

5/16 04 - Genesis 1:28-31 -- "The Creation Mandate - Jesus' Mission"

<> Foundation: We looked at the Creation Mandate last week

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Procreation (be fruitful & multiply) | Gen 1:28 |
| 2. Filling the Earth | Gen 1:28 |
| 3. Subduing the Earth | Gen 1:28 |
| 4. Dominion over creatures | Gen 1:28 |
| 5. Labor | Gen 1:28 |
| 6. Weekly Sabbath | Gen 2:3 |
| 7. Marriage | Gen 2:24-25 |

We talked in depth about what the Creation Mandates look like especially in the areas of living life: being fruitful, subduing the Earth, taking dominion, laboring for God. Summary: We are to be living out our lives for the Glory of God: this affects our families, our politics, our workplace, our schooling, etc.

You see: Life is bigger than you are, life is bigger than your marriage, your school, your job, your car, your vacation!

<> Illustration: child states "I thinked"... why?

A little toddler just learning to talk runs to her Mommy and says, "Mommy, Mommy, I thinked about what you just said." And Mommy says, "No, no dear. It's not thinked, 'I thinked.' It's, 'I thought.'"

Now think about this for a moment. This little encounter is amazingly human. It's all about what human beings are actually like. It's this little girl, this human being, with a desire to know and to understand, and her God-given ability to learn, has learned a rule of the English language. She has learned that if you want to form a verb in the past tense, you generally add an -ed to the present tense. Now, what parent has ever had that conversation with their child? Or said at about 18 months to their child, "Dear, you're going to want to conjugate the language in the past tense." You don't have to do that because you've given birth to a child; who never, ever, ever stops thinking.

Here are the lessons:

- **We are interpreters & thinkers.**
 - You need to know that, as human beings, we do not live life based on the facts of our experience, but based on our interpretation of the facts. We're never just responding to the situations, and relationships around us. We're never objectively responding to our circumstances. We always bring a certain lens, we always bring a certain interpretation, and we always have a certain perspective that shapes the way we deal with life.
- The only way we can properly understand anything is to examine what it was designed to be when it was 1st made.

<>God's awesome love for us demonstrated for us in Genesis.

- Invites us back to the beginning.
- Teaches us what Creation (us included) was designed to be when 1st made. What are some things we learn?
 1. God was before Creation. It is all about God, not me
 2. You and I are part of Creation designed to relate to God
 3. We are by nature, worshipers. It is not an issue of whether or not we worship, it is merely what we worship.

Some implications of these Truths:

- The Fall affected ALL of Creation: human beings, their relationships, nature (the world around us) and our thinking and interpreting so we need God's revelation to set our thinking straight!
- In Genesis 3:15 we receive the promise of restoration of Creation
- Jesus Christ came to reconcile to himself all things (Col 1:15-20)
*For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.** ” (Colossians 1:15–20, ESV)*
 - Jesus came to redeem the souls of sinners
 - Jesus came to restore the Creation back to right relationship

Jesus (His Church) is to be about restoring ALL of Creation: souls & culture

So let us go back to Genesis again this morning as interpreters and thinkers, let us go back with the TRUTH that God has revealed to us and learn some lessons:

<> The Bottom Line of Genesis 1&2:

You were created to be part of something big

Have you ever wanted to invest yourself in something worthwhile? Have you ever wondered why your life seems to lack meaning or purpose? Have you ever been disappointed when a position, achievement, possession, or relationship failed to fulfill you? Have you ever dreamed that somehow, some way you would be part of something truly great?

Allow me to teach you a term:

tran-scen-dence: the state of being beyond and outside of the ordinary range of human experience

Genesis is given by God to us to help us understand our place & how things were originally meant to be.

Examining Jesus work of restoration can help us understand our work.

- > ILL: It is a classic scene in western culture. She stands before the microphone, beautiful and poised, a finalist in the Miss America contest. The host asks her what she would like to accomplish during her reign and she says, "I would like to create world peace, solve world hunger, and liberate all the caged parakeets in the entire world." If you've seen, *Miss Congeniality* you know the joke – 'world peace'...

YET... there is something deeply and uniquely human about the desire for world peace and solving world hunger!

WHY? There is woven inside each of us a desire for something more—a craving to be part of something bigger, greater, and more profound than our relatively meaningless day-by-day existence.

Think about it: why do people climb Mt. Everest? Why does a 16yr old girl attempt to sail around the world?

- > Picture of Jessica Watson

Perhaps that's why we get hooked on politics, sports, or a myriad of causes that give us something to fight for.

We simply weren't constructed to live only for ourselves. We were placed on earth to be part of something bigger than the narrow borders of our own survival and our own little definition of happiness. The desire resides in each of us, and it is called transcendence. To transcend is to be part of something greater. We were created to be part of something so big, so glorious, so far beyond the ordinary that it would totally change the way we approach every ordinary thing in our lives. And in all of sin's blindness, brokenness, and rebellion, that desire to transcend has now been crushed.

Proofs: Being a fan in the stands with 65,000 other fans at the Super Bowl with everyone screaming at the top of their lungs as the kicker launches that last-second field goal gives us a feeling of transcendence. You hear it in the voice of the fan who says, "It's our year! Our time has come! We're going to win this one!" He sounds like he is a paid member of the team, yet he is not. The "we" language is transcendence. He has become part of something greater than his mundane workaday world. His connection to his local team has helped him, if just for a moment, to transcend the small boundaries of his average-guy world.

Politics: The local worker in the presidential campaign has much the same experience. No, he will probably never meet the candidate face to face; and yes, he is only running folding machines and stuffing boxes full of literature. But he is part of something transcendent. He has been told that this campaign could forever change the face of American politics. His campaign involvement has helped him escape the little world of his small college life to become an integral part of something bigger. If only for a moment, he has transcended.

This desire for transcendence is in all of us because God placed it there. He constructed us to live for more than ourselves. He designed us to want meaning, purpose, and consequence. We were not wired to be fully satisfied with self-survival and self-pleasure.

Maybe the beauty contestant isn't being so silly after all. Maybe in that moment she has gotten something right about world peace. Perhaps her desire for transcendence is a more beautiful part of her humanity than her physical beauty will ever be.

There is definitely an "above and more" positioning of human beings in the creation accounts of Genesis 1 and 2.

- Adam and Eve were not just the highest of the animals.
- The whole account presents them as being unique, different, and above the rest of the things that God made.

It is just as clear, too, that these two people were made for more than their own existence. They weren't placed in the garden for self-survival and self-satisfaction.

God immediately gave them a vision and commission that would take them far beyond the borders of their own needs and concerns = the Creation Mandate. Transcendence was a part of their humanity. They were given amazing capacities to do what no other creature could do. Anything less would be a subhuman existence.

<> The SO WHAT: Think about what this means for all of us who are the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. You and I were created for more than filling up our schedules with the self-satisfying pursuits of personal pleasure. We were meant to do more than make sure that all of our needs are fulfilled and all our desires are satisfied.

We were never meant to be self-focused little kings ruling tiny little kingdoms with a population of one. We were meant for far more than Planet Self – population One!

Sure, it's right for you to care about your health, your job, your house, your investments, your family, and your friends. It would be irresponsible to act as if none of those things mattered. Yet it is a functional human tragedy to live only for those things. It is a fundamental denial of your humanity to narrow the size of your life to the size of your own existence, because you were created to be an "above and more" being. You were made to be transcendent.

How about you? What is the big vision that you're working toward? What is the big dream you are investing in? What is your definition of the "good life"? When will you know that you have been successful? If you had it all, what would "all" look like?

I am afraid there are many people of faith who attend church each week, give regularly to God's work, know their Bible pretty well, and don't live overtly evil lives; but they have settled for "below and less" when they were created for "above and more."

The mistake that they have made is that they have shrunk their Christianity to the size of their own lives. They have taken God's grace and wisdom as an invitation to a better marriage, a better relationship with their children, a better extended family life, better success at work, etc. And there is a way that God's grace does invite me to all of these things.

BUT God invites you to so much more!

God's grace invites you to be part of something that is far greater than your boldest and most expansive dream. His grace cuts a hole in your self-built prison and invites you to step into something so huge, so significant that only one word in the Bible can adequately capture it. That word is glory.

Admit it. You're a glory junkie. That's why you like the 360°, between-the-legs, slam dunk, or that amazing hand-beaded formal gown, or the seven-layer triple-chocolate mousse cake. It's why you're attracted to the hugeness of the mountain range or the multi-hued splendor of the sunset. You were hardwired by your Creator for a glory orientation. It is inescapable. It's in your genes.

ILL: Tedd Tripp says, the penguins don't score one another as they dive off the ice into the frigid sea. There is no penguin announcer who says, "That was a 9.3, had high technical merit, but lacked artistic creativity."

But we're different. Ever seen a group of guys at a pool?

We were simply made for glory, but not just the shadow glories of the created world. We were made for the one glory that is transcendent—the glory of God. When you grasp this, your life begins to make a difference.

So does your life have purpose?

There are many people who have lived lives of purpose that didn't really make much of a difference. Every person's life is purposeful because every human being lives in pursuit of something.

It is a good thing to have purpose, but if your purpose isn't tied to God's glory, you have still denied your humanity as God created you!

<> Let's consider the glory-focus of Genesis 1 and 2. There are four transcendent glories (From *Quest For More*) that were created to be the life-shaping focus of every human being.

1. **God Glory.** We were made to be more connected to what is above us than to what is below us. We were made for the Glory of our Creator – we were made to experience.. To be part of... to be consumed by, and to live

for the one glory that is truly glorious – the Glory of God! WSC#1 - to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

WHAT IS THE SO WHAT? We were made by God for a purpose... The transcendent glory that every human being seeks for, whether he or she knows it or not, is not a THING or ACTIVITY, it is GOD HIMSELF!

Think about it – God’s presence with Adam and Eve in the Garden was the ultimate in transcendence! Before the Fall Adam & Eve lived for God’s glory – the Fall was when they began to live for their own purposes - their own glory.

We must rebel against the Fall and realize that because of Christ we can once again live our lives for the Glory of God!

- > 2. **Stewardship Glory.** Note when you read the story of Creation that God carefully created the world and THEN put ADAM & EVE in CHARGE. They were God’s resident managers.

The transcendence of humans is realized as humans actually rule and steward God’s created world. God’s command to manage HIS creation was a divine call to transcendence!

WHAT IS THE SO WHAT? When we shrink our stewardship to just caring for just ourselves then we have shrunk the size of God’s command! Be a rebel against the Fall – what is God calling you to be a steward of in His creation for His glory?

<>

3. **Community Glory.** Before Creation, God had perfect community in Himself – the fellowship of the Three Persons of the Trinity. When we are made in the image of God we need to realize that YOU and I were made to live in community just like God. At Creation, Adam & Eve were meant to live in community with one another and with their descendants – a huge web of interdependent human relationships which would model the fellowship of God Himself.

THE SO WHAT? We must not give into the call of the FALL which tells us to live independent, autonomous and self-sufficient lives. We were crated to have lives shaped by a constant pursuit of the glory of humble, dependent community. We were made to need one another! How? God has given us a variety of communities: family, neighbor, friends, church body, city, state and nation. If we are to bring glory to God we must seek to maintain Godly relationships. Yep, we must get out of our selfish, personal focuses that can never deliver the glory that getting outside of ourselves and living in Godly community can bring to God. The American ‘just me and God’ mentality is in opposition to God’s plan. That is why the church and family community is so important – God’s glory is best manifested in community.

4. **Truth Glory.** In both Genesis 1 & 2 (1:28-30 & 2:16) God dealt with man in a way unlike any other part of creation – He spoke commands to them! God, the King, the Creator of the universe was speaking divine truths to

the humans that He made.

Unlike the rest of creation, Adam & Eve were to transcend the boundaries of their own thoughts and receive God's revelation of truth as the sole guide for their lives. They were set apart from all the rest of Creation because God revealed the Glory of Truth to them alone! These truth words contained:

- God's knowledge
- the meaning and purpose of life
- a moral structure for living
- how they were to understand their human identity,
- and a call to human community and divine worship.

From what we are taught in Genesis 1-3 we see that Adam and Eve were given all the TRUTH from God that they needed to live their lives to the fullest by bringing glory to God.

SO WHAT? We must not be like Adam & Eve in the Fall and not depend upon God's Revealed Truth. So often we trade God's truth for our own pathetic reasoning. We must constantly go back to God's revealed truth to check ourselves against God's purposes for us!

<> THE BIG SO WHAT:

Perhaps you are saying, 'these are interesting ideas but how do I apply them?' I'm living life, I'm just trying to survive my kids getting through school, or paying my bills, or dealing with keeping my health.

Here is the deal – Because of the FALL there is a powerful pressure to not live your life for the glory of God and to trade the GLORIES that God has intended for our lives and instead limit your life to a selfish, shortsighted and self-focused life. We often settle for so much less when we were created for so much more – the Glory of God.

App: Marriage counseling. So often parties come seeking to be happy. Usually it is by fixing or changing their partner so that they will meet my needs. Marital success is achieved only when we understand God's plan – die to self:

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,”
(Ephesians 5:25–26, ESV)

Secret to marital happiness is to not focus on our own happiness (our own little world) but to focus on God's Glory and Plan for marriage. Yes, it will be hard, it may seem impossible – Just remember the words of Jesus: *“But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.””* (Matthew 19:26, ESV)

My challenge to you is this:

Don't forget WHO you are and WHAT you were created for!

Don't settle for less when you have been created for more.

When you realize that YOU were created by God for transcendence and you live with that as a focus of your life then there is a glorious joy to realizing that the mundane things of your life are sovereignly ordained by God for you to exercise your humanity for God's Glory!

If Genesis 1 is a welcome to transcendence, then Genesis 3 is about the tragedy of the shrinking of transcendence. Adam and Eve were created so that their lives would reach as wide as the kingdom and glory of God.

Jesus' work is our example & power:

This is why God sent his Redeemer Son to earth. He came to rescue us from ourselves and return to us participation in his transcendence. Jesus came to restore the Kingdom of God.

In his adoption we are restored to the God glory which is to be central to everything we do. In his church we are restored to the community glory in which we were built to participate. In freeing us from idolatry, rather than being ruled by the creation, we are restored to the stewardship glory over creation to which we were called. In the ministry of his indwelling Spirit, through Scripture, we are restored to the truth glory that was meant to be the interpretive lens of every human being since Adam took his first breath. His is a gorgeous work of rescue!

Not a popular idea – especially in light of social gospel errors. But walk with me Biblically about why Jesus came:

- Jesus' earthly ministry declaration by Jesus: Lk 4:17-21
"And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'" (Luke 4:17–21, ESV)
- Jesus' mission was to restore Creation to God's original plan – it was to preach the good news of the kingdom of God
"but he said to them, 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.'" (Luke 4:43, ESV)
- Kingdom:
"So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'" (Acts 1:6–8, ESV)

- It is important for us to read the WHOLE BIBLE. God has inspired and protected Genesis thru the ages for us so we can understand the big picture.
- As I read Genesis I am reminded that we in the American church have too small a view of Christ's work. If you ask a typical American why Jesus came they will say, "Jesus came to die on the cross to save us from our sins so that we can go to heaven."
- WIMPY! TOO SMALL as I look at the foundations.

The only way we can properly understand anything is to examine what it was designed to be when it was 1st made.

- While it is true that Jesus came to save sinners, I believe the Bible gives a much bigger picture of Christ's work. Turn with me to Paul's inspired words in Colossians:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. " (Colossians 1:15–20, ESV)

- Jesus is described as Creator, Sustainer AND RECONCILER of ALL THINGS! Have you every sung, "Joy to the World"?

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,*

- Jesus Christ came to redeem ALL of Creation.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. " (John 10:10, ESV)

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. " (John 10:10, NIV)

The SO WHAT?

<> Consider Tombings:

Listen to their ministry...

MISSIONARIES: P.M.I. - Khen & Rith Tombing

Pray for AMAZING GRACE (Abandoned Babies Home). The Lord led the Tombings' to start the Abandoned Babies Home in April 2009. For many years they knew babies were abandoned in the hospitals, streets and other areas of the towns but there was no one to take them. Not every abandoned baby will find a home. They began working on a legal aspect of taking abandoned babies. Pray for them as they work in this challenging ministry. About 12 years ago the RESCUE MISSION (Rescuing those enslaved financially by local money lenders) began with a purpose to bail out their church members enslaved by local money lenders on demonically high interest (60%-100% per annum). Their church paid off the debts and rescued them from this sinister enslavement. To date, they have rescued

40 people under this program. They are required to pay back all the capital money to the church after they are restored. Recipients of Rescue Mission Fund are also required to tithe faithfully & regularly. "Thank you for helping us to free other from financial enslavement."

Do you hear Creation Redemption in their work?

Yes, they preach the gospel, but they are also about Creation restoration!

Many grew up in an America where the gospel could just be preached because the blessings and the benefits of the kingdom

But our culture has once again been heavily impacted by the effects of the Fall. What does that mean? Part of our taking the restoration message of the Kingdom is that we must take more than just the message of salvation – we must reclaiming the world from the FALL – we must be about healing society, helping the poor and downtrodden, healing families, bringing truth to our workplace, to our schools, etc. It is then, that God will use our redemptive efforts to cause people to ask "Why?" so we can point them to the Creator Redeemer God!

What will that look like for OCC?

Let's start praying, talking & discussing what that looks like...

For the glory of Jesus Christ, our Creator & Redeemer!

Jesus & The Creation Mandate

May 16, 2010

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Genesis 1-3; Col 1:15-20

Pastor Mark W. Turner

The Creation Mandate

1-Procreation (be fruitful & multiply) Gen 1:28; 2. Filling the Earth Gen 1:28; 3.Subduing the Earth Gen 1:28; 4. Dominion over creatures Gen 1:28; 5.Labor Gen 1:28; 6. Weekly Sabbath Gen 2:3; 7. Marriage Gen 2:24-25

- We were created to be Interpreters & Thinkers
 - We live our lives on our interpretation of facts
- To properly understand something we must know what it was created for

God's Love Demonstrated for us in Genesis: We learn:

- God was before Creation — not about us, but God!
- You & I are part of Creation designed to relate to God
- We are by nature, worshipers. What do you worship?
- Fall affected ALL of creation
- Promise of restoration — Jesus came to reconcile all things (Col 1:20)

tran-scen-dence: the state of being beyond and outside of the ordinary range of human experience

- You were created to be transcendent
- You were created to pursue Glory - God's Glory

Learning Our Glory Focus:

1. God Glory - we are made to bring God glory
Fall: we live for glory of self
2. Stewardship Glory - we are made to steward for God's glory
Fall: we just steward our own selfish little world
3. Community Glory - we are made to live in community & fellowship.
Fall: we live independent, autonomous, self-sufficient lives
4. Truth Glory - We were made to receive & live by God's Revelation
Fall: we create our own truth and don't depend upon God

The So What:

- Because of the Fall there is a powerful pressure to live our lives for self, not for the Glory of God
- Don't forget who YOU were created by God to be!
 - Don't settle for less - it won't satisfy
 - Jesus' work is our example and power

Jesus & The Creation Mandate

May 16, 2010

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Genesis 1-3; Col 1:15-20

Pastor Mark W. Turner

The Creation Mandate

1-Procreation (be fruitful & multiply) Gen 1:28; 2. Filling the Earth Gen 1:28; 3.Subduing the Earth Gen 1:28; 4. Dominion over creatures Gen 1:28; 5.Labor Gen 1:28; 6. Weekly Sabbath Gen 2:3; 7. Marriage Gen 2:24-25

- We were created to be Interpreters & Thinkers
 - We live our lives on our interpretation of facts
- To properly understand something we must know what it was created for

God's Love Demonstrated for us in Genesis: We learn:

- God was before Creation — not about us, but God!
- You & I are part of Creation designed to relate to God
- We are by nature, worshipers. What do you worship?
- Fall affected ALL of creation
- Promise of restoration — Jesus came to reconcile all things (Col 1:20)

tran-scen-dence: the state of being beyond and outside of the ordinary range of human experience

- You were created to be transcendent
- You were created to pursue Glory - God's Glory

Learning Our Glory Focus:

1. God Glory - we are made to bring God glory
Fall: we live for glory of self
2. Stewardship Glory - we are made to steward for God's glory
Fall: we just steward our own selfish little world
3. Community Glory - we are made to live in community & fellowship.
Fall: we live independent, autonomous, self-sufficient lives
4. Truth Glory - We were made to receive & live by God's Revelation
Fall: we create our own truth and don't depend upon God

The So What:

- Because of the Fall there is a powerful pressure to live our lives for self, not for the Glory of God
- Don't forget who YOU were created by God to be!
 - Don't settle for less - it won't satisfy
 - Jesus' work is our example and power