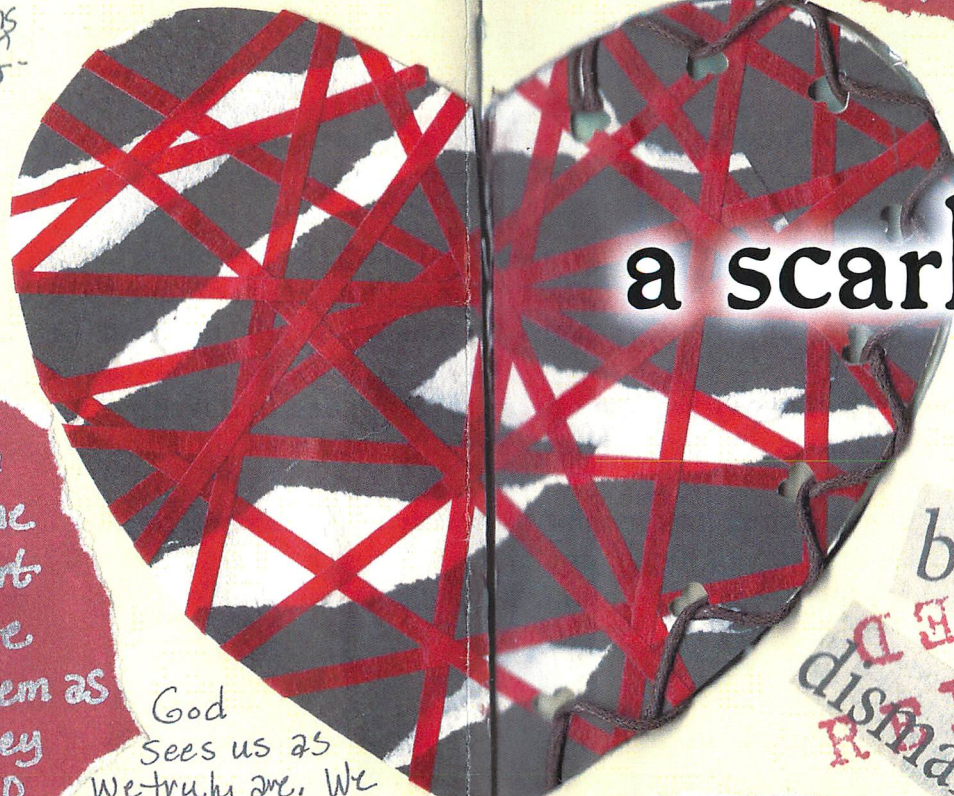


We are all born with a heart Condition. Left untreated, it is terminal. So, we self-medicate, thinking that we've got it all figured out. But the deeper we drink in our own toxic solutions, the stronger our addiction to rebellion. The thing about an addict is the relentless pursuit to mask the painful truth about one self. We are naturally bent toward obsessions, stinginess, and every kind of self-indulgence. Bit-by-bit, self-inflicted wounds leave a heart gashed and wrecked by a life of may hem.

The heart is hopelessly dark and deceitful, a puzzle no one can figure out. But I, God search the heart and examine the mind. I get to the heart of the human. I get to the root of things. I treat them as they really are - not as they pretend to be. Jer. 17:9-10

God
Sees us as
we truly are. We
can't manipulate, placate,
stipulate, or legislate the remedy.

Through the Holy Spirit, God exposes who we are and once we face the shocking truth of our own Condition, something amazing occurs. He extends mercy and grace, because that's how he treats sinners. I can totally relate to what Paul wrote to Timothy - I am the worst of the worst, but I am evidence that God is patient and loves to heal. True to his promise, he binds up wounds and heals brokenness.



This is a process. Just like an addict, I am just one decision away from a free-fall back into a chaotic mess - I am always aware that my human condition is fragile and teeters on the edge all the time.

Slain ^{guilty} a scarlet thread

reckless
crimes
burdens
dismal
cheating
stingy

My prayer for you to day is that you take a few moments to get a heart check. Invite God to examine you and by his mercy, clear the record. With his scarlet thread may he pull together the things that have rended your heart and weave a story of redemption in your life.

Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard. Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there...

~Genesis 37:36 & 39:1 (ESV)

1) A Mysterious Chapter In History

- A) The book of Genesis is "the book of beginnings." The stories of Genesis establish God's patterns for creation and life (prior to the Fall of mankind); and the results of the cancerous intrusion of sin into the world (after the Fall of mankind).**
- B) Genesis follows a logical progression from the beginning of all things (Genesis 1-3) to the poetically written pre-Patriarchal Period (Genesis 4-11), concluding with Noah. The book becomes much more detailed with the introduction of "Father Abraham," and introduction of the "Covenant" (promise) between God and mankind (12:1-3).**
- C) The rest of Genesis details the Patriarchs (the fathers), "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Genesis 12-36). The last part of Genesis focuses on Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Jacob (Genesis 37-50), and closes with Joseph's death and mummification in Egypt.**
- D) In the midst of a clearly progressing story (telescoping from very broad to very specific), there is one chapter which stands out as an oddity. Genesis 38 is the story of Judah (one of the 12 sons) having sex with Tamar, his daughter-in-law (it's kind of a sicko/wacky story), by which she becomes pregnant and delivers twins. Why such a random and embarrassing story?!**

2) The Mystery Is Revealed

- A) Each of the Gospel stories is written with an "audience" in mind, to reveal the identity of Jesus Christ to a large group of people. For example, Matthew is written with a particular "Jewishness." This is on display in Matthew 1, which records the lineage of Jesus Christ, focusing on the royal heritage of the Christ (cf. Genesis 49:8-12; 2 Samuel 7:11-16; Micah 5:1).**
- B) The genealogy is not exhaustive, but is theologically pointed to draw attention to Abraham, David, and Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:1). The genealogy recounts both good and bad kings, but most notably mentions five women culminating in Mary, mother of Jesus. Including women in male-centric genealogic culture was exceedingly rare, especially since all the women had questionable reputations, and all but Mary were Gentile converts.**
- C) The message of God's unconventional approach, inclusion of foreign nations, embracing of significant scandal, and choosing of the lesser over the more important, are all examples of the scarlet thread of God's redemptive message in Jesus Christ!**