

GRACE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH – *NARRATIVE THEOLOGY*

When we look at what God has been doing through the ages, we realize that He's weaving a magnificent story of hope and redemption for our entire world, and that each of us has a significant role to play in His story.

Before the beginning of time, God lived in relationship with Himself (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit). When He created us, He created us to be relational beings also, living in harmony with God, each other, and creation. Our job was to look after this world, which He entrusted to us, having rule and reign over it.

Since we were created in the image of God, we were created with a will, having the ability to choose. Exercising our volition, we disobeyed God when Satan tempted us. At that point, sin and brokenness, a fallenness from the beings we were created to be, became a state of being in our world.

God immediately and redemptively intervened. The Bible, which we understand to be written by people who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, documents the countless ways God sought to restore that close relationship with us. God patiently revealed Himself to the nation of Israel, refusing to give up on the people He chose to represent Him to the world, even when they demonstrated mankind's inability to make consistently good choices.

God knew that His final act to restore our lost relationship with Him would require Him to send His son, Jesus. We believe that Jesus—conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary, a virgin girl—was God, in human form. He showed us in tangible ways what it means to live life as God intended it to be lived. Through His life, crucifixion, death, and resurrection, Jesus is our best and only hope for peace and reconciliation between God and mankind. Through Jesus, we have been forgiven.

God continues to bring reconciliation: to ourselves, to each other, to creation, and to the world around us. The Holy Spirit affirms, as children of God all those who trust Jesus, and empowers us with gifts—guiding, convicting, comforting, regenerating, and bringing us back into relationship with God and each another.

God again shows the world who He is through His people, the church. As the church is grounded and rooted in Christ, practicing spiritual disciplines and celebrating baptism and the Lord's Supper, we become a tangible expression of God's love. We embody the resurrected Christ, who lives in and through us, to a world yearning to be restored to what God intended for it.