

the season of advent

CHRIST



In the Beginning...

We lived with God, and it was "very good". (Genesis 1:26-31)

We were forbidden one thing; the knowledge to know Evil from Good. (Genesis 2:15-17)

The Deceiver came and lied to us; we could become "like God" if only we chose to betray God. (Genesis 3:1-5)

Instead of walking with God in the "cool of the evening", we decided we'd rather be our own god. (Genesis 3:6-11)

We, having been created in openness with the God who left his throne for us, become closed off from him. (Genesis 3:22-24)



Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3:22-24



We are born having inherited both this fallen world and the desire to overcome God instead of walking with Him.



Though We Left God...

His desire had never changed, and he entered into a relationship with a man named Abraham and his wife Sarah. (Genesis 17:1-8)

Because Abraham offered to kill his son, God promised that all the nations of the Earth would be blessed through his descendants. (Genesis 22:15-19)

Hundreds of years later, God freed their descendants, the Israelites, from slavery and chose to reveal himself to them. (Exodus 3:13-22)

He gave them the Law and formed a relationship with them by partially revealing his nature to them; What he hates (Sin) and what he loves (Righteousness). (Exodus 20-24)

The Law also gave the Israelites a system that would momentarily cover their sin, but still left them separated from God. (Leviticus 1:1-6:7)

“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.

Leviticus 16:20-22

Even though the Law revealed God better than anything had previously, our sin still left us closed off and separated from God.



Despite Having the Law...

We constantly chose our sin over God. (Judges 21:25b)

Instead of following God as their leader, the Israelites demanded a King. (1 Samuel 8)

Even the best of their kings used their power to destroy, exploit, and harm others. (2 Samuel 11)

The sin of the kingdom led to the splitting of the kingdom; now, the people were closed off from each other as well as God. (1 Kings 12:16-24)

The next five hundred years became an unending cycle of brokenness: Sin led to Slavery, Slavery led to Repentance, Repentance led to Freedom, Freedom led to Arrogance, Arrogance led to Even Worse Sin. (1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles)

And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem will I put my name." And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. And he burned his son as an offering and used fortune-telling and omens and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger. And the carved image of Asherah that he had made he set in the house of which the LORD said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever. And I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander anymore out of the land that I gave to their fathers, if only they will be careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the Law that my servant Moses commanded them." But they did not listen, and Manasseh led them astray to do more evil than the nations had done whom the LORD destroyed before the people of Israel.

2 Kings 21:4-9

Separated from God,
we're trapped in a
closed system of brokenness.



We Kept Spiraling, So...

God sent prophets; men and woman chosen to speak the truth of God's Word into our lives. (Jeremiah 1:4-10)

They reminded the Israelites of the love God promises to those who repent and return to him. (Joel 2:12-14)

They spoke out against the sin and depravities that not only broke God's Law but caused destruction and devastation throughout the lands. (Micah 3:9-12)

The Prophets began speaking of one who would come and replace the kings and priests as the person who led God's people. (Isaiah 53:11)


After generations of rejection, God offered one last word; a day of the Lord is coming. He then went silent for hundreds of years. (Malachi 4:5-6)



The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD rose against his people, until there was no remedy.

2 Chronicles 36:15-16

We tried *everything* to open ourselves back up to God: God-ordained governments, religious systems, signs and wonders, advanced philosophies, holy texts, righteous deeds, direct divine revelation, and so *much more*. Nothing worked.



God Sent Himself.

Jesus had to be born of a virgin - having no earthly father - so that the system once closed could be opened again.

Jesus had to be born in a manger - already rejected by humanity - for the riches and powers of kings had already failed.

Jesus had to be fully human - like us - for only a human could stand in for all humanity.

Jesus had to be fully God - not *similar* to God but *the same* - because despite how far we've fallen, we're still created to walk in the "cool of the evening" with God.

Jesus had to die - being separated from God the Father - because the sin heaped on him had to lead to separation so that we may become reconciled.

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).



Matthew 1:22-23

God's answer to your sin, pain,
sorrows, addictions, brokenness,
and sorrows is this;

Himself. Fully, and utterly, Himself.

