

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of several blue feathers, likely from a peacock, with their intricate patterns and colors clearly visible. The feathers are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and texture, with some feathers in the foreground being sharper than others in the background.

# ***LIVING THE GOSPEL***

*THE GOD OF CREATION  
LOWERED HIMSELF FOR US  
THAT WE MAY PROSPER IN HIM*

**Foundation For God's Love, Genesis 1:26**

## Foundation For God's Love

- Crime witnesses trying to describe someone they saw
  - They will use words that describe their physical characteristics
  - Sometimes they will say they look like someone they both know
  - The idea is to produce an image where the person that looks like the drawing can be found
- This is what I felt like trying to understand God's kind of love
  - Biblical Hebrew uses the word, "Hesed"

## Foundation For God's Love

- “Hesed” is translated into English using a variety of different words/terms – **Psalm 85:10**
  - Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. **(NIV)**
  - Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. **(ESV)**
  - Lovingkindness and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed each other. **(NASB)**
  - Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed. **(NKJV)**

## Foundation For God's Love

- “Hesed” is difficult to translate because it stands for a cluster of ideas—love, mercy, grace, kindness wrapping up in itself all the positive attributes of God
  - There is no single English word (or two words, in the case of “steadfast love”) is sufficient
  - Yet, there must be a foundation it rests upon that will help us grasp a little deeper God’s love
    - Like an archeologist will discover a foundation of an ancient building and can make intelligent observations about it

## Scripture

- **Genesis 1:26 ESV**, 26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

## Foundation For God's Love

- When God created mankind, He placed within them His image or likeness
  - God blessed us with His characteristics to live through and respond to His creation
  - **Psalm 8:3-5 ESV**, 3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?
    - 5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings (*angels*) and crowned him with glory and honor.

## Foundation For God's Love

- When God created mankind, He placed within them His image or likeness
  - Just because we brought sin into His very good does not mean we no longer bear His image or likeness
  - It does not mean we are no longer crowned with glory and honor
  - Nor does it mean we can never step back up into the glory and honor granted us by God if we squander it
  - This is part of the definition of “hesed” – love that is unearned, undeserved, always desiring the best for

## Foundation For God's Love

- When God created mankind, He placed within them His image or likeness
  - This means we were created having the ability to love, rule and manage God's resources as God Himself would do
  - The Holy Spirit today gives us the ability to love, rule, manage as intended by God after salvation
  - Yes, it must battle with our old sinful nature still within us, but we have become possible... Can you say that with me?

## Foundation For God's Love

- What allows God's love to be steadfast, long-suffering, true?
  - What do I need to bring into my life allowing this kind of love to flow in and through me?
  - How can I move on from “full of potential” to “active practicing” loving and living as God created for me?

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- **Genesis 1:31 NIV**, 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.
  - Was God delighted in His creation?
    - **John 3:16 ESV**, “For God so loved the world”
    - **Psalm 104:31 ESV**, “May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- God created all living creatures to be an expression of His nature, His plans, and His loving care
  - **Matthew 10:29 NIV**, Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care (*will*).

## **We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”**

- Dominion is not a word we would think to look for answers about love, joy, peace...
  - Dominion - sovereignty or control
  - Hebrew words are built upon root word for understanding
    - Most then did not read so God needed to draw pictures in their minds using common everyday things and events
    - Biblical Hebrew word for “comfort” contains the root word for a nursing child

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- Dominion does carry the idea of ruling, subduing, managing in a way that God intended
  - The root part of the original Hebrew word interpreted dominion goes deeper and means, “to lower oneself”
    - Dominion by lower oneself
  - "To lower oneself" in the Bible means to voluntarily adopt a position of lower status, service, or submission to God while resisting the urge for pride or self-exaltation
    - It is described as a deliberate, conscious act of reducing one's own importance and relying on God's grace and wisdom

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- The root part of the original Hebrew word interpreted dominion goes deeper and means, “to lower oneself”
  - It is to remember that all of Creation belongs to God
  - Your life-God’s, Spouse/Children, Animals in your care, Work, The Earth
  - So as you are dominating, remember who you and who they are
  - How else will you know what is best for them (*part of hesed*)

## **We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”**

- The root part of the original Hebrew word interpreted dominion goes deeper and means, **“to lower oneself”**
- If Adam spoke in Hebrew he would have given his dog the name, “Kalav”, which means “like your heart”
  - Chaim Bentorah, “You want to learn about dominion, start with Sparky your dog. Come down to his level. Look into his eyes and see the loyalty, affection, desire to be with you and the unconditional love and ask yourself, “What does that tell me about His creator?” Old Sparky might just have given you an important lesson about your relationship with God.”

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- The root part of the original Hebrew word interpreted dominion goes deeper and means, “to lower oneself”
  - We see God demonstrating this in **Genesis 3:8 ESV**, And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day
    - I think this was a common, maybe a daily event they probably looked forward to
    - God still longs to come down to you in the relaxed part of the day to fellowship with you

## We begin to find answers in the Hebrew word, “dominion”

- The root part of the original Hebrew word interpreted dominion goes deeper and means, “to lower oneself”
  - We see the idea of “to lower oneself” in the New Testament
    - **Ephesians 5:21 NIV**, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”
    - Is this not the same teaching?

## We see God lowering Himself even deeper by walking into man's sinfulness

- **Genesis 3:6 NIV**, 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
  - Instead of lowering themselves
    - Instead of imitating their loving Creator
    - Instead of seeking God's wisdom and truth
  - They chose to allow pride a place in their heart

## We see God lowering Himself even deeper by walking into man's sinfulness

- I can almost see all the animals, maybe all of Creation, shaking their heads and thinking, “No, don't do it!”
  - They injected pride into their dominance and their relationship with God – Did it make a difference?
    - **Genesis 3:7 ESV**, 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
    - **Genesis 3:8b ESV**, “the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

## We see God lowering Himself even deeper by walking into man's sinfulness

- They injected pride into their dominance and their relationship with God and His “very good” creation – Did it make a difference?
  - It caused separation between their Creator and themselves
    - **Genesis 3:24 ESV**, 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

## We see God lowering Himself even deeper by walking into man's sinfulness

- They injected pride into their dominance and their relationship with God and His “very good” creation – Did it make a difference?
  - It caused separation between them and the work God gave them
    - **Genesis 3:17 NIV**, “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.

## We see God lowering Himself even deeper by walking into man's sinfulness

- We see God lowering Himself into man's sinfulness not just with a response of condemnation but looking through eyes of "hesed" answered, "What does mankind really need now?"
  - Redeemer - **Genesis 3:15 TLB**, "From now on you and the woman will be enemies, as will your offspring and hers. You will strike his heel, but he will crush your head."
  - Covering - **Genesis 8:21 NIV**, "The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them."

## We see God ultimately “lowering Himself” when He literally stepped out of heaven and into flesh

- **Isaiah 9:6 NIV**, For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
  - **Luke 2:10-11 NIV**, 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

We see God ultimately “lowering Himself” when He literally stepped out of heaven and into flesh

- **John 1:14 NIV**, 14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
  - Literally – “The Word pitched his tent among us”
- **John 1:29 ESV**, 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
  - Behold - see or observe a thing or person that is remarkable or impressive

## We see God ultimately “lowering Himself” when He literally stepped out of heaven and into flesh

- God didn't just bend down and look in our eyes
  - He took upon Himself the conditions of sinful mankind
  - **Philippians 2:7-8 TLB**, 7 but *(He)* laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking the disguise of a slave and becoming like men. 8 And he humbled himself even further, going so far as actually to die a criminal's death on a cross.
  - God is now justified to redeem everything lost in the Garden of Eden for those who walk through the Cross of Jesus

## Foundation For God's Love

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21 TLB**, 21 For God took the sinless Christ and poured into him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God's goodness into us!
  - **NIV**, "in him we might become the righteousness of God"
- Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we have been made possible
  - We can set aside our human pride and "become lower" so God can become greater
  - **John 3:30 TLB**, 30 He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

## Foundation For God's Love

- **John 3:30 TLB**, 30 He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less
  - Sounds like “to lower oneself”
    - This is the answer to all your relationship problems
    - Peacefulness, Fear/Anxiety, Self-Doubt, Addictions, Trials/Temptations, Eternal Questions

## Foundation For God's Love

- How Randy can I allow Jesus to become greater in my life?
  - Choosing to shift focus from yourself to Him
  - A process involving dedicated time in prayer and Bible study,
    - Surrendering your will daily, worshiping, serving others
    - Actively living out biblical teachings like loving enemies and using your gifts for His glory
  - It's about intentionally making Jesus central in decisions, actions, and heart
    - Allowing Him to increase as you decrease, finding strength and purpose in His presence



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