

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
THE WAY OF LIFE - LESSON 1: GOD'S ORIGINAL
CREATION

**CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE**

PO BOX: 385 Bertoua (Cameroon) Tel: (237) 699512900 / 678223408 / 678300636
www.bcc.ztfministry.org / e-mail: bcc@cmfionline.org / whatsapp: (237) 694135835

TEACHING BASIC DOCTRINES

COURSE 1

“THE WAY OF LIFE”

Prof Zacharias Tanee Fomum

LESSON 1: GOD’S ORIGINAL CREATION

Dear student,

We are happy for the interest that this course has raised in your heart.

The goal of the teaching on basic doctrines of the Christian life is to help you find the LORD Jesus, know Him, love Him and serve Him.

These are teachings found in the 14 books of a series called "**The Christian Way**", by Pr. Zacharias Tanee Fomum. The first course constitutes seven lessons elaborated from the book, "**The Way of Life**".

As you begin this course, we encourage you to go till the end. We recommend that you should have a Bible (in case you don't have), to continuously read it and verify the Biblical truth of what you are being taught. Equally, answer the questions at the end of each lesson and send your questionnaire for correction and award of marks. If you don't do it, this course might be of slight usefulness to you. Our quotations are from the NIV version of the Bible.

Our prayer is that at the end of the lessons of this first course, you should enter into a living personal relationship with Jesus, and so, begin to really live.

May God abundantly bless you!

II. INTRODUCTION

God's original purpose was that there might be only one creation, His perfect creation. The Bible says: "*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good*" (Genesis 1:31). If God pronounced such a verdict on something, then it must really have been good in every aspect. All of creation, including man, was perfect from creation. God's heart was satisfied.

The following questions can be asked at this level:

- Why did an invisible God create a visible world?
- Why God, who is Spirit, create a material world?
- What satisfied God's heart at the end of the process of creation?
- Why did God create man?

The objective of this first lesson is to respond to these questions, basing on the first seven paragraphs of the book "The Way of Life" and chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis in the Bible.

III. WHY DID GOD CREATE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH?

God's glory

God created the heavens and the earth to establish a kingdom that could manifest His glory.

From the beginning, the invisible God created a visible world to manifest His glory. A careful reading of the Word of God, the Bible, brings out this main thought on God's action concerning the creation of the heavens and the earth.

- In Genesis 1: 26, God plans to create man in His image and likeness to dominate. The dominion of man was to be a reflection of God's glory, a manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth;
- In Numbers 14: 21, God swears that His glory will fill the whole earth, despite the denial of some to co-operate with Him in that, like those Israelites faced with the giants of the Promised Land. God wanted to lead them into victory that manifests His glory.
- In Judges 7: 2 – 7, God reduced Gideon's army from 32 000 soldiers to 300, so that the victory over the Midianites should be for His glory.
- Psalms 19 begins with a proclamation: The heavens declare the glory of God...,
- In Matthew 6: 10, the Lord's prayer asks that the Kingdom and the Will of the Father be done on earth as it is in heaven, so that God's glory will be manifested on earth as in heaven; it ends with the declaration: "*For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory*"

- Ephesians 1: 4 – 6; 1:11-12; 3:8-10 reveals that God planned these things in advance and that God does all things for the praise of His glory.

We can then conclude with Isaiah 11: 9 and Habakkuk 2: 13 – 14, that God is fulfilling His plan according to which, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and of His glory as the waters cover the sea.

God at work for His glory

The first picture of creation, from Genesis 1: 1 to Genesis 2: 3 present God at work to create a world that could reflect His glory.

- Genesis 1: 2 talks of God's Spirit hovering over the waters;
- Verses 3 to 25 show God's Word at work in the process of creation. It proceeds from God and creates everything.
- Genesis 1: 26 presents the Divine Beings (Father, Son, Spirit), concerting about the creation of man.
- Verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25 of Genesis 1, show God evaluating His work regularly: Six times He found that what He had accomplish was "good";
- At the end, in Genesis 1: 31, He makes an overall evaluation with the following verdict: "*God saw all that He had made, and it was very good*", (Genesis 1: 31).

If God pronounces such a verdict on something, it means that it is really good in all aspects. Man and the rest of creation fully participated in the praise of God's glory from the beginning.

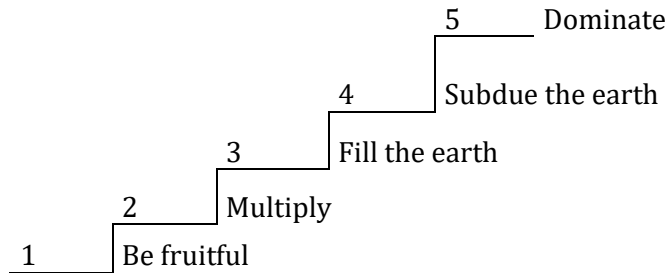
This evaluation by God of His Work also teaches us a fundamental thing: the need to evaluate the work that one does for God as it is being executed. Not to do so is pretending to be better than God and being able to do better than God.

IV. WHY DID GOD CREATE MAN?

Man was created to be God's partner in the praise of His glory.

In Genesis 1: 26, God plans to create man in His image and likeness to dominate. Man's dominion had to be a reflection on earth of God's Kingdom as in heaven, a manifestation of the spiritual and invisible reign of God in a visible and material world.

Man was therefore God's special creation, to participate in a special way in God's purpose. For this reason, God assigned to Him a mission with the following objectives, according to Genesis 1:28:



To accomplish this mission, God created man to function according to the following four goals:

Communion with God

Man was created to have a personal relationship with God, to have communion with God and to satisfy God's heart. In order for man to be able to do this, God created him in a special way:

- He created him in His image, according to His likeness. The Bible says: "*Then God said: Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...*" (Genesis 1: 26);

- He put something of God in him. The Bible says: *“The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being”* (Genesis 2: 7)

The image of God, the likeness of God, the breath of God rendered man capable to know God’s thoughts, God’s will, God’s feelings. By accepting them, man will share these with God; this is communion.

Only such a life of communion could satisfy God’s heart and render man capable of accomplishing God’s mission.

Dominion

Secondly, man was created to dominate over the rest of creation.

- Dominion is mentioned when the creation of man was still as a project in God’s mind. The Bible says: *“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule ...’* (Genesis 1: 26);
- Dominion is cited among the things that God enumerates in the mission which HE gives man as soon as he was created. It is written: *“God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground”* (Genesis 1: 28). This is the apex of man’s mission.

God’s original thought was to bring man to exercise an unlimited dominion over all living beings as an overflow of his communion with God. Man, submissive to God, satisfying God’s heart through a special relationship with God, would receive from God what was needed for dominion. He had to exercise authority.

Subdue the earth

Thirdly, man was called to subdue the earth:

Subduing the earth is listed among the things that God expects from man in Genesis 1: 28: “*God blessed them and said, ‘be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.....’*”. The command to cultivate the garden which God had just planted and to keep it, is subduing the earth.

To subdue the earth, man had to work hard. God has never desired to see man idle or lazy. He has always been and will always be against idleness and laziness.

Obedience

Fourthly, man had to obey God

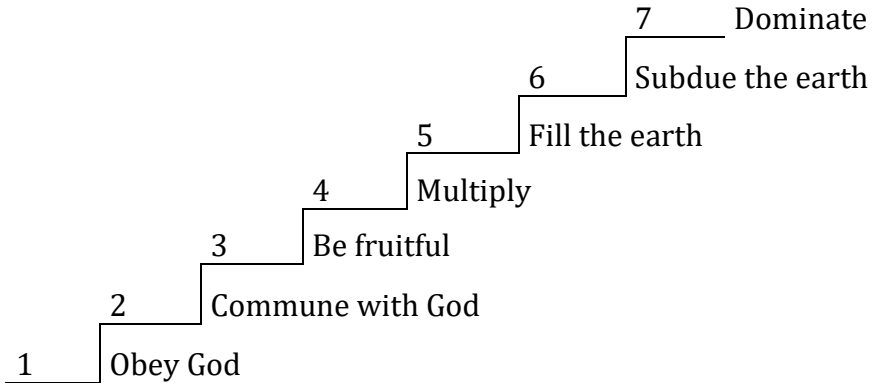
The special relationship between God and man could only exist and continue on the basis of man’s voluntary obedience to God. Man had the liberty to accept or refuse God’s mind, God’s will and God’s feelings. In obeying, man would grow in communion with God and advance in the process of subduing the earth and of dominion over the rest of creation.

So, wherever one’s look, one could see men, women and children in God’s image, exercising God’s authority from an overflow of communion and intimacy with God, until the knowledge of the Lord and of His glory fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

On the contrary, disobedience would cause man to lose his communion with God and, consequently, his power over the rest of creation. Everything would collapse

V. GOD AND MAN AT WORK

On His last day of work, God created man with a divine potential and confided a mission to him. When man was put in the Garden of Eden, he had a road map which can be presented as follows:



Obedience and Communion:

God gave clear and precise orders that man had to obey:

- Genesis 1:28: The global mission
- Genesis 1:29: Provision for the missionaries
- Genesis 2:15: Cultivate the garden and keep it
- Genesis 2:16-17: Forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
- Etc.

It was thanks to his communion with God that man could know what God expected of him, that he could receive these instructions. Obedience did not only maintain and develop communion with God but enabled man to receive from God what he needed to do the work that was demanded of him. This is

what the centurion declares in Luke 7:7-9 and what the Lord Jesus appreciated so much. This is equally how He functioned when He was on earth (John 5: 19).

Subdue the Earth:

The process of subduing the earth was launched.

The Bible says: *“Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden and there He put the man He had made”* (Genesis 2: 8), then: *“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it”* (Genesis 2: 15).

We see God initiating man into agriculture by working the garden and keeping it (see Isaiah 28:24-29).

Dominion:

Dominion over the rest of creation was also launched.

The Bible says in Genesis 2:20: *“Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field...”*

This goes beyond rearing, which is the first thing that comes to mind. For naming others is a sign of authority.

Multiplication

The institution of marriage heralded procreation, hence multiplication.

The Bible says: *“The Lord God said, “It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him” and “So the man*

gave names to all the livestock, the bird of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam, no suitable helper was found.” “Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man” (Genesis 2: 18 – 23), and “... man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Genesis 2: 24).

These passages bring out the fact that man was created first, then after the woman was created. She comes into the scene when the man was already in the service of God; in the same way as man came in when God was already working.

The arrival of this suitable helper besides man opens the way to fruitfulness, to multiplication and to the fact of filling the earth. Adam finally had someone with whom he would share what he did with God and what he discovered in God’s creation.

The mission God confided to man on earth was fully being executed by the end of Genesis 2. God worked with man and man worked with God (see Mark 16:20; I Corinthians 3:9 and II Corinthians 6:1).

VI. GOD'S PURPOSE AFTER ADAM AND EDEN?

Since then, God has not stopped creating men on earth with a divine potential and a mission to accomplish for His glory.

In the Bible

Every time that God intervened before the birth of a person or during his life time, it was generally to reveal that person's mission in relation to His eternal purpose.

- Noah had to build an ark and save the race from the flood (Genesis 6: 7-9);
- Noah and his children had to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth after the flood (Genesis 9: 1);
- Abraham had to let God to bless all the peoples on earth, that is all of humanity (Genesis 12:1-3);
- Isaac had to be born for God to accomplish the promises made to Abraham (Genesis 17:19 and 21, 18:18-19);
- Moses had to free God's people from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 3: 7-10);
- Samson had to be born to start the deliverance of Israel from the dominion of the Philistines (Judges 13:5);
- Josiah had to be born to destroy Israel's idolatry (1 Kings 13: 1 - 2);
- Jeremiah was set aside as prophet to the nations before his birth (Jeremiah 1: 4-5)
- Cyrus had to command the reconstruction of the temple (Isaiah 44: 28);
- John the Baptist had to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah (Luke 1: 13-17);
- Paul was set aside from his mother's womb to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles (Galatians 1: 15-16);

- Jesus had to be born to save men from their sins (Matthew 1: 20-21) and to reign eternally (Luke 1: 30-33);

God's call

All the above is not a privilege for a few people but God's provision to each person. Every human being created by God is destined to participate in the praise of His glory in a mission that God planned in advance; to bring in a specific contribution to the edification of God's Kingdom on earth.

The Bible says it so clearly and wondrously in Psalms 139: 13-16, in Ephesians 2: 10. It is the heavenly call of God in Jesus Christ (Philippians 3: 12-14).

Everybody is called to seek and find his contribution to the manifestation of God's glory on earth; a mission to be accomplished from the overflow of communion and intimacy with God.

It also wise and honest for everyone to evaluate his mission while it is being accomplished, so as to say like the Master in John 17: 4: "I have brought You glory on earth by completing the work You gave me to do".

VII. WHAT SHOULD WE RETAIN?

This first lesson shows God at work to manifest His glory, first of all alone, then with man as partner. From Eden, God created men to participate in His purpose of filling the earth with His glory as the waters cover the sea.

God gave Adam the liberty to do as he wanted: obey and continue to be God's partner or to disobey and die. Unfortunately, man ended up disobeying God and terrible consequences followed up till today.

If you have not yet received Jesus as your Saviour and Lord, I encourage you to do so. You will find the following steps helpful:

ADMIT that you are a sinner. Tell God that you have personally sinned in your thoughts, words and actions. Tell Him that you take the responsibility for all your sins. Confess to Him all the sins that you have committed and which you can remember. Confess them, naming them to Him one after the other. Turn your back to them, forsake all your sins and sinful ways. Decide that you have finished for ever with that type of life. God will not forgive you unless you are determined, with His help, to put an end to all your sins and sinful ways.

BELIEVE that Jesus Christ died on the cross in your place. By believing that, you are rejecting every system or philosophy that suggests that a man can be reconciled to God and go to heaven without passing through Jesus Christ. If you truly believe that Jesus is the only way that God has given for men to enter heaven, then you will want to receive Him personally into your heart and life. You will also want to do it at once before it becomes too late, but,

CONSIDER the cost of following Him. Jesus will want you to love and obey Him in everything and for all time. At any time that the demands of Jesus will contradict your own desires or the demands of any other person or persons, you will have to obey Jesus at any cost to yourself. Are you prepared to abandon your own interests daily for those of Jesus? Are you prepared to be led in new directions by Him? Are you prepared to suffer and, if need be, die for Him? If you are prepared to follow Him at any cost, then you must do something about it right now.

INVITE Jesus to come into your life as your Lord and Saviour. You can receive Him by praying as follows:

“Lord Jesus, I am a wretched sinner. I have confessed my sins to You and forsaken them completely. I believe with all my heart that You died on the cross for me. Come into my heart now and have total freedom to lead me in all Your ways. Write my name in the book of life o that I will never perish but instead come to be with You in heaven someday. Do it right now, Lord. Amen”

If you prayed this prayer with a sincere heart, then the Lord Jesus has forgiven you and He has made of you a child of God. Please, write to me so that I can pray for you.

May God bless you abundantly!

Zacharias Tanee Fomum

VIII. INTRODUCTION TO LESSON 2

God gave Adam the liberty to do as he wanted: obey and continue to be God's partner or to disobey and die. Unfortunately, man ended up disobeying God and terrible consequences followed up till today.

Lesson 2 presents this disobedience with its consequences on man and on the rest of creation.

IX. QUESTION 1 ON COURSE I:

(LESSON 1: GOD'S ORIGINAL CREATION)