



EMMANUEL

GOD WITH US



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"WHAT WE CELEBRATE AT
CHRISTMAS IS NOT SO MUCH
THE BIRTH OF A BABY, BUT THE
INCARNATION OF GOD
HIMSELF."

RC SPROUL



A STUDY ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

IN HIS IMAGE

Author: Bethany Herron

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.
- Genesis 1:26-27

Made in the image of God....to have relationship with the Father and to exercise dominion over creation. Made through Christ and for Christ.

Mankind was the only part of creation made in the image of God. What a special relationship! Unmarred by sin, Scripture says that Adam and Eve likely walked with God in the garden. They were tasked to care for the garden and the life enveloped within it. That work was given as a gift to bring glory to the Creator.

As we will see later, this image was marred when that beautiful relationship was broken by sin. No longer was man set apart and without sin. Instead, man would stand in need of restoration of that righteous image. Restoration was needed that could only be brought about through God Himself.



God is forever faithful to his people. That broken image would not remain. The first Adam shattered that beautiful image, but the second Adam, Jesus Christ, would come to restore that image for those who believe.

Examine your heart:

The birth of Christ makes it possible for man to once again bear the image of God. Though still marred by sin on earth, the Christian stands before the Father in the holiness and righteousness of Christ. As we look forward to celebration of the incarnation, take time to reflect on your role as an image bearer on earth.

Have you ever thought about what it means to reflect the image of God? Are you externally reflecting the work that Christ has done in your heart?

Father, you are good and faithful. Thank you for creating us in your image. Thank you for giving us dominion over creation for the glory of your Name. God, we praise your Name for sending your Son, it is only through his righteousness that we stand before you. Forgive us our sin. Restore in us your image through the work of Christ on our behalf. AMEN.



THE RELATIONSHIP BROKEN

Author: Bethany Herron

The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the Lord God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

- Genesis 3:21-23

It was a normal day in the garden. Adam and Eve were caring for God's creation, walking with the Father, and communing with one another. When out of the blue, the serpent approaches Eve tempting her to doubt the faithfulness of the Creator.

Satan has been on the attack from the beginning, always attempting to steal the glory that belongs to God alone. In the garden, his plan was put into action when Adam and Eve chose to disobey the Father. Immediately, they recognized what they had done. They hid in shame - while attempting to somehow cover up their sin with mere fig leaves.

The Father came walking in the Garden. He knew. They could not hide their sin. Yet, He was faithful. An animal was killed, and God created a covering for Adam and Eve - a kind whisper of THE Sacrificial Lamb that was to come. What an act of grace!



Yet in that grace, justice was executed. Sin could not exist in the presence of the Holy God. Man's relationship with the Father was broken, and Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden.

But, God....

In His faithfulness, God promised to send a Rescuer, one who would crush the head of the Serpent. Surely, Christ would come.

Though it would take many years, the Messiah came as a infant, lived a sinless life, laid down his life for mankind, and rose again on the third day. The head of the serpent was crushed. Christ won.

Though Satan still tries to steal God's glory each day, Christ stands in victory throughout eternity. Through his sacrifice, a way has been made for a restored relationship. No more fig leaves, no more temporary coverings, only Jesus.

Examine your heart:

Have you put your trust in the perfect sacrifice of Christ?

Are you walking in the victory of Jesus each day?

Father, we love you. We praise you for the gift that you have given us in your precious son. This Christmas, we thank you for your faithfulness. You could have left us in our sin, but instead you pursued us in your love. Thank you for the gift of Christ that makes a way to a restored relationship with you. AMEN.



RESTORATION PROMISED

Author: Jana Long

All throughout Scripture, there are whispers of the promised restoration through the coming Messiah. Israel waited for this promise. Little did they know that salvation would come in a lowly manger. Christ would come to conquer both sin and death in a way no one expected, opening up the door to restoration with the Father. Restoration is a beautiful thing.

And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. - 1 Peter 5:10

Peter closes out his letter to the scattered Christians in the churches of Asia Minor with some final instructions. He counsels the elders about how to lead, includes how and why to live in humility for the glory of Christ.

In the midst of brokenness, failures, sin, mistakes, and hurts that are experienced in this world, Jesus restores. To restore literally means to bring back, return, and recover, put back in order, and to adjust back together.



Peter then addresses all Christians with this, "Put on humility toward each other out of submission to God." God is God, and we are not. We are to humble ourselves under His hand, understanding that our only significance is found in Him. We can freely stop promoting ourselves, because He will exalt us, when the time is exactly right.

When Jesus restores you, you always turn out better than you ever were. You may have scars that show what you have been through, but they are only a testimony of God's love and power.

Examine your heart:

Restoration of the relationship between you and God through Jesus, is His work. Your role is humble submission. Your responsibility is to trust Emmanuel, God with us. He is faithful.

Have you placed your faith in the saving work of Jesus?

Where do you need Jesus to bring restoration?

Heavenly Father, you sent your messengers to tell of the birth of your Son, that people might believe in him. Open our ears to hear your call, to repent of our sins, and to seek you in humility. We trust in your work on the Cross of Christ as our only hope for restoration. We love you with all of our hearts. AMEN.



THE PROMISE FULFILLED

Author: Bethany Herron

God is faithful to keep his promises. From perfect communion to a broken relationship, God promised to send a Rescuer who would crush the head of the serpent. All of Israel waited generations upon generations for the Rescuer to come. Would communion with God be broken forever? Would God be faithful to his promise to defeat sin and death?

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

– Galatians 4:4-5

Emmanuel, God with us...

Redemption made possible. The promise fulfilled.

In God's perfect time, He sent his precious son - Christ the Messiah. He did not come as a brutal tyrant, instead He came as a precious lamb who laid down his life for his people. As we look toward Christ this season, take time to behold Him as bold the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah - defeating the serpent through the laying down of his life. Raising victorious and conquering every enemy while roaring to the masses that our God reigns.



*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 greatness 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. - Isaiah 9:6-7*

What a faithful God we serve. In his image we were made. When we broke our relationship and marred that image, He promised restoration. Through the life and blood of his precious Son, that restoration has come.

Examine your heart:

Do you know this faithful God?

Are you focusing on Him this season?

*Father, you are so faithful. Though we ruined your good plan,
you pursued us in mercy through your precious son. Thank
you for always loving us. Thank you for remaining
faithful, even when we show little faith. We love you.
AMEN.*



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