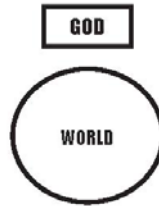


# The Good News of the Kingdom

**1. Creation** - Christians believe that God created the world with a special design.

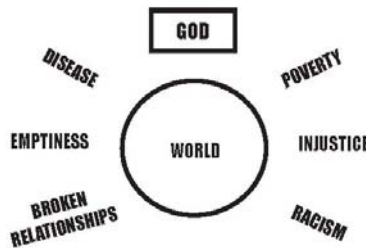
God's intention was:

- That all of life would resonate with His love and peace.
- We would know God personally.
- We would have loving relationships with each other that were not marred by selfishness and pride.
- Even the whole created order of plants and animals would work in a God given harmony. No Katrina disasters, no tsunami devastations, no droughts or floods, etc.



## **2. But Something's Wrong...**

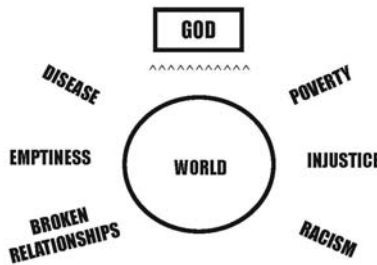
Obviously, things aren't that way now. Something is wrong with our world.



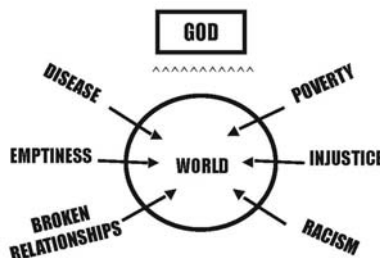
What is the cause of all these problems? How did the world get to be this way?

## **3. Infection**

Christians believe that from the very beginning, humanity chose, and continues to choose to live apart from God. We want to live life our way, according to our own standards. We want to drive the car, so to speak. We ignore or rebel against God and His ways. So our relationship with God was broken.



The result of our rebellion is that all of life went careening off balance. It's like a computer virus has infected the hard drive of the universe such that everything gets messed up. There are **global consequences** as a result. That is why things like injustice and poverty and disease and began to corrupt our world.



There are also **personal consequences** and that's why in our own personal lives things are not always right.

- Every relationship we are in is infected with some degree of selfishness and pride and people get hurt – sometimes in small ways, sometimes in huge ways.
- Deep inside our souls, there is an emptiness that keeps rising up out of nowhere – something is missing. Our souls cry out, “Is this all there is? There has got to be something more...”
- When it comes to being a good person, we can't seem to measure up to our own standards – we keep falling into selfishness that hurts others; we fall into indifference when it comes to the poverty and pain that plagues our world.

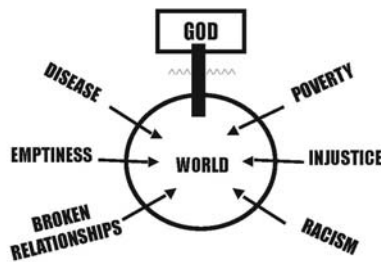
It seems like there is nothing we can do to fix things – no matter what we try, our life, and all of life on this planet continues to run off course. Our world has been infected by a virus and there doesn't seem to be a cure. And we continue to contribute to the mess as we live life apart from God.

- Our selfishness gets out of control and hurts others.
- Our apathy allows others to suffer and struggle.

How do you see yourself in this picture? If you were God, what would you do to the people who caused all of this tragedy, heartache, and evil?

#### 4. Incarnation

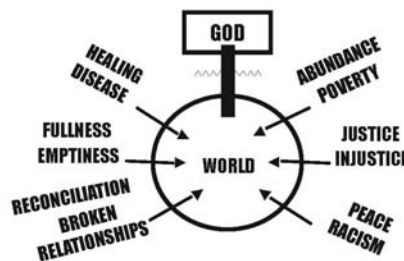
God could have just left us here, or He could have just wiped us out; but out of love for us, He came down into our world to make things right.



Jesus was God, coming to us, to call us back to God. Jesus started a revolution to take back his lost world...

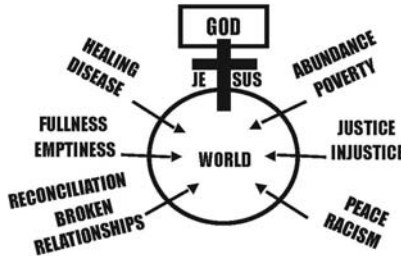
- A revolution of calling people back to God and a revolution to fix all of the brokenness that infects our world.
- And not a revolution of military power, but a revolution that is marked by the power of love and truth.

When Jesus was on earth, He talked about how the Kingdom was coming, how God wanted to get rid of all the bad stuff and replace it with good stuff. So, instead of poverty, abundance; instead of emptiness, meaning; instead of injustice, justice; instead of racism, racial reconciliation and unity.



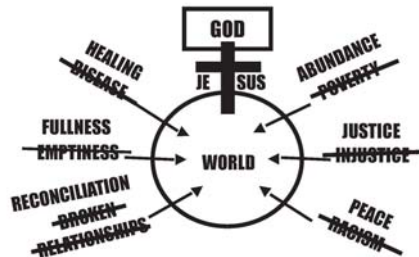
## 5. Redemption

But then Jesus gets killed on a cross. At first glance, it seemed like all the evil and brokenness of this world was too much and it overpowered Jesus. But the truth of the matter was that Jesus was dying to take on all the punishment for our waywardness and rebellion. If you remember, it was humanity's waywardness and rebellion from God that got us into the mess we find ourselves in. Jesus died to take on our punishment for all of this and to wipe the slates clean. That's what Good Friday is all about - Jesus' death on the cross paying the penalty for our sin and rebellion.



## 6. Resurrection

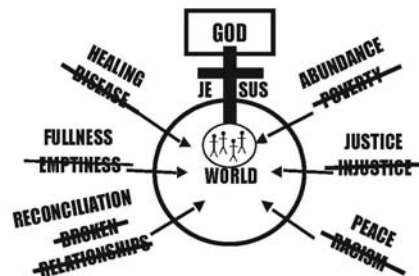
And then Jesus comes back to life! Jesus' resurrection is a wonderful sign of hope for us who believe in Him. That's what we celebrate on Easter Sunday - the resurrection of Jesus. The Resurrection validates the truth of who Jesus was and what He was about. It shows us that everything Jesus said is true. It also serves as a sign of hope that the mess of this world is not the last word. Jesus is alive and well and working to make our world right again. Someday, when Jesus returns, all will be made right, and injustice and poverty and disease and death will be done away with once and for all.



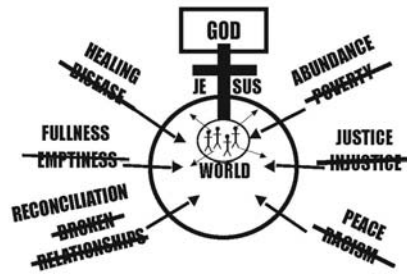
## 7. Revolution

But in the meantime, Jesus' revolution continues through His people. The revolution that Jesus started continues to this day. The Divine Conspiracy moves forward, slowly but surely.

- Jesus is seeking to find those who want to enter into relationship with Him.
- He's gathering those people together in communities - communities like Nurses Christian Fellowship and your local church. Little groups of co-conspirators, like Robin Hood's band of Merry Men. The Underground, the Resistance.



The church is represented by the stick figures in the circle below. Jesus is sending those communities out to be His hands and His feet to help spread the revolution - to bring peace where there is conflict, justice where there is injustice, healing where there is pain, etc.



### 8. Invitation

See Joe in the circle below? Write your name in instead of his. This is my invitation to you. Do you want to join Jesus and His revolution? If so, you only need to know about the 4 Cs."

1. Confess - confess that you've been living life apart from God - that you've been living life on your own terms. Choose to turn away from that.
2. Commit - commit to live life with and for Jesus. Commit to living life in relationship with Jesus and to live for His purposes in the world. Surrender your life to Jesus. Let Him take the keys and sit in the driver's seat.
3. Community - join the community of God's people that God is using to change the world.
4. Commission - live out Jesus' commission to be an agent of His will in the world helping others enter into relationship with Jesus, fighting against injustice and pain, being an agent of healing and justice wherever you are. If you have been reading this with another person and would like to accept this invitation, you can do this by praying together, or if you are alone you can pray by yourself to God. I invite you to **confess** living your life apart from God, **commit** to living life with and for Jesus, commit to live in **community** with other Christians, commit to living out Jesus' **commission** to be an agent of His world-changing purposes.

