



John 3.16-21

I can't save myself. I am too bent. Too broken. Too far out of place to ever find my way back on my own. I get it, but does that mean all is lost, that I am lost, forever out of place with no hope of ever experiencing the life God has for me? I suppose if that were the end of the story, then, yes, I would have no hope. The great thing is, it isn't the end of the story.

God saw us, trapped in a life of our own design, a life of being our own gods. He saw us, those weak and pathetic creatures who thumbed their nose at Him even as He sought to show them a new way to live through the Law. He saw us in our ruined and rebellious estate and loved us anyway. Says a lot about God doesn't it? He loved us so much that He couldn't help but throw Himself into our dilemma, throwing Himself into doing for us what we could not do for ourselves—making a path back to Eden. So, He made a path through His Son, Jesus. He invites all that would have this life to freely take it. There's just one catch. He would have us to take it from Him. He would have us turn back to Him and accept life, the life we so desire from His hands as something He has provided. You see, that's where all the trouble starts.

Bent and broken creatures accustomed to being their own gods don't take lightly to humbling themselves and accepting something freely from another. That anyone would be God other than ourselves is an offense of the highest order. To come to another as God, to receive freely from His hands what we could not provide for ourselves would be tantamount to admitting failure. Admitting shame. Admitting brokenness. Acknowledging our need for rescue. To humble ourselves by turning, turning in an act of surrender called faith would mean that we would be known for who we truly are. The jig would be up. Even the thought brings about a shudder. So, we flee. Maybe in an act, a prayer, a moment we surrender, but then we continue to flee. We run from holding out our hands in surrender to take from His hands what we so desire in our normal comings and goings for we are still proud. The thought of another God other than ourselves is still offensive. The result is that the life, that creation life God offers remains elusive. We speak of it in the future tense, while Jesus speaks of it in the present. Consider for a moment what it might be like to speak of it in the present tense ourselves. What might it be light to live, really live today? The offer is there if I will but turn, turn and admit that I am not God. That, for me and for so many I know, seems to be the problem. Good thing we still have some chapters left in the story.

A fellow traveler,

Blake
Spiritual Formation Pastor

My Next Step

We encourage you to consider doing the following as a way of handing off faith to your family. . .

- **Talk about faith:** This week look for an opportunity to discuss faith with your kids. Usually we have openings in experiences where we are confronted with a need to trust someone else for our well-being or provision. This could be as simple as your children “having faith” in you keeping a promise. Very young children trust easily. Affirm this trust and point out that God wants us to trust Him in the same way for our protection and provision. Older children have learned to distrust. Use these instances to talk about what makes trusting someone so hard. See if you can make the point that while trusting people is hard because they let us down, trusting God is possible because He never lets us down. He is a good and loving God who is seeking our God in the person of Jesus.

We encourage you to take one of the following next steps on your faith journey. . .

- **Accepting God’s life:** Eternal life is something that we can experience today. We don’t have to wait to “go to heaven” to experience it. Yet, we don’t often realize this. Rather, we speak of eternal life as something that is a future reality. This week, memorize and meditate upon John 3.16-21. Allow these words to soak through your life by thinking on them while you drive, while you wait in line, or as you wake in the morning. Allow God to remind you that His life is available today, and that we have access to this life through faith.