

“But God”

By Mallori Boston

But God

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love in which he loved us, even though we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- by grace you have been saved” Ephesians 2:4-5

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. As the six days rolled by, God created light, darkness, beasts, crawling things, oceans and sea life by the power of his words. Then God created man, from his own breath, new life, the most valuable creation yet, and it was very good. And out of the man, came a helper fit for him; and God called her woman. God and man lived in perfect peace together. Man was able to be in the presence of a perfectly Holy God. God in his goodness gave the man and woman everything they needed. In his loving wisdom he gave them a command to not eat from the tree in the midst of the garden.

Then came the serpent. And the woman, being deceived yet also desiring knowledge and power did what God had told her not to do, and her husband followed her. Shame and guilt came over the man and woman like a weight they had never felt before. As they heard God coming to find them in the garden, they hid. They knew that something was different now. They were naked and ashamed, and they knew it. But God gave them clothes to wear. In God's justice he cursed the man and woman, a curse that all mankind would come to know; sin. The man and woman were cast out of the presence of God with no means to get back in his

presence. God and man are forever separated, because our holy God cannot be in the presence of sin.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love in which he loved us, even though we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ- by grace you have been saved” Ephesians 2:4-5

From Genesis to Revelation, God is always moving towards his people. It has always amazed me in Scripture to see countless times people rebelling against God. Even in the midst of God providing for them, they (and by they I also mean us) easily forget what God has done for them. Like Paul, I feel the need to remind myself of what my state before Christ was. Scripture says dead. Not sick, not broken but dead. There is no coming back to God on my own. There is no way to be alive on my own.

“But God”

What blows me away about God is that even though it was man’s sin that caused separation from Him, God himself made a way for us to be back in his presence. Without compromising any of His attributes; his justice, mercy, love and holiness, God provided Christ, who was and is always my greatest need.

I have struggled with doubt more than I care to admit. I can’t count how many times I have cried, prayed and pleaded with God, “I believe; help my unbelief” (Mark 9:24). That prayer has a desperation for deliverance from unbelief that I am far too familiar with. Yet, as God continues to purpose every event in my life to transform me into the likeness of his Son, I learn more and more of his faithfulness. In the midst of struggling with unbelief, our faithful God always has this one phrase that goes off in my head like a resounding bell; **“But God”**.

As I am so easily tempted to doubt, God reminds me to remember what he has done. Like Job, in my finite mind, I lean on my own understanding of most of life’s trials, which leads me to focus more on what my circumstance is and not on Who is in control of my circumstances. I need to remind myself that if God is willing to give his Son for us, to fulfill my greatest need, then I have

no reason to doubt. I would guess that maybe like me, you have struggled with unbelief. Although it's true that until God either calls us home or Christ returns, we may struggle with unbelief. But at the same time I believe that the Holy Spirit will enable us into trusting God. But in the meantime, I encourage you to take some time to meditate on Ephesians 2:4-5.

Focus on what it says about God, what attributes it highlights and how you can personally use it in your daily life. Scripture is full of these “**But God**” moments that I pray would be encouraging to you. When life seems chaotic, still, or painful, rest in the fact that God has already fulfilled your greatest need on Calvary's cross and you can trust him.