

Fall 2017 | Issue 5

CLARITAS

A Journal of Christian Thought

The Conflict in Community Issue:
Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration



CLARITAS is the Latin word for “clarity,” “vividness,” or “renown.” For us, *Claritas* represents a life-giving truth that can only be found through God.

WHO ARE WE?

The *Cornell Claritas* is a Christian thought journal that reviews ideas and cultural commentary. Launched in the spring semester of 2015, it is written and produced by students attending Cornell University. The *Cornell Claritas* is ecumenical, drawing writers and editors from all denominations around a common creedal vision. Its vision is to articulate and connect the truth of Christ to every person and every study, and it strives to begin conversations that involve faith, reason, and vocation.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader,

We live in a time where *identity* is a primary concern. We come to college partially to “find” our identity. How do we blend our outward identities, or physical markers, with internal identities, such as beliefs and interests, to create a descriptor of who we are? For example, my outward identities include that I am junior math major (cue Cornell introduction), I am white and Asian, I am a woman, and my internal identities include that I enjoy crafting meals to share with my friends, and I am a Christian.

In addition to personal identity, we also need to look into the identity of the communities to which we belong. What defines Cornell – its high achieving research facilities, its diversity of fields of study, its cold winters, its history of top notch hockey? When we examine these different pieces that make up Cornell, or other communities to which we belong, we can better paint a picture of what Cornell is.

Finally, we can again take this approach of looking into the identity of humanity. How do we define humanity; do we talk of humanity in terms of fingers and toes, spoken and written language, or failures like the Holocaust and successes like sending a man to the moon?

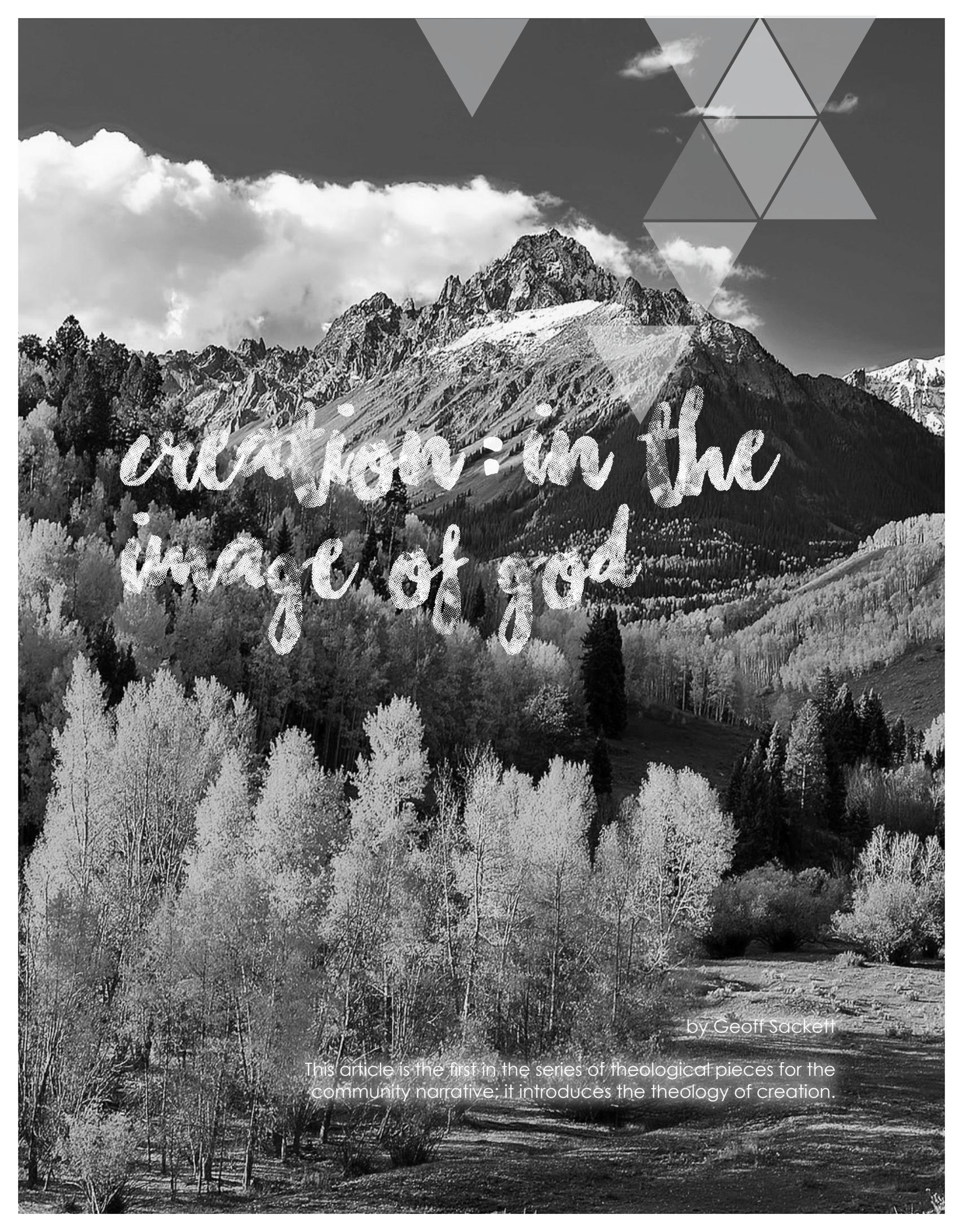
In searching for all these identities, one can look to *narratives* to help clarify what we say. If you asked me who I was, I would probably start with what has shaped me, the rhythms of life in my family growing up, my favorite memories of my city, Philadelphia, and the lessons I learned from influential teachers and friends in primary and secondary school.

In the same way, we can look into the narratives which shape humanity. Because we at Claritas claim the Christian faith, we see the narrative shaping humanity and subsequent communities to be that of *creation, fall, redemption, and restoration*. We believe God created the world and then humans to live in the world in community with him and with each other. We believe that the first humans, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thus separating themselves from a perfectly holy God. We then believe that God put in motion a plan of redemption, sending Jesus Christ, his son, to earth to die for the sins of humans. We finally believe that, because Jesus was perfect on earth, he conquered death and we can now look forward to perfect community again with God, given our faith in Jesus.

This narrative not only shapes how we see humanity (and how we see our own stories of salvation), but also how we see community. This semester, we centered our conversations around *conflict in community* and looked into the creation, fall, redemption, and restoration of communities such as nuclear families, fraternities, friendships, and Cornell. This print issue reflects pieces of these conversations. We invite you, regardless of faith or other identity, into these conversations not to present answers written in stone but to mutually explore the narratives that bring clarity to the truth of our existence.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Schmucker, '19
Editor-in-Chief



creation: in the image of god

by Geoff Sackett

This article is the first in the series of theological pieces for the community narrative; it introduces the theology of creation.

The Christian doctrine of creation begins and ends with God. Before there was anything, God was. God existed eternally “before” the advent of time and space, matter, and minds. His existence was, and is, characterized by utter self-sufficiency. He needed not a thing because he was perfectly satisfied in himself: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally loved and delighted in each other in sublime perfection. Where else did the creative act flow out of but God’s absolute freedom? Contingency and dependence—in contrast with God’s necessary existence and independence—characterize creation.

Everything that exists outside of God exists for his glory. “The whole world,” noted sixteenth century theologian John Calvin, “is a theatre for the display of the divine goodness, wisdom, justice, and power.”¹ And yet creation was never meant to remain in its original, primordial state. From the beginning creation always had an end in sight, namely, God himself. “The divine goodness is the end of all things,” as the medieval doctor Thomas Aquinas put it. “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.”²

The Triune God brought the natural world, and chiefly humans, into being in order to share loving fellowship with his creatures, and for his creatures to enjoy loving fellowship with each other, as well as to care for their natural habitat and their fellow inhabitants.³ The mutual love the three persons of the Trinity have for each other is the very basis of and exemplar for loving relations among people. Some of history’s greatest thinkers have pleaded ignorant about the origins of human community, while others have posited an original state of brutishness. According to the Christian worldview, however, human community is the earthly analogue of the original, transcendent, self-giving “community” of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Creation—all of it as well as each aspect of it—was declared by God to be good, and yet it was not until God created human beings that he declared all of creation to be very good.⁴ Why is this so? Because God creates human beings alone in the divine image, a status which none-greater-can-be-conferred.

According to holy Scripture, humans do not bear or have the image of God. They are the image of God. The image is everything man is—body and soul. It is not confined to a single aspect of the soul—the virtues, or holiness, or rationality, or speech, or naming, or relationality, or dominion—nor to a single part of the body—the

brain or the senses, for example. It is the totality of human personality and body, together. “Man is the image of God because and insofar as he is truly human, and he is truly and essentially human because, and to the extent that, he is the image of God.”⁵

Certainly, we would want to say, following Scripture’s teaching, that each and every human being is the image of God. But the image is not confined to discrete individual human beings alone; it is together, both male and female, that humans are the image and, in fact, the human race as a whole is the image. As the human race grows, so grows the image.

Nineteenth century Dutch theologian Herman Bavinck is worth quoting at length on this score:

“As a man and by himself he was incomplete. He lacked something that no lower creature could make up (Gen. 2:20). As a man by himself, accordingly, neither was he yet the fully unfolded image of God. The creation of humankind in God’s image was only completed on the sixth day, when God created both man and woman in union with each other (Gen. 1:27), in his image. Still, even this creation in God’s image of man and woman in conjunction is not the end but the beginning of God’s journey with mankind. It is not good that the man should be alone (Gen. 2:18); nor is it good that the man and woman should be alone. Upon the two of them God immediately pronounced the blessing of multiplication (Gen. 1:28). Not the man alone, nor the man and woman together, but only the whole of humanity is the fully developed image of God, his children, his offspring. The image of God is much too rich for it to be fully realized in a single human being, however richly gifted that human being may be. It can only be somewhat unfolded in its depth and riches in a humanity counting billions of members. Just as the traces of God (*vestigia Dei*) are spread over many, many works, in both space and time, so also the image of God can only be displayed in all its dimensions and characteristic features in a humanity whose members exist both successively one after the other and contemporaneously side by side. But just as the cosmos is a unity and receives its head and master in humankind; so also that humanity in turn is to be conceived as an organism that, precisely as such, is finally the only fully developed image of God. Not as a heap of souls on a tract of land, not as a loose aggregate of individuals, but as having been

created out of one blood; as one household and one family, humanity is the image and likeness of God.”⁶

Because humanity is the image and likeness of God, racial and ethnic superiority is a notion foreign to the created order. Dignity and equality mark every person.

As *imago Dei*, humans have been given the command to labor, steward, rest, and worship.⁷ Many people, though certainly not all, are also called to marry and to have children, of which the latter calling may also be fulfilled through spiritual multiplication.⁸ While it is certainly conceivable for humans to labor, steward, rest, and worship in relative isolation, Scripture makes it plain that these tasks are to be pursued together in communities—families, poleis, churches, and other social and civic organizations—which in important respects anticipate and foreshadow the new covenant community of God’s redeemed, the bride of Christ.⁹

Original creation anticipates and yearns for new creation, the new heavens and earth, the habitation in which the Lord himself will dwell with his people forever and ever.¹⁰ People

dwelling in community with the Lord himself was part of creation’s original design, and is also part of the design of the age to come. ☩

¹ John Calvin, *Commentary on Psalms, Vol. 5. Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, trans. James Anderson (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2009).

² Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*. Translated by Fathers of English Dominican Province (New York, NY: Benziger Brothers, 1948), 232. ; Romans 11:36a (ESV)

³ Genesis 1:26 (ESV)

⁴ Genesis 1:25 (ESV); Genesis 1:31 (ESV)

⁵ Heramn Bavnick, *Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁶ Bavnick, 557.

⁷ Genesis 1:26 (ESV); Genesis 2:15 (ESV); Genesis 1:28 (ESV); Genesis 1:26 (ESV); Genesis 2:2-3 (ESV); Psalm 95 (ESV)

⁸ Genesis 2:24 (ESV); Genesis 1:28 (ESV); Matthew 28:19 (ESV)

⁹ Revelation 19:6-9 (ESV); Romans 8:22 (ESV); Revelation 21:1-7 (ESV)

¹⁰ Revelation 21:3 (ESV)





by Carley Eschliman

The Intersection of Eating and Community

In today's economy, time is money. Cornell, the world as a whole, and even the voices inside our own heads, daily insist that there is more that we could be doing. Our culture makes it nearly impossible to find worth in things other than the useful, the productive, and the resume-ready. Pure utility and true efficiency are always aimed for but never attained. And so, we trudge on, struggling to make any progress and finding all of our value in our contributions, our accomplishments, and our successes. Working this hard means that time is always of the essence, and an easy way to reclaim time is to eat alone. Quickly snagging a salad from an eatery or packing a lunch allows for flexibility, mobility, and, most importantly, efficiency. This "time-saver" is yet another "life-hack" adopted by the American public. Since the 1960s, dining alone in the United States has more than tripled; in 2015, a study conducted by the Food Marketing Institute found that the average American eats nearly half of his meals and snacks alone.¹ And, solo eating has spread globally as well. In South Korea, an online phenomenon called mukbang—literally, "eating rooms"—features web pages where people share videos of themselves eating alone. Furthermore, "introvert restaurants"—establishments that offer solely seating for

one—have popped up everywhere from the Netherlands to Japan.² It is clear to see that as our world becomes increasingly centered around efficiency, our social norms surrounding the act of eating with others have changed dramatically.

If productivity is our goal and the act of eating together is socially complicated and logistically challenging, why do we continue to eat together?

These social norms were exposed in great detail by Dr. Alice P. Julier in her 2013 book *Eating Together*.³ In this work, Julier delves into the elaborate and often nuanced social systems regulating communal meals. Through a recounting of her extensive interviews, surveys, and historical reviews, Julier highlights how the shared meal culture in America has changed from one of mainly informal inclusions to more structured—and, often, more stressful—eating events. This shift, Julier asserts, is due to multiple factors, including the advancement of the professional sphere. Stresses centered

around utility and productivity at work have begun to negatively affect our ability to invite others into our private spaces. This separation has subsequently decreased our frequency of eating with those unlike ourselves.

However, Julier does recognize a confounding part of our eating together: despite the stress that many of her interviewed cases felt during the preparation of their dinner parties or potlucks, these communal eating situations continued to occur. Regardless of the intensive work that one must contribute to hosting or partaking in a shared meal in modern America, people of all socioeconomic statuses, races, and professions continue to make time to eat with others. But, why? If productivity is our goal and the act of eating together is socially complicated and logistically challenging, why do we continue to eat together? What is so great about sharing a meal?

For decades, scientists have been attempting to answer the questions surrounding the causes and effects of the company with whom we do—or do not—eat. Numerous studies on the impact of solo eating—especially on developing children and young adults—have concluded that eating by ourselves is not as good for us as we think it is. Yes, we may save time, but cons outweigh pros. Eating more meals alone has shown that our test scores tend to decrease, our ability to communicate with those who do not share our beliefs may suffer, and our overall nutrition is often poorer.⁴ I believe that there is an obvious conclusion that can be drawn from these data: eating is about more than food. In fact, I believe that eating is intrinsically linked with community. And, as a Christian, I believe that God designed this link purposefully and continually calls us to eat and, more importantly, eat with others.

Why did God make us need to eat?

Even if one denies the presence of God, one cannot deny the presence of a grumbling stomach halfway through a 12:20 p.m. lecture. We are creatures that need to consume, and our bodies cannot physically function without nutrients. We exist, we need energy, we eat. These three facts start and end the line of reasoning for many people. But, in the Christian tradition, we are able to go further than these statements. Because we recognize and believe in a Creator,

a Creator who promises us our daily bread, we are led to be able to ask this important question: Why? And, more specifically: Why did God make us need to eat? In our attempts to answer this, we can see how God creates food to be less about nutrients and more about community.

Even if one denies the presence of God, one cannot deny the presence of a grumbling stomach halfway through a 12:20 p.m. lecture.

Let us start at the beginning: the Garden of Eden. In the Christian tradition, the Garden of Eden is the world as God intended it, a world free from sin and brokenness. After God created the universe, he walked in the garden with Adam and Eve and told them that they “should have [every plant and tree] for food” and that they could “eat fruit from the trees in the garden.”⁵ God commanded humans to eat, even before the Fall, even before sin entered the world. After the Fall, God continued to make eating an important part of a life of faith: God provides the Israelites with manna, a bread-like food, from heaven while they wait for entry into the Promised Land; Old Testament law provides extremely specific instructions for the preparation of food; Daniel is sustained with solely vegetables during his exile in Babylon. The overarching theme of food and hunger in the Bible is that of dependence; we trust God for daily nourishment, for safe food, and for continued sustenance. Tish Harrison Warren, in her 2016 book *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, speaks well on the theme of dependence. In her chapter on the role of meals and their theological implications she asserts that “the act of eating reorients us from an atomistic, independent existence toward one that is interdependent.”⁶ Time and time again, God uses our want for food to remind us of how we should want for him. When we eat, we are reminded that we cannot do things on our own. And, when we start to see food as more than just what we need to get through a day, we can begin to see the deep connections that food creates. The granola bar that we scarf down on our way up the slope has a story that involves countless people: it is manufactured, packaged, shipped, displayed, and purchased. The community hiding behind every item we consume is so often overlooked. This oversight is why God has continued and will continue to call us to eat together, again and again.

One of the central traditions in Christianity is Communion, also known as the Eucharist. Essentially, this practice is one of interdependence. On the surface, the physical act of Communion does not seem that special: Christians get a piece of bread, sip some wine, then sit and wait for everyone else to eat. But, Communion is about more than just what meets the eye—the bread and wine represent the body and blood of Christ. Partaking in Communion reminds Christians of the reality of Jesus' death on the cross, the reality of his taking the weight of our sins, and the reality of how much we need him. God uses the act of physically eating together to remind us of our role in the kingdom of heaven and of our hand in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. It is with great intentionality and care that Communion is done this way, and we can take God's desire for us to eat together during Communion and transfer this communal eating to our everyday lives.

By designing us with a need to eat and by commanding us to eat in community, God has given us the opportunity to take our focus off of ourselves.

God knows that we all too often fix our gaze solely upon ourselves. We care about our abilities, our successes, and our productivity far more than we think about others. By designing us with a need to eat and by commanding us to eat in community, God has given us the opportunity to take our focus off of ourselves. Over a short lunch between classes, we can turn our eyes outwards and realize that there is more to the world than our problem set, our essay, or our final project. We are dependent upon others, for company, for information, for food... and that is how God intended us to be. So, as the stresses pile up and the load becomes heavy, call up a friend, clear up your calendar, and ask them to grab a bite. ☺

¹Roberto Ferdman, "The most American thing there is: Eating alone," *Washington Post*, August 18, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/08/18/eating-alone-is-a-fact-of-modern-american-life/>. ²Emma Janzen, "Party of one: This Dutch restaurant requires you to dine solo," *Food Republic*, February 2, 2015, <http://www.foodrepublic.com/2015/02/05/party-of-one-this-dutch-restaurant-requires-you-to-dine-solo/>; Stephanie Buck, "Japan has perfected the art of eating alone, and you can too." *Timeline*, November 4, 2016, <https://timeline.com/japan-eating-alone-56c5fafe89ee#yq7owznr4>.

³Alice Julier, *Eating together: Food, friendship, and inequality*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013).

⁴Daniel Miller, Jane Waldfogel, Wen-Jui Han, "Family meals and child academic and behavioral outcomes," *Child Development* 83, no. 6 (2012): 2104–2120, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01825.x>; Reed Larson, Kathryn Branscomb, Angela Wiley, "Forms and functions of family mealtimes: Multidisciplinary perspectives," *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 2006, no. 111 (2006): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1002/cd.152>; Marion Hetherington, Annie Anderson, Geraldine Norton, Lisa Newson, "Situational effects on meal intake: A comparison of eating alone and eating with others." *Physiology & Behavior* 88, no. 4 (2006): 498–505, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2006.04.025>.

⁵Genesis 1:29 (NIV); Genesis 3:2 (NIV)

⁶Tish Warren, *Liturgy of the ordinary: Sacred practices in everyday life*, (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2016).



Carley Eschliman is a sophomore attempting majors in both atmospheric science and communication. She loves her home state of Kansas, mint gum, and fancy mechanical pencils. Due to her obsession with weather, the majority of her time on campus is spent with her head in the clouds—literally.

who what where when why

By Olivia Simoni

Who grew the oceans from his palms
Who painted the jungles with echoed songs
Who, from dust, made man, made life
Who from rib cage bones made his wife

What makes us think he is not real
What makes us doubt because we cannot feel
What holds us back from running to him
What causes us to run to sin

Where are the facts and proof, we ask
Where is the man behind the mask
Where is your faith, god replies
Where the book sits, my presence lies

When will my Jesus come for me
When, from my chains will I be free
When can I leave this world of sin
When will I see your face again

Why do you let these things happen I scream
Why do you let these things happen I wail
Why can't you hear me.

Why. I wonder... as god cries in my pain.
He mourns my losses. His tears are my rain.

I am not perfect
If perfection were a cliff I would have fallen
long ago
If perfection were a person we would live on
other ends of the universe
If perfection were an apple, I would surely take
a bite.

I am a sinner.

I am hopeless

He is hopeful

I am broken

He is strong

I am empty

He is whole

I am lost

He is home

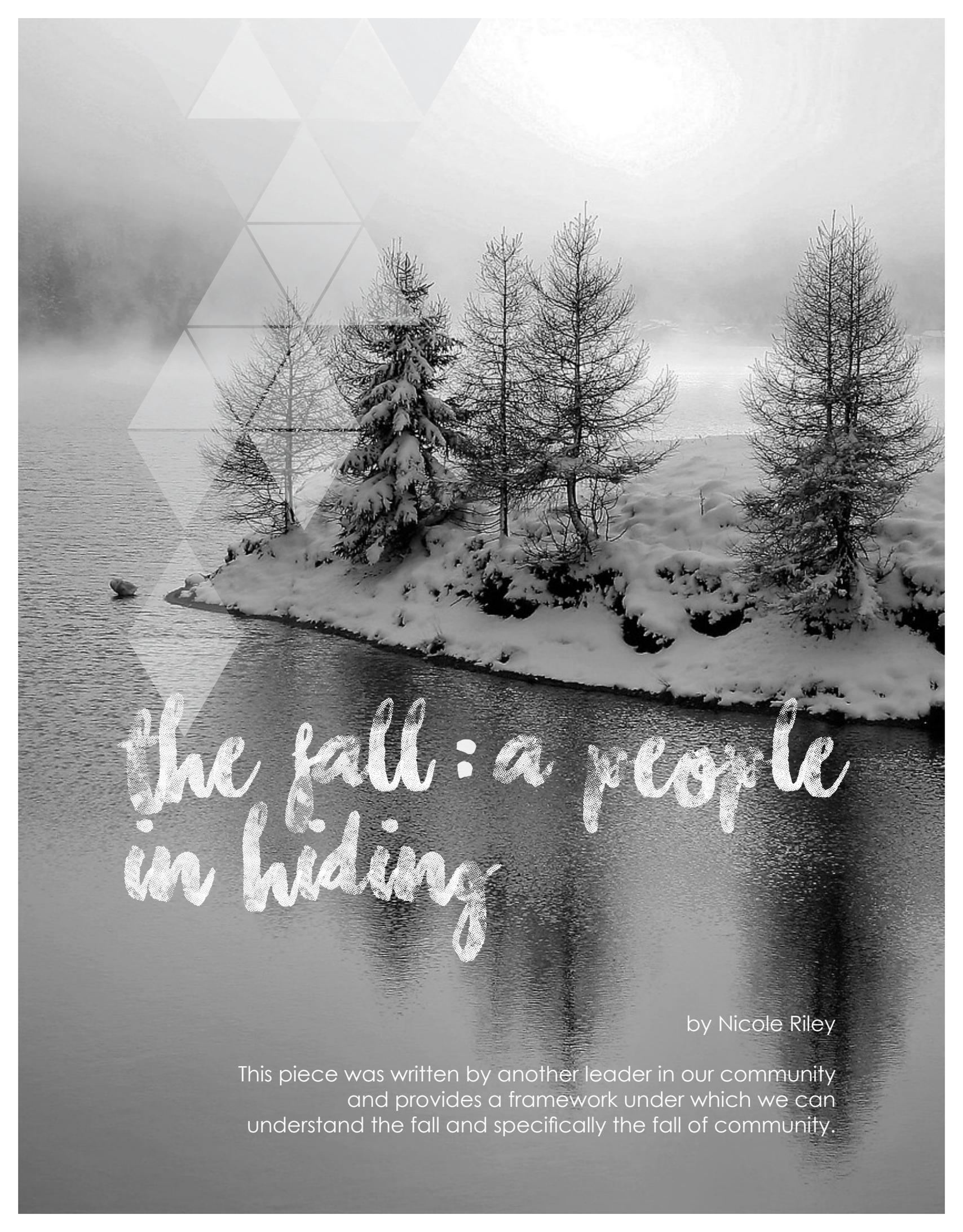
I am far from perfect.

But he is.

And that is more than enough.



Olivia Simoni is a freshman from Grenoble, France, majoring in English. She loves dancing around to 80s music and has an abundant collection of crazy socks.



*the fall: a people
in hiding*

by Nicole Riley

This piece was written by another leader in our community and provides a framework under which we can understand the fall and specifically the fall of community.

If there is an aspect of the Fall most visible to mankind, it is arguably its relentless entanglement with community. Or, more plainly, with human connection. While we see evidence of the Fall in all of creation's groans, be it hurricanes, blight and famine, or other natural disasters, humanity's great violence towards itself touches the heart of every person with a unique and undeniable depth. We all carry our own wounds of loneliness, exploitation, and exclusion. We all have done wounding. We carry those wounds also.

These wounds find their origin in the biblical narrative piece known as "the Fall." Our diversion from the intended created order took root in Adam and Eve's decision to eat of "the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil." This first act of disobedience is not a mere desire to "know" more, but rather, it marks the decisive moment in history where man begins to choose "self" as god instead of the creator they know to be God. And, when the created unfasten from the creator, they become less of who the creator intended them to be. We become less human. This distortion of humanity has irrevocable consequences for how we view ourselves and the community around us. Eve and Adam's decision to eat of the fruit catalyzed not only the divide between man and God but also a cosmic communal disintegration.

In making this choice, something mysterious but profound occurs: "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths."¹ Later, when questioned by God, Adam replies, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."² *I was afraid, because I was naked, and so I hid.* Something about this unravelling of the intended order provokes a disruption in human connection that causes man to instinctively go into hiding, hiding from both God and the companion God had gifted to him. In this, we see the subtle pangs of shame emerge into a world.

Later in Genesis 3, we see a second symptom of disrupted community when Adam points at his companion, Eve, and tells God, *she made me do it!* "The woman whom you put here with me, she gave me the fruit."³ It is here that we see blame and separation seep into the folds of creation. We ourselves become the accuser as we fall asleep to our mutuality and our collective reflection of the Imago Dei, the image of God. And community—the very thing meant as a gift and the means of

fulfilling the created order—becomes that which has the power to wound us deeply.

By the Fall, a barrier is erected between creature and creature that allows for shame, rather than the glory declared in creation to take residence in our bodies. It allows for the despairing accusation of the other instead of a sacrificial desire to hear and know our neighbor. And we are, in grave incongruity with the word of God, marked by a perversion of power that leads to injustice instead of honoring the inherent dignity of all persons. We are no longer able to look our neighbor in the eye and be known and seen as image bearers of a living God; rather, we are a people in hiding: divided, apathetic, accusing, and alone.

It is essential to recognize, however, that this division is not for lack of desire. Our very souls petition for connection and knowness. It is in this vague and inherent desire where we sometimes meet the hope of redemption. Catholic author and philosopher, Jean Vanier, utters the heart of man when he writes,

"Deep in our hearts there is a call to live in communion with others, a call to love, to create, to risk... I want to, but cannot. So many things seem to prevent me from loving and I feel them in my inmost being... so many defenses and fears. I risk losing hope. I risk entering into a world of sadness and I begin to doubt myself. I have doubts about others. I doubt the value of my presence. I doubt everything.

This is our human condition. We want so much but we feel incapable. We believe in love but where is it? There are so many obstacles to break through within ourselves in order to become free and to become present to others; to their misery and to their person."⁴

This is our human condition. And we join the psalmist as he cries out from page, "How long, Oh Lord?" 

¹ *Genesis 3:7 (ESV)*

² *Genesis 3:10 (ESV)*

³ *Genesis 3:12 (ESV)*

⁴ *Jean Vanier, Eruption from Hope (Toronto: Griffin House, 1971).*

Acknowledgements

By Anne-Sophie Olsen

Forgive me. They were people,
Each, whose worth I tossed aside.
Abuse bleeds naturally
From veins of pride.

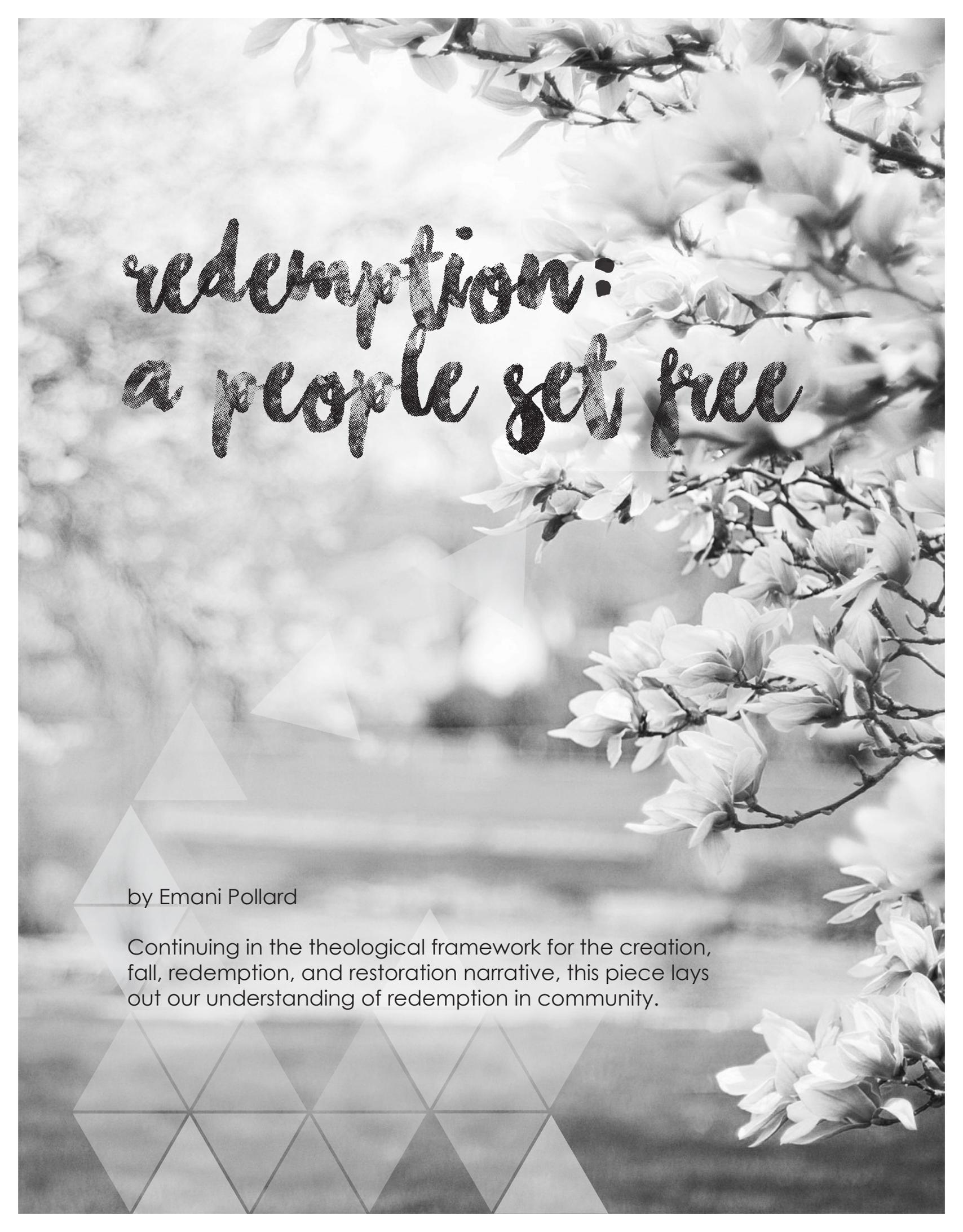
Forgive me. They were innocent
Of sins I forced upon them, cleansed
By unjust blame
I washed my hands of them.

Forgive me. Christ—
The crucified
Were left for improper burial. I
Was tired from hammering nails, who thought
I suffered—

Forgive me. I
Did not realize
All those I thought unworthy
Were crucified in You.



Anne-Sophie Olsen is a slightly over-caffeinated sophomore studying English and Philosophy. Some of her favorite writers include Donna Tartt, G. K. Chesterton, P. G. Wodehouse, and Ray Bradbury. She is a native of St. Paul, Minnesota, but does not want to talk with you about Garrison Keillor.



redemption: a people set free

by Emani Pollard

Continuing in the theological framework for the creation, fall, redemption, and restoration narrative, this piece lays out our understanding of redemption in community.

Redemption is a difficult subject to discuss because it involves humanity coming to terms with all the ways we are implicated in the bad things that happen in the world. It is easy to recognize that there are problems in the world. Our cognitive dissonance—our struggle between reeling in guilt and demanding absolution—only increases when we consider dictators like Mussolini and Pol Pot, the Syrian refugee crisis, or the genocide of the Rohingya people.

Redemption is about taking responsibility for our attitudes and actions and living humbly with our eyes open. “Sin” is anything that separates us from God or gets in the way of our relationship with God. Sin does not just destroy our relationship with God, however, it also fractures our relationships with other people. Sin fosters division. Sin is aimed at hindering people from living life to the fullest. Sin is responsible for racism, sexism, and xenophobia. Sin delights in false narratives about humanity and personhood. And, if we are honest, sin has most of us in chains. We are enslaved to narratives that would have us believe that we are less human than God created us to be. We are enslaved to narratives that we are not worthy of love or friendship. We are enslaved to narratives that certain groups of people are inherently bad or dangerous. The story of Adam and Eve illustrates well our propensity to blame and condemn even those closest to us in order to save ourselves from punishment.

We cannot really understand redemption until we recognize our need for it. We cannot rely on ourselves, because we could only attempt to be “good enough.” On our own, there is no such thing as “good enough.” “Good enough” still hurts people. “Good enough” still tells lies and still fosters division. “Good enough” is colorblind and thinks we live in a post-racial society because a black man was president. “Good enough” does not see the subtle ways in which we are still enslaved to our personal desires—the desire to succeed, the desire to marry, the desire to live a morally good life, or the desire to be loved and admired by our peers. “Good enough” does not see how our personal desires can enslave others.

Sin would have us believe that humanity is inherently bad and that all people are evil. Sin tries to have us to forget the beginning of the story, but we must remember the true narrative. When God created the world, he called it “good.” When God created humanity, he called us “very good.” It is true, we have been marred by sin, but the beauty and truth of the gospel is that

no man is irredeemable because God’s love is that big. The cross is God’s answer to sin’s false narrative.

While we were enslaved by sin, Jesus was born into a human body as fully God and fully man, lived a sinless life, took on the punishment for the sins of the world, died a horrific, public death, and rose again, conquering death and pulling those who would receive him into new life without sin or death. In the most public way, Jesus died. And, in that way, his call becomes the most inclusive. There is nothing about you that precludes you from redemption. There is nothing about you that precludes you from the love of God.

The word “redemption” comes from the Latin words for “buy back.” When something is redeemed, there is usually some kind of exchange process whereby the something is bought and subsequently changes hands. That Jesus took on himself the punishment we deserved because of our sin is called substitutionary atonement. To ignore the role of the incarnation of Christ in redemption and reconciliation, however, would do us a great disservice. The fact that Jesus became a man—that the Word became flesh—immediately signals to us the redemption of humanity.

In living a perfect, sinless life, Jesus redeemed what it means to be human by reclaiming humanity from false narratives. Jesus’ death on the cross destroyed the notion that we are bound to death—or separation from God—as a result of our sin. The *transactional* cross thus becomes *transformational* as Christ leads us into life as redeemed human beings.

In the onslaught of false narratives about personhood, we must continually center ourselves on the cross. The transformative power of Jesus’ conquering of death on the cross empowers us to resist what is false. The cross empowers me to stand firm against racism. Compelled by the love of God, the cross empowers me to better love those around me.

Our heart’s inclination to justice reminds us that the world was never meant to be broken as it is. We were not always prone to hurt one another, and we need redemption that can begin to restore the way we relate to God and others. Redemption is only possible because of Jesus Christ. His life and death are the greatest demonstrations of love and the beginning of our freedom. ☩



by Abi Bernard

So, I'm [insert ethnicity here]. Does God even care? Should I care?

During the months leading up to the 2008 presidential election, it became clear that Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton would be the frontrunners of the Democratic Party's primary election. Black American voter turnout was expected to be high, as their constituency prepared to flood the polls and make history for their race. Political commentators and analysts knew this primary would present a unique conflict to black women in particular: should they vote for Obama, in light of their race, or should they vote for Hillary, because of their gender? Many women weighed the candidates' respective political experience, their approval ratings within their parties and across the aisle, and the potential personal gain, but ultimately, Barack Obama won the nomination.¹ One must not remove the agency of black voters by claiming they *all* used race as their primary heuristic; however, we cannot deny that when there is intersectionality of identity, one must take precedence.

Christians in a postmodern world are constantly faced with culture's fickle definitions of identity:

how it is formed, who decides its significance, and when it can or cannot be imposed. Whether it is a truth we are told to create, or a joy we are pressured to follow, the biblical worldview challenges these ideologies by asserting that the Christian is crucified with Christ. In response, it is no longer *they* who live, but *Christ* who lives in them.² How then do we navigate other facets of our identity, such as our race? Does it play a role, or is our God simply colorblind? Our racial identities are an immutable, intrinsic, and profound aspect of who we are. Ultimately, our identity is irrevocably connected to things in which God delights, whether that be family structure, language-background, art, forms of leisure, etc. All of these components of our identity are wonderful, but were solely intended to be fingers pointing back to a Good Creator.

In the beginning, God created the earth and the fullness thereof; however, only humankind was created sacredly and intentionally in his image. Despite their sin and consequential separation from God, the first presentation of the Gospel promises a Mediator between a

fallen creation and their Creator.³ The Lord laid this responsibility upon Israel through his unconditional covenant with Abraham and the institution of circumcision; as a result, the Jews' superintendence rested in his divine choice, not their ethnicity: "I am the LORD your God, who has set you apart from the nations."⁴ Throughout God's Old Testament dealings with Israel, he used the Hebrews' procreation—proof of his divine blessing—to build his nation, all the while preparing the world for the Mediator, Jesus Christ, who would forever reconcile his people back to himself.

With his vicarious death and resurrection [Jesus] "crushed the dividing wall of hostility" between the Jews and Gentiles...providing the pathway for reconciliation between God and humankind, and those of any race.

In the covenant of the Jewish Law, ethnicity was an identity that the Israelites could not ignore, as this facet of their identity was a physical manifestation of a spiritual relationship with Yahweh. Within the Jewish Law, God manifests his desire for racial reconciliation. Israel was commanded to love, not oppress, the strangers in their midst, as they themselves were once strangers in Egypt. These "strangers" were also permitted to partake in Israelite ordinances by making sacrifices, "for as you [Israel] are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD."⁵ But rather than taking joy in God's grace and lack of partiality, the Israelites turned to sinful extremes: intermarrying with idol-worshipping neighboring tribes, priding in their xenophobia, and ostracizing the poor, sick, and orphaned.

God's prohibition of interracial marriage was never to maintain ethnic purity but to preserve *spiritual* purity.⁶ Many of the tribes surrounding Israel were vicious, inexplicably wicked people; they slaughtered the infant and pregnant during war and worshipped gods who demanded the burnt sacrifices of children.⁷ But, God's beautiful plan for a perfect savior born of a broken people took precedence over the race of Israel. Within the line of Jesus are men and women whose race represented little more than hurt, shame, and ostracization. Ruth, the wife of an Israelite man and the first of four women mentioned in the lineage of Christ, was of the tribe of Moab,

a people-group founded through incest who practiced the aforementioned atrocities.⁸

In Ruth's day, followers of God were primarily evidenced by their ethnicity. Hundreds of years later, that reality changed when Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, perfectly fulfilled the Law which human strength alone could not fulfill. With his vicarious death and resurrection, he "crushed the dividing wall of hostility" between the Jews and Gentiles—or non-Israelites—providing the pathway for reconciliation between God and humankind, and those of any race.⁹

Christians are therefore now identified by their oneness, which is this unity in reconciliation, and not by their sameness, which is what is seen: ethnicity, lingua franca, or name. However, as Christians are commanded to be holy—or literally, set apart as God is—they are set apart by what is seen: their love, joy, peace, patience, and self-control.¹⁰ And yet, the Gospel of John tells us of the hope we have of eternal racial reconciliation. There will be a day when all tribes, tongues, and nations will be worshipping before the throne of the God who reconciles.¹¹ So if God not only sees but also values our race, how then do we reconcile this identity with an identity in Christ?

Firstly, it is important to remember that the Christian identity—Christian literally meaning "little Christ"—cannot come with qualifiers. If one is "kind of, sort of" a little Christ, we should ask if they are a little Christ at all. In the same way, we should ask ourselves this question: if a Christian makes their standing before Christ contingent on their ethnicity, do they truly treasure the Lord the way a little Christ should? Or conversely, if their identity in Christ cannot be separated from their race, how can they be worshipping the God of the Bible, who is the God of all tribes, tongues, and nations? As a Christian, regardless of the color of your skin or content of your culture, your citizenship is in heaven. Plainly put, you cannot "sometimes" be a citizen of a place, or put off citizenship when it inconveniences you. Our Christian citizenship *always* comes first because it is our eternal identity.

When little-Christians live out their eternal identity, they let the world catch a glimpse of what the "big" Christ looks like. From the very beginning, race has only been a vehicle through which the character of God is amplified. By letting our ethnicity be the primary identity which defines us, we actually turn to idolatry

by worshipping the created and not the Creator. We effectively tell God that a color, a culture, and a history are more powerful than he. The opposite is true. The Christian does not share the hope of the Gospel because God needs some more Chinese people, but because that is how incredibly powerful the Gospel is. Nor does he or she love others for the sake of social justice—though social justice is important—but because the love of Christ compels us. They do not strive to vindicate the wrongs against their race for vengeance’s sake—vengeance is the Lord’s, and he is perfectly just—but seek justice as we walk humbly with him.¹²

By letting our ethnicity be the primary identity that defines us, we actually turn to idolatry by worshipping the created and not the Creator. We effectively tell God that a color, a culture, and a history are more powerful than he.

By making our identity in Christ preeminent, we showcase that Christ is preeminent. God cannot and will not be secondary or qualified by anything else. He alone has the power to redeem the brokenness that comes with every ethnicity, whether that be centuries of draconian colonization and systemic racial oppression, hypocritical discrimination, manipulation of history for personal gain, or, even worse, manipulation of Scripture for vain ambition or condemnation. It is not unity or awareness alone which will alleviate racism—interpersonal and systemic—like the world tells us. Rather, true and eternal racial reconciliation can only be a physical manifestation of a spiritual condition. When we submit our racial identity to Christ, we confound the world with the power of the Holy Spirit, as they will identify what is seen, and glorify our Father in Heaven.¹³

God cannot and will not be secondary or qualified by anything else. He alone has the power to redeem the brokenness that comes with every ethnicity.

All Christians share a place in the intersectionality of faith and race, but these identities need not be subject to an “either-or” debate. God is the furthest one could be from colorblind, yet he sees race without the prejudice and pain that we do. If we want access to the untainted beauty of diversity, true remedy to racism, and perfect motivation to social justice, we must always be conscious of this reality: the God of every tribe, tongue, and nation sees those who follow him first and foremost as his children—their colors and cultures augment their precious uniqueness and his awesome creativity. ☺

¹Randi Kaye, “Gender or race: Black women voters face tough choices in S.C.” CNN, January 22, 2008, <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/01/21/blackwomen.voters/>.

²Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

³Genesis 3:15 (NKJV); Genesis 12 (NKJV); Genesis 17 (NKJV)

⁴Leviticus 20:24 (NIV)

⁵Numbers 15:14-15 (NIV)

⁶I Kings 11:2 (NKJV)

⁷II Kings 3:26-27; 8:12; 15:16 (NKJV)

⁸Genesis 19:30-37 (NKJV); Matthew 1:5 (NKJV)

⁹Ephesians 2:11-18 (NKJV)

¹⁰Galatians 6:22-23 (NKJV); John 13:34-35 (NKJV)

¹¹Revelation 7:9-10 (NKJV)

¹²Romans 12:17-21 (NKJV); Micah 6:8 (NKJV)

¹³Matthew 5:16 (NKJV)



Abi Bernard is a junior from Grand Rapids, Michigan studying history and government. She is originally from Haiti, dabbles in photography, and could beat you at trivia any day of the week—maybe.

Fingerprints

By Olivia Simoni

In a world where identity is self-declared,
It occurred to me
That though we try to hide it,
We are nothing but united.
In a society that praises the self
Over selflessness,
Giving up community for independence,
Thinking our liberties will liberate us...
It seems we do not know each other, yet to be
known is all we want.

But we are known by the father.
Loved so infinitely,
Designed so intricately.
Who could know us better than the God who
made us?
What a joy it is to find fullness in a creator
without bounds:
The creator of every race and space we claim
divides us.

There are no borders.
Nothing that can separate or restrain us
When our God is limitless.
The depths of Him are too profound for us to
ever know.
God, if we knew you fully, you wouldn't be God.

Your glory is found in the mystery of you,
So I will find wonder in my wondering,

Finding the lack of proof to be evidence that
you are infinite.
I see you in your creation;

It is the clearest portrayal of your beauty.
This planet is your blueprint.
I am amazed
And humbled

To be a part of your design.

We are made of a voice:
Bones from consonants,
Tissue from vowels,
Spoken into existence.
God exhaled and we were.

We are words with a heartbeat.

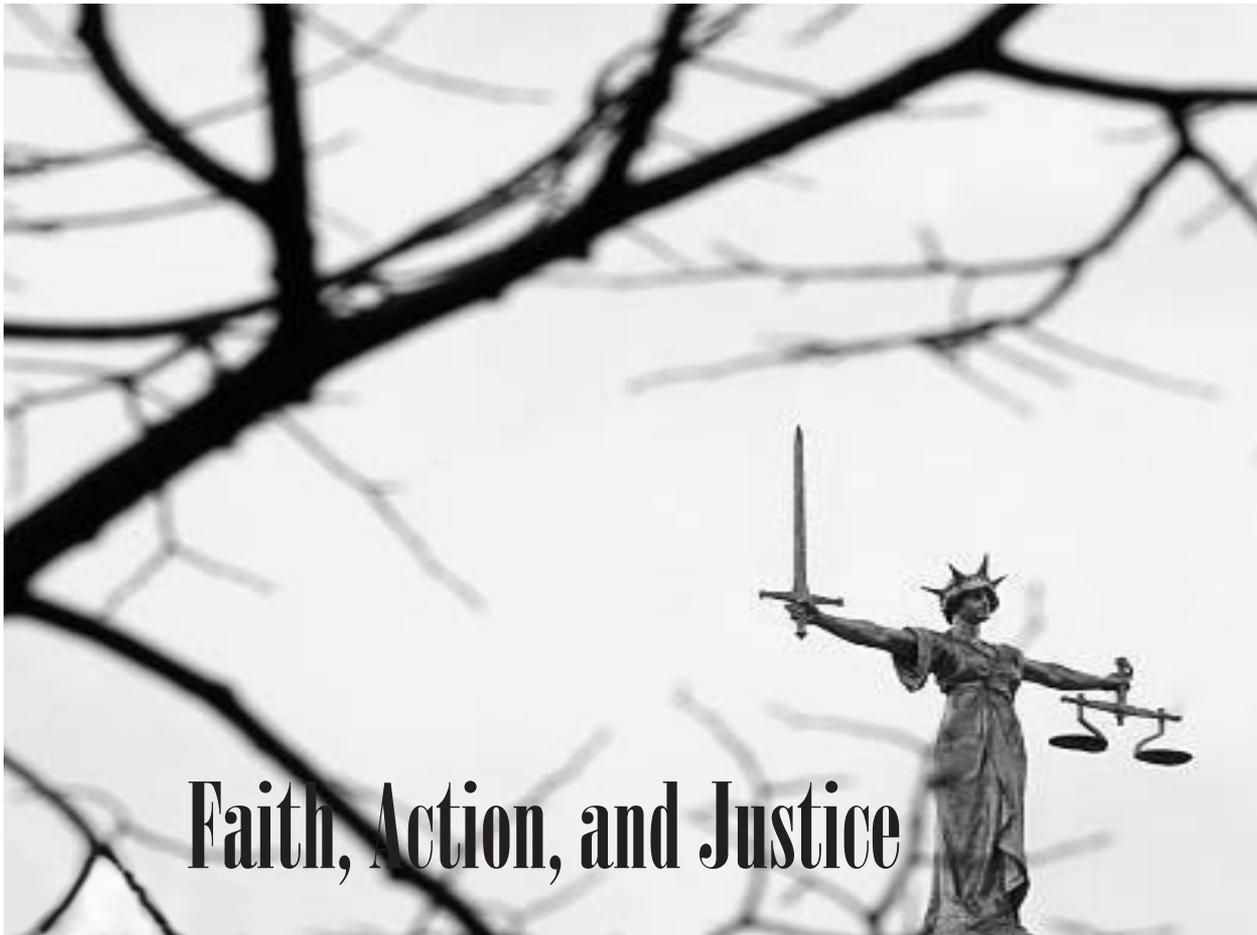
It's easy to pretend we are more different than
alike,

But I see a glimpse of Him in you.
He is our one uniting factor.
The one we all belong to,
The one we all long to know.
But while we're still here,
His creation is a good place to start.

His fingerprints
Are everywhere,
On everything,
On everyone.



Olivia Simoni is a freshman from Grenoble, France, majoring in English. She loves dancing around to 80s music and has an abundant collection of crazy socks.



Faith, Action, and Justice

by Christopher Arce

Then and now: God's defense of the vulnerable

Hate crimes against Muslims and Jews have continued to increase in rates in recent years according to the FBI's most recent annual report on hate crime in 2015. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the Department of Justice argued this past summer that a federal civil rights law does not protect LGBTQ people from discrimination in the workplace. Indigenous persons continue to struggle to receive just treatment and autonomy from the federal government in their communities and reservations. Black people and Latinos are twice as likely as Caucasians to live in poverty. Black people, Native Americans, and Latinos are incarcerated at a disproportionate rate: 5.1, 4, and 1.4 times more than Caucasians, respectively, in state prisons across the United States. The American Civil Liberties Union found that Black and Latino offenders, with similar criminal backgrounds and circumstances to Caucasian offenders, received harsher and longer sentences for the same crime. Many State governments continue to enact unnecessarily harsh voter ID laws and continue to redistrict their electoral maps, reducing the rates at which

people of color and people who are low income vote. Millions of American citizens in Puerto Rico, an unincorporated territory of the United States, are denied the right to vote and the ability to elect representation to Congress, despite being subject to the laws made by Congress and the actions taken by the President. Puerto Rico has the highest rate of poverty in the U.S., with nearly 50% of the population under the federal poverty line; despite this, the federal government denies Puerto Rico equal access to Medicaid, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income—three programs that Puerto Rico funds through its taxes and that have been proven to help people with low income and disabilities avoid economic insecurity.

The Fall: Injustice begins

These travesties were not part of God's plan for the world. God intended for the world to be perfect. His creation design included people living in perfect harmony in paradise, living in abundance with all needs met. Once humanity decided to sin and turn away from God, evil entered the world, leading to the pain and

suffering that we witness today. Humanity's turning away from God is directly responsible for the injustices plaguing the United States.

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The Attempted Redemption of the World through the Israelites

God first sought to redeem the world through his special, covenantal relationship with Israel. God intended for Israel to be a model that would be followed by the rest of the nations, that by obeying God's rules and sacrificing animals in accordance to the law, the Israelites, and hence the nations, would look forward in faith to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus which would fully redeem the brokenness between God and his people. Such laws and rules gave special attention to upholding justice and creating a just society, one that focused on marginalized and the disadvantaged. God gave specific commands to ensure that all people were guaranteed justice, and that the vulnerable were especially protected: in Leviticus 19:13, 15, Israel is told to not "hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight", and to not "pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly." God also gave specific commands with respect to how Israel's agrarian economy should function to ensure that the vulnerable were protected, further capturing God's concern for the treatment of the vulnerable; in Leviticus 19:9, God tells Moses "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner." In Leviticus 25:25-28, God also gave specific attention to guard against generational poverty in Israel, saying: "If one of your fellow Israelites becomes poor and sells some of their property... [and] they do not acquire the means to repay, what was sold... will be returned in the [Year of] Jubilee, and they can go back to their property." Families would not be kept in poverty forever because the land they sold to guard against financial insecurity would be returned to them in a new cycle every

seven years - the seventh year being the Year of Jubilee. In that seventh year, according to Deuteronomy 21:15, all debt would be cancelled among the Israelites to guard against rampant inequality and poverty.

Moreover, God judged Israel and the surrounding nations many times for their mistreatment of the poor and marginalized. The prophet Daniel, in Daniel 4:27, while in Babylon, told the King of Babylon that to escape being punished by God, "Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue." Jeremiah also warned the Kings of Judah that God would punish them for their oppression of the marginalized, going as far as to equate just treatment of the marginalized with actually knowing God, saying in Jeremiah 22:13-17, "Woe to him who builds his palace by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice... [Your fathers] did what was right and just, so all went well with him. He defended the cause of the poor and the needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" Tellingly, in Jeremiah 51:24, Jeremiah predicted the destruction of Babylon, tying the downfall of the empire to the oppression that it subjected God's people to—Babylon failed to take Daniel's advice in ceasing its oppression, and was eventually destroyed by God for the persecution committed by the nation. Amos 2:7 warned Judah that God would crush the nation and its leaders for how it denied the poor people their needs and held the vulnerable in oppression, rather than giving them justice. God went as far as to say that he would not listen to the prayers of Judah while it attacked the most vulnerable.

In Jeremiah 7, God went as far as to say that he would not listen to the prayers of Judah while it attacked the most vulnerable.

Redemption through Jesus Christ

Prophets and laws failed to change people's hearts and bring about the redemption of the world, thus God sent his son Jesus to change people's hearts and turn to God, as part of God's overall plan to redeem humanity from this broken state. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus went as far as to say how we treat the vulnerable people—the poor, the people imprisoned, the widow, the destitute—was how you treated him. Later in the same Chapter, Jesus does not

allow the people who mistreated the vulnerable to enter Heaven. Jesus showed his love for all people of all races and backgrounds when he talked to the Samaritan woman in John 4, which was unheard of—Jews did not interact with the Samaritans, so for Jesus to speak to a Samaritan woman shattered the norms of his time.

James, one of Jesus’ disciples, in James 2:9, calls the Church to uphold justice, equality, and protect the vulnerable, calling out different Churches for showing favoritism to the rich and shunning the poor. Jesus also called out religious leaders of the time for failing to uphold the “weightier matters of the law” in Matthew 23:23, for pretending to be pious because of how they acted in Church, while failing to ensure justice, saying “Woe to you, teachers of the law... you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices... But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.”

We must remember that people continue to be subjected to injustice because of people’s actions, or lack thereof—it is not a theoretical matter: it has real life consequences for people.

Call to Action: Looking forward to the Ultimate Restoration

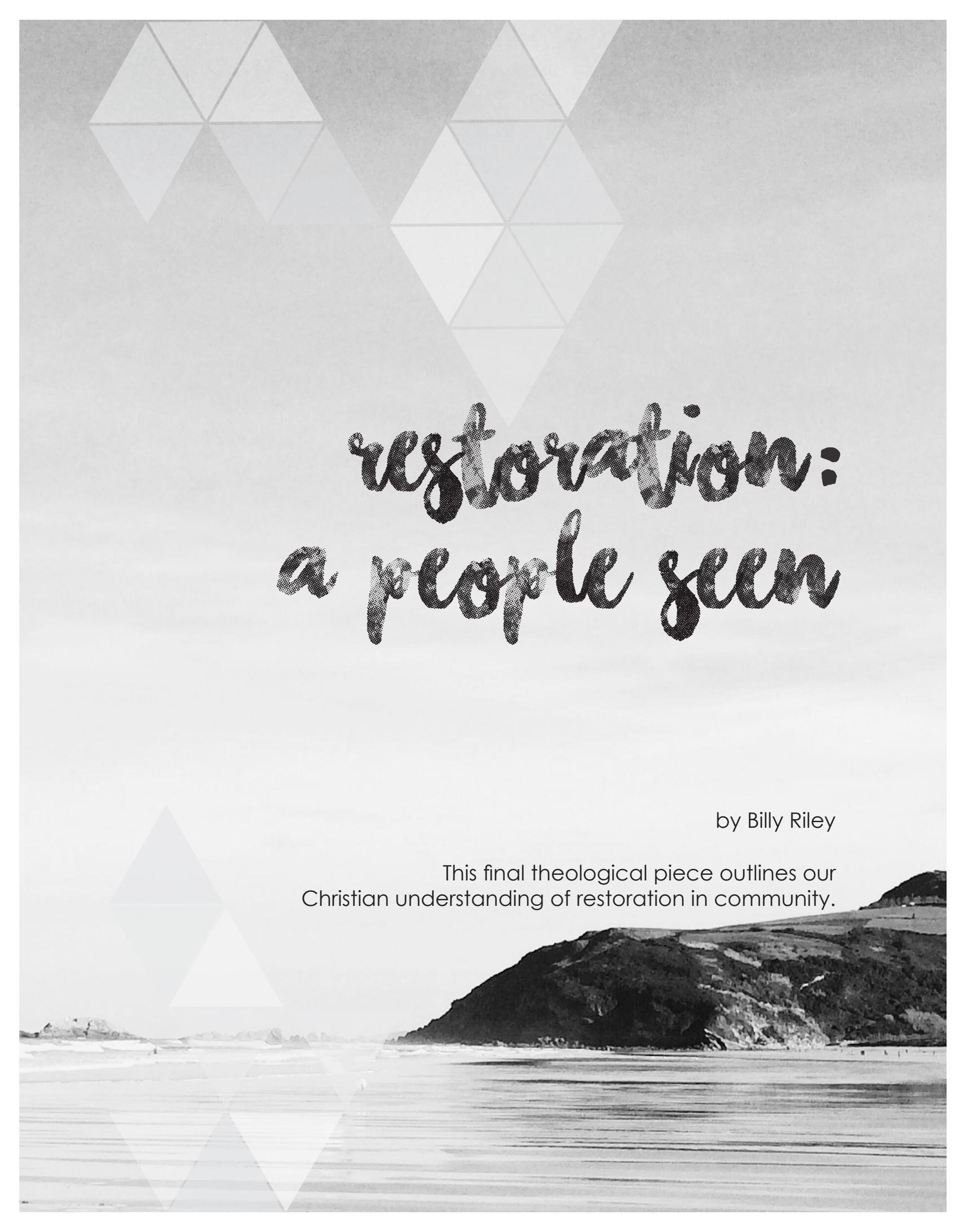
The new relationship we can have with Jesus Christ continues under the plan of God to bring about the ultimate redemption of humanity. God intends to bring an end to evil one day in the future, an end to all forms of sin and consequently all injustice. Thus, followers of Jesus cannot be idle in the fight against injustice. Knowing that Jesus first loved us, we must act in aid of and love others, and be a part of the plan to redeem and restore all the universe. When Esther, in Esther 4, learned of Mordecai’s plot to murder all the Jews, she acted swiftly and saved her people from genocide. When the Israelite spies sought refuge from persecution in Joshua 2, Rahab, a Canaanite, acted swiftly and risked her life to hide the innocent Israelites from the

King of Jericho. When Israel was persecuted by the Canaanite King Jabin in Judges 4, Deborah acted swiftly and delivered the Israelites out from the oppression of the Canaanites. These three courageous women saw injustice, knew it was wrong, and acted.

As Christians, we are called to take part in God’s redemption of the world; his plan to bring people to a place of unity and peace that was enshrined in his original design for all of creation, a plan that has yet to be actualized because of sin’s presence in the world. Therefore, injustice is an attack on the majesty of God’s creation, and a rejection of God’s design and intention for humanity. Jesus, in Matthew 22, tells us that the two Greatest Commandments are to love God and to love neighbor. We must ask ourselves: how are we loving our neighbors when we do not fight against the oppression that hurts them? Faith in Jesus yields fruit: James, in James 2:17, said that faith without works is dead. Jesus affirmed the importance of marginalized people by emphasizing the need to treat them as they would treat him. We must remember that people continue to be subjected to injustice because of people’s actions, or lack thereof—it is not a theoretical matter: it has real life consequences for people. If we profess to love people affected by injustice but do nothing to fight systems of oppression, we do no good and we are not truly loving those people. Christians today must speak up for the needs of the marginalized and the vulnerable, because we are supposed to love them the same way we love Jesus—the person who we love the most. Indeed, if there are such things as “Christian values,” fighting for justice is one them—because this is our part in God’s plan to restore the universe from the fall. 



Christopher Arce is a junior majoring in Government, a brother of Beta Theta Pi, and is involved in Christian Union, Student Assembly, the Inter-Fraternity Council, Puerto Rican Students Association, and Cornell Welcomes Refugees. He loves reading Foreign Policy magazines and spending time with his friends.



restoration: a people seen

by Billy Riley

This final theological piece outlines our Christian understanding of restoration in community.

It is a mysterious paradox that deep human connection requires the foundation of being seen and known, yet our most paralyzing roadblock to connecting with others is our fear of being seen and known. What are we to make of this tension in light of a biblical view of restored community?

Impressions of the “end times” are often filled with dark notions of desolation. These images are based in Scripture and tradition, but often the nuanced meaning and implications that come with them are unexplored. Take fire, for instance; often seen as a destructive force, fire in the story and theology of the eschaton, the final event in redemptive history as revealed in the Bible, is a refining or revealing fire. This force comes to reveal and rid imperfection from God’s good creation, much like how fire would be used in the same manner in the process of metallurgy. This process becomes the means through which all things are made new.

At the center of this renewal, we see the finished product of the long struggle between God and his people. Revelation 21:3 puts it like this; “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.’”¹ Here is the great culmination of relationship between God and his image bearers. This is a restoration of the community seen in Genesis, wherein Adam and Eve existed totally seen and known before their maker. This return does not come easily, however, but only by the same revealing fire that purifies all of creation.

These two realities, the vulnerability of relationship in creation and the revealing fire of the eschaton, point us to a core aspect of restored community: intimacy. The Fall of Adam and Eve in the garden was the betrayal and subsequent loss of intimacy in community. The first thing they do after realizing their nakedness is hide. They seek to make themselves less known as they begin to fear being completely known. While this impulse to hide spreads to all of humanity, the rest of the story of Scripture progressively depicts God making himself known to his people and calling them back into communion with him. The biblical law and the prophets speak to who God is, revealing his nature and his will. As the wisdom literature teaches, even the pervasive order and beauty of the creation make him known to us. The height of this self-revelation

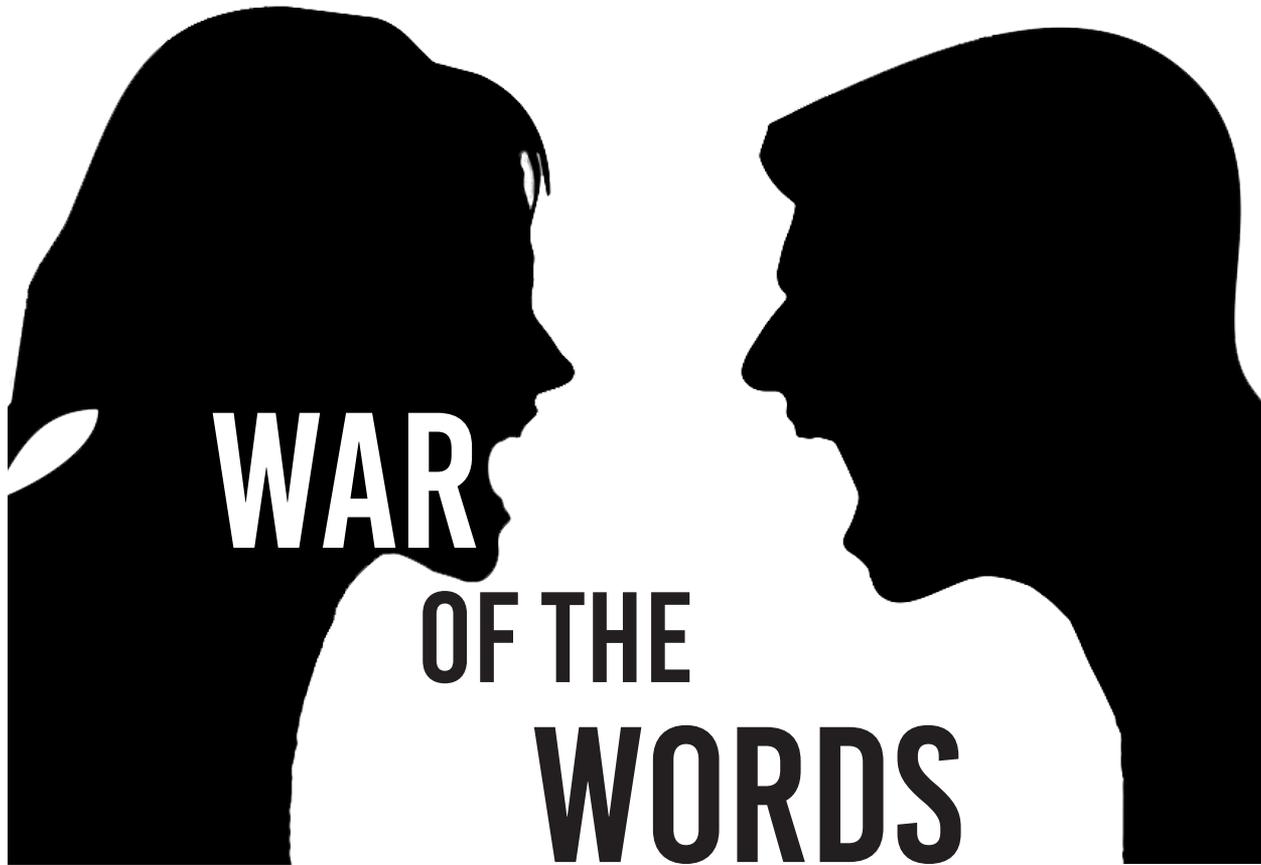
is the person of Jesus Christ, God with us. And, our current chapter in this narrative tells of the Holy Spirit at work in the church, whose liturgy and practice bear witness to the triune God. All these movements build toward the “Revelation of Jesus Christ,” John’s letter to seven churches and the final chapter in the story of God restoring the community lost in the garden.

What we learn in this final chapter is a hard truth. We are not returning to the intimacy Adam and Eve had with God in the garden. That was a seed; in the eschaton it is a tree. It is no longer two individuals or even one people group, but every tribe and every tongue that will dwell with God; in that, the restored intimacy in community will then be deeper and richer. Why? Because it contains story. Story not only between creator and creature, but between rescuer and rescued, between king and citizen, between father and child, between husband and bride, between God and his people. I call this a hard truth because the events that make up this story up to and including the very fire that reveals and refines, are painful realities that must take God’s people and indeed God himself through the deepest suffering and even death.

To see this truth more clearly, we need to look no further than our own experiences of deep community. To share our stories, to reveal our trauma, to confess our sins, to have our hearts broken for one another; these are the paths to nearness and deep connection. It seems built into the reality of relationships that the depth of our intimacy and mutual joy is necessarily matched by the depth of our suffering and lamenting together as we enter one another’s stories and pain. Restored community is no less than the pervasive and all-encompassing glorious intimacy that comes when all the wrong is confessed, all the suffering revealed, and all the evil and lies are unveiled. In that moment, “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. And he who is seated on the throne will say, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’”² ☩

¹ Revelation 21:3 (ESV)

² Revelation 21:4 (ESV)



by Zachary Lee

This piece is an adaptation of a talk titled “Steward Speech to Free Spaces” given by Zachary Lee for the Q-Union Conference on October 27th, 2017.

When Condoleezza Rice, the 66th United States Secretary of State, was scheduled to give the 2014 commencement address at Rutgers University, there was an ample amount of backlash from the student body. Many of the protesters pressured her to back out from the address, decrying her involvement in the Bush administration’s decision to invade Iraq and her approval of waterboarding torture methods. Rice eventually announced that she would not be speaking at Rutgers due to the controversy, stating “Commencement should be a time of joyous celebration for the graduates and their families. Rutgers’ invitation to me to speak has become a distraction for the university community at this very special time.”¹ Yet there were also faculty and students who supported her and petitioned to have her come back and speak.

Occurrences like these frequent college campuses today with Yale, Middlebury, and even Cornell. In 2016, the Cornell Republicans hosted Rick Santorum to speak on his political ideologies and his expectations for the future of America under

President Donald Trump. He, like many other speakers, had his speech impeded and was met by strong resistance and heckling from students who viewed his ideas as “racist” and “anti-gay.”² Even more recently, a number of horrific events have plagued campus: the anti-semitic posters that appeared on campus buildings, the racial epithets hurled at an African-American student in Collegetown, and the “build a wall chants” around the Latino Living Center by a Zeta Psi fraternity member.³

As a result, this paradox remains:
free speech makes spaces unsafe
and safe space limits speech.

These recent events on university campuses reveal a dynamic in which free speech and safe spaces appear to be at odds. At the University, we desire discourse and diversity of opinions so that we may better learn the truth, which is the heartbeat of the liberal arts education and the

mission of the educational institution. On the other hand, students live on campus, and we want them to feel safe. Yet this desire for safety is not easy if students are faced with ideas and worldviews that profoundly clash with their own, particularly views that seem bigoted and hateful. paradox remains: free speech makes spaces unsafe and safe space limits speech.

Now, when you attack one's ideas,
you attack one's person.

Additionally, there are two other realities that further complicate this issue. The first is that the University is multifaceted and dichotomous in nature. Ashutosh Bhagwat, Professor of Law at the University of California, and John Inazu, author of *Confident Pluralism*, state in their essay on safe spaces that the university is neither “a wholly privatized space” nor a “pure public forum.” The campus is filled with “venues for robust, open debate where speech restrictions have no place,” yet are also “havens for their students, who are perfectly entitled to their privacy.”⁴ Students’ homes overlap with these arenas of dispute which makes mandating and regulating the permissibility of spaces for debate difficult.

Secondly, it is hard to have respectful debate in a postmodern world where truth is subjective. If people believed that there was external truth to personal opinion, then people could have respectful debate and critique ideas instead of the person in search of that measureable truth. Now, when you attack one’s ideas, you attack one’s person.⁵ For example, if I, a Chicagoan, were to say that Deep Dish Pizza is avant-garde, complex, and far superior to the layman and simple New York Style Pizza, such an exhortation is no longer an objective true statement (which it clearly is). Rather, it is inseparable from my personal beliefs and a part of who I am. For those who argue for the superiority of New York Style Pizza no longer question a true statement, rather, they also question who I am. Their argument becomes an attack on me. While this example is contrived and histrionic—rarely will people riot or violently protest over differences in pizza—when the subject is one such as race, religion, gender, socio-economic background, subsequent discussions can have this level of personal attack.

The question therefore becomes not should safe

spaces and free speech coexist; the construction and purpose of the University guarantees that it must be so, but how must the two coexist and even work together? The first step towards coexistence is to acknowledge that free speech and safe spaces have pertinent and relevant functions on campus, despite the fact that proponents of one or the other would say otherwise. Ironically, these clashing concepts were both born out of the same spirit of resistance. Safe spaces were designed for marginalized groups to find “practical resistance to political and social repression.” Black churches, for example, acted as havens and sustainable areas for African-Americans who were rejected by white Christianity. Likewise free speech was designed to help individuals speak out against broken and unfair systems and critique unjust laws when the earlier colonists fought back against the restrictions and draconian rule of the British Empire. As they share the same structural origins, what is the key to their reconciliation? Ultimately, it becomes a matter of discernment: which areas on campus are to operate as safe havens for students who want to be surrounded by people who share their views, and which spaces are where respectable discourse and argument is permissible? Dorm rooms, for example, are clear spaces where students should be entitled to privacy and the space to recharge, regroup, and reenergize without fear of attack for the beliefs they hold. Likewise, groups and clubs, channeling the freedom of association, have the right to have private physical places to meet and deliberate; within these spaces they are allowed to exclude (and shield themselves from) opposing viewpoints. The caveat is that the University allocates said spaces evenly to everyone who asks.



Ultimately, it becomes a matter of discernment: which areas on campus are to operate as safe havens for students who want to be surrounded by people who share their views, and which spaces are where respectable discourse and argument is permissible?

On the other hand, lecture halls and socratic seminar style classes are venues for discourse. These spaces are able to help students change the associations that cause them discomfort, and this sort of conversation is better perhaps in the controlled environment of the classroom. There is a difference between judging to condemn, and judging to assess and maybe even redeem; avoid the former, embrace the latter. It is places that are more ambiguous that require discretion and tactfulness such as message boards in dormitory, common room areas, and hallways outside of faculty offices.

In addition, as a Christian, I am always interested in seeing what the ancient texts of my tradition have to contribute by way of wisdom on such a matter. In the book of Genesis, God literally spoke the world into existence. God said. It was so. It was good. One sees this pattern of God's speech-acts being repeated throughout Scripture in a lyrical way. According to the Jewish and Christian traditions, human beings are created in the image of a talking God—a God who loves words and a God who exercises his power through them. Though we may not create galaxies or turn water into wine, our words have power: to build up and destroy. If we do not act as stewards of speech, detrimental consequences follow. In the Christian New Testament, Jesus likens unrighteous anger to murder. This should give some pause to individuals before they decide to speak harshly. For those who follow Jesus, we have a divine command from God to be responsible with this gift and we are commanded to “speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.”⁶

Luke 6:45 states “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. Out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” And yet Jeremiah 17:9 states “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” It is

difficult to live life believing that one's desires are wrong. It is much easier to live believing that our emotions are valid and do not need to be regulated; after all, God created human beings to be emotional and it would be wrong to completely discredit one's feelings. The problem begins when our emotions become the sole basis by which we live our lives. In today's culture, speaking words in their raw form is true authenticity. As Christians, we know that the tongue is a “restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing.”⁷ To fully change one's speech begins with a change of heart, and this change can only come from God. Yet those who call themselves Christians can set an example on campus and change the current culture. Even as Christians engage in debate, we must not just say the first things that come to mind; even when a comment offends, it is important to think about what you say and to truly value the person with whom you are debating.

Yet due to the Fall, we treat our opponents as less than. We forget that even the most scathing opinions do not define people, and scoff at the idea that our “enemies” are also made in the image of God. If we truly believe this then we have no basis or reason to listen to what others have to say. But if we were to respect each other of their inherent value as image bearers, we would be able to share our ideas with lovingly and with acumen and be more patient and respectful listeners. Let the word of God be the measure of our truth and compassion.

But if we were to respect each other solely because of their inherent value as image bearers, we would be able to share our ideas with lovingly and with acumen and be more patient and respectful listeners.

On Earth, the unfortunate reality is that there will always be tension between safe spaces and free speech. While their co-existence is something that we we have to look forward to when the work of Jesus is completed, there are steps that we can take now to bring this reality closer. If people on campus consciously

think of themselves as stewards of speech and use wisdom in determining which spaces are appropriate to have debate, such acts will not only work towards healing our divided nation but ultimately restoring a broken one. ☞

¹Kristina Sguelgia, “Condoleezza Rice declines to speak at Rutgers after student protests,” CNN, 5 May 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/05/04/us/condoleezza-rice-rutgers-protests/index.html>, Anna Delwiche, “Students Protest Santorum’s Visit, Calling Politician’s Policies ‘Racist,’ ‘Anti-Gay,’” Cornell Daily Sun, 30 November 2016, <http://cornellsun.com/2016/11/30/students-protest-santorums-visit-calling-politicians-policies-racist-anti-gay/>.

²Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs and Anna Delwiche, “Anti-Semitic Posters Appear on Ezra Cornell Statue, Campus Buildings,” Cornell Daily Sun, 23 October 2017, <http://cornellsun.com/2017/10/23/anti-semitic-posters-appear-on-campus-advertising-apparently-fake-hate-group/>; Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs, “Ithaca Police Arrest Cornell Student for Possible Hate Crime in Collegetown,” Cornell Daily Sun, 15 September 2017, <http://cornellsun.com/2017/09/15/ithaca-police-arrest-student->

[for-possible-hate-crime-in-collegetown/](http://cornellsun.com/2017/09/07/fraternity-member-allegedly-chants-build-a-wall-near-latino-living-center/); Josh Girsky, “Fraternity Member Allegedly Chants ‘Build a Wall’ Near Latino Living Center,” Cornell Daily Sun, 7 September 2017, <http://cornellsun.com/2017/09/07/fraternity-member-allegedly-chants-build-a-wall-near-latino-living-center/>.

³Ashutosh Bhagwat and John Inazu, “Searching for Safe Spaces,” Inside Higher ED, 21 March 2017, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2017/03/21/easily-caricatured-safe-spaces-can-help-students-learn-essay>.

⁴Joshua Tseng-Tham, “Campus Voices: Postmodernism and the Paradox of Tolerance,” The Veritas Forum, 9 May 2017, <http://www.veritas.org/postmodernism-paradox-tolerance/>.

⁵Ephesians 5:19 (NIV)

⁶James 3:8-10 (NIV)



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go ahead and commune

By Adrienne Hein

It began with three
A smallish batch if you'd have asked me
Hovering over the waters, the Father
Calling Son
Calling Spirit
Come and rest with Me, again
And when they communed
On that celestial afternoon
The Spirit searched both heart and mind
Father and Son
Fully known
But words seemed cheap to describe their
affection
So He sat in the shade
Still basking in the light of what He had seen
Some days later
Two more hearts enter, stage left
One son
One daughter
These ones much more fragile than the heart
of God
Together they became whole
A simple design
One with their Father
But communion was obedience, submission, a
grudged yes
Who wants that?
Cue bitterness, blame, selfishness
Son, Daughter—disjoint
They wait for intimacy
Some years later
Some trillion fragile hearts later

One mother
Four children
Father gone, lost—dead?
They wait for wholeness
Some centuries later
One church
34,000 divisions
Taste bland, dull, no salt
They wait for truth
Return to us, sweet three
To know and be known
The original design
Surely community trumps selfish romance
Redeems suffering
Expels dogma
The wait is weighty
Bearing down on lonely hearts
If we're going to wait—
Why not together?



Adrienne Hein is a sophomore studying Hospitality as well as French language and culture, a most dynamic duo. Having to move every couple of years growing up, she calls Ithaca home even though she still has no idea how to dress in layers.



THE LOVELY EMBRACE OF PAIN

by Jamie Har

A breakdown of the uplifting promises that relationship with pain brings in love and community

Straining on your tippy-toes, you stretch your sausage-link fingers across the gleaming stove, barely reaching your glowing, red target. It's so warm, so inviting...until, Ouch! It scorches your tender hand, sending you reeling backwards in a puddle of tears.

Whether this experience resonates—perhaps too traumatically—with you or someone around you, everyone knows that this retraction is an instinctual reaction to physical pain. But, what about our responses to non-physical, emotional wounds?

Emotional pain is just as real as—if not at times more apparent than—physical pain. Cue “heartbreak,” which is not just an arbitrary title but can feel excruciatingly real when it takes over your body, weighing you down with, ironically, the heaviest sense of emptiness. However, emotional pain differs from the physical because it involves inner conflict; our responses are no longer simple and reflexive. Rather, individuals differ in which solutions they are inclined to seek, and those paths are often crooked, swerving in multiple directions. Vulnerable, we take extreme caution, often asking questions such as How can I thrive with minimal pain? What can I fix? in order to first, come to terms with damage already done, and second, anticipate and avoid future pain.

However, this way of thinking might not actually take us where we want to go, wherever that may be. In those moments, you might wonder, Where should I look to take the next, best step? Are these even the right questions to ask?

What are the right questions to ask?

People often face this dilemma when they grapple with two prominent aspects of life: love and community. The two are closely interrelated and interdependent as parts of the larger system that is our world. Both are intangible concepts that humans ground in reality through their actions and emotional perceptions. Love is expressed between individuals, and love within groups of people forms community. Community cannot exist without love because it relies on relational bonds beyond mere group formation. There are many kinds of love and ways to show and understand it, and similarly, there are various types of communities at different depths.

So, how do we navigate love and community?

The Roman poet and philosopher, Lucretius, offers one method of handling love. In Book IV of *Lucretius On the Nature of Things*, he illustrates his harsh view of love as absolute pain.

To understand his argument, we must first

understand the foundation of Lucretius' worldview. Lucretius was an Epicurean philosopher, so he focused on prioritizing pleasure, seeking happiness by attaining peace without fear or pain, and explaining the world as wholly material without divine intervention.

In Lucretius' material world, fixed "seeds,"¹ like atoms, form every body and soul. Stimulating these seeds, whether by a blow to the tangible body or intangible soul, causes a change in that form from its natural state. Human seed, which is sensory and sensible,² can only be stirred up by other humans.³ This is where "falling in love" comes into the picture. When a person's seeds are stimulated by another, that person is automatically drawn to the other with a desire for his or her body. This is because just as bodily blood spurts in the direction from which an injury is inflicted, people's souls are also drawn to what causes their arousing blows. Lucretius describes this human inclination to "fall towards the wound"⁴ as integral to human behavior when "the mind is smitten with love."⁵

After presenting his fundamental association between love and wounds, in a series of theoretical scenarios and patterns, Lucretius explicates how love is inevitable infliction and receipt of pain, never satisfying, and draining yet consuming. Thus, for the happiest life, Lucretius concludes that love should be avoided completely. This shunning of love would not be shunning a pleasure but rather choosing to pursue other "joys which brings no pain."⁶

Lucretius' argument, though, is a difficult one to swallow. Especially when it is examined through the lens of human experience and application, Lucretius' argument becomes impractical and insensible. In fact, the feasibility of completely avoiding love is highly questionable. Understanding this idea relies on two fundamental postulates within two forms of context. The first part looks at love in community, while the second assesses love in human design.

First, all humans inevitably encounter love in community. According to Lucretius' belief, experiencing love requires the presence of at least two people, since the human seed must be stimulated by another human. According to human experience, it can also be observed that all humans are born into some form of community. Not only are babies born from mothers, but due to proximity, every human also encounters another human at some point (even Tarzan

eventually did). Throughout history, humans have congregated to share resources and socio-emotional support in order to enhance their survival. These congregations also consisted of naturally-occurring families that depended on interpersonal nurture. Further, today's advanced culture revolves around connecting with other people, from social media and networking to education and innovation. In all cases, basic human involvement in community entails formation of relationships, which all involve some degree and form of love.

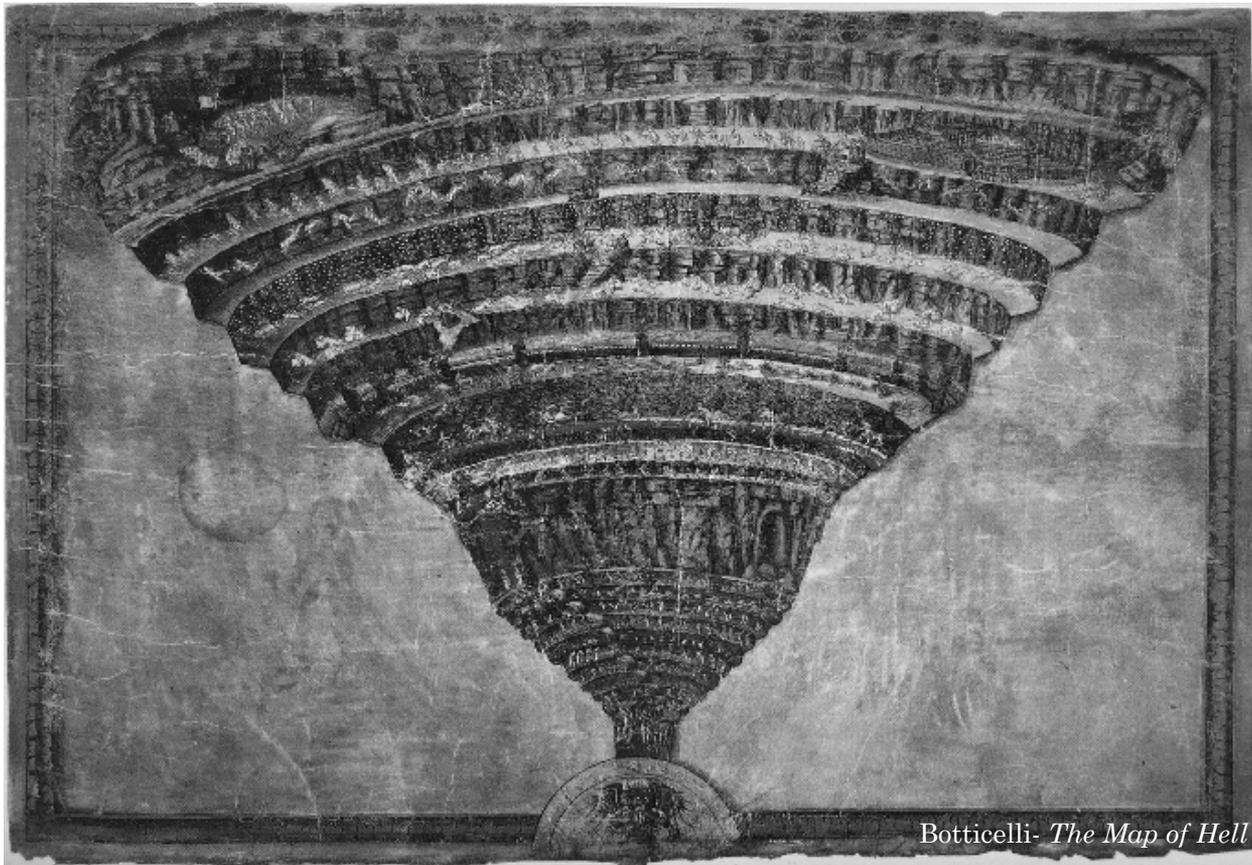
The fact that love's encounter is unavoidable actually shadows another overarching reality that love is out of total human control. Love is action, emotion, and cognition that is expressed, felt, and understood. Though human actions do involve choice, emotions and spontaneous thoughts often do not. Emotions and thoughts are both intangible and invisible, so control over them is difficult for humans to claim. If people could predetermine their "spontaneous thoughts," those thoughts would no longer be spontaneous. In addition, it is doubtful that humans who can barely perceive every thought they have are purposefully conceiving each one. Thus, encountering love as an action, emotion, or cognition is inevitable and uncontrollable, on both the individual and communal levels.

This idea actually leads into the second contextual point. If people inherently lack complete dominance over love's experience, do they really have the ability to withdraw from it?

First, isolation does not actually result in freedom from pain. Rather, it is deeply associated with and often brings more pain.

For one, to withdraw from love would insinuate that it was already encountered. This further underlines love's greater power than and over humans, undermining the likelihood of overcoming it. More importantly, though, withdrawal is actually impossible for two main reasons: love is part of human life's design, and Lucretius' proposal to withdraw is self-contradictory.

Human design can be understood similarly to love. Love as action, emotion, and cognition is a combination of choice and occurrence. So is



Botticelli- *The Map of Hell*

human life. An individual's body and mind are not pure products of his intention because people are born into bodies with unique characteristics that they did not create themselves; a person's form is a result of "occurrence" outside his control. Most people, though, believe that they also have the innate gift of "choice" as "free will," or the ability to make decisions.

This is where Lucretius' own foundational view of human design cripples his following argument in an ironic paradox. In his proposed solution, Lucretius orders people to simply "avoid being drawn into the meshes of love."⁷ Avoidance, though, requires decision-making and immaterial, metaphysical "free will" which cannot exist in Lucretius' solely material world. Therefore, control of one's fears, desires, and actions about love is impossible since first, without free will, humans have no control over their behavior, and second, if the mind and spirit are all material, fears and desires must be results of uncontrollable, spontaneous events. So, without any control, people can neither avoid falling in love nor actively get themselves out of it. Lucretius may as well have called humans pitiful puppets of chance.

But in a world that is more than mere atomic formations, humans can choose how they

respond to chance encounters with love. It is ingrained into how they are designed to live. Coming full circle, then, love is an unavoidable and necessary part of life from which complete withdrawal is impossible.

Another principle characteristic of Lucretius' view is that it ultimately seeks painlessness. For this purpose, Lucretius urges isolation. However, there are two critical issues with this goal-orientation.

First, isolation does not actually result in freedom from pain. Rather, it is deeply associated with and often brings more pain.

In fact, in the Italian poet Dante's Purgatorio of his Divine Comedy, isolation is the crux characteristic of hell and Satan's punishment. As Professor of Comparative Literature and Italian Studies at Wellesley College Rachel Jacoff describes in her book *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, "the deepest isolation is to suffer separation from the source of all light and life and warmth," which is "the ultimate and universal pain of Hell"⁸ in the Ninth and last circle of Dante's Purgatorio.⁹ Satan's character embodies this severe punishment because he is banished from heaven as a fallen angel "isolated from his own kind"¹⁰ to the darkest, coldest

center of Hell.¹¹ What makes Hell's isolation particularly torturous is its pervasive loneliness.

Loneliness is one of the deepest, most prevalent kinds of personal pain. Today, forty percent of Americans say they are lonely compared to twenty percent in the 1980s.¹² It is important to note the difference between being alone and being lonely, but it must also be recognized that the two are strongly related. Isolation is the process or state of being alone, or physically separate from others. In particular, "social isolation" is an individual's lack of contact and connection to society; social isolation would be the ultimate result of attempting to withdraw from love as Lucretius suggests. Loneliness is the subjective feeling and perception of isolation. Loneliness can exist even when a person is surrounded by others, but it is especially likely to arise with isolation.

This comes down to understanding that human interaction with pain is itself a relationship that is important, good, and necessary.

Social isolation has been extensively shown by several studies to increase health problems, ranging from impaired immune systems and sleep patterns to heightened stress and risk of cardiovascular diseases.¹³ It has even been linked to a doubled risk of premature death.¹⁴ Such connections between physical states of social proximity and personal health cannot be ignored. Further, the relationship between an individual's physical and psychological states is just as important. For instance, people who suffer with physical chronic pain, which often also induces depression and/or anxiety,¹⁵ are highly likely to engage in isolating behavior.¹⁶ More importantly and broadly, people in poor health, particularly those with anxiety or depression, are more likely to be lonely.¹⁷ Therefore, physical, emotional, and mental isolation, pain, and loneliness are inextricably linked. Together, they can create a toxic cycle of agonizing despair that traps a person rather than freeing him.

Second, the goal itself of painlessness is dubious. For if both engaging in love as Lucretius portrays and isolating oneself from it result in pain, it seems that painlessness is not even possible. At

least, there is no concrete proof that it is. That would also mean that there are no other "joys which bring no pain"¹⁸ to seek in love's stead. Well, then, is there even anything to seek? What have we been doing all along?

Before drowning in hopelessness, it is important to remember that wishing for the least pain possible was not utterly insensible or wrong; pain is by definition not pleasurable. It must also be made clear that pain should not become the new goal. We can, however, shift our focus. Perhaps, rather than striving for absolute absence of pain, we should dedicate ourselves to accepting the pain in our world, particularly with love and community, and working with it. This comes down to understanding that human interaction with pain is itself a relationship that is important, good, and necessary.

The idea of a journey with pain for a good goal is not new; it is often colloquially expressed as "no pain, no gain." However, this phrase belittles pain as a great enemy to conquer and overcome rather than a working partner. Also, it cannot be flipped to promise "yes pain, yes gain" because most goals are influenced by other factors that keep achievement uncertain. There are, though, other illustrations that highlight the beauty and significance of relationship with pain. It just so happens that a number of them can be found in the Bible.

This idea is prevalent in phrases such as "take up their [your] cross,"¹⁹ "lose their [your] life,"²⁰ "love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,"²¹ and especially, "rejoice in our sufferings."²² In the New Testament, Jesus himself embodies all of these commands and thus offers himself and these phrases as guides for how to live.

The first two phrases allude to Jesus' crucifixion, taking upon not only the physical cross but also the world's sins by offering up his life and conquering death for humankind, "so that the world may know that you [God] sent me [Jesus] and loved them even as you loved me."²³ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son,"²⁴ and in turn, Jesus, who was the "first" son, became "last" so that "the last," or broken humans, could "be first."²⁵ Making this choice and enduring suffering were not pleasant for Jesus. In fact, before his crucifixion, Jesus cried out to God, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me."²⁶ He even sweat blood as he prayed. Yet, his next prayer was in obedience and embrace of the suffering because he knew it

was for a greater, good, and necessary purpose: “Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.”²⁷ Because of Jesus’ obedience, we were offered a promise of eternal life and “great” reward in heaven,²⁸ a goal whose outcome is certain as long as we receive and believe. In all these verses, it is very apparent that sacrifice was made purely out of love in community; from God to humans, from Jesus to humans, from God to Jesus, and from Jesus to God. Love is the foundation for the community, and it is created in giving and serving.

As humans, we will inevitably deal with pain, especially in love and community. However, we have the freedom to choose how we do so, with love and community.

The next command addresses more concrete ways in which humans can love in community that involves pain. As Jesus loved, people are also called to “love one another.”²⁹ However, this does not only include those we already like because they showed us love first; that would be selfish and exclusive. Rather, God calls us to make the harder choice to “love your enemies.”³⁰ If the perfect God did so first by showing endless love to a world that despised him, who are we as imperfect people to belittle or hate each other? One way to love others is to pray for their growth and benefit, especially when they persecute us because all sin points to human brokenness and need for fulfillment by the greater Him. In this kind of community, we could also find comfort in knowing that others would pray for us when we fail by hurting them, so that we can turn around, learn, and grow. The focus here is on giving, because if everyone was always giving, everyone would automatically always be able to receive as well; without giving, there could only be unjust, selfish taking. Another way to give is to share lessons learned from falls when others struggle with similar pain. Jesus came to empower and use “those who are sick,”³¹ not the perfectly strong, because God’s “power is made perfect in weakness.”³² Accordingly, we can strengthen community with our understanding of shared weaknesses.

The last phrase that “we rejoice in our sufferings”³³ points to a larger truth about the necessity and importance of pain. We rejoice because “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces

character, and character produces hope,”³⁴ which we only have because of God’s active love and gift of everlasting salvation. Instead of wallowing in pain or striking others because of it, we rejoice because its cause—our brokenness—is exactly what God redeemed with his saving grace. Our “imperfection” is an important, necessary part of God’s “perfect” design. God offers his gift of saving grace so that, if we accept it, we can be in relationship with him, who is perfect love and community. Without his gift, we would only be broken; without our brokenness, God’s sacrifice would no longer hold significance as salvation. God did not make us sinful, but in our lacking, he made us whole.

As humans, we will inevitably deal with pain, especially in love and community. However, we have the freedom to choose how we do so, with love and community. Through Jesus and in the Bible, God offers the liberating option to dive into relationship with him and to serve and love others in our community.

The next step of how this relationship with pain in love and community will look in your life depends on you. I encourage you to ask yourself these new questions: *What ultimate purpose and reward will you prioritize because it is worth it? What can you give, and whom can you serve? What will you choose that can set you free?* ☩

¹Titus Lucretius Carus, *Lucretius On the Nature of Things*, trans. Cyril Bailey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 101-103.

²Lucretius, 56.

³Lucretius, 101.

⁴Lucretius, 101.

⁵Lucretius, 101.

⁶Lucretius, 102.

⁷Lucretius, 103.

⁸Rachel Jacoff, *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, ed. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 143.

⁹Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Purgatorio*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), Canto XXXII.

¹⁰Jacoff, 143.

¹¹Alighieri, Canto XXXIV.

¹²Dhruv Khullar, “How Social Isolation Is Killing Us,” *The New York Times*, 12 November 2017, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/22/upshot/how-social-isolation-is-killing-us.html>>.

¹³Jessica Olien, “Loneliness Is Deadly,” *Slate*, 12 November 2017, <<http://www.slate.com>>.

[com/articles/health_and_science/medical_examiner/2013/08/dangers_of_loneliness_social_isolation_is_deadlier_than_obesity.html](http://www.plosone.org/articles/health_and_science/medical_examiner/2013/08/dangers_of_loneliness_social_isolation_is_deadlier_than_obesity.html)>.

¹⁴Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Timothy B. Smith, J. Bradley Layton, "Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review," *PLoS Med* 7 (2010): 1-20.

¹⁵Michelle A. Bosco, Jessica L. Gallinati, Michael E. Clark, "Conceptualizing and Treating Comorbid Chronic Pain and PTSD," *Pain Research and Treatment* (2013): 1-10.

¹⁶Rachel Noble Benner, "Chronic pain not only hurts, it also causes isolation and depression. But there's hope.," *The Washington Post*, 12 November 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/chronic-pain-not-only-hurts-it-also-causes-isolation-and-depression-but-theres-hope/2015/01/12/db576178-7fe7-11e4-81fd-8c4814dfa9d7_story.html?utm_term=.ea083a556576>.

¹⁷C. Wilson, B. Moulton, "Loneliness among Older Adults: A National Survey of Adults 45+," *Knowledge Networks and Insight Policy Research* (2010): 1-35.

¹⁸Lucretius, 102.

¹⁹Matthew 16:24 (ESV)

²⁰Luke 9:24 (ESV)

²¹Matthew 5:44 (ESV)

²²Romans 5:35 (ESV)

²³John 17:23 (ESV)

²⁴John 3:16 (ESV)

²⁵Matthew 20:16 (ESV)

²⁶Luke 22:42 (ESV)

²⁷Luke 22:42 (ESV)

²⁸Matthew 5:12 (ESV)

²⁹John 13:34 (ESV)

³⁰Matthew 5:44 (ESV)

³¹Mark 2:17 (ESV)

³²2 Corinthians 12:9 (ESV)

³³Romans 5:3 (ESV)

³⁴Romans 5:4 (ESV)



Jamie Har is a sophomore from Northern California studying Communication. Music and food are the two things that always make her dance, and she laughs a little too much at punny play-on-words.

THEOLOGICAL PIECES

We have asked leaders in our community to articulate the theological concepts of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration as they relate to community. Below are the author biographies in the order in which their pieces appear.



After working in DC, Geoff Sackett went to study systematic theology, ethics, and philosophical theology at Reformed Theological Seminary and at the Catholic University of America. He recently moved to Ithaca to work as a ministry fellow for the campus group Christian Union at Cornell.



Hailing from Pennsylvania, Nicole Riley studied English Writing and English Literature at the University of Pittsburgh. After spending another year at Pitt as a Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO) fellow, she joined full time staff and now works at Cornell, partnering with the Chesterton House. Additionally, she acts as Claritas' advisor.



Emani Pollard is from the Bay Area in California. She graduated from the ILR School in 2017 and is now working as a paralegal in Ithaca. She is passionate about social justice issues and aspires to attend law school in the future.



Originally from south central PA, Billy Riley received philosophy and psychology degrees from Washington & Jefferson College. Since then, he has joined the Coalition for Christian Outreach (CCO) where he currently works with CCO's partner at Cornell, the Chesterton House.

SUBMISSIONS

If you should like to contribute an essay, review, or artwork, we invite you to contact the editors and discuss your ideas. We also accept unsolicited manuscripts, although we reserve the rights to publish submissions that are appropriate to the mission, tone, and standard of quality of the journal. We also welcome letters to the editor. You can contact the editors or submit a manuscript by emailing cornell.claritas@gmail.com.

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