

God's desire is not to see us suffer, but to see us whole and fully restored. (John 3:17) The woman's sin would be paid for on the cross, but Jesus wanted her to live a life free from sin. He told her to sin no more.

John 3:17 NLT - 17 God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

The only way to know God's character is by experiencing it through spending time with Him. And you can't do that when you are hiding because of guilt or shame.

You can't live fully alive if you are avoiding God due to guilt and shame. If you fear coming to God for restoration, maybe you haven't had a chance to experience His true nature; He is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love. As you close this study, pray that each one in your group will experience God's restoration in every area of their lives so that they will know the complete and unrestrained love of God for them.

WRAP-UP

God, who created you in His own image, calls you His beloved and wants to bless you, not because of what you have done, but because you are His. Even when you wander into dark places, God's love will find you there and can restore you. But don't let guilt and shame keep you from revealing your need for Him. You are loved by Jesus, so live fully alive.

Memory Verse

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,"
- Exodus 34:6 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members' needs: _____

Challenge- Listen to this song and let the message bless and reassure you of God's love for you- Reckless Love - Cory Asbury



"Loved by Jesus" Fully Alive #2

INTRODUCTION

In our current sermon series, Pastor David is encouraging us to live fully alive in Jesus. The first step in that process is to know you are loved by Jesus. God's love is the basis of your salvation and the blessings of the abundant life God wants for you. It is available to everyone, everywhere.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

What is the most selfless act of love you have heard of in the news lately?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. Everyone

Genesis 1:27 NLT - 27 So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Everyone who ever lived, was created in the image of God, and He loves every one of us. The word image¹ is repeated twice in this verse, and it means a shadow or resemblance of something. ^{1 tselem}

When God looks at us, He sees a resemblance to Himself. He is the one who declares us valued and chosen to be His. Jesus hinted at this when the Pharisees were trying to trap him by asking about paying taxes.

Mark 12:16-17 NIV - 16 They brought the coin, and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. 17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." And they were amazed at him.

If the coin that bears Caesar's image and inscription² belongs to Caesar, what is it that bears God's image and inscription and thus belongs to God?

²"Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus, Augustus." inscription on a Tiberius denarius

2. Beloved and Blessed

Sometimes we make the mistake of thinking God loves us because we are Christians and we love Him. God's desire is that you would know that you are loved not because of what you have done but because of who created you.

Romans 5:8 NLT - 8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Think of the most notorious villains of history and insert their name into this sentence. "God even loved _____."

We may find it impossible to love them while they are sinners, but God loved them, even in their sin. And God calls us His beloved.

Song of Songs 7:10 NIV - 10 I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me.

God's love for us awakens us to order and purpose in our lives. When we realized God's great love for us it overflows to a love for others.

2 Corinthians 9:8, 11 NIV - 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ... 11 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

What are some of the ways God has blessed you? In what ways can you extend that into a blessing to others?

3. Everywhere

God's story reminds us we have this propensity to wander, but His love will always find a way into our darkness.

Genesis 3:8-9 NIV - 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

In a perfect world, we would realize God's love for us and remain close to Him. But like Adam and Eve we take the wrong path and find ourselves separated from His love and goodness, hiding in a dark and troubled place. In verse 9 God asks, "Where are you?" even though He knew where they were. His question gave them an opportunity for self-revelation.

What do you think God might have wanted them to reveal about "where they were" in relationship to Him? If God asked you the same question today, what would you reply?

Adam and Eve failed to express their need to be restored. Instead they focused on guilt, shame and blame. Maybe they hadn't yet gotten to know the nature of their God and creator.

How did God describe Himself to Moses?

Exodus 34:6 NIV - 6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

God's desire to see us restored comes from His character; gracious, compassionate, patient, faithful and loving. That same character is revealed in Jesus' exchange with the woman caught in adultery.

John 8:10-11 NIV - 10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."