

Simply One Page-Fostering Freedom-Does humanity need fixing?

This piece was created from my own reflections and vision. I used ChatGPT as a tool to help shape the text from my original concepts and structure. The final form is the result of thoughtful revision motivated by my one page intent. Mike Haddorff 2634

There's a common way many of us have learned to read the biblical story. Humanity was created good. Humanity made a bad choice. Something broke.

From that point on, the story becomes about God stepping in, again and again, to deal with that brokenness. Sometimes through law. Sometimes through prophets. Ultimately, through Jesus and the cross, where the problem is fully addressed.

That framework is familiar. And in many ways, it feels accurate. We can all see that something is not right in ourselves, in our relationships, in the world.

But there's another way to look at the same story.

What if the issue is not simply that humanity became broken and now needs fixing? What if what we're seeing is the outworking of something that has been there from the very beginning?

Genesis describes humanity as made in the image of God. And whatever else that means, it includes the freedom to make choices.

Freedom is not a side feature. It is integral to what it means to be human. And where freedom exists, risk is unavoidable. Not just the risk of mistakes, but the possibility of living out of alignment with what is true.

We see this in small ways. I have assumed incorrectly on many occasions. My assumption creates a story in my head, and that story informs my beliefs and actions. My actions then align with what I've created, rather than what is actually true.

When I follow that thread, the results are painful. Fracture. Confusion. Even what we call sin. Not because I am made poorly, but because I am participating in ways that run against the grain of reality itself.

So instead of asking, "What is broken in me that God needs to fix?" We might ask a different question: "What does it mean to be free, and how am I using that freedom?"

From this angle, the biblical story begins to look less like a repair project and more like a relationship.

God is not scrambling to fix a defective humanity. God honors the freedom woven into creation, even when its misuse brings grief.

And yet, God does not remain distant.

In the incarnation, God fully enters this human condition, not to repair humanity from the outside, but to reveal and restore what it looks like to live in alignment with what is true.

We naturally think of humanity as broken and in need of fixing. But perhaps we might consider a different lens. Humanity was designed to be free. And that freedom, from the very beginning, has always carried both dignity and risk.

So as I slow down to ponder, am I trying to fix the fracture or learning to foster the freedom woven in from the beginning?