



*REBOOT: "Restored"

Bible Text: Genesis 1:27-31

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So, how many of us use a laptop, data-enabled mobile device, or a computer, or have kids or grandkids that do? All of us, of course!

I'm not young enough to be part of the millennial generation - the first generation to grow up never knowing a world without the internet. But my first educational stop of many, in the *1970's (*I know, scary picture*) was training as a computer programmer.*

And I learned quickly that if your computer got stuck, you could always press and hold three buttons; *CTRL+ALT+DEL. Doing this would restart your program, or restart your computer.

How many of us have had some kind of a problem that required us doing just that to fix, restart or reboot things? **Again, all of us have.**

*So, I thought – what a good name for a sermon series!

But, even Bill Gates admits that weird "restart" / "reboot" feature happened by accident. Listen to this clip from a Harvard interview. *

*But even more serious errors happen, right? How many of us have ever had our computers go to the **"blue screen of death"* that caused us to say, "Oh fudge!" or something less socially acceptable? It can happen even with the most recent Windows 10 computers!

A few years ago, it happened to me. I thought, "OK – *that's it, I am buying a Mac!*" *I ditched my PCs, bought a refurbished MacBook, and thought I had it made - until this little spinning wheel popped up and wouldn't quit.* The only fix was to reboot the operating system!

*So, the short lesson is this. There is no technological "safe zone" where you can avoid rebooting your computer from time to time.

* It turns out it's also true in life! And it's not a bad thing to go back to the beginning! **Who could look at what we have made of our lives and world and not think that might be a good idea? Amen.**

You may not have realized it before, but the idea of a **"reboot"* or *"restart"* was in the Bible, long before computers were invented!

* Despite our personal and environmental and political sins, according to Romans 8:19: ***"Creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God."***¹ * Turns out, the world is counting on Christians to restore life to God's design and purpose.

* So, if you think about it that way, the world is God's loving creation, and calls us to accept who we were created from the start to be - so that the world, too, can be what God created it to be.

I love Sally Lloyd-Jones words: **"God wrote 'I love you' in all creation and in every heart. He created it all to cause our hearts to sing."*²

And that means, creation is precious, beloved of God. And human lives, including yours are God's most precious resource!

* That's in our text today. So, open your Bible to Genesis 1:27-31:

"So God created humans in his own image, in the image of God, he created them; male and female he created them." ...³

God also had a plan for us to love and care for the earth: * ***"God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and tend and care for it..."***⁴

In Genesis 1:31, we see the sense of love God has for all creation:

"God saw all that he had made, and indeed, it was very good."⁵

¹ Romans 8:19, *New Revised Standard Version Bible*. Copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

² Sally Lloyd Jones, *Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing*, Copyright 2012, Zonderkidz, Division of Zondervan Press: Grand Rapids, MI.

³ Op. Cit. Genesis 1:27 (using "humans" instead of "humankind"), *New Revised Standard Version Bible*.

⁴ Genesis 1:28, paraphrased by the author with an alternate translation of the Hebrew word for "dominion over."

We all bear God's image. **So, what kind of *reboot do we need? Who is there today that we sometimes don't regard as precious?**

*The refugee? Isn't the refugee made in God's image, too? Or people of another ethnicity? Aren't they also made in God's image?

I could go on. Elderly people, young people, the disabled, the poor or homeless, gay folks. These are not demographics – they are people like you and me, with the same hopes, dreams. *

So, what do we do? We remember our design by the Creator. *God created us, all of us in God's image, and said **"very good!"** And when we forget that, or fail or sin, God can help reboot our lives.

*We don't have to be perfect, thank God, or I'd be out of luck and so would you! But God can forgive us and help us begin again!

Think about it. Consider the Biblical family tree of God's people. *It's pretty fascinating - it reads like daytime drama or Netflix miniseries.

- * **Adam and Eve just had to do the one thing God said "don't do."**
- * **Cain murdered his brother in a fit of rage.**
- * **Abraham had a wandering eye and Sarah laughed at God.**
- * **Jacob was a liar and stole his brother's inheritance.**
- * **Samson had a bad haircut and loved the wrong woman.**
- * **Moses murdered in anger, stuttered, and made excuses.**
- * **Miriam danced and sang at the death of the Egyptians.**
- * **King David sent a friend to death, had an affair with his wife.**
- * **Jonah ran away from the calling of God.**
- * **Amos' only training as a preacher was fig-tree pruning.**
- * **Isaiah said he was a sinner, a man of "unclean lips."**

⁵ Ibid, Genesis 1:31, paraphrased.

***And Jeremiah, Jeremiah was a bullfrog. (I know-wrong Jeremiah!)
No, Jeremiah tried to avoid God's call, saying he was too young.**

*And the New Testament, our Christian family tree? Well, Jesus was perfect, but his followers not so much!

***Peter denied Jesus three times.**

***Martha was a worry-wart and Mary was accused of being lazy.**

***Mary Magdalene had a bad reputation.**

***James and John were only looking after themselves.**

***Paul was an accessory to murderer and persecutor of Christians.**

***Thomas doubted the Resurrection.**

***John talked in riddles, had weird visions and was called crazy.**

My point is this. *The history of God's people is not a history of perfect people – it is a history of redemption and restarts! *And He can redeem, reboot and restart your life and mine!

That message runs through the *Old and New Testaments from beginning to end. When we turn to God, our lives can begin again.

****"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit. I will replace your heart of stone with a heart that beats with life..." (Ezekiel 11:19)⁶***

****"Anyone in Christ is a new creation; the old is gone, and the new is come." (II Corinthians 5: 17)⁷***

*Our past doesn't have to define us. With God all things become NEW. Your life can be "rebooted" and be more than what it's been.

You can begin to live the life you were designed to live. ****"This one thing I do; forgetting what is behind, I press on toward the higher calling of God in Christ Jesus."***⁸ (Philippians 4:13-14)

⁶ Ezekiel 11:19, paraphrased by the author from the NRSV and Eugene Peterson's "The Message."

⁷ Philippians 3:13-14, paraphrased by the author.

***And if that's true for us - and it is - there is hope for the world! ***

But we have to choose to follow Him! If you aren't following Him, who are you following? Your own way? Your own wisdom? How's that working out for you? How's that working out for the world?

Without God, life is too hard - but with God all things are possible.

I love what Ann Lamott says, *"I don't know much, but I understand how entirely doomed I am without God."*⁹

The Good News is that God is still redeeming us and redeeming the world. THANKS BE TO GOD!

Let us pray.

⁸ Op. Cit. Philippians 3:13-14, paraphrased by the author.

⁹ Anne Lamott, [Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith](#), Copyright © 2000, Anchor Press: Ann Arbor, p.108.