

Imago Dei

Week 2: Remade in Christ: Fall and Restoration

Genesis 2–3 • Ephesians 2:4–6 • Revelation 21:3–4

Pastor Brent Warkentin • October 18, 2026

Lesson length: 60 minutes. Suggested times are shown next to each section. “Beyond the Sermon” is optional, for when time allows or for personal study during the week.

Leader tip: This week touches on broken relationships, and Pastor Brent named abuse directly. Some in your group may carry deep hurts. Let people share at their own pace, and remember the sermon’s point that relationship wounds and even reconciliation usually take time; restoration does not mean returning to an unsafe relationship. Sunday also included an invitation to faith, so be ready to talk with anyone who wants to know more about being made alive in Christ.

Opening (Leader overview)

Last week we saw that God made us in His image. This week Pastor Brent asked what happened to that image when Adam and Eve rebelled. God gave them a garden full of trees and only one restriction, yet they ate from the one forbidden tree, and everything was corrupted: pain, sickness, selfishness, betrayal, even weeds and earthquakes. Humanity did not stop bearing God’s image, but sin put a veil over it. Core to our faith is recognizing the sinful nature we inherited from Adam, and just as core is our confidence that God will restore. At the top of the curse were two things: broken relationships with each other and spiritual death and separation from God. Pastor Brent showed that God answers both curses with restoration in two parts. Part 1 begins now, as God heals the brokenhearted and makes us alive in Christ. Part 2 is coming, when God will wipe away every tear and dwell with His people forever. Until then, we hold on to faith, hope, and confidence in God’s restoration. The service closed with stories of restoration from Carmen Owen and Catherine Christie.

The three main points:

- 1. The Fall broke our relationships, and God restores them:** Blame entered on day one, but God heals the brokenhearted (Genesis 3:11–12; Psalm 147:3; Matthew 11:28).
- 2. The Fall brought spiritual death, and God makes us alive:** Sin killed our spirit, but God raises us to life with Christ (Genesis 2:16–17; Ephesians 2:4–6).
- 3. Hold on to hope in Restoration Part 1 and Part 2:** Restoration begins today, and a day is coming when God will dwell with us and wipe away every tear (Revelation 21:3–4; 1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Opening Question (5 minutes)

Go around the room and let everyone answer. Keep it light; the goal is to get people talking.

Have you ever restored something that was old or broken, like furniture, a car, a house, or an old photo? What did it take, and how did it feel when it was finished?

Alternate: When you were a kid, did you ever get caught doing something and immediately try to blame someone else? What happened?

Big Idea (10 minutes)

Sin did not erase God's image in us, but it broke our relationships and brought spiritual death. In Christ, God is restoring both now, and one day He will restore them completely. That promise is the hope we hold on to.

What we want everyone to take away:

- **The image is veiled, not erased.** Jesus is the exact image of God (Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3). We are still eternal, spiritual, and moral beings called to live into God's purpose, but the sinful nature we inherited from Adam has covered that image.
- **Sin broke our relationships.** From Adam blaming Eve to Cain killing Abel, broken relationships came quickly. God steps in now to heal, though wounds and even reconciliation usually take time.
- **Sin brought spiritual death.** Adam and Eve's bodies did not die that day, but their spirits did. In Christ, God makes our dead spirit alive again, forever connected to Him.
- **Restoration comes in two parts.** Part 1 is God's healing and new life now. Part 2 is heaven, when there will be no more tears and God will dwell with us forever.

Questions to get started:

1. What stood out to you most from Sunday's sermon or the stories that were shared?
2. Pastor Brent said sin didn't remove God's image from us but put a veil over it. What do you think that looks like in everyday life?
3. Which part of restoration feels more real to you right now: what God is doing today (Part 1) or what He has promised for the future (Part 2)? Why?

Learning Together (30 minutes)

Spend about 10 minutes on each point. Read the scripture aloud, share the explanation, summarize, and then discuss.

Main Point 1: The Fall Broke Our Relationships, and God Restores Them

Genesis 3:11–12 (NIV)

¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Explanation: God was not asking for information; He was confronting Adam. Adam's reply is the first sign of broken relationships: he blames Eve, and even hints at blaming God ("the woman you put here"). One chapter later, jealousy leads Cain to kill his brother Abel.

Psalms 147:3 (NIV)

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Explanation: God does not leave the curse unchecked. Pastor Brent called this Restoration Part 1: God steps in now to heal the hurt that broken relationships cause.

Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Explanation: Jesus invites everyone carrying the weight of hurt, blame, and broken relationships to come to Him and find rest.

Genesis 33:4 (NIV)

But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.

Explanation: Esau once set out to kill Jacob, and the brothers were divided for 20 years. Their reunion shows that God can restore even deeply broken relationships, though it may take time and does not always happen this side of heaven.

Summary

Since the first sin, people have blamed others and deflected responsibility, and we have all felt the pain of hatred, pride, betrayal, and even abuse. But God refuses to let broken relationships have the last word; He heals the brokenhearted and invites the weary to find rest in Jesus. This side of heaven, relationship wounds and even reconciliation usually take time, but as Jacob and Esau show, He is at work to begin restoring what sin has broken.

Discussion

1. Adam blamed Eve, and even God, instead of owning his choice. Why is blaming others so natural for us? Where do you see it in yourself?
2. Pastor Brent said relationship wounds and even reconciliation usually take time to heal. Why is that important for someone carrying a deep hurt to hear?
3. Have you seen God restore a relationship, in your life or someone else's, like Jacob and Esau? What did it take?

Main Point 2: The Fall Brought Spiritual Death, and God Makes Us Alive

Genesis 2:16–17 (CSB)

¹⁶ *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden,*
¹⁷ *but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."*

Explanation: God gave Adam enormous freedom; as Pastor Brent put it, if there were a thousand trees, 999 were open to them. When they ate from the one, their bodies, minds, and personalities did not die that day, but their spirits did, and they were separated from God.

Ephesians 2:4–6 (NIV)

⁴ *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,*

⁵ *made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.*

⁶ *And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,*

Explanation: This is God’s answer to spiritual death. Jesus was not the only one raised from the dead; everyone who puts their faith in Him is raised to spiritual life. Pastor Brent called this Restoration Part 1 for our spiritual death, and it is entirely God’s grace, not our effort.

Summary

The most devastating result of the Fall was not physical but spiritual: Adam and Eve were cut off from the God whose image they carried. Yet God stepped into that death and separation, and through Christ He makes our dead spirit alive, forever connected to Him. Pastor Brent invited anyone who has not yet been raised to spiritual life to let today be that day.

Discussion

1. God gave Adam and Eve almost total freedom, yet they chose the one forbidden thing. Why do you think the forbidden is so attractive to us?
2. What is the difference between being physically alive and spiritually alive? How would you describe it to a friend?
3. Ephesians 2 says God made us alive “because of his great love” and “by grace.” Why is it important that this is God’s work and not ours?

Main Point 3: Hold On to Hope in Restoration Part 1 and Part 2

Revelation 21:3–4 (NIV)

³ *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.*

⁴ *‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

Explanation: This is Restoration Part 2. Pastor Brent suggested God speaks in a “loud voice” because He wants heaven, earth, and hell to hear: no more tears, and no more death or separation from Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (NIV)

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Explanation: One day we will be perfectly and eternally with the Lord, with no barrier of sin or brokenness between us.

John 14:2–3 (NIV)

² *My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?*

³ *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

Explanation: Jesus Himself promises to prepare a place for us and come back to bring us to our forever home.

Summary

Sin corrupted everything, but God says, “I can handle this. Trust Me! Restoration begins today.” A day is coming when the devil and death will be gone for good, God will dwell with His people, and heaven someday will become heaven today: complete, perfect, and eternal restoration. As we struggle in this broken world, we hold on to faith, hope, and confidence in both Restoration Part 1 and Part 2.

Discussion

1. Pastor Brent pictured God saying, “I can handle this. Trust Me!” Where do you need to hear that from God right now?
2. Revelation 21 promises no more tears, mourning, or pain. Which part of that promise means the most to you right now, and why?
3. What helps you hold on to hope when you are struggling in this broken world? How can our group help each other hold on?

Why This Matters (8 minutes)

We live between what God has already done and what He has promised to finish. The brokenness we feel in our relationships and in our hearts is real, but it is not the end of the story. God is restoring us now, healing wounds and making us alive in Christ, and one day He will complete that work forever. That hope frees us to own our mistakes instead of blaming others, to pursue healing without forcing it, and to hold on to hope when life feels unsteady.

Application ideas

- **With God:** Bring one hurt or broken relationship to Jesus each day this week using Matthew 11:28, and ask Him for rest and healing.
- **With our family:** The next time something goes wrong at home, resist the urge to blame. Own your part first with a simple “I was wrong; I’m sorry.”
- **With those around us:** Ask God to show you one person who needs to hear that He heals the brokenhearted, then reach out with an encouraging word or offer to pray for them.

Prayer (7 minutes)

Take prayer requests, then pray through these prompts together:

- Thank God for making us alive with Christ by His grace.
- Ask Him to heal broken relationships and hurting hearts in our group.
- Pray that we would hold on to hope as we wait for His full restoration.

Beyond the Sermon (If time allows)

These passages weren't in Sunday's message but fit this week's theme. Use them if your group wants to go deeper.

More Scripture to explore

- **Genesis 3:15:** Right after the Fall, God promises that the woman's offspring will crush the serpent's head. How does this first promise of a Savior show that God planned restoration from the start?
- **2 Corinthians 5:17–18:** In Christ we are a "new creation," and God gives us "the ministry of reconciliation." How does being restored to God prepare us to help restore relationships with others?
- **Hebrews 6:19:** "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure." How is hope in God's promises different from wishful thinking?

Try this

- **Anchor cards:** Give each person an index card. Using Hebrews 6:19 as a picture, have them draw a simple anchor and write one of God's promises from this lesson inside it. Encourage them to keep it somewhere they will see it all week.
- **Part 1 / Part 2:** Have each person quietly write one broken thing in their life. Under it, write "Part 1: What God can do now" and "Part 2: What God has promised," and fill in both. Invite anyone who is comfortable to share.

Additional questions

1. Pastor Brent said God "stacked the deck" in Adam and Eve's favor. Where has God been generous to you in ways you have overlooked?
2. Jacob and Esau were divided for 20 years before they were restored. How do you keep hoping when a relationship has been broken for a long time?
3. How might Carmen and Catherine's stories, or a story of your own, encourage someone who feels beyond restoration?