

Welcome to the Ray Charles Gospel Hour!

This morning we're going to do church a little bit different; interweaving two, seemingly unrelated, stories into one.

What do the Bible and a few Ray Charles songs have in common? Well, both were authored by God, both belong to Him, and both, rather eloquently, speak of the beauty, power and inherent brokenness of the human condition.

Listen to both stories over this next hour. Let the truth of God meet you through word and song.

WORD...

The Beginning

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light

from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

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."

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."

Genesis 1, The Message

SONG...

Oh what a Beautiful Morning, by Ray Charles

There's a bright golden haze in the meadow (pan this image side/side).

There's a bright golden haze in the meadow.

The corn is as high as an elephant's eye (pan bottom to top).

And it looks like it's climbing clear up to the sky...

Well, oh what a beautiful morning, aw now.

Yes, what a wonderful day. (Look out there).

You know I - I've got a beautiful feeling.

Everything's - everything's going my way. (Ya'll c'mon now).

Whoa, the cattle are standing like statues.

The cattle are standing like statues.

They don't turn their heads as they see me ride by.

But a little brown maverick is winkin' her eye. She said...

Oh, what a beautiful morning. Yeah!

Well, what a wonderful day. I want ya'll to know, oh now.

I've got a beautiful feelin'.

I got everything - everything's goin' my way.

Everything's goin' my way - my way.

(Alright ya'll, do it to me)...

Whoa, the sounds of the earth are like music.

The sounds of the earth are like music.

The breeze is as busy, it don't miss a tree.

And a little ol' weepin' willow is laughin' at me. She said...

Oh, what a beautiful morning! (Alright now!).

Yes! What a wonderful day. Alright?

Yeah, I got a beautiful feelin'.

I got everything - I got everything - I got everything. (Whooh!).

Everything's goin' my way - My way. Hah ha.

Everything's goin' my way.

Whoa, baby. Oh, baby.

I wanna thank you little girl - for such a wonderful day.

Oh, I got a beautiful feelin'.

Everything's goin' my way...



WORD...

Genesis 3 - The Fall of Man

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.' "

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,

"Cursed are you above all the livestock
and all the wild animals!
You will crawl on your belly
and you will eat dust
all the days of your life...."

To the woman he said,

"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;
with pain you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you."

To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,'

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it
all the days of your life.

It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return..."

SONG...

Cryin' Time

Oh, it's cryin' time again, you're gonna leave me
I can see that far away look in your eyes
I can tell by the way you hold me darlin'
That it won't be long before it's cryin' time

Now they say that absence makes the heart grow fonder
And that tears are only rain to make love grow
Well my love for you could never grow no stronger
If I lived to be a hundred years old

Oh, it's cryin' time again, you're gonna leave me
I can see that far away look in your eyes
I can tell by the way you hold me darlin'.
That it won't be long before it's cryin' time

Interlude piece

Now you say you've found someone that you love better
That's the way it's happened every time before
And as sure as the sun comes up tomorrow ('morrow)
Cryin' time will start when you walk out the door

Oh, it's cryin' time again, you're gonna leave me
I can see that far away look in your eyes
I can tell by the way you hold me darlin'. Alright now
That it won't be long before it's cryin' time
(That it won't be long before it's cryin' time)

WORD...

Genesis 6:5-7 – Falling Further

"The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them."



SONG...

Let the Good Times Roll

Hey everybody
Let's have some fun
You only live but once
And when you're dead you're done

So let the good times roll
I said let the good times roll,
I don't care if you're young or old,
You oughtta get together and let the good times roll

Don't sit there mumbling
Talkin' trash
If you want to have a ball,
You got to go out and spend some cash

And let the good times roll now,
I'm talkin' 'bout the good times,
Well it makes no difference whether you're young or old,
All you got to do is get together and let the good times roll

Interlude – Long organ solos- 3 -5 images
Hey y'all tell everybody, Ray Charles in town,
I got a dollar and a quarter and I'm just ringing the clock,
But don't let nobody, play me cheap,
I got fifty cents more than I'm gonna keep.

So let the good times roll now,
I tell y'all I'm gonna let the good times roll now,
Well it don't make no difference if you're young or old,
All you got to do is get together and let the good times roll

Hey no matter whether, rainy weather
If you want to have a ball, you got to get yourself together,
Oh, get yourself under control, woah, and let the good times roll.

WORD...

“The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.”

Genesis 3:21

I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

Genesis 9:11

But how can I give up on you, Ephraim?
How can I turn you loose, Israel?
How can I leave you to be ruined like Admah,
devastated like luckless Zeboim?
I can't bear to even think such thoughts.
My insides churn in protest.
And so I'm not going to act on my anger.
I'm not going to destroy Ephraim.
And why? Because I am God and not a human.
I'm The Holy One and I'm here—in your very midst.

Hosea 11

"Can a mother forget the infant at her breast,
walk away from the baby she bore?
But even if mothers forget,
I'd never forget you—never.
Look, I've written your names on the backs of my hands.”

Isaiah 49:15-16



SONG...

I Can't Stop Loving You

(I can't stop loving you)
I've made up my mind
To live in memory of the lonesome times

(I can't stop wanting you)
It's useless to say
So I'll just live my life in dreams of yesterday
(Dreams of yesterday)

Those happy hours that we once knew
Tho' long ago, they still make me blue

They say that time heals a broken heart
But time has stood still since we've been apart

(I can't stop loving you)
I've made up my mind
To live in memories of the lonesome time....



WORD...

“The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death
a light has dawned...
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

The Prophet Isaiah 9:5-9

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

Jesus in John 14:1-3

SONG...

Come Live with Me

Come live with me and won't you be my love
Share my bread and wine
Be wife to me, be life to me
Be mine

Come live with me and won't you be my love
Let our dreams combine
Be mate to me, be fate to me
Be mine

With these hands I will build a roof
To shield your head
And with these hands I will carve the wood
For our baby's bed

Come live with me and be my love
So I can love you all the time
Be a part of me, the heart of me
Be mine

I will try to do my best for you
I swear, I promise you
I'm gonna lie for you, I will cry you
My whole life through

Come live with me and won't you be my love
Share my bread and wine
Be a part of me, be the heart of me
Be mine

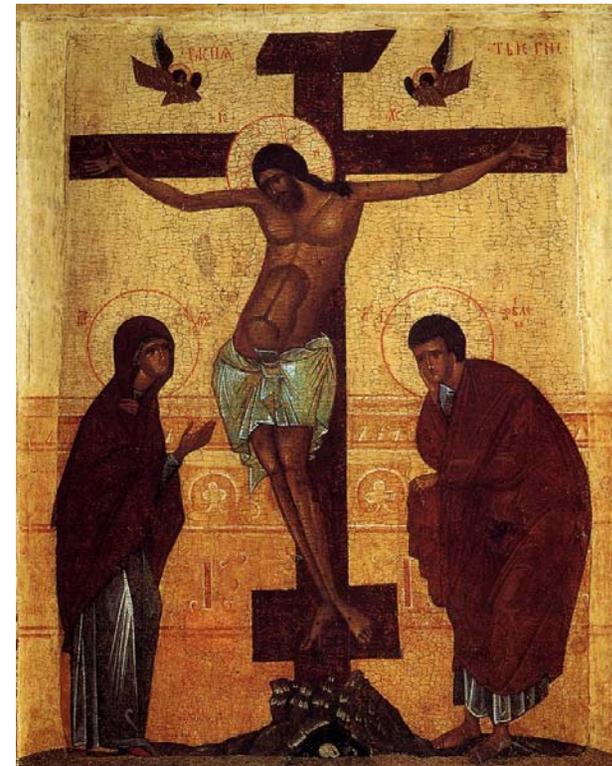
WORD...

"God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us."

Ephesians 3:20-21

"I am the way and the truth and the life..."

Jesus in John 14:6



FINAL SONG...

The Long and Winding Road

The long and winding road
that leads to your door,

Will never disappear,
I've seen that road before

It always leads me here,
leads me to your door.

The wild and windy night
that the rain washed away,

Has left a pool of tears
crying for the day.

Why keep me waiting here,
let me know the way.

Many times I've been alone
and many times I've cried,

Anyway you'll never know
the many ways I've tried,

Still they lead me back
to the long and winding road,

You left me standing here
a long, long time ago.

Don't leave me waiting here,
lead me to your door.
Amen.

