

The Reclamation of All Things: A Greater Identity

In the 2014 movie, *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, the world has separated into two camps: genetically altered apes & humans. The apes have escaped from the science labs that created them and have found refuge in the mountains. Meanwhile, a deadly virus has wiped out most of humanity and the survivors are holed up in dilapidated cities without electricity or other conveniences the human-race once enjoyed. Their world has fallen apart. Through a twisted series of misunderstandings, the apes believe the humans are out to destroy them and vice versa. The consequence: an all-out war.

As the humans develop their defensive plan, we hear their motivation as they fight for survival. One man says, *you all know what we're up against! And I want you to know - it's not just about power! It's about giving us the hope to rebuild, to reclaim the world we lost!* In this quote, we find the heartbeat of most movies, literature and sporting events - *dominion*. Who will come out on top? Who is the strongest? Who will rule? Who will reclaim what was lost?

From Rabbi Jesus, we learn the answer - *He* will reclaim what was lost (Matthew 18:11). And he will do it in the most unlikely way: by living the life humans couldn't live, dying the death humans should have died and donating his merits to humanity. Now he lives in his people through the same Spirit that brought him back to life, empowering them to live a new kind of life and partner with Him in the reclamation of all things (Luke 24:49, Romans 8:11). *What are the implications of all this?*

Journey Together

- 1). Describe your vision of a perfect world?
- 2). What can we do as Christ's followers to help shape that world?

Roadmap: Read Matthew 27 & 28

- 3). What do you think is significant about the way Matthew ends his gospel (Mt. 28:16-20)?
- 4). Read Genesis 1:27-28. What was God's first command to humans? How does it compare with Jesus last command in Matthew? How would this command benefit the world?

5). Read Genesis 12:1-3. How is God's call to Abraham similar to his command to Adam & Eve? Now return to Matthew 28:16-20. What is God still concerned with?

6). Being baptized into the name of the Father, Son & Spirit is being immersed into a new identity. What changes about my identity when I'm brought into a new identity with the Father, the Son and the Spirit?

7). Jesus commissions his disciples to spread out and fill the earth with this new and greater identity, which is an expression of who God is and what he has done. How would your life and world change if you, personally, lived from this greater identity? How might these things reflect Jesus plan to reclaim and renew all things?

8). Read Ephesians 1:22-23. We read that Christ's church is his people who "fill all in all." In light of all the texts we've looked at up to this point, what images come to mind when you think of Christ's people "filling all in all?"

Discipleship Challenge: Being a disciple of Jesus means living as a family of missionary servants. This is our new trinitarian identity and it's not an individual endeavor. The church isn't an event we attend, but a family we belong to. Gather with a few friends this week over a meal and talk about how you might live differently with each other in the next 3-6 months if you really believed you were family. What if you believed you were servants to the least of these? What if you believed you'd been given the Spirit for mission. Practice this seventh competence of *A Greater Identity* by agreeing with a few friends to live differently in light of your new identity.

My Journey

1. How has God been using *Journey* in your life this week to do *Great Things* for Him?
2. How has this last study helped pull together the overall picture of what discipleship under Rabbi Jesus is all about?
3. How can this group be praying for you right now and this week?