

Main Points

- Made with purpose and value (culture of honor! And celebrating diversity)
 - i. Vocation
 - ii. Finite expressions of the Infinite
- *Imago Dei* → personality and morality → Responsibility & judgement
- Incarnation
- Body of Christ/community

Begin - What are we here for?

- How do we know we are doing what we should be doing?
- How do we decide which opportunities to accept and which to decline?
 - Opportunity costs

We need to know why we exist in order to know what is worth doing and what is right to do.

Last week we started at the beginning, today we'll start at the end:

- Eschatology - study of the end (the telos: purpose)
- Judgement
 - We will be judged according to what we have done!
 - Matthew 12:36
But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.
 - Words matter!
 - Matthew 25
 - Revelation 20
 - We do not earn salvation by doing good, but we are created to do good (Eph 2:1-10)
 - One of the truths about God most troubling to many contemporary people is that of JUDGEMENT.
 - Does it make you uncomfortable? Why?
- While deeply challenging, the reality of judgement should fill us with joy!
- What we do matters! The choices we make are important.
 - Even to God the infinite Creator.
- Each person will be judged according to what they had done.

Humans have been given Responsibility by God from the beginning

Responsibility points to value, meaningfulness, purpose!

What kind of responsibility? What kind of purpose were we created for?

Genesis 1:26-28 **memorize verse 26

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, "***Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.*** Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

- *Let us make...in our image* -- personality
- *So that ... they may rule* -- responsibility and authority
- *God blessed and commanded (v28)* -- goodness → morality
 - Placement in the Garden (Gen 2)
 - Beauty, provision, purpose
 - Priesthood and Temple (river, tree of life, Presence, cherubim, etc)

Personality, Authority and Morality are aspects of the Creator God who made us in the Divine Image (part of what it means to be like God)

- What do you think it means to "fill the earth and subdue it?"

Reproduce the good rule of God all throughout the world.

God made a world full of good things, including a garden of life and beauty where heaven and earth intersect.

Go and do likewise, expand the temple, and create good things.

Other Responsibilities Given to Humanity throughout the Scriptures

- Do good (Micah 6:8; James 1:27; Ephesians 2:10, et al)
- Love God and neighbor (Deut 6:4-5; Lev. 19:18; Mark 12:28-31, et al)
- Love one another (John 13:34-35, et al)
- Make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2)

All people know these responsibilities to some extent through conscience, culture, and relationships, but ultimately by biblical revelation.

- Our personalities, desires and ambitions are pointers to purpose
- These are not to be rejected but rejoiced in - but only in submission to God
- Desires must be disciplined.

Psalm 8

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory in the heavens.
Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.
When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?

You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.
You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:

all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,
the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

- We see God doing what God wants to do **in and through** human beings.
- Partnership is the foundation and the goal!
 - Not distance, avoidance, annoyance, animosity
 - like ANE myths, Greco-Roman mythology, 18th ce. Deism, contemporary liberal-progressive Christianity, and our own internal and cultural problems

WORSHIP PAUSE - *For a moment, consider the Wonder of the Incarnation!* -John 1

- Creation and Incarnation (not to mention Redemption) establish the value of humanity, collectively and individually.

APPLIED THEOLOGY

We are Finite Expressions of the Infinite

Psalm 8 - crowned them with glory and honor

1 Cor 11:7 - *a man...is the image and glory of God*

We, as a community, are to be God's Temple (heaven meeting earth)

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple. (cf. 1 Cor. 11 re: the Lord's Supper and the body)

- As a community, we are to form Christ's body.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 (12, 18-26)

12 Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

- We each have unique abilities and gifts and histories to share.
 - Irreplaceability
 - absolutely unique neural networks
 - Our experiences and processing can never be replicated
- Our appearances and experiences are not equivalent, but all are equally essential to the whole! (cf. James 2:1-13)
- God means business! *If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person*

Because we (all humans) are made with God's imprint, we are valuable and full of purpose!

- We honor (value) one another - CULTURE of HONOR

Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

- And we celebrate diversity

Revelation 7:9

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

- God's purpose: all peoples unified in loving purpose

- Cultures (tribal identities, languages) will be welcomed into God's eternal dwelling!
- We are not to be assimilated but to bring the very best of all that we are to the throne of the Lamb, our true King!

Everything we do matters, and that matters for everything.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- We are unique in personalities and particular purposes.
 - We have one purpose as Image bearers of the King - to live for God's glory: *fill, subdue and rule*
 - But we live that out in unique callings (vocations)
 - In our work, we fill, subdue and rule
 - Living as Jesus would live if he were we
 - Training to Reign
- Reigning in authority with our true identities! (Rom 8:17, Col 3:1-4, 2 Tim 2:12, Rev 20:1-6)
 - Rev 2:17 - Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.
 - Rev 2:26 & 3:21
To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations
To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Conclusion: Rehash a couple of points with testimonies

- Judgement and responsibility -**NO Cheap! NO Cheat!*
 - Personal testimony: standing firmly in my God-given value and taking responsibility for what I can and should influence and accomplish (but not more than that)
- Honor and Value
 - Valuing others in word and deed and attitude (Gospel, too)
 - Personal Testimony: intentionally identifying the beauty of the Creator within individuals and encouraging them

WEEKLY READINGS

1. PSALMS 1, 8, 36, 139
2. 1 CORINTHIANS 12
3. ROMANS 12
4. JAMES 1-5

COMPANION RESOURCE

- [BEGINNERS BIBLE STUDY](#) FROM OUR 10W1 PLAN