesh

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” *John 1:14*

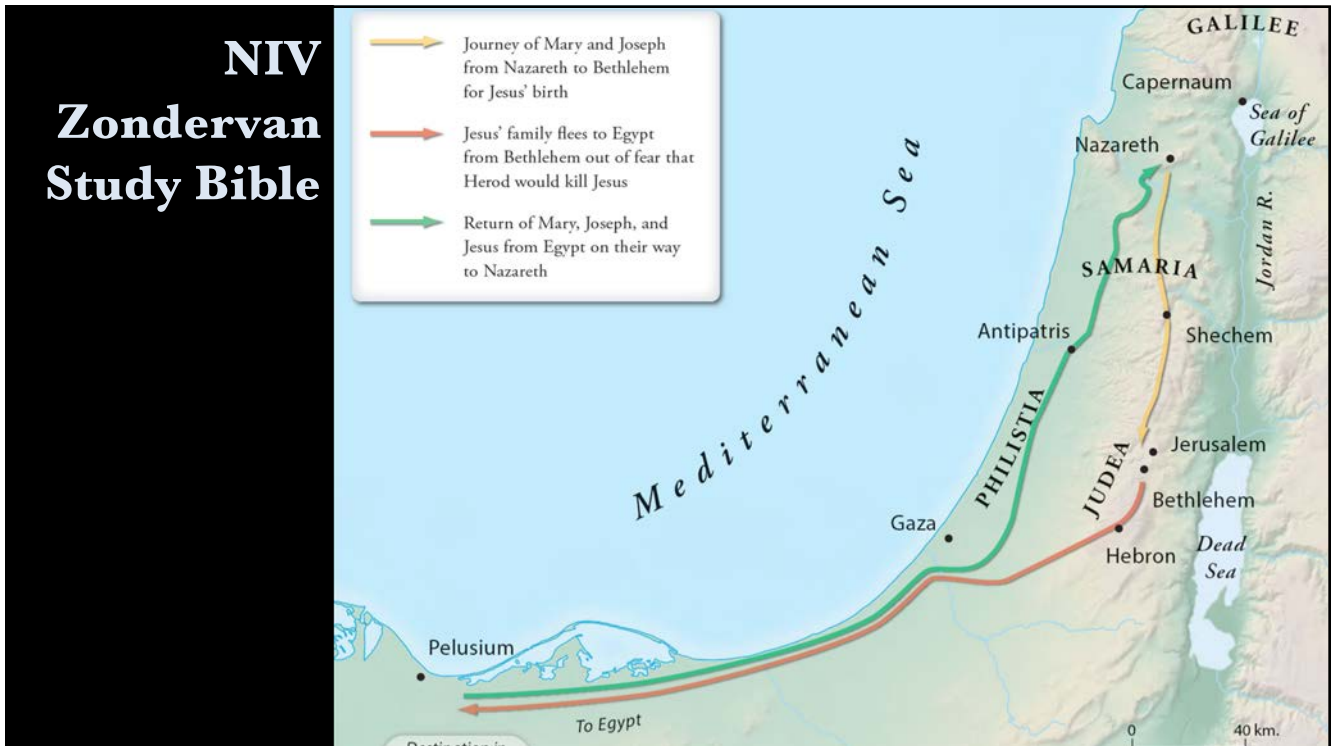
Word = Son of God

- God the Son, from eternity past, creator of all that is became a human being without stopping being God
 - He always had full access to His deity (rights, power, glory) yet lived within the limitations of being human in order to be like us and be our Savior
 - He **never** did or thought sinfully. His life was a perfect life

The “Incarnation”: God in the flesh

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” *John 1:14*

- The story of the incarnation is told twice in the Bible
 - **Matthew**: told from Joseph’s perspective
 - Luke: told from Mary’s perspective
- Joseph’s experience so far
 - Fiancé got pregnant, yet told to accept the child as his own
 - Magi (rich, powerful, foreign wise men) worship his adopted son
 - Magi were told in a dream not to report back to King Herod



Matthew 2:13-23

13-15: Joseph flees with Jesus & Mary to Egypt

16-18: • Magi worshiped. Now a king wants to destroy Him

19-23: • “the child and his mother” were entrusted to Joseph

- Egypt was place of refuge for Jewish patriarchs

- Perhaps 90 miles/145 km (a week's travel?)

- Pattern:

- God interrupts: a “Behold!” moment

- Joseph obeys immediately & fully

- Creator of the universe needs human help

- Fulfills God's plan and pattern: prophet Hosea

- Israel: Formed, rebelled, and rescued from Egypt

- God's protection and provision **through** exile

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Matthew 2:13-23

13-15: Joseph flees with Jesus & Mary to Egypt

16-18: Herod slaughters baby boys to try to destroy Messiah

19-23: • What brings joy to Magi makes Herod furious

- Pattern:

- Herod responds sinfully
 - Errs on the side of greater evil; perhaps 10-30 babies
- Fulfills God's plan and pattern: unique statement
 - Rachel: favorite wife of Israel; symbol for Israel
 - Ramah: near Rachel's grave & Bethlehem; point of departure for exile: weeping as country was destroyed
 - Yet "the only gloomy verse in Jeremiah 31"
 - A painful tragedy in the midst of the greater hope

Matthew 2:13-23

13-15: Joseph flees with Jesus & Mary to Egypt

16-18: Herod slaughters baby boys to try to destroy Messiah

19-23: Joseph returns with Jesus & Mary, but to Nazareth

- Pattern:

- God interrupts: another "Behold!" moment
- Joseph obeys fully
 - Verse 13: "Stay in Egypt until I tell you"
- Fulfills God's plan and pattern
 - Much like Moses: savior is also delivered from troubles
 - Perhaps "Nazarene"=insignificant, ignored
 - "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" *John 1:46*
 - "[Paul] is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect" *Acts 24:6*

Matthew 2:13-23

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Jesus lived a perfect life

His last 3 years looked a lot like the first 3 years

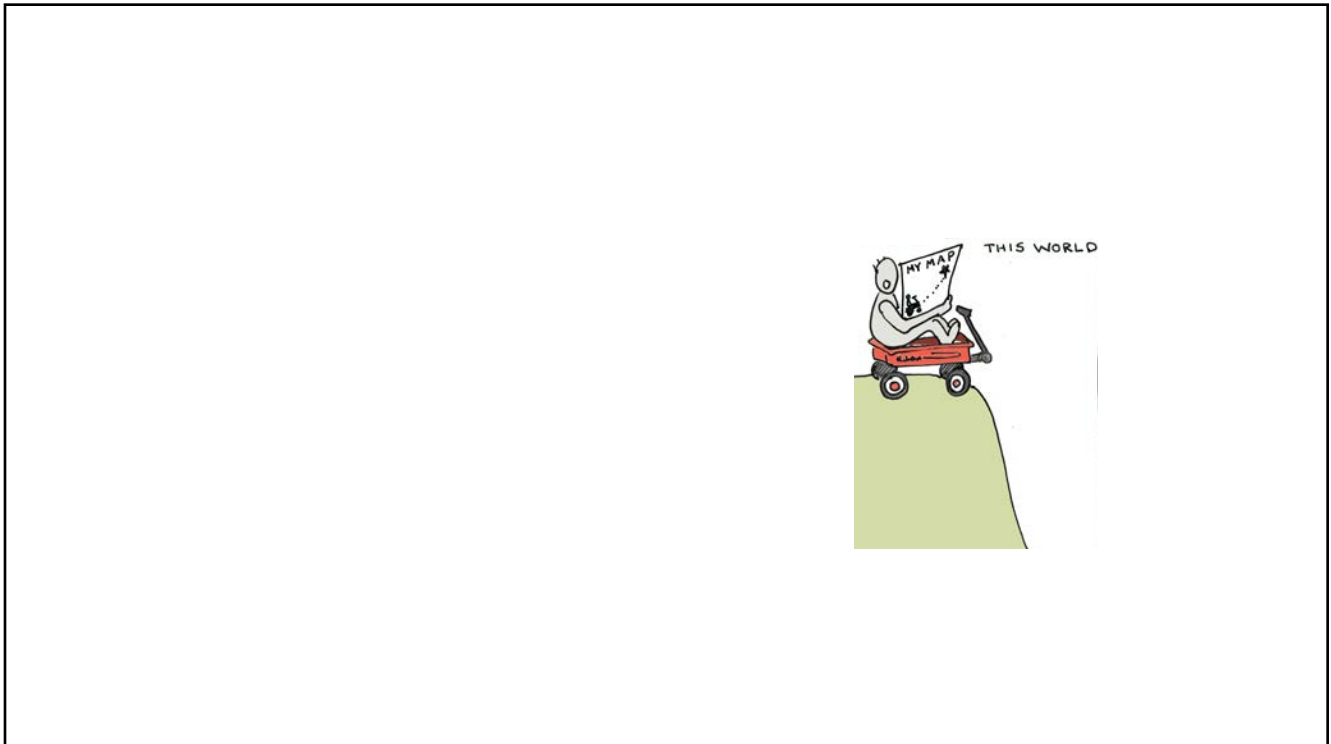
**“He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.**

**Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.”**

Isaiah 53:3

The Big Idea

**God obtains His glory and our good
by working through all things
including trouble and trial and tragedy
in Christ**

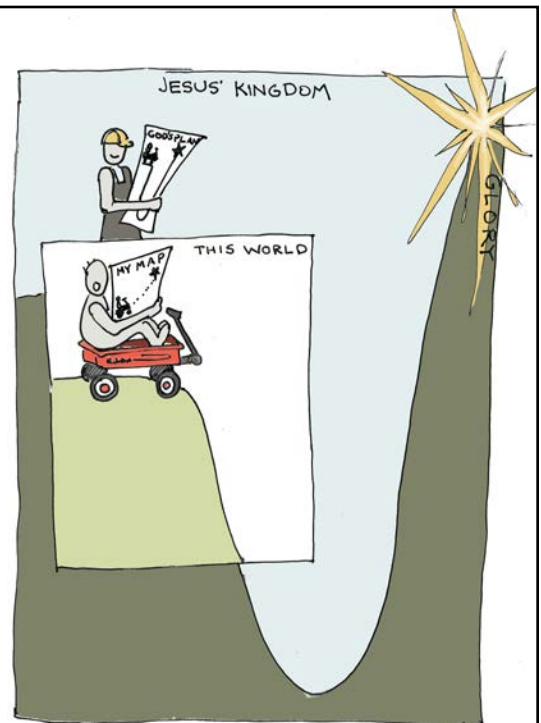


Jesus said, “**My kingdom is not of this world.** If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

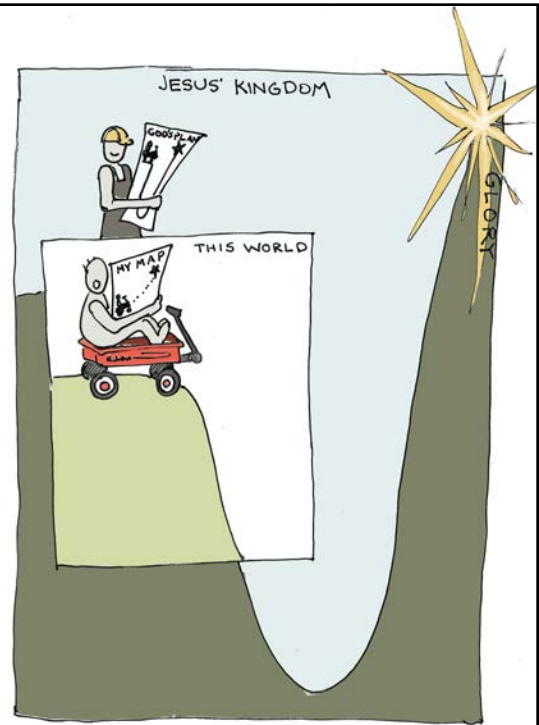
John 18:36

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world **you will have trouble.** But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33



And we know that in all things God **works for the good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to **be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, **he also glorified.** *Romans 8:28-30*



The Big Idea

**God obtains His glory and our good
by working through all things
including trouble and trial and tragedy
in Christ**

Application

- **Have the right expectations for following Jesus**
 - “My Kingdom is not of this world.” *John 18:36*
 - If it were, God would focus on making this life better!
 - “In this world, you will have trouble.” *John 16:33*
 - “If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.” *1 Corinthians 15:19*
 - If your goal is to make this life easier, Christ will disappoint you
 - So...
 - Jesus is working **all things** for our good and His glory
 - Jesus is with us **in everything**
 - “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” *Hebrews 4:15*

Application

- **Have the right expectations for following Jesus**
- **Persevere with hope**
 - “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, **it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace** for those who have been trained by it.” *Hebrews 12:11*
 - “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord**, not for human masters, since you know that **you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.**” *Colossians 3:23-24*
 - Imagine rewards from the creator and sustainer of the universe!

Application

- **Have the right expectations for following Jesus**
- **Persevere with hope**
- **Have confident faith**
 - We see God’s power when it is needed
 - “But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness.**’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, **I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.**”

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Application

- **Have the right expectations for following Jesus**
- **Persevere with hope**
- **Have confident faith**
- **Life with wisdom AND faith**
 - Like Joseph, we are expected to make wise decisions
 - Sometimes God interrupts to redirect: “Behold!”
 - He does that today through...
 - Conviction through the Holy Spirit in the Word or life
 - People’s input
 - Natural world and life circumstances
 - Ideal: “faith-filled wisdom” and “wise faith”

The Big Idea

**God obtains
His glory and our good
by working through all things
including trouble
and trial and tragedy
in Christ**

Where do you need to see God's power today?

**Where is God working for His glory
and your good in your life today?**

Will you trust Him? rather than blame, fear, worry, despair, harder work, ...

