

The first scene of *God's Big Picture* occurs at the dawn of creation.
Everything that the Master Designer created had a purpose.

Unveiling the panorama of the Creator's original design for people, you will discover His resolve to
never abandon His plan for your good.

This is God's Big Picture.



The content of this book

is both amazingly simple and
astoundingly profound in significance.

The mental images that take form may affect the reader's deepest levels of religious presuppositions, reshaping the way he or she thinks about God, about the world, and about oneself.

This book is not a comprehensive treatise on redemption—it is not intended to be an exhaustive Bible study on the subject. It is an attempt to take the fundamental essentials of biblical faith and focus them as one unfolding panorama of God's plan for people like you and me.

God's Big Picture is the central theme of the biblical text that begins in Genesis and continues through Revelation. The Bible defines God's design for people and it contains the information necessary for the fulfillment of human purpose. It is not a mystery intended for an elite few. It is one magnificent panorama of God's loving plan for all human persons.

The first two chapters of Genesis set forth God's original dream for His creation.

The third chapter of Genesis exposes Satan's scheme to thwart God's plan, and then it announces God's strategy to restore His dream.

Chapters four through eleven of Genesis detail the resulting corruption of God's creation and His resolve to give humankind a new beginning.

The twelfth chapter of Genesis (and continuing throughout the Old Testament) begins the saga of God's redemptive plan for humanity declared in His promises to Abraham and Sarah.

Preface

The Book of Exodus is a dramatic picture of God's plan in one historic drama, beginning with the bondage of His people in Egypt and the birth of their deliverer, and ending with the completion of the wilderness Tabernacle, in which God dwells in the midst of His people.

From the remainder of the books of Moses, through the historic writings, the wisdom literature, and the words of the prophets, God speaks to His creation. In historic events; through visuals of worship, ceremonial sacrifices and festivals; and in many ways God reveals Himself as loving Creator and faithful Redeemer. The entire Old Testament can be synopsized as a preview of God's predestined plan to come and redeem His creation, despite repeated disobedience.

The New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John announce the arrival of God's promised Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He fulfills every anticipation of hope and each promise of salvation communicated in the Old Testament. Christ's earthly life and ministry unveil the fulfillment of God's original plan for people.

Subsequent New Testament books, from the Acts of the Apostles to the Book of Jude, are inspiring and instructive accounts about ordinary people responding to God's activity manifested through those who believe in Christ.

The final Bible book of Revelation is written as a captivating word picture of God's ultimate and glorious victory over the adversary, through Christ as both the substitutionary Lamb and as the conquering King.

God's Big Picture represents a synopsis of the principal story of the Bible—the gospel—through the unfolding panorama of four events that allow God's marvelous plan of redemption to become clear and relevant in the lives of women and men who read it.

When *God's Big Picture* is viewed biblically, the results are clarity where there has been confusion, revelation where there has been resistance, peace where there has been perplexity, and solution where there has been strife.

Many Christian books have been written to expound complex theological topics, such as sin or salvation, or to explain common Christian disciplines, such as prayer or perseverance. The purpose of this book is neither to expound nor to explain, but to invite each reader to experience a living faith that will transform his or her life.

What qualifies me to suggest that the realities conveyed in this book can fulfill such daring claims?

It was my good fortune to be raised by parents (Drs. T. L. Osborn and Daisy Washburn Osborn) whose primary mission has been to communicate God's good news to people around the world. The year that I was born (1947), our family began traveling from nation to nation pioneering mass miracle evangelism in non-Christian nations, with the demonstration of supernatural signs and wonders, and inaugurating methods to bring people effectively into a transforming relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The world was literally my playground and children of differing skin colors and cultural lifestyles were my playmates.

During a lifetime of Christian ministry among the peoples of the world, I have learned that biblical truth transcends culture and tradition, and that the gospel must be both declared and demonstrated if it is to be believed and embraced by people who have their own religion, ethnic culture, and national traditions.

As carriers of God's message of hope and love to all people, we must convey the essentials of biblical faith in ways that can be clearly understood.

Redemptive truth is effective in all circumstances

and is for all people, because it concerns God's unchanging plan for His entire human creation.

God's Big Picture is the heart of biblical truth. I have presented this panorama to people around the world in many different ways, using imagery, parables, and pictorial dramatizations to communicate God's plan for the redemption of humankind. What is now published in this book will not engage the reader in the tedious detail of religious argument, but it will elevate the reader to the transcending drama of God's love in action.

This gospel classic is intended to be a discussion, between author and reader, that leads to discovery and an exchange that results in experience. The four fundamental scenes of this book, depicting *God's Big Picture*, are the biblical truths that can replace the pious ritual of religion with the practical relevance of relationship.

God's Big Picture introduces a faith that is factual, not mystical. It presents absolutes that are enduring, not faddish. Through this gospel panorama, you can discover yourself in God's plan.

La Donna Osborn



Preview
OF THE GOSPEL

*This book presents
a panoramic perspective
of the Bible,*

of God's original design
for people,
and of His resolve
to never abandon
His plan for their good.



It emphasizes how much God believes in human persons, despite their faults, and how much He has invested to restore them to Himself as His partners in life. It unveils the grand drama of His grace and love that makes it possible for people to experience His life that brings renewed dignity, vital equality, and dynamic purpose to their daily living. This, in essence, is what we call the *Gospel of Redemption*.



THE GOSPEL OF REDEMPTION

Redemption is the foundation of all spiritual revelation.

Perceiving the drama of human redemption is the key that unlocks biblical truth.

The truths of redemption convey the message that

*To understand redemption
is to glimpse the heart of God.*

offers hope
and dignity
to humanity.

God's
redemption
of humankind

is the biblical solution to life's perplexing questions.



The story of redemption unveils the panorama of the Creator's love in action. It is *God's Big Picture*

To understand redemption is to glimpse the heart of God. The gospel, the *power of God to salvation*,¹ is the only message the Church is commissioned to proclaim.² The facts of redemption

express what Jesus accomplished on the cross, reveal why it was necessary for

*Redemption is the basis
for balanced and buoyant
Christian living.*

Him to sacrifice His life on our behalf, and disclose who we are as human beings because of God's redemptive action.

Comprehending redemptive truth is the basis for confident and consistent faith in God, and for balanced and buoyant Christian living. Embracing these principles of redemption stabilizes and vitalizes the believer's thinking. Putting them into practice in daily living is what validates our witness of Christ in our world.

1. Romans 1:16 2. Mark 16:15

FOUR SCENES
COMPRISE ONE PICTURE

The panorama of *God's Big Picture* is a progressive story of the fulfillment of His beautiful plan for humanity. It portrays four significant events that together comprise the essence of biblical truth. These events are sequential. They may be studied separately but only as they are interwoven and viewed as one continuum can the knowledge of redemption transform the lives of people.

These four dynamic events of redemption are:

- 1) God's *Creation*,
- 2) Satan's *Deception*,
- 3) Christ's *Substitution*, and
- 4) our *Restoration*.

These four fundamentals begin in the Book of Genesis and unfold throughout the Scriptures. They express the purpose of God's creative plan, expose the deception of the enemy, expound the redemptive work of Christ, and explain His restorative presence in each person who embraces them.



This redemptive revelation brings:

Dignity for the demeaned,
 Forgiveness to the condemned,
 Beauty to the blemished,
Confidence to the frustrated,
 Comfort to the bereaved,
 Virtue to the depraved,
Direction to the confused,
 Faith to the unbelieving,
Self-esteem to the disparaged,
 Integrity to the fraudulent,
 Nobility to the outcast,
Distinction to the ordinary,
 Restoration to the alienated,
Power to the weak,
 Health to the diseased,
 Strength to the weary,
Freedom to the captive,
 Security to the vulnerable,
 Hope to the despairing, and
 Life to the dying.



REDEMPTION IS A MIRACLE

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...³

So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away, see, everything has become new. All this is from God, who reconciles us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making His appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.⁴

This is redemption. It covers the full intervention of God that reconciles us to Him in Christ, and that enables us to represent Him to others. This new creation miracle is only made possible through the redeeming work of Jesus. He is the central character in the drama of redemption—*God's Big Picture*

3. Romans 1:16 4. 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (New Revised Standard Version).



The gospel is the overall perspective of four major facts: 1) God created us; 2) Satan tried to destroy us; 3) Jesus redeemed us; and 4) we are now reconciled and restored to God as His friends and representatives.

With this focused biblical vista, these four events form an interpretive overlay of the Bible, making its design clear, and revealing our own identity, dignity, and divine purpose in life.

The gospel—or redemption—is good news and it is for everyone.

*Whoever calls
upon the name
of the Lord
shall be saved.⁵*

*Jesus is the central character
in redemption's drama.*

*For God took
the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins. Then, in
exchange, he poured God's goodness into us!⁶*

To redeem means:

1. To buy back; to repurchase.
2. To get back; to recover, as by paying a fee.
3. To pay off (a mortgage or note).
4. To rescue, ransom, or liberate from captivity or
bondage, or from any liability or obligation to suffer.

5. Acts 2:21 6. 2 Corinthians 5:21 (The Living Bible).

5. To deliver, rescue, save in any manner.
6. To perform, as a promise; to make good by performance.
7. To make amends for; to atone for, to compensate.
8. In law, to recall, as an estate, or to regain, as mortgaged property, by payment of what may be due according to the terms of the mortgage.
9. In theology, to deliver from sin and its penalties, as by a substitute assuming the guilt and enduring the judgment assigned to the sinner.



GOSPEL—THE KEY TO THE BIBLE

God's redemption of humankind, through Christ,

*God redeems us to
our rightful place with Him.*

reinstates us to
our rightful place
with Him and
restores us as His
representatives
in the world,

enabling us to fulfill our predestined purpose. This is the central theme in the Scriptures of God's revealed design and will for us.



Therefore, I re-emphasize that the knowledge of redemption is the foundation of all spiritual revelation. Christian doctrine is to be evaluated by and be consistent with the underlying and overarching revelation of the gospel of redemption.

An unwavering confidence is produced in those whose faith is based on redemptive truth. It produces assurance in the believer's...

- ...knowledge of God,
- ...relationship with God,
- ...personal value to God,
- ...power and authority over Satan, and
- ...divine purpose in God's Kingdom..

Drs. T. L. and Daisy Osborn, my parents, have crisscrossed this planet together for more than a half-century, always expounding for multitudes these four basic redemptive issues that comprise the gospel.⁷

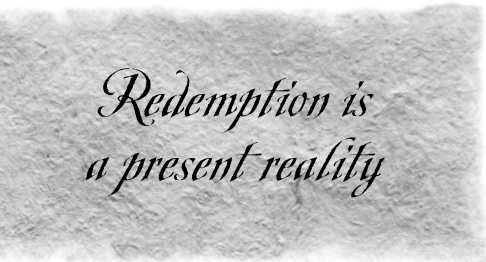
1. *God's Creation*—humanity's origin in God.
2. *Satan's Deception*—the beginning of human suffering.
3. *Christ's Substitution*—His death and resurrection
on our behalf
4. *Our Restoration*—the reality of God's life expressed in
and through us as believers today.

7. T.L. Osborn, *The Message that Works* (Tulsa, OK: www.osborn.org, 1997), 18,20.

The gospel of redemption is the good news that every man and woman can believe in Jesus Christ as his or her Redeemer and Lord and can begin living His victorious lifestyle now. For all who believe, redemption is a present reality, and

Satan is already defeated.

Christ's victory is their victory, and His righteousness is now theirs.⁸



*Redemption is
a present reality*

God's Big Picture

begins on the first page of the Book of Genesis and continues through the last page of the Book of Revelation. It is this one plan, this glorious unfolding panorama, and this progressive revelation of God's love, that we call redemption. Through it, we can know God and discover His magnificent plan.

I have proclaimed this good news in nations around the world, on open fields, in coliseums, in ballparks, and in large and small churches. This gospel has been announced from my lips in every imaginable ambiance, from ornate pulpits of elaborate cathedrals, and from the tops of wooden boxes in the center of public village markets.

Wherever the announcement of God's redemptive

8. Ibid., 359



plan is heralded with clarity and relevance, the results are the same. Lives are changed by His power and healing miracles confirm that *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever*.⁹ His gospel is the power of God.¹⁰

Church leaders and Bible teachers often neglect the dynamic revelation of redemption that was the driving passion of the Apostle Paul's ministry. Contemporary Christians often popularize secondary issues, giving minimal attention to the biblical facts of redemption. Pastoral themes such as prayer, fasting, gifts of the Spirit, prosperity, healing, marriage, ethics, etc., must be presented within the essential framework of the revelation of redemption. It is the *a priori* principle of Scripture by which all biblical doctrine is measured. It is vital that we comprehend the redemptive reasons why God's provisions and His power are available to us as believers in Christ.

*Only the gospel of
Christ's redemption has power
to produce lasting change.*

Popular, trendy teachings come and go. Only the gospel of Christ's redemption produces enduring change in

9. Hebrews 13:8 10. Romans 1:16

human lives. The good news of redemption is as effective in the villages of interior Africa as among the sophisticates of Japan. It is as miraculously productive in Papua New Guinea as it is in England, Canada, or the United States. Why? Because *the Gospel is the power of God*,¹¹ regardless of the social culture, the religious tradition, or the economic or academic level of the people to whom it is presented. Everyone deserves to hear the gospel, so that each can believe it and be saved, healed, and enjoy purposeful living.¹² The mission of clergy and laity alike is to communicate the gospel to our world.

To understand this gospel of redemption we will now focus on each of the four significant scenes that comprise *God's Big Picture*, beginning with His *Creation*.

11. Romans 1:16 12. Romans 10:13-15