

Swimming in the Depths of God's Wondrous Love for You

God's benevolent intentions are often misconstrued. Although He generously conveys His revelation, our own misconceptions "muddy the waters." I was recently reminded of this while listening to a group of men discuss God's impression of humanity.

A harsh, rigid man asserted that "humanity is nothing more than a stench in the nostrils of God. Since sin embodies us, the Lord's truly 'itching' to pour out His wrath. I'm surprised that He's still holding back His impending judgment. Man is irrevocably wretched."

It seems that many believers have a truly dreadful view of humanity.

I understand and agree with the importance of denouncing sin. Believers genuinely cannot underestimate the darkness that's fighting to maintain its hold upon creation. Though ever-diminishing, it remains on the scene. There's no doubt that its ugliness can truly be felt in a number of modern contexts. I don't want to minimize the crisis of iniquity.

Nevertheless, our legitimate hatred of sin shouldn't be translated into a hatred of God's creation—even in its present brokenness and disrepair.

In the beginning, God conveyed His benevolent purposes for humanity. The Lord decreed wonderful things that must be understood and embraced. Sin should be taken seriously, but so should God's intentions for man.

The Bible reveals that humanity's essence is substantially different from everything else in creation. While each plant and animal was formed "according to its kind" (Gen. 1:11), man

was lovingly created in the image of God. Scripture boldly affirms, “in His own image; in the image of God He created him” (Gen. 1:27).

As image-bearers, we didn’t just reflect God’s creativity and reason, but also His moral and spiritual qualities. From the beginning, men and women were uniquely formed to be God’s agents in this world, administering His resources and expressing His governance.

Shockingly, even after the tragic fall, the mandate of humankind was still to visibly demonstrate the image of the invisible God. Under the Spirit’s unction, David declared,

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have established, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You attend to him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatever travels the paths of the seas” (Ps. 8:3-8).

For some reason, the beautiful anthropology of the Bible is seldom given credence in religious conversations. Honestly, much of what’s conveyed in Scripture is in direct conflict with our heightened emphasis on depravity. It seems that God often speaks of glory and honor, but many continue to insist that nothing good ever comes from man.

There’s no doubt that sin has marred the human condition, but that doesn’t change God’s underlying design. Through the precious blood of Jesus, God is contending for restoration and renewal. The work of redemption really isn’t making us into something different. Rather, it is restoring us to who we truly were.

Although seeing themselves as biblically astute, those argumentative men miss the very heart of the Father. Throughout history and time, you were truly designed to bear the image God here on Earth. You were truly made for beauty and glory.

Why would anyone desire to throw mud on God's beautiful painting? {eo}

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