

01



# Genesis

IN THE BEGINNING

# Genesis

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# Contents

# In the Beginning

*AN INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 1-4*

## What Is Genesis?

**G**enesis—literally “beginning” or “origin”—is the first book of the Bible and the doorway into the entire story of God. Written by Moses, likely around 1400 B.C., it tackles humanity’s most fundamental questions: *Where did we come from? Why are we here? What went wrong? And how did God begin the long, patient work of putting His world back together?*

Genesis doesn’t simply open the Bible; it opens reality. It sets the stage for everything that will follow.

## Why Start Here?

The first chapters of Genesis aren’t dusty artifacts from the ancient world; they’re the interpretive lens through which we make sense of life itself. These pages explain:

- The origin of the universe and humanity
- The nature and character of God
- Human identity and purpose
- The entrance of sin and its devastating consequences
- The beginning of God’s rescue plan

Without Genesis 1-4, the rest of Scripture—and the Gospel at its center—doesn’t just lose clarity, it loses coherence.





## The Big Picture of Genesis 1-4

### ***Creation: God’s Good Design (Genesis 1-2)***

Before anything existed—before light, galaxies, oceans, or time itself—there was God. Then, God spoke, and creation exploded into existence. Unlike the chaotic, violent creation myths of surrounding cultures, Genesis reveals a God who creates with wisdom, intention, and delight. His world isn’t accidental. It’s ordered, purposeful, and declared “good.”

Humanity is God’s masterpiece. Made in His image, we are created to reflect His character, relate to Him personally, and rule over His world as His royal representatives. God places the man and woman in a garden designed for flourishing—a place where relationship with Him, with one another, and with creation itself is unbroken and whole.

Creation begins with a breathtaking truth: *We were made on purpose, with purpose, by a God of purpose.*

### ***The Fall: Paradise Lost (Genesis 3)***

But the story takes a tragic turn. The serpent’s temptation wasn’t merely about fruit—it was an invitation to doubt the goodness of God. Adam and Eve chose independence over trust, and their act of rebellion sent shockwaves through creation.

This was more than a misstep; it was a cosmic rupture. Shame replaced innocence. Fear replaced fellowship. Pain, toil, suffering, and death entered the world. Humanity was expelled from the garden, and creation itself came under a curse.

Yet, even in judgment, God whispered hope. He promised that an offspring would come—one who would crush the serpent’s head. From the very moment sin entered the world, grace entered the story.

### ***The Spread of Sin: From Bad to Worse (Genesis 4)***

Sin doesn’t stay contained; it spreads. Genesis 4 shows how quickly rebellion escalates when left unchecked. One generation removed from Eden, brother rises against brother. Cain murders Abel in a field—driven by jealousy, anger, and a heart that refused correction.

God’s warning to Cain in verse 7—“*Sin is crouching at your door*”—paints sin as a predator waiting to pounce. It reveals a battle that every human will face: sin desires mastery, but we are called to resist, rule, and overcome. Cain’s refusal to listen becomes a sobering reminder of



“

**CREATION  
BEGINS WITH A  
BREATHTAKING  
TRUTH: WE  
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WITH PURPOSE,  
BY A GOD OF  
PURPOSE.**

”



how destructive sin becomes when we ignore God's voice.

## Key Themes in This Series

### *God's Creative Power and Purpose*

God wasn't needy or lonely when He made the world. He created out of love, overflowing glory, and sovereign intention. Creation reflects His heart and hints at His plan.

### *Human Identity and Dignity*

Every human being carries the imprint of the Creator. Being made in God's image gives each person inherent worth, dignity, and a calling to steward His world.

### *The Reality of Sin*

Sin isn't merely rule-breaking—it's God-rejecting. It bends what is straight, corrupts what is good, and fractures what is whole. Its effects ripple outward into every part of life.

### *Consequences and Hope*

Sin brings real consequences, but God never abandons His creation. Even in the earliest chapters, grace glimmers. Judgment isn't the end of the story; redemption is already in motion.

## Why This Series Matters Today

Our world wrestles with the same questions Genesis answers: *Who are we? Why do we exist? Why is the world so beautiful yet so broken? Is there any hope?*

Genesis 1-4 tells us we are not cosmic accidents or biological flukes—we are beloved creations of a good and intentional God. These chapters explain why we see breathtaking beauty in the world and heartbreaking brokenness in ourselves. They expose the ache we all feel for something more, because we were made for something more: relationship with God.

And they point forward. They point to a Savior who would one day crush the serpent, lift the curse, and restore what was lost in the Garden.

In this series, *In the Beginning*, we'll discover that these ancient words are not distant echoes—they are the story beneath our story. They speak with surprising relevance, piercing honesty, and enduring hope. They reveal a God who has been writing redemption into the fabric of the world since the first page—and who is still inviting us into His story today.

# Nothing to Something

■ God is \_\_\_\_\_.

■ God is \_\_\_\_\_.

■ God is \_\_\_\_\_.

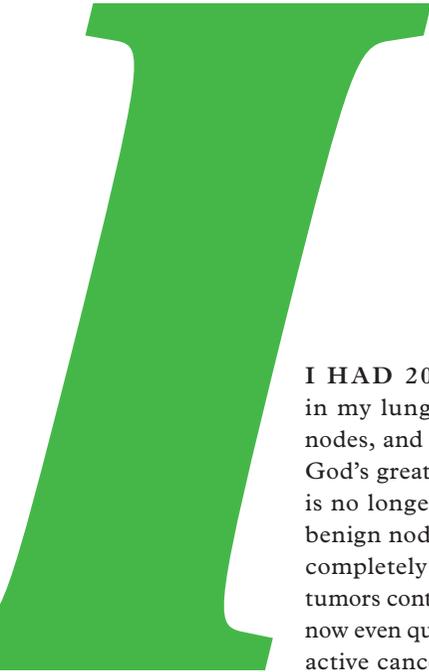
■ I am \_\_\_\_\_.



LA GRANGE CAMPUS

# Lauren's Story

*I am a 33-year-old wife and momma of two,  
and in March 2025, I was diagnosed with  
stage 3 colorectal cancer.*



**I HAD 20 BENIGN NODULES** in my lungs, seven enlarged lymph nodes, and two malignant tumors. By God's great mercy and guidance, that is no longer the case. I now have 27 benign nodules, my lymph nodes are completely cancer-free, and the two tumors continue to shrink. Doctors are now even questioning whether there are active cancer cells in my body due to invalid test results.

Cancer is a heavy word—one that fear clings to. I don't say what follows lightly. Only after walking through the fire myself can I truly mean it: Cancer is not always a bad thing.

“

*YOU REALIZE THAT TOMORROW ISN'T PROMISED TO ANY OF US, THAT EACH DAY IS A GIFT—ONE WE'RE CALLED TO LIVE ON MISSION, LOVING OTHERS, AND LEADING THEM HOME WITH US.*

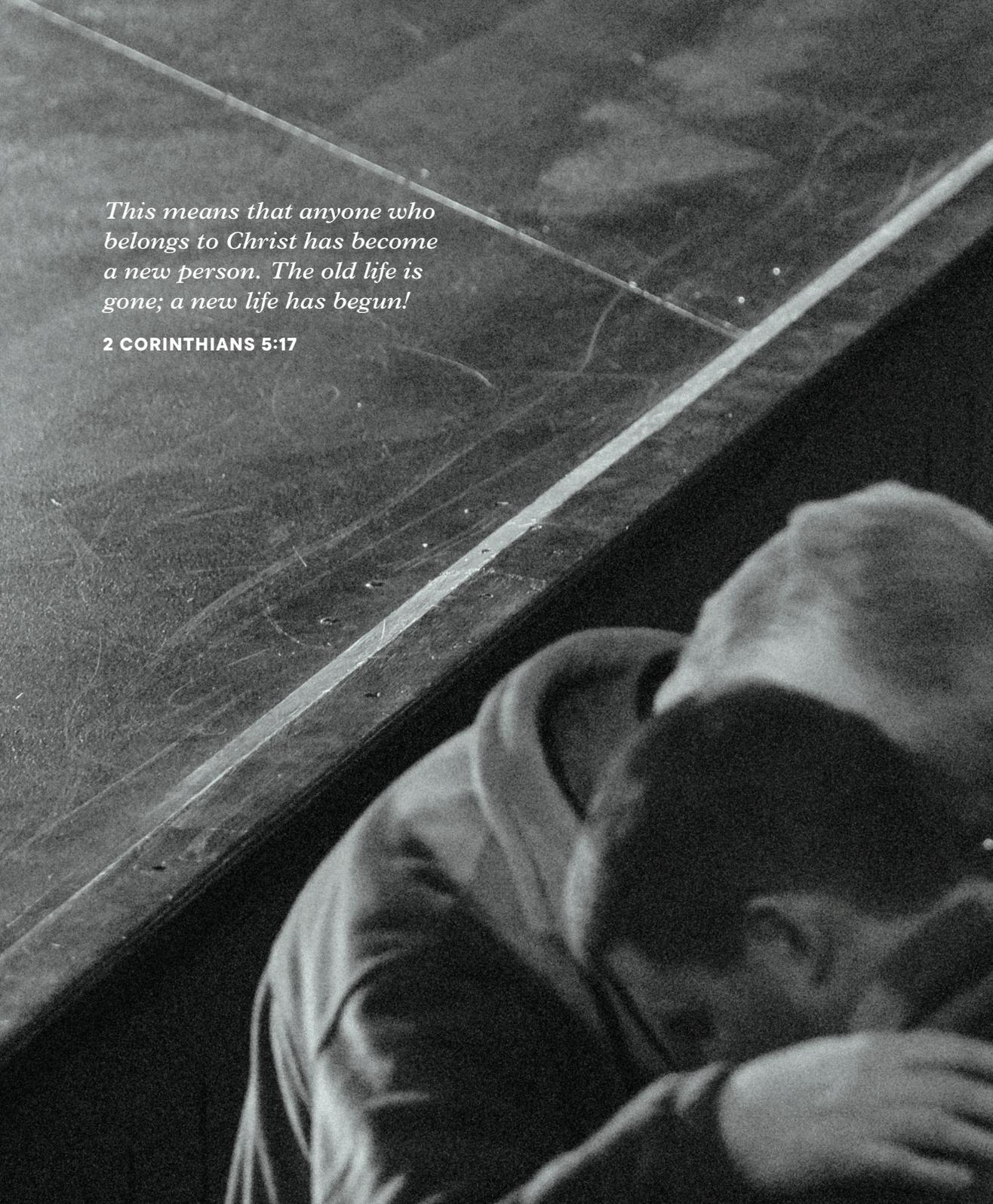
Cancer is a tool of refinement—not just for the person diagnosed, but for those next to you. It refines the hearts of those praying for you, pleading for you, turning their heart back to God, or

seeking His face for the first time...all because of how much they care for you.

The real battle isn't physical; it's a battle of faith—the same one we all face. Will we remain faithful even when the shadow of death is upon us? Will we run or declare who our God is when we are looking Goliath in the eye? Will we still point to Him when sadness floods us and we can't speak? Because cancer or not, for those who bear His name, it is by His stripes we are healed.

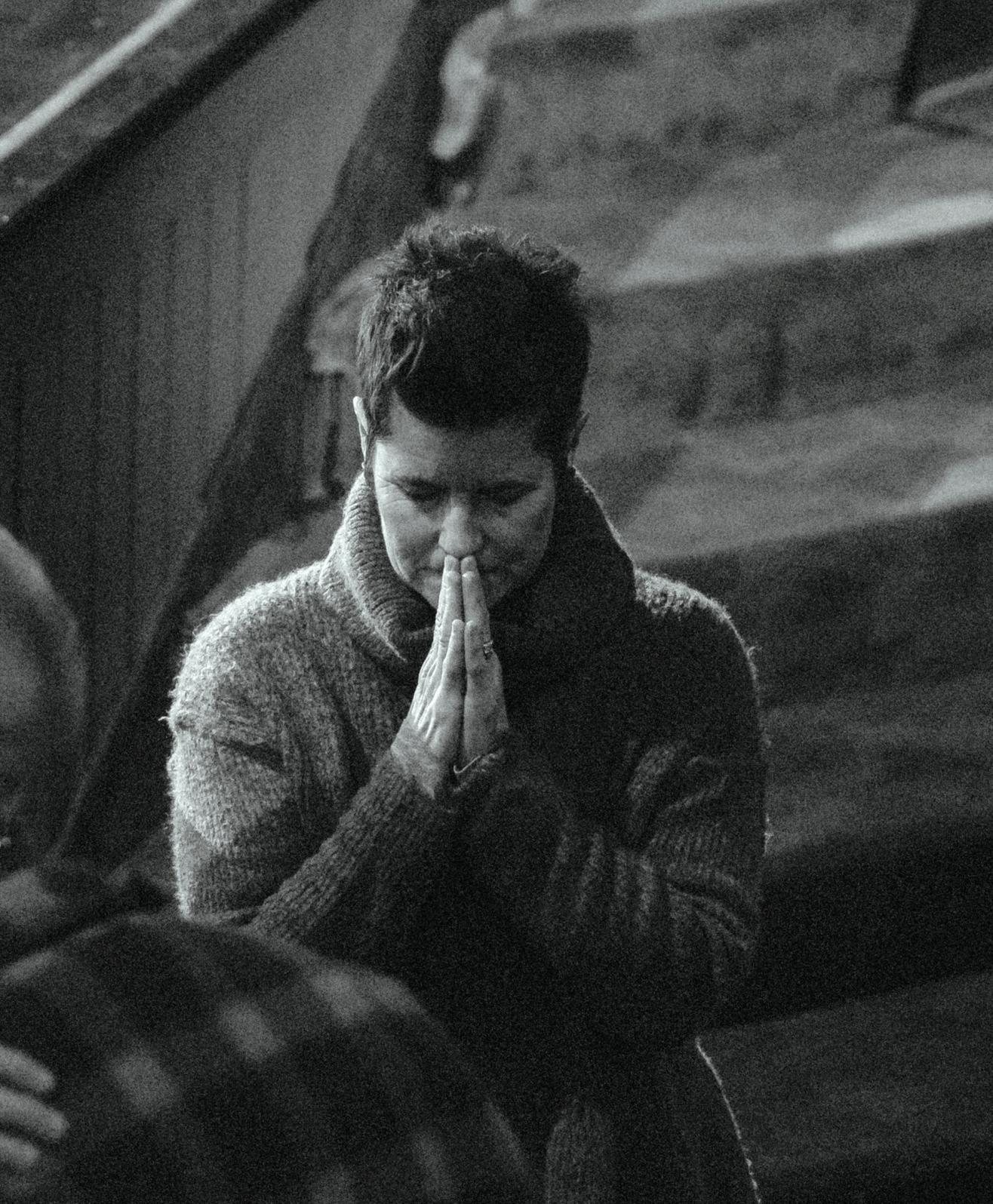
Even if I never hear the word “remission” on this side of heaven, I am deemed white as snow by the blood of the Lamb, and death has no sting. The true fight is not just saying these truths, but believing them. And once you do, you've won—the victory is yours...it's His...and fear cannot hold you. You realize that tomorrow isn't promised to any of us, that each day is a gift—one we're called to live on mission, loving others, and leading them home with us.

So, live loved and suffer well, knowing that we are more than conquerors. Let the joy of the Lord be your strength. To Him be the glory.

A black and white photograph showing a person from a high angle, wearing a light-colored hoodie. Their head is buried in their arms, which are crossed and resting on a dark, textured wooden surface. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a somber and contemplative mood.

*This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!*

**2 CORINTHIANS 5:17**



# In His Image

■ *What the Bible doesn't say:*

Let \_\_\_\_\_ create man in \_\_\_\_\_ own image.

■ *What the Bible does say:*

Let \_\_\_\_\_ create man in \_\_\_\_\_ own image.

■ The word “*trinity*” appears in the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ different times.

■ Human beings are a \_\_\_\_\_ creation unlike any of God's other created beings, because we are \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ of being an image bearer.

■ You have value not because of what you do, but because of who you are.

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ of being an image bearer.



BLANKENBAKER CAMPUS

# Tyler's Story

*My wife and I did not set out to become foster parents or to eventually adopt. Over the past eight years, our story has unfolded one step at a time, and through each, God has been faithful.*



“

*WE SENSED THAT HE WOULD PROVIDE FOR OUR NEEDS AND FOR THE NEEDS OF OUR FUTURE CHILDREN, AND THAT ALL HE WAS ASKING WAS FOR US TO SAY “YES” AND STEP FORWARD IN FAITH.*

**OUR JOURNEY BEGAN** when we felt prompted to attend a foster and adoption interest meeting. At the time, we had plenty of reasons to hesitate. We were in our early 20s, finances were tight, and we had questions about insurance, college, and what else would be expected of us as parents. Yet as the meeting went on, God stirred both of our hearts. We sensed that He would provide for our needs and for the needs of our future children, and that all He was asking was for us to say “yes” and step forward in faith.

A few months later, our two children were placed in our home. We felt unprepared and unsure, but we committed to prayer and to trusting that God would work through us, even when we didn’t know how.

As we navigated temper tantrums, sulking, and the challenge of building relationships with two pre-teens, God was at work in all of us. While He was working through us to grow our children, He was working though them to build us. In quiet moments, He taught me about His love. When my son resisted something that I knew was good for him, I sensed the Holy Spirit reminding me, “I want good things for

you, too. Just as you ask your son to trust you, you need to trust Me.”

As I tried to lead our children with encouragement, joy, and hope, God gently reminded me that He does the same for me. Through my children, I have learned more about God’s heart and my own than I ever learned from a sermon or worship song.

There have been seasons of joy and seasons of deep struggle—relational, mental, physical, and even a global pandemic. Yet in every season, God provided exactly what we needed: encouragement from friends, rest, new opportunities, and peace.

Recently, we have seen the Holy Spirit move powerfully as both of our children were baptized and began their own walk with Jesus. Three years ago, we could not have imagined where they are today, but God always knew His plan.

We began this journey expecting God to work through our family, but I didn’t realize how deeply He intended to work in me. Our journey continues, and I trust He will remain faithful, because He is a wonderful Father.

*And all who have been united with  
Christ in baptism have put on  
Christ, like putting on new clothes.*

**GALATIANS 3:27**





# Paradise Lost

## ■ 1. THE SERPENT'S STRATEGY (Genesis 3:1-5)

- He questioned the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's word (v. 1)  
"Did God really say...?"
- He distorted the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's word (v. 4)  
"You won't die!"
- He denied the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's word (v. 5)  
"...you will be like God..."

## ■ 2. ADAM AND EVE'S CHOICES (Genesis 3:6)

- *Eve's choice:* She \_\_\_\_\_ the lie.
- *Adam's choice:* He \_\_\_\_\_ in silence.

## ■ 3. SIN'S FALLOUT (Genesis 3:7-13)

- \_\_\_\_\_ replaced innocence. (v. 7)
- \_\_\_\_\_ replaced intimacy. (v. 8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ replaced honesty. (vv. 12-13)

## ■ 4. GOD'S RESPONSE (Genesis 3:9, 14-24)

- He \_\_\_\_\_ them out. (v. 9)
- He \_\_\_\_\_ consequences. (vv. 14-19)
- He \_\_\_\_\_ a Rescuer. (v. 15)



BLANKENBAKER CAMPUS

# Alaina's Story

*Growing up, I didn't live with my biological parents. My mother went to prison for drugs when I was only 5 months old, and my father and my sister didn't live nearby. I was raised by a family friend I called Aunt Carolyn.*



**WHEN I WAS 9**, Aunt Carolyn passed away, and I went to live with my grandmother and aunt and uncle. However, my grandmother also died a few months later. I remained with my aunt and uncle until the man I believed was my father said he wanted me to live with him and my sister.

That lasted only a few months, until Child Protective Services removed us from the home. Once CPS got involved, my biological sister was adopted and I was given the option to move to a children's home.

I lived at the children's home from ages 11 to 17 with eight other girls and two house parents. Though many people view children's homes negatively, this one was filled with love. The director himself had grown up in one and understood what we needed.

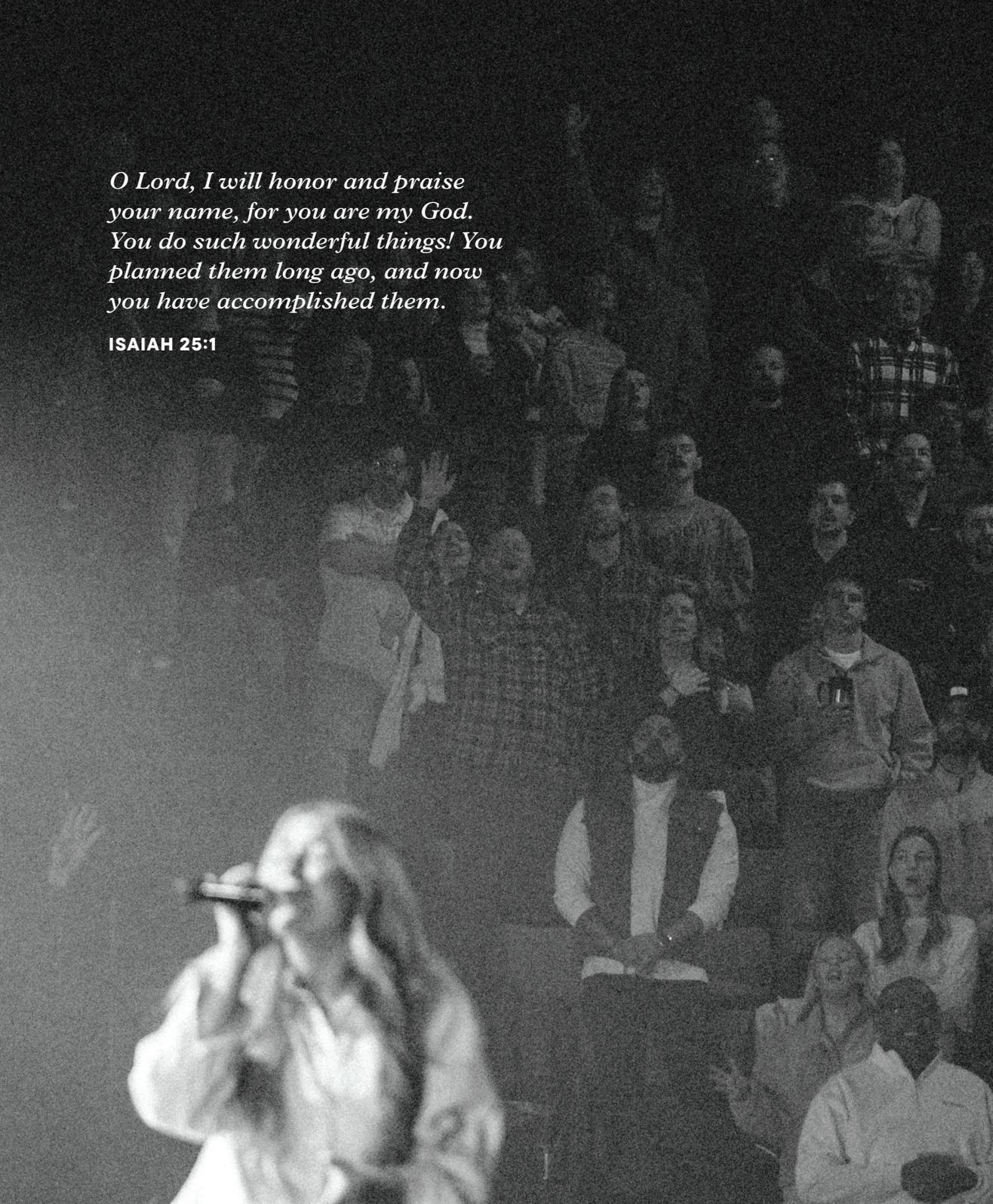
When I was 16, my house parents had to leave. Losing them sent me into a dark place. During that time, I entered a toxic relationship, but after it ended, I realized I needed change. I called my youth pastor, and that night I opened my heart to Christ.

In January 2024, my former house parents gained custody of me, and the following January, they adopted me. Looking back, I see how God worked behind the scenes. My adoptive mom always says you can be a victim or a victor. Through Christ, I've learned I'm a victor—and I'm grateful for every step God used to bring me home.

“

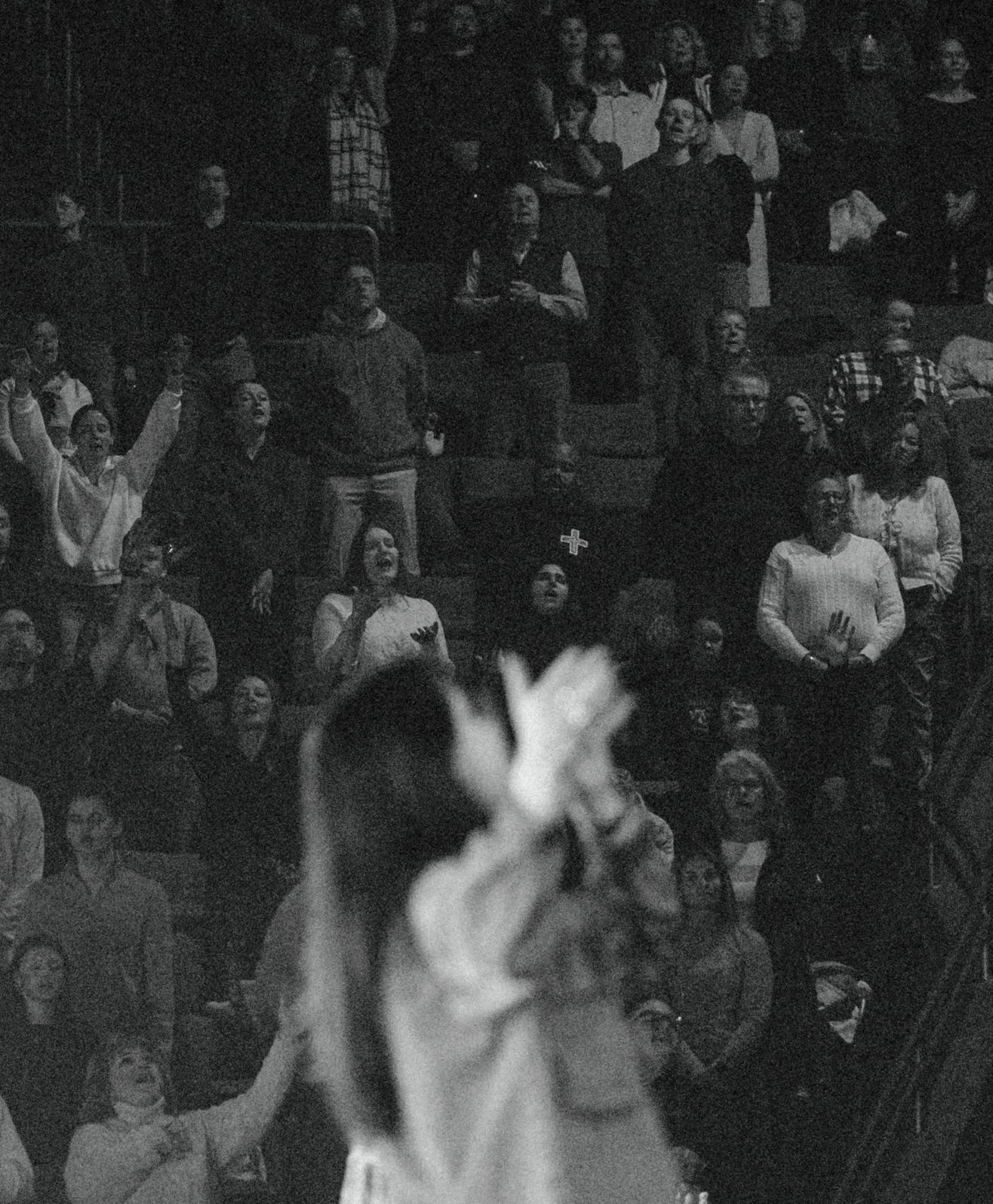
*LOOKING BACK, I SEE HOW GOD WORKED BEHIND THE SCENES. MY ADOPTIVE MOM ALWAYS SAYS YOU CAN BE A VICTIM OR A VICTOR. THROUGH CHRIST, I'VE LEARNED I'M A VICTOR—AND I'M GRATEFUL FOR EVERY STEP GOD USED TO BRING ME HOME.*

”



*O Lord, I will honor and praise  
your name, for you are my God.  
You do such wonderful things! You  
planned them long ago, and now  
you have accomplished them.*

**ISAIAH 25:1**



# Don't Open the Door

■ **GENESIS 3:15:** “*And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.”*

- This prophecy is all about \_\_\_\_\_!

■ Cain is gifting \_\_\_\_\_ of his crops to the Lord. (*Genesis 4:3*)  
Abel is gifting \_\_\_\_\_ of his lambs to the Lord. (*Genesis 4:4*)

- God’s rejection of Cain’s offering wasn’t exclusively about the \_\_\_\_\_ of Cain’s \_\_\_\_\_. It wasn’t exclusively about the \_\_\_\_\_ of Cain’s \_\_\_\_\_. It was about Cain’s \_\_\_\_\_. (*Genesis 4:5*)

■ **GENESIS 4:6-7:** “*‘Why are you so angry?’ the Lord asked Cain. ‘Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.’”*

- God \_\_\_\_\_ Cain and offers him a \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ leads to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ leads to \_\_\_\_\_. (*James 1:14-15*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ is not a \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is when you \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_.

*Notice:* Cain never \_\_\_\_\_. (*Genesis 4:6-8*)

## ■ APPLICATION

- \_\_\_\_\_ to God’s warning. (*Genesis 4:6-7*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ to God and others. (*James 5:16*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ temptation. (*Ephesians 6:10-18*)



ELIZABETHTOWN CAMPUS

# Emma's Story

*I'm a 12-year-old who grew up in a Christian home. From a young age, I was taught about God, Jesus, and the Bible.*



**GOING TO CHURCH**, praying, and learning Bible stories have always been a normal part of my life. I have always known God, but as I've gotten older, my relationship with Him has become more personal.

I began thinking about baptism in 2023, but I didn't really understand what it meant, that it was more than being dunked under water. I was doing gymnastics at the time—about 20 hours a week—and that often distracted me from my relationship with God. I quit gymnastics the following year, and it was around then that my faith began to really grow.

That same year, I began regularly attending *Middle School Ministry*. I learned more about the true meaning of baptism, but I still didn't feel quite ready and knew I had a few more things

to learn. Then, last year at *Middle School Camp*, I decided to get baptized.

God had impacted my life so much that I knew I needed to tell other people about Him. I

started by simply inviting my friends to *MSM* and church, but over time I felt called to do more. That led me to begin hosting Bible studies in my home. On Sunday nights, I invited middle school girls to come over to learn, worship, and, of course, have snacks!

God gives each of us a special gift, but we have to recognize those gifts and put them into action.

“

***GOD HAD IMPACTED MY LIFE SO MUCH THAT I KNEW I NEEDED TO TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT HIM.***

*Your love for one another  
will prove to the world that  
you are my disciples.*

**JOHN 13:35**





SE RECOVERY

# Andrea's Story

*For many years, my life was defined by survival, not freedom.*



“

*THROUGH A SERIES OF EVENTS THAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS DIVINE INTERVENTION, JESUS REACHED INTO MY LIFE AND BEGAN TO CALL ME BY NAME. HE PLACED PEOPLE IN MY PATH WHO SAW ME NOT FOR WHAT I HAD DONE, BUT FOR WHO HE CREATED ME TO BE.*

”

**I WAS TRAPPED** in cycles of sex trafficking and drug addiction that stripped me of my identity, my voice, and my hope. What began as choices made from pain eventually became chains I could not break on my own. I believed the lies spoken over me. I was disposable, unworthy of love, and beyond redemption...that's what I thought. Each day felt like a fight to stay alive. I ended every night with deeper shame and despair.

Addiction became my escape and my prison. Drugs numbed the trauma, the pain, but they also kept me bound to the life I wanted to escape. I was exhausted in every way. I cried out to God more than once, but deep down I didn't believe He could see me where I was, or that He would want me if He did. I felt too broken, too dirty.

But God! He met me in the darkness.

Through a series of events that can only be described as divine intervention, Jesus reached into my life and began to call me by name. He

placed people in my path who saw me not for what I had done, but for who He created me to be. For the first time, I encountered love that didn't demand anything from me and grace that **DID NOT** run out. Slowly, the walls I had built to survive began to come down.

Surrender did not happen all at once. Healing is a process, and recovery requires courage, accountability, and faith. But day by day, Jesus replaces my shame with truth, my fear with peace, and my addiction with hope. Where I once felt owned and controlled, I now experience freedom. Where I once believed I had no future, God reveals to me **PURPOSE**.

Today, I am walking in sobriety and restoration. I am no longer defined by my past, but by the love of Christ who rescued me. Jesus didn't just save me *from* something...He saved me *for* something. My story is living proof that no one is too lost, too broken, too dirty for God's redeeming power. If He can do this for me, He can do it for anyone.

# Next Steps



## Let's Connect

We're all about showing up for people one at a time. So, wherever you are in life or whatever you're walking through, you matter to us—and we'd love to get to know you.



## Find Your Crew

Groups are a great way to do life together, caring for one another as we build relationships and grow in faith. Everybody needs a crew...and yours is waiting for you! Check out our on-campus, home, and online group options.



## Celebrating Baptisms

Baptism serves as a beautiful symbol of the burial of the old self and the resurrection of new life in Christ. If you are interested in learning more about baptism, we invite you to visit the Baptism page on our website.



## Church News

From local church events to connection opportunities, there's something for everyone here at Southeast! Stay up to date weekly with Church News.

CONNECT WITH US!



IT ALL STARTS  
IN A GROUP!



LEARN MORE



LEARN MORE





## Give

In His goodness, God allows us to partner with Him by giving back a portion of what He has blessed us with, using our financial gifts to change lives for eternity. We give because Jesus gave everything.

GIVE



## Serve With Us

God has uniquely gifted each of us. While our talents may look different, each is essential in making Southeast a place known for sharing the love of Jesus. No matter our passion, there is a place for each of us to serve—including you!

I'M READY!



## Resources

Check out past sermons, dive deeper with podcasts, explore Bible plans, and more on the Resources page of our website.

EXPLORE



## MOVE

God is on the move at Southeast! See the latest updates on how we are partnering with Him in Kingdom-building work as we move **together** as one church, **forward** in our mission, and **closer** to those who need Jesus.

LET'S MOVE!



## Follow Us

Stay connected to how God is moving in and through Southeast!



@SE.CHURCH

# Events



## Southeast Camps

Life-change happens in unforgettable ways at a Southeast Camp, where campers make lasting friendships and learn about Jesus in a safe, fun environment.

We have camps for elementary, middle, and high school students, as well as our friends with special needs and kids who have been fostered and adopted.

LEARN MORE  
AND REGISTER



## Basic Needs Drive: Baby Care Essentials

*Collection Dates: March 16-29*

Please help struggling families in our community by donating diapers, pacifiers, and other baby care essentials. Scan the QR code for a complete list of needed items.

LEARN MORE



## Celebrate Easter with Southeast

*April 2-5*

Easter is the story of a new day, when hope rose from the grave and everything changed. Through Jesus, the broken can be restored, the empty can be filled, and the lost can be found. This is the promise of Easter—**your story made new.**

SCAN FOR DETAILS



**STAY UP TO DATE  
WITH SOUTHEAST!**

**SOUTHEAST**  
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**SE.CHURCH**