

## Chapter 1 | God's Great Passion is to Be With You

Some movies start at warp speed. Case in point: Star Trek. From the opening scene to the end it barely lets you breathe. If you slip out for popcorn you were sure to miss something important. And yet, people did.

This disturbs me greatly since I am a movie snob. I think the way to maximize the movie-going experience is to be in your seat at least 20 minutes early. Never done that? Then next time you go to a movie look around and spot the person that is in the prime seat—dead middle, eye level with the center of the screen. That's what 20 minutes early gets you. Popcorn and drink in hand, nothing will move this person from their secured spot for the duration of the movie.

That's where you need to be for God's story. Its opening scene also starts with a relentless pace that doesn't let up. The first line reads, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

Right off the bat we find the main character in the story is not you or me. It's God. And the rest of The Story will unfold out of the nature and person of this character. Just ten words in and there is enough action to leave you breathless.

It doesn't take long to find out what God's great passion is. Birds? Nope. Animals? Not quite. Sun, moon or stars? Bright guess. No, in Genesis 3:8 we find that God is walking in the Garden with Adam and Eve in the "cool of the day."

Sounds nice if you are in a hot, humid climate, doesn't it? And yet the "cool of the day" is not the focus. God is, and he is near. He is right with Adam and Eve. And he is right here with us. His simple vision for his creation was to spend time with them every day, to take a walk with them. God's supreme passion is to be with us.

Some of you have lived your life with the idea that God is some angry cosmic kill-joy who sits in the heavens and watches you, waiting for you to make a mistake so he can zap you. Or, you feel he is distant and doesn't care or has simply forgotten you.

But from the beginning he has shown us this is not the case. He wants to be with you. He has not forgotten you. In fact, this might be the perfect time for you to go for a walk.