

**Tainted Reflection**  
**A Whistle-Stop Tour**

**His purpose is accomplished when His people reflect His image by and through our conformity to His Son.**

**Romans 8:28-29 (HCSB)**

**28** We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For those He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers.

**Colossians 1:19-20 (HCSB)**

19 For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him,  
20 and through Him to reconcile everything to Himself by making peace through the blood of His cross— whether things on earth or things in heaven.

**To Reflect—Not Create—His image**

**Romans 1:25 (HCSB)**

**24-25** So God said, in effect, “If that’s what you want, that’s what you get.” It wasn’t long before they were living in a pigpen, smeared with filth, filthy inside and out. And all this because they traded the true God for a fake god, and worshiped the god they made instead of the God who made them—the God we bless, the God who blesses *us*. Oh, yes!

**The Beginning Shades of the Taint**

**Genesis 3:17-18 (HCSB)**

**17** And He said to Adam, “Because you listened to your wife’s voice and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘Do not eat from it’:

**The ground is cursed because of you.** You will eat from it by means of painful labor all the days of your life.

**18** **It will produce thorns and thistles for you,** and you will eat the plants of the field.

## **Humanity Goes Their Own Way**

### **Genesis 3:24 (HCSB)**

24 He drove man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.

### **Isaiah 53:6 (HCSB)**

6 We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished Him for the iniquity of us all.

## **The Taint Deepens**

### **Isaiah 59:1-16 (HCSB)**

Indeed, the Lord's hand is not too short to save,  
and His ear is not too deaf to hear.

2 But your iniquities have built barriers  
between you and your God,  
and your sins have made Him hide His face from you  
so that He does not listen.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood  
and your fingers, with iniquity;  
your lips have spoken lies,  
and your tongues mutter injustice.

4 No one makes claims justly;  
no one pleads honestly.

They trust in empty and worthless words;  
they conceive trouble and give birth to iniquity.

5 They hatch viper's eggs  
and weave spider's webs.

Whoever eats their eggs will die;  
crack one open, and a viper is hatched.

6 Their webs cannot become clothing,  
and they cannot cover themselves with their works.  
Their works are sinful works,  
and violent acts are in their hands.

7 Their feet run after evil,  
and they rush to shed innocent blood.

Their thoughts are sinful thoughts;  
ruin and wretchedness are in their paths.  
8 They have not known the path of peace,  
and there is no justice in their ways.  
They have made their roads crooked;  
no one who walks on them will know peace.  
9 Therefore justice is far from us,  
and righteousness does not reach us.  
We hope for light, but there is darkness;  
for brightness, but we live in the night.  
10 We grope along a wall like the blind;  
we grope like those without eyes.  
We stumble at noon as though it were twilight;  
we are like the dead among those who are healthy.  
11 We all growl like bears  
and moan like doves.  
We hope for justice, but there is none;  
for salvation, but it is far from us.  
12 For our transgressions have multiplied before You,  
and our sins testify against us.  
For our transgressions are with us,  
and we know our iniquities:  
13 transgression and deception against the Lord,  
turning away from following our God,  
speaking oppression and revolt,  
conceiving and uttering lying words from the heart.  
14 Justice is turned back,  
and righteousness stands far off.  
For truth has stumbled in the public square,  
and honesty cannot enter.  
15 Truth is missing,  
and whoever turns from evil is plundered.  
The Lord saw that there was no justice,  
and He was offended.  
16 He saw that there was no man—  
He was amazed that there was no one interceding;  
so His own arm brought salvation,  
and His own righteousness supported Him.

## **God's Vision for His Creation**

### **Isaiah 65:17-25 (HCSB)**

17 "For I will create a new heaven and a new earth;  
the past events will not be remembered or come to mind.

18 Then be glad and rejoice forever  
in what I am creating;  
for I will create Jerusalem to be a joy  
and its people to be a delight.

19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem  
and be glad in My people.

The sound of weeping and crying  
will no longer be heard in her.

20 In her, a nursing infant will no longer live  
only a few days,

or an old man not live out his days.

Indeed, the youth will die at a hundred years,  
and the one who misses a hundred years will be cursed.

21 People will build houses and live in them;  
they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 They will not build and others live in them;  
they will not plant and others eat.

For My people's lives will be  
like the lifetime of a tree.

My chosen ones will fully enjoy  
the work of their hands.

23 They will not labor without success  
or bear children destined for disaster,  
for they will be a people blessed by the Lord  
along with their descendants.

24 Even before they call, I will answer;  
while they are still speaking, I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox,  
but the serpent's food will be dust!

They will not do what is evil or destroy  
on My entire holy mountain,"  
says the Lord.

**How is God Going to Get His World and His People  
From the Bleakness of Isaiah 59 to the Glory of Isaiah 65?**

**Luke 2:8-14 (HCSB)**

**8** In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. **9** Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: **11** Today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David. **12** This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in cloth and lying in a feeding trough.”

**13** Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:

14 Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and peace on earth to people He favors!

**God Saturates His People with His Word to Remove the Taint**

**Isaiah 55:6-13 (HCSB)**

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found;  
call to Him while He is near.

7 Let the wicked one abandon his way  
and the sinful one his thoughts;  
let him return to the Lord,  
so He may have compassion on him,  
and to our God, for He will freely forgive.  
8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
and your ways are not My ways.”

This is the Lord’s declaration.

9 “For as heaven is higher than earth,  
so My ways are higher than your ways,  
and My thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For just as rain and snow fall from heaven  
and do not return there  
without saturating the earth  
and making it germinate and sprout,  
and providing seed to sow  
and food to eat,

11 so My word that comes from My mouth  
will not return to Me empty,  
but it will accomplish what I please  
and will prosper in what I send it to do.”

12 You will indeed go out with joy  
and be peacefully guided;  
the mountains and the hills will break into singing before you,  
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thornbush, a cypress will come up,  
and instead of the brier, a myrtle will come up;  
it will make a name for Yahweh  
as an everlasting sign that will not be destroyed.

### ***The New Covenant—Image-Bearing Restored***

#### **Jeremiah 31:31-34 (HCSB)**

**31** “Look, the days are coming”—this is the Lord’s declaration—“when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. **32** This one will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant they broke even though I had married them”—the Lord’s declaration. **33** “Instead, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days”—the Lord’s declaration. “I will put My teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people. **34** No longer will one teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they will all know Me, from the least to the greatest of them”—this is the Lord’s declaration. “For I will forgive their wrongdoing and never again remember their sin.”