

AUTOPSY • Week 4: Your Pain, Their Gain

Daily Briefing • Day 3 of 5 • What We Are Restoring People To

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

Days 1 and 2 this week established what you carry and what you have to offer. Today we ask the question underneath all of it: what exactly are we trying to restore people to? You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, You have called us to so much more than simply being nicer and better people. You have called us to partner with You in the restoration of Your creation. I pray that we would not lose sight of this much larger goal as we use our failures to help others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Most people assume the goal of the Christian life is to become a nice person: Stop the bad habits. Improve your manners. Be more patient. Stuff like that. And while none of that is wrong, it is not the point. It is not even close to the point. God did not create you to be generically decent. He created you with a specific design, a specific calling, and a specific capacity to bring something to the world that nobody else can bring in exactly the way you can. The ministry you offer out of your failure is not aimed at making people nicer. It is aimed at restoring them to something much larger than that.

Before any laws or commandments appear in the Bible, God introduces human beings with a design and an assignment. Genesis 1:26-27 says that God created human beings in His own image and gave them a specific mandate: subdue, cultivate, have dominion, tend. The vocation God assigns describes the work of a builder, a crafter, a creator, a problem-solver, a steward. Not domination for its own sake but the kind of servant leadership God Himself exercises: bringing order, life, and beauty out of what is raw and unformed. Everywhere you go, you are called to leave people, places, and things better than you found them. That is God's design for human beings. Sin fractured it. And Jesus came specifically to restore both our connection with Him and our calling in His world.

The restoration is both completed and ongoing. When you received Christ, something decisive happened: the old self was put off and the new self was put on (Colossians 3:9-10). That is not in process. It happened. But the renewal of that new self in the knowledge and image of the Creator is a present-tense, continuous work. You are already new. You are still being remade. And the goal of that remaking is not generic moral improvement. It is conformity to the image of Christ, who is the fullest expression of what human image bearing was always supposed to look like. When you help someone else move through failure toward restoration, you are participating in this ongoing work in their life.

This is why the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is not primarily a recruitment drive. Jesus does not say go and make rule-followers or good citizens or morally improved people. He says go and make disciples, teaching them to obey everything He commanded. The obedience Jesus is describing is not compliance. It is conformity to design. Teaching someone to obey Jesus means helping them walk in the full expression of what they were originally created to be and called to do. The mission becomes the reason for better financial decisions. The mission becomes the reason to forsake addiction, rage, deception, and wasted time. Not because these behaviors are socially unacceptable, but because they undermine the calling God placed on your life before you were born.

READ & MEDITATE

Genesis 1:26–27

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Colossians 3:9–10

“Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”

Matthew 28:19–20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Read Genesis 1:26-27 and notice what God says before He says anything about rules or obedience. What design and assignment does He give? Then read Colossians 3:9-10 and notice the two verb tenses: what is described as already completed, and what is described as still in process. Then read Matthew 28:19-20 and ask what teaching people to obey everything Jesus commanded has to do with restoring their original design.

REFLECT

God introduces human beings not with a list of rules but with a design and a calling. You were built for something specific.

Based on Genesis 1:26-27, what does it mean to bear the image of God? What specific capacities, assignments, or responsibilities does the passage connect to that design?

The autopsy this series has been training is ultimately an assessment of where failure has prevented you from functioning in this design. Restoring someone is not making them a “better” version of a generic person. It is helping restore them to their specific calling.

Where in your own life, work, relationships, or community does your God-given design show up most naturally? And where has failure most specifically undermined that design?

Colossians 3:9-10 holds two realities simultaneously. One is settled. The other is still in motion.

Read Colossians 3:9-10 and identify what is described in the past tense (already completed) and what is described in the present tense (still in process):

Already completed:

Still in process:

You are already a new creation. The renewal is not creating something from nothing. It is uncovering and conforming what was placed in you at conversion to the image of the One who created you.

What does it mean for the ministry you offer that restoration is a process rather than an event? How does that change how patient and persistent you need to be with the people you are helping?

Jesus does not commission His followers to make nicer people. He commissions them to make disciples who are taught to obey everything He commanded.

Fill in the blanks from Matthew 28:19-20:

"Go therefore and make _____ of all nations... teaching them to
_____ all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)*

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

How does this commission change the way you think about what you are actually doing when you offer someone your empathy, example, and education from your own failure? You are not helping them be a better person. What are you actually helping them return to? And where specifically in your own story has God restored a capacity He can now deploy through you in someone else?

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Romans 8:1 from memory:
