

The People-Chaser

Presentation Handout

Many people are surprised...

- to think of God as a Divine Chaser who initiates a reconnection with sinful humans, wanting to love and bless them, instead of judging and condemning them.

God—the People-Chaser to love & bless

- *Adam & Eve* {Genesis 3}
 - Hid to avoid God {v. 8}—fearing what they thought He would do to them.
 - God’s response: He pursued them as they hid from Him—God initiated reconnection!
Take-Away: *God pursues human beings to reconnect, redeem, heal & restore. Humans hide from God to avoid sin, pain, hurt & healing, while blaming Him.*
- *Abraham & God’s Covenant* {Genesis 12}
 - God desires to bless the entire world. He’s not exclusive—favoring Israelites or Christians only {v. 3 -> *Matthew 5:43-48*}.
 - We see God pursuing and including non-Israelites among His covenant people like: the “stranger”—allowed to be part of God’s festivals {*Deuteronomy 31:10-12; Exodus 12:48-49*}, Rahab—a Canaanite harlot {*Joshua 2:1b-3, 9-13; 6:16-17; Matthew 1:5*}, Ruth—a Moabite - descendants of incest {*Ruth 4:13-22; Matthew 1:5*}, the eunuchs & foreigners—welcomed into God’s covenant community & worship {*Isaiah 56:4-7*}, King Nebuchadnezzar - a pagan king God gave one of the most important prophetic dreams to {*Daniel 2*}, etc.
Take-Away: *God does not arbitrarily exclude someone from His covenant blessings, they exclude themselves through unbelief. He honors their choice though still pursuing to reconnect.*
- *The Great Multitude* {Revelation 7:9-10}
 - This group of people from all nations, tribes (people groups), peoples (nationalities), and tongues (languages) worshiping before God’s throne is the ultimate, final fulfillment of the covenant promise to Abraham {*Genesis 12:3*}.
 - God gives all human beings His everlasting Gospel no matter who they are—all could be saved and blessed, if they would respond to it in faith {*Revelation 14:6*}.
Take-Away: *God is not exclusive, racist, or prejudice!! Every race or people group are equally important to Him and should be to us too.*

Not a God of fitful wrath or vengeance

- *Cain* {Genesis 4}
 - Even though Cain murdered his brother Abel, God still pursued Cain to redeem him.
- *Antediluvian world before the Flood* {Genesis 6}

- Wicked beyond hope and help even though they had the life & word witness of Seth, Enoch & Noah. {vv. 5, 11-12}. Their rejection of God’s blessings grieved Him {v. 6}.
- *People at Tower of Babel* {Genesis 11}
 - Before His judgment of scattering, God came down to “investigate” the people’s willful unbelief though He already knew how there were {vv. 4-5}.
 - Though God scattered the people He calls Abraham in the next chapter {Genesis 12} to bless the whole earth—grace in judgment though the people didn’t deserve it.

Take-Away: *God always pursues sinful human beings before administering judgment, which itself can also be an act of pursuing.*
- *People of Sodom & Gomorrah* {Genesis 19}
 - Though God already knew the people’s wicked, rebellious condition, He commissioned two angels to go in-person to confirm, similar to the Tower of Babel.
 - The people’s interaction with the two angels (who appeared in human form) revealed again the people would not repent no matter how long God gave them.
 - Yet, in answer to Abraham’s plea-prayer {18:16-33}, God would have spared the area if only 10 righteous individuals lived there. But God did still rescue Lot and his family because of Uncle Abraham’s prayers though they were “messed up” by their immersion in this wicked culture—remember the Moabites & Ammonites {vv. 30-38}.

Not a genocidal maniac/lunatic God

- For some, the mass destruction of the Canaanite people is one of the biggest objections or obstacles to faith and embracing God.
- The Backstory...
 - God gave the Canaanite people a probation of 400+ years {Genesis 15:14} to respond to His salvation gift in repentance—God didn’t act out of a fitful anger/vengeance.
 - Any Canaanite person could be saved if they would only respond in faith to God’s salvation invitation, like Rahab & Ruth. This is why God called His house—“a house of prayer for all nations” {Isaiah 56:7}.
 - After Joshua & the Israelites crossed the Jordan River {Joshua 3}, the Angel of the Lord appeared to him {Joshua 5:13}. When Joshua asked Him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?” the Angel of the Lord responded, “No!”—implying neither {v. 14}. God wasn’t “taking sides!”
 - Moses said the Canaanite people worshiped idols that were actually demons {Deuteronomy 32:15-17} who led them into perverse debauchery, like human sacrifice—adults & children, perverse sexual activities & religious prostitution, etc.

Take-Away: *God did not destroy the Canaanite people in an act of genocide but in judgment on their willful, rebellious, and wicked lifestyle, just like anyone who ultimately rejects His salvation gift.*

What motives God to pursue us, even if it hurts Him? And it does!!

- “God is love!” {1 John 4:8, 19}. “...With lovingkindness I have drawn you” {Jeremiah 31:3}.
- And God patiently suffers with sinful humanity as He pursues {Isaiah 63:9; 1 John 4:9-10}.
- God Himself in Jesus suffered the price of all our sin on the Cross {Romans 5:6-10}!!
- **Will you say, yes!** to His salvation gift for you? Will you recommit yourself to it?