



connect to reflect

INTRODUCTION

the cosmic controversy **02** reflecting Jesus is at the heart of the battle



the challenge to believe

Romans 8:29 says that God's purpose for our lives is to be "conformed to the likeness of his Son". As a participant in the great battle between Christ and Satan, to what extent has God's purpose for you been a guiding influence? What are the practical implications of God's purpose for you?



deepening dependence

Spend some time in prayer to reflect on your own desire to reveal the character of Jesus.



steps to re-connecting our hearts to God

1. Ask the Holy Spirit what he wants you to learn from this lesson. What do you sense the Holy Spirit teaching you?
2. This week, what practical steps do you need to take to apply what the Holy Spirit is teaching you?
3. What evidence will you see that indicates that you are successfully applying what the Holy Spirit is teaching you?



passing it on

INTERCESSION Who can you pray for that they may understand the significance of revealing the character of Jesus?

WORDS Who can you tell about the importance of revealing the character of Jesus?

CHARACTER How does the character of Jesus need to be visible in your own life?



open to God's words

In the seventeenth century, John Milton wrote about Lucifer's fall from Heaven in his epic poem, Paradise Lost. Milton uses texts such as Colossians 1:16, Psalm 2:6-7, and Philippians 2:9-10.18

to describe the reasons for the Fall. In a Harvard essay, Gary Anderson highlights Milton's understanding of the rebellion of Satan. The story unfolds as Satan hears a rumour that the Father and Son were planning to create man. As the highest created being in Heaven, Satan's pride was hurt because he had not been involved in the discussions. Aware of this, the Father called all the angels together and exalted Jesus above all to demonstrate that no-one else could be compared to him. On this elevation of Jesus, Anderson observes,

If Satan found this objectionable and a cause for rebellion, then it is hardly idle speculation to say that he would have found the figures of Adam and Eve more objectionable. In some sense the elevation of Christ is a provoking moment that provides the necessary occasion for Satan to vent his hostility towards God's larger designs with His universe. The elevation of Christ smokes-out the secret hatred of this formidable angel and foe.

"The Fall of Satan in the Thought of St. Ephrem and John Milton", Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 2000.

Two hundred years after Milton's poem, Ellen White describes the origins of this rebellion in a similar way:

Satan was once an honoured angel in heaven, next to Christ. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing great intelligence. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. But when God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image," Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. He desired to receive the highest honours in heaven next to God. (Early Writings, 145).

This battle which Satan began against Jesus in Heaven, continues today. But it will not go on forever. One day very soon, God's character will be vindicated, and this will be seen most of all as Christ's character is revealed through his people.

reflecting Jesus throughout the great controversy

Fall of Satan and his angels from Heaven

1

Man to be made in God's image: God's character misrepresented

Satan wanted to be like God. Because of this pride, Satan started a war in Heaven against God and His government. As a result, Satan and one third of the angels were expelled from Heaven. Satan's pride and anger increased as he later began trying to destroy the people God made in His own character. As a fallen angel, Satan and his angels work invisibly to human eyes.

Isaiah 14:12-15
Ezekiel 28:14-17
Revelation 12:7-9
Ephesians 6:10-12

Creation

2

Man made in God's image

God created us in his image—his character. Everything God made was beautiful and caused great joy for Him and all in the Universe.

Genesis 1:26-27
Genesis 1:31
Job 38:4-7

Fall of Man

3

Image of Jesus in man de-formed

Soon after creation, Eve went to the tree of good and evil—the very place God told her not to go. It was there that Satan was able to tempt her. Once she and Adam disobeyed God, they suddenly realised that they were without clothes. Their sin had broken God's character within them. It appears that bright glory had clothed them, and this represented God's glorious character in them. But now that His character in them was broken, the glory around them vanished. But more than that, they were beginning to experience the consequences of their disobedience. They were beginning to die.

How could they, and all their children who would follow, be rescued from the consequences of their sin?

Genesis 3:1-12

Salvation

4

Man reformed in Christ's image

Sin always leads to death. As sinners we are condemned to die eternally. But Jesus came and died in our place. He took the punishment for sin that we should have taken. So when I put my trust in God that Jesus has died in for me, God considers that I am saved from the consequence of my sins—eternal death. But most importantly, I am now free to work with God as He restores His own character back into me—the character that Adam and Eve lost in Eden. This salvation was symbolised for Adam and Eve when God re-clothed them with skins—representing the glorious righteousness of Jesus wrapped around us again.

Isaiah 53:4-6
Romans 6:23
Romans 8:29
Galatians 4:19
2 Corinthians 3:18

Judgement

5

Judged according to the revelation of Jesus' character

Who can tell who is truly saved? Only God can. But as Satan has accused God of being unfair and unjust since the very beginning, God holds an open judgement, where the whole Universe can see that the decisions God has made are right, good, and fair. We are saved by our trust in Jesus. However, Jesus also makes it very clear that we are judged according to whether we have responded to His Salvation by partnering the Holy Spirit to reflect the character of Jesus in our lives.

Romans 14:10-12
Daniel 7:9-10
Matthew 25:31-46

Second Coming

6

God's image in man permanently restored

Jesus promised that He would return to earth, and would do so physically—just as when He came the first time. This will not be a secret event but will be visible for all to see. At this time, in "the twinkling of an eye" our bodies will be clothed with the same glory that Adam and Eve wore in Eden.

John 14:1-3
Acts 1:9-10
Matthew 24:24-27
1 Corinthians 15:35-55

Destruction of Satan and the wicked and the re-creation of the Earth

7

Earth restored as a place where man continually grows in the image of Jesus

After 1000 years with Jesus in Heaven, we will judge Satan, his angels, and the wicked. After this judgement has been announced, God will destroy the world by fire and recreate it as He intended at the beginning. We will then live on the earth, growing more and more in the character of Jesus for the rest of eternity.

1 Corinthians 6:3
Revelation 20:7-15
Revelation 21:1-5
2 Corinthians 3:18