

(Genesis) - Part 3

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of fellowship with God and entering into His rest, which is achieved by prioritizing fellowship over work and recognizing that everything is very good.

Duration: 1:01:08

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-3, Genesis 2:1, Genesis 2:3, Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 4:4, Hebrews 4:10-11

Topics: "Genesis"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the first two chapters of Genesis and draws parallels between the creation of the earth and the process of sanctification in believers. He emphasizes that just as God remade the earth in stages, God also works in us gradually to transform us from our fallen condition. The preacher highlights the importance of putting God first in every aspect of our lives and encourages daily self-examination of our actions, thoughts, and motives. He contrasts the grace of Jesus with the law, emphasizing that in grace, we are justified and forgiven before we even begin to serve God.

Transcript

We'll turn now to Genesis chapter 1, which we were considering in the last two studies. We considered, towards the end of our last study, how God made man in his own image on the same day as the animals, and it is only that fact that he was made in God's image which separated him from the animals. And unless we keep that before us, it's very easy to descend to the level of the animals.

We considered that. We saw that God blessed them, verse 28, commanded them to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, rule over it and over all the fish of the sea, etc. And we also saw that God gave man only vegetables and food and fruit to eat, verse 29 and 30.

For all human beings, for man and woman and also for all animals, God had given only the vegetables and fruit to eat. And then it says God saw all that he made and, behold, it was very good. We saw that, that at the end of every day, God inspected the work that he did and examined it and saw it was good.

And then at the end, when he has created man and woman, he says it's very good. And just like we said in the beginning of this chapter, in the beginning, God, that's the way it should begin in our lives, in every area, that in every aspect of our life, in the first place, in the beginning, should be God. Likewise, there's something else we can learn from this chapter, and that is to do what God did at the end of every day.

What did God do at the end of every day? He examined all that he had done. And that's a good example for us to follow, to examine all that we have done and said and thought, our attitude, our motives, at the end of every day. Every day, he examined one day at a time.

It's a tremendous example for us. That's written there, right at the beginning of the Bible, so that we can see whether it is good in God's sight, whether God can look at what we have done during the day and whether he can say, good, very good. We see that, we saw when we studied the first three verses, there's a picture here of, just like the earth gave unto judgment, a picture of man's fall and how the Holy Spirit and the word of God moved upon that judged earth and remade it beautiful.

And we saw that this is a picture of our sanctification, too, how God wants to remake us from our fallen condition. And there we have also something we learned from chapter one of Genesis, that God didn't do it all in one day. He could have remade it in a moment.

That would have been no problem for God at all. But he did it stage by stage, little by little by little by little by little, till the work was complete, teaching us that is how he works in us also in our sanctification. We read the path of the righteous, Proverbs 4.18, is like the shining light that shines more and more until the perfect day.

That is when God completes his work. Or as it says in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 3.18, that the Holy Spirit transforms us from one degree of glory to another. That is like saying, one day, second day, third day, fourth day.

We can say just like in that first week, God had a particular plan to be accomplished each day. And for example, the making of light, that wasn't planned for the second or third day, that was planned for the first day. And the making of the fish, the bird, that was planned for the fifth day.

We can say from that too that God has a plan for our lives too. Jesus said, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, Matthew 6.34. And God intends in all the evil that comes to us in one day, that we overcome it through the power of his Spirit, so that a certain transformation can take place in our lives, on that particular day. That's what he's planned for that day, just like he planned different things for the six days.

In our case, it's thousands of days, because we've lived for many years. But God plans something for each of those days. That's why Jesus said if anyone wants to come after him, he must take up the cross every day.

It's a daily matter. There cannot be a single day that I can miss out on taking up the cross. Just think if God had left out one day and done nothing in one day.

There'd have been a big gap there in creation. Maybe the fish and the birds wouldn't have been on the earth. Every day something has to be done.

And so it is in our sanctification too. That's why we need to value every day and every trial that comes to us every day. We need to see all the people and circumstances that come across us every day as something that God wants to do.

And this is why we say that for us in the Church, the meeting is not the important thing. It's the days between the meetings. And why do we place so much emphasis on our life at home? Because every day we are at home.

We're not even in our office every day. For some people, two days in a week, they're not in the office. But every day we are at home.

And there is where God allows circumstances, people living in the home, and situations and circumstances. There we need to keep Genesis chapter one in mind and see that God is seeking to do something in me today, so that when it is written at the end of the day, the evening and the morning or the first day, that something has been accomplished in that twenty-four hour period, that God wanted to accomplish, that I haven't wasted that time by yielding to temptation, by not cleansing myself from filthiness of the flesh and spirit. If we can be gripped by this, we can come to that end, finally, that God desires, the completion of the work that He wants to accomplish in us.

We read here in chapter two, verse one, Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host. Think if that can be said about us at the end of our life. Like Paul said, I have finished my course.

Jesus said, Father, I have finished the work that You gave me to do. When He died on the cross, He said, it is finished. God always does a finished work.

We see that right in the beginning. He didn't do a work half and then forget about it. That's man's way.

And you see how unlike God, men are. You see that with children. You give them a task to do, even if it's to do their beds or tidy up a room, they'll do it half and go off.

That's man's way. And this irresponsible, unfaithful attitude to ordinary earthly tasks is typical of the fallen race of Adam. God, it is not like that with God.

And we are not considering in Genesis chapter one some highly spiritual things God was doing. God was doing very down-to-earth earthly things, we can say. He was making something on this earth, earthly things He made in six days, teaching us the sanctity of earthly work and the importance of a finished work in whatever we take up to do.

Jesus said, He who is faithful in little things is faithful also in much. And it is in the little things that we are tested to see whether we will complete a task entrusted to us. If something is entrusted to you in the church, you have to take it and complete it.

That's the spirit of God. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed and finished. And we know, as we considered, that Jesus and Paul also could say that at the end of their life.

And by the seventh day, God completed His work which He had done. And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. It's not because God was tired when it speaks about entering God's rest.

In Hebrews chapter four, this verse is quoted, if you turn to Hebrews four, in the New Testament, verse four, for He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh day, and God rested on the seventh day from all His works. And verse nine, there remains therefore a Sabbath rest, a seventh-day rest for the people of God. What is that? The one, verse 10, who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his own work as God did from His.

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. It's obvious that all believers don't enter into that rest, because he's writing to believers.

He's writing to believers and saying, Dear brothers, let us enter into that rest.

In other words, you haven't entered into that rest just because you are born again. There is a rest for the people of God. Jesus said, Come to Me and I will give you rest.

It's all coming back to this seventh-day rest. And it says here that, verse three, Genesis 2, 3, Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, it says here. Because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Two things. He created something and He made something. And He rested.

And notice the word here, sanctification. Sanctification and rest go together. You see that right in the beginning of the Bible.

God set apart that day, and He rested. And in our life, too, sanctification and rest always go together. That's why it says in Colossians 3, 15, Let the peace of Christ be the referee in your heart.

In other words, when there is some unrest in the heart, there is some area in which you are not sanctified. Because sanctification and rest always go hand in hand right from Genesis 2, 3. He sanctified it and He rested. Where there is sanctification, there is rest.

Remember this. Always, when there is unrest, irritation, whatever may be the crime that other people outside of us have committed, it still proves that we need sanctification. If only I can take this as a simple thermometer.

Whenever the thermometer, the mercury in the thermometer goes above that minimum, that normal temperature, there's fever. Sometimes little, sometimes much. In the same way, whenever there is unrest in the heart concerning anything, concerning anyone, it indicates there is a lack of sanctification in our life.

Maybe your husband does something wrong or your wife does something wrong. That may be. Maybe they are criminals.

Maybe they are very evil. But when it produces unrest in your heart, it's best you forget about your partner and work out your own salvation at such a time. Because you need sanctification.

They may need more sanctification than you. That's besides the point. The point is you need sanctification also because you are so troubled.

You are so much at unrest. We can do good things and be at unrest. For example, Martha, when Jesus came to her house, was working and working and working in the kitchen.

But she was at unrest. She was at unrest concerning her sister. Why is my sister like this? You can be at unrest concerning another sister.

Why another sister does like that and doesn't do like that? Or why God has dealt with another brother or another sister like that? And that unrest proves that you need sanctification. So sanctification and rest go together. So we need to enter into that rest.

We need to enter into that rest, as we read in Hebrews 4, meaning that, it says in Hebrews 4, let us strive diligently to enter into that rest. Hebrews 4, let us fear and let us strive diligently, which means that it's not

something we can enter into easily. We have to fight a battle to enter into this rest.

To enter into that rest means that I come to the place where another person's actions and words do not cause unrest in me, do not cause me to be all worked up and irritated. Then I have entered into God's rest. Until then, I have not entered into God's rest.

I have to fight to enter into that rest. And if each time I get into unrest, if I can fight that battle, I can enter into that rest one day. Let us, brethren, fear, lest we waste our earthly life only confessing our hope.

And at the end of 20 years God gave us, we're still confessing our hope, not entered into rest. Brothers and sisters, we need to be wholehearted. In Hebrews 4, where it speaks about the seventh day, we know that it also speaks about entering into Canaan.

And we know that God wanted the children of Israel to enter into Canaan two years after they left Egypt. Two years, that's the time God gives. Two years.

Have you heard the truth for two years? You should have come into rest by now, otherwise you're not wholehearted. You're not wholehearted. If it's taken 10 years, you're 20 percent hearted.

And if it's taken 15 years, even less. Two years, you should enter into rest. We must apply that rule to ourselves.

Be wholehearted and radical so that I finish with confessing my hope and say, Lord, by your grace I've entered in. I will not allow any of these things to disturb me. Why could God enter into rest? Because He could look at everything that He had made.

He had made it. He had made that on the first day. He had made that on the second day.

He had made that on the third, fourth, fifth, sixth day. And it was all very good. And when we can also look at it in the same way, that all these things around me, God has made it to work for my very best.

And this God has made, and that God has made, and that God has made, and that person, and that circumstance, and that thing, exactly like God made in those six days, God has made all these things around me, and I can say, like God, it's very good. Then I come into rest. I cannot come into rest until I can say, like God, it is very good.

That's the meaning of Romans 8, 28. All these things. It's not Judas Iscariot who made it, and that fellow who's causing me some trouble, and that troublemaker there, and that difficult person, and that awkward circumstance, and that person who made a mistake.

Those are all unbelieving believers. And my brothers and sisters, the sad thing is, I've come to see that even in our midst, after ten years of listening to the word of the cross, there are believers who are still so far away from that rest. So far away.

We've spoken umpteen times on Romans 8, 28, and they haven't come to believe that every single thing you can say, it is very good. That is for me. Very good.

Very good, very good, very good, very good. Everything we can inspect of all the things that are happening around us, all the people who come our way, all the circumstances in our home and say, very good, very good, very good, very good, there will be rest. Sure.

It's when I cannot say very good, I think God didn't have a hand there. That was that person, that person, this troublesome child of mine, that difficult neighbor of mine, that difficult partner of mine. My brothers and sisters, if you are like that, I say there's very little hope.

Very little hope, unless we are radical and get rid of this wretched disease that we've inherited from Adam, and see that everything is very good, then we enter into rest. There's something else also we see here. It's a picture of grace.

That God made man towards the end of the sixth day. And though it was God's seventh day, it was man's first day. Because he had just been created a few hours before that first day began for him.

So we can say that for Adam, his Sabbath was on the first day. He didn't have a seventh-day Sabbath. He had a first-day Sabbath.

The very first day of his life was a Sabbath. We can say he entered into the benefits of God working for him for six days. And he entered and enjoyed the light, and the earth, and the trees, and the fruit, and the vegetables, and the animals, and the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the fish, and the birds.

Who did all that? God did it all, and man just entered into that and enjoyed it. And that's the picture of grace. And we need to see the difference here between grace and law.

Because the law says, if you turn to Exodus chapter 20, Exodus 20, and verses 8, 9, and 10, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you must work, and the seventh day you shall not work. It's the Sabbath of the Lord.

Because, verse 11, in six days the Lord made, not created, but remade, the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day. Notice what the law says. Work for six days, and then you'll get one day holiday.

Grace says, you take your holiday first, and then come and work. Let's have, in other words, God says, it's very important to see this distinction. If only we can be gripped by it, I believe it will deliver us from the spirit of the law under which the vast majority of believers labor, and struggle, and get condemned.

What is it? The law says, God wants you to work. What work are you doing for him? What are you doing for God? Have you given up your job? Have you given up your money? Have you gone off to some difficult place? God wants you to work for him. Six days you must work, and then we'll think of some rest for you.

But grace says, what God did for Adam, first of all, I want to have fellowship with you. Adam, I don't want your work first. I want your fellowship.

Let's have a day of fellowship first, and from that fellowship, you can go out and work in the garden for the remaining days of the week. But it must begin with fellowship. That's what we read in Genesis 2. Adam's first day was a day of fellowship with God, and fellowship with his wife.

Fellowship with God and fellowship with his wife, not work, but fellowship with God and fellowship with his wife. Think of that. Think of what God planned for man, so different from our human ideas of religion.

Most of so-called Christian religion is law, law, law, because man thinks he's a servant. Under the law, man was a servant. But the Lord says, I don't call you servants anymore.

In fact, He calls us sons. And the father wants fellowship with his son, not work, first of all. A son will work for his father, but fellowship first.

It's fellowship that a husband and wife need, more than the wife working for the husband. That's the difference between grace and law. And we see that right at the beginning of the Bible.

When man fell, then God had to keep him under law for a period and finally teach him about grace. But grace was intended to bring man back to the beginning. Back to the beginning means back to realizing that fellowship is more important than work.

What you do for God is not as important as your fellowship with God. If you don't fellowship with Him, all your work for Him is useless. Your fellowship with Him is primary, and that's what we learn in the story of Mary and Martha.

What was Mary having? Fellowship. What was Martha doing? Working for the Lord. And the Lord rebuked Martha and said, You are doing such a lot of work for me, but that's not what I'm interested in.

Mary has chosen the good part. That's the one thing needful. That's grace.

And we need to see that. It's very important to see it because that's got something to do with sanctification. Sanctification doesn't come out of working.

It says, what did we read in Hebrews 4? We have to seize from our works like God did from His. We got to seize thinking that work is what God wants from me first. Fellowship.

Fellowship. God does the work. I enter into it.

Then I can work for Him. That's how it is in Calvary. Jesus did that work and said it is finished.

I enter into that and I'm justified without doing a single work. I'm justified. My sins are forgiven.

I have become a child of God. Then I can go out and serve the Lord after I come into fellowship with Him. But in the law, it was not like that.

The law said, you keep the commandments, then you can have fellowship with God. Quite the other way around in grace. If we can see that difference, it'll deliver us from a lot of bondage.

And it's all there hidden in the first two chapters of God's word. Verse four. This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

That is Genesis 1 verse 1. In the day that the Lord God made. That is verses 2 to 31 of Genesis. Earth and heaven.

Notice the difference there again between created and made. Now, I just want to say one thing before we go on to the rest of chapter. The six days of work are also a picture of the 6,000 years of man's history from the time that Adam was created.

Now we are running to the end of the 6,000 period of man's history. One day is with the Lord. It's a thousand years, it says in 2 Peter 3. So we can say that in God's six days are now running out.

And the seventh day is coming. The seventh day will be the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on earth when there will be perfect rest and peace. No war, no poisonous snakes, no wild animals.

That will be the seventh day. It's all pictured there. The whole history of man, as it were, is pictured there in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Now we can go on in verse 5. Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth.

Now here it is describing in detail what God did on the sixth day. He first gives you a outline of what God did in seven days, and then the writer gives a greater detail of how, what happened on the sixth day when man was created. He says there was no man to cultivate the ground.

This was by the end of the evening of the sixth day, and the morning had not yet come. The second part of the sixth day had not come. No man had been created yet.

Everything else was finished. And there was no rain, but it says a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. Maybe something like dew would fall upon the ground and water it.

And it's possible, though we can't be certain about it, that there was no rain on the earth perhaps until the time of Noah. Because that's the first time we read that rain came upon the earth, and this is probably another reason why when Noah said that it's going to rain, nobody believed him, because they said, rain? Are you crazy? Man's been living for 2,000 years nearly, and there's been no rain? You're talking about rain. That's what they told Noah.

Rain. 2,000 years we've been going, now you're talking about rain. That's exactly what people say today.

2,000 years the church's been talking about the coming of Christ, nothing's happened, and one day suddenly the rain came. And one day suddenly God's judgment will also come. But it says here, the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth, verse 5, but a mist used to rise from the earth and water the ground.

Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground. And he didn't pick up gold. He picked up ordinary dust.

And it's just something interesting which I want to point out to you, that the Hebrew word which is translated here as dust is also translated in Nehemiah chapter 4 and verse 2 as dusty rubble or rubbish. And again in Nehemiah 4 verse 10 as rubbish. When they were building the wall, the people in Judah said, there is much rubbish here.

And it's exactly the same word which is used in the Hebrew. It says there in the margin of Nehemiah 4, 10, or dust. We can say that God made man out of rubbish, so that we have a proper evaluation of all of this body of ours.

And then you see the folly of man putting a garland of gold around this garbage bin. Have you seen people putting gold around the garbage bin, decorating the garbage bin in their house with gold and lipsticks and painting all the edges? No, we were not created for things like this. The reason why God made man out of dust, out of that which is the most worthless thing on earth, dust.

Who will pay money for dust? It's so that we realize that we are earthen vessels. But it is the one living inside. It is the transformation of the person inside which God is after.

Otherwise our body is made of the same dust as the animals. You ask the doctors, they'll tell you that. The functioning of the human body is exactly the same as functioning of all the animals' bodies.

Same thing, the same dust. God made man out of dust. And we read here, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

That is what made man different from the animals. He made animals from the dust. But here God formed the man.

He took a personal interest, which means he was interested in this body of man. It's not that this body is unimportant. What I'm saying is, we must remember that this body is made out of worthless dust, but God formed it.

Jesus said in Hebrews chapter 10, A body hast thou prepared for me. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, in this body. That's why God formed a body for Adam.

And we can say God has formed a body for you and me. The question is, what do you have done with that body in all the years that we've lived? He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. We can say that God breathed into him a spirit.

And what do we have there in verse 7 then? A body. God breathed a spirit into him, and man became a living soul. And so we see there, man is a trinity.

Body, soul, and spirit. That's why God said, Let us make man in our image. The angels are not trinities.

The angels are only spirits. But man was made in God's image. Man is a trinity.

Body, soul, and spirit. And we see that in verse 7. And what God breathed was a spirit. And it is in that spirit that we now have a conscience that tells us about God.

And even unconverted people have that conscience that tells them about God. That's why even in the remotest jungles among barbarians, you'll find them, these people who have gone out and discovered these lost tribes and peoples, they've discovered they're religious. They worship a stone or the sun or some tree or something.

They're religious. But nobody's ever found a religious monkey or a dog so far, anywhere in the world, because this spirit is not there. It's a spirit that makes man aware that there is a God.

And God breathed into him. We are reminded of how, you see, there's a lot of similarity between this old creation and the new creation. Just like the old creation was completed, God breathed into Adam in the beginning of the new creation.

We read on the first day of the week, Jesus came into the midst of his disciples, and he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit, John 20, verse 22. Way back there, God gave Adam a human spirit. That was the old creation.

Now in the new creation, Jesus came and gave his disciples the Holy Spirit. And, verse 8, the Lord God planted a garden toward the east in Eden, and there he placed the man whom he had formed. It's God who made a home for man.

It's very encouraging for us to remember that. Man didn't go to God and say, Lord, I need a place to live in. God was concerned.

Man needs a place to live in. And he gave him a home. And that home was not a palace.

It was a garden. Some people think only a palace would be the best place to live in. God gave Adam something far better than a palace.

He gave him a garden. He planted a garden. He made that home and gave it to Adam.

Do you believe that God loves you as much as he loved Adam? Is he interested in providing a home for us? According to your faith, be it unto you. God saw the need of a home for Adam, a place to live. Great encouragement for us.

We can go to God in faith and say, Lord, you're the one who saw Adam's need for a place to live in. Do you see my need, too? He certainly does. If you have faith, God's never disappointed a man who has had faith in him.

The reason many people do not receive is because they do not believe. They insult God by thinking that God's not bothered about their accommodation problem, God's not bothered about any of their difficulties. Therefore, they live and die like miserable animals when they could have lived as glorious sons and daughters of God if they only had faith.

God, who saw Adam's need, sees my need. Secondly, we read here in verse 9, out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food. I want to tell you that there is an attractiveness that God has placed in creation and a sense of beauty that God has placed in us because that's part of his image.

Don't think that beauty and attractiveness is evil. God didn't make all of this earth in black and white, white sky and black grass and black trees. He could have made it all like a black and white picture.

He didn't do it. You look at the colors in the sunset or the colors in a flower garden and you can't imitate it. Look at the beauty there is in creation and that is in a fallen world.

Think how it must have been before man fell. I just mention this because I see some believers who think that spirituality is to be sloppy. To be badly dressed is spirituality.

That's not true. You're not divine when you're like that. No, there's a beauty in creation and God expects his children to be neat and tidy, I'll tell you that.

There's neatness and tidiness which is part of God's nature and that's something we've got to really acquire more and more. Pleasant to the sight. God knew that black and white won't be pleasant to the sight so he made so many colors so that it'd be beautiful for man to look at.

For whom was it? Who was the one whose sight God was interested in? He wasn't bothered about the lions and the dogs looking at all these colors. I don't think they're bothered about the colors. He wasn't worried about the angels.

They don't have eyes. They're only spirits. He wasn't thinking about himself.

He was thinking of man. When he put that sunset there, he thought of Adam and said, Adam will love to see that. When he put all these colors in the flowers, he said, Adam will love to see that.

He thought of Adam. He thought of Adam just like a father planning for his son. Think of that.

And remember the word of God is true in Zephaniah 3.17. He's silently planning for you in love. He is. He silently planned for Adam in love, a home, beauty in creation, and good for food.

That's another thing. You know these taste buds that we have? God made them. The devil didn't make them.

And there's nothing sinful about enjoying a good meal. There's nothing sinful about enjoying tasty food. God made those taste buds, provided I'm not a slave to them.

There's nothing sinful about enjoying it. He made things that are pleasant to the sight and good for food. The only thing is man's abused all this.

That's another thing. But it is God who made all these things pleasing to the sight and good for food. There's an attractiveness in creation.

And the tree of life also good for food. I just want to mention something else here. God who provided a place for Adam to dwell in also provided him food to eat.

God knew that man needs food to eat. He's interested in that also. So we see a second thing that God provided for Adam.

He provided him a place to live in, a dwelling place. And secondly, he provided him food. And good food.

And food that was attractive. See that? See the goodness of God there? That God's interested in our food. Give us this day our daily bread.

That's what Jesus taught us to pray. God's interested in it. And the tree of life also in the midst of the garden.

And the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden. And there it divided and became four rivers.

And that was water for man to drink and to water the garden. The name of the first is Thyson. It flows around the whole land of Havaila where there is gold.

And the gold of that land is good. And I thought of that verse. And I thought, gold's good in heaven.

But here on earth, it's a snare. When we get up to Eden, we can say that again. The gold of that land is good.

Now on earth, people fight for it and it's evil. The Delium and the Onyx stone are there. Precious stones.

God made them all. And the name of the second river is Gihon. It flows around the whole land of Cush.

The name of the third river is Tigris. It flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

Which perhaps gives us an impression, an indication rather, that the garden of Eden must have been somewhere in that region which is now known as Iraq. Somewhere there. It was on this earth.

And the location is identified by these rivers and that place. That's the place out of which later on where Babylon was built. The Tower of Babel was built there.

Ur of the Chaldees is in that area from which Abraham came out. And then we see something more. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

Verse 15. Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it. Here's the third thing that God gave man.

What have we seen so far? God gave him a home, a house, the place to live in, I mean. God gave him food. And God gave him a job.

It's God who gives people jobs. See, these are the things people are occupied with on the earth. And all these things are here.

God providing them all for Adam. A place to live in, food to eat, and a work to do. And it wasn't to sit and read the Bible.

It was a very ordinary, down-to-earth work called gardening. Before sin came into the world, God was trying to teach man the sacredness of earthly work. Don't think that's something, oh, that's earthly work.

I must sit and read the Bible and pray. Yeah, there's time for that. But God gave Adam a work to do.

Even before sin came into the world. Never forget that. The only thing that happened after sin came was that God told Adam, now you're going to perspire like anything when you do this work.

Before that, he didn't perspire. Now he perspires when he works. But he still had work to do.

Even before, God gave him a job, a specific job. And said, your job is the gardener of Eden. And you must cultivate it.

You can't just lie down lazily there and say, this is paradise, everything will grow by itself. No. He was given a job to cultivate it.

And it says here, a second thing, to keep it. And the word there in the Hebrew is to guard it. To keep it means to protect it.

And in that word, you get the impression that there is an enemy here, who wants to spoil this garden. Otherwise, why should you use the word guard it? You don't guard something unless there are enemies or decoys around. And that word keep means to guard.

He gave Adam a twofold job, cultivate it and guard it. That's your job. You're the gardener and you're the watchman.

So we can say that God gave a twofold job to Adam, to be a gardener and a watchman. You don't think of those jobs as very big jobs these days. Think of the type of job God chooses for his children.

Gardeners and watchmen. Simple, ordinary jobs. And that's what we see there in verse 15.

And then verse 16 and 17. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, from any tree of the garden you may eat freely, but not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You shall not eat, for in the day you eat from it, you shall surely die.

Here's something else that God gave man. What's that? A commandment. It's another thing God gives man.

He gave man a place to live in. He gave man food. He gave him work to do.

And then he gave him a commandment. He gave him a law. And that's what we need too.

God gives that also to us. The same God of love who gives us food and home and job. And these things, of course, people fast and pray for.

But when it comes to this fourth one, we don't find many people fasting and praying for Lord commandments. Any more commandments, Lord? Any more commandments? Like people pray better house, Lord, better job, more food, more money, more commandments. See how blind man is that he doesn't put commandments also in the same category as home, job, food, commandments.

That's also the gift of a loving father. We need to see it in its proper perspective. God was not making an animal.

He was making one in his own image. And if this one thing was left out, if he only gave him a home and a job and food, man would have been an animal. It's this commandment that lifted him up above the level of the animal.

God could have given a place to live in for the animals, food to the animals, work for the animals, but couldn't give a commandment to the animals. And there we see God telling him not to eat of this tree of knowledge of good and evil. We can think about that later on a little more, but basically what it means is that God did want man to have the knowledge of good and evil resident within him.

He wanted man to get that knowledge of good and evil from God. What I mean is, supposing you want to know what is good and what's evil, Adam would have to go to God each time, Lord, can I do this? And God would say, yes, you can do that. And another time, maybe a few minutes later, you've got to go back to God and say, God, can I do that? God would say, no, you can't do that.

But what the devil was trying to get Adam into, we'll see that later, was to get him out of this perpetually having to go to God all the time. No, no, no, no, no need of all that. You just eat this and you'll have all the knowledge of good and evil inside you.

You don't have to go to God, you don't have to consult Him about anything. You know everything yourself. You know what's good, you know what's evil.

You make your own decision. And there we see how man has been living all these 6,000 years, making his own decision. He doesn't have to consult God about anything.

That is the essential difference between the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life is God Himself, that I have to live in perpetual dependence on God. In other words, live by faith.

The tree of God, I've got all the knowledge stacked up in my head, and I can live by that. There's a danger even of Bible knowledge becoming like a tree of knowledge of good and evil for us. This is good, that's evil, I've gone to enough meetings, I've stacked all the knowledge in my head, now I don't need God, I don't need the Holy Spirit.

It's very dangerous. God doesn't want us to live like that. He wants us to live in perpetual dependence on Him.

That's the meaning of faith. Anyway, that's just the reason why God said, you shall not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because in the day you eat thereof, you shall die, meaning, when you stop living by dependence upon Me, you shall die. But if you want to live, you must live by faith.

The righteous will live by faith. And then, the Lord God said, it's not good for the man to be alone, I'll make him a helper suitable for him. Here's another thing God made for man.

A woman, a marriage partner. Now, let's list all the things God's made in this chapter. Home, food, job, law or commandment, and a partner.

Think that God is interested in all these things for us. It was God who saw Adam's need for a home and gave him a garden. It was God who saw Adam's need for food and created all the trees for food before He made Adam.

It was God who saw Adam's need to do work and made a job for him. It was God who saw Adam's need for commandments, if he's to be a son, and made commandments for him. And it was God who saw Adam's need for a partner in life and gave him a partner.

If only we can have faith instead of being so unbelieving in all these areas. And when you come to Genesis chapter three, towards the end of Genesis chapter three, you see one more thing that God made, which is not necessary in Genesis chapter two, and that was clothing. In Genesis chapter two, they didn't need it.

Perhaps there was some glory of God that was over their bodies, which is like their clothing, but they lost it the moment they sinned. And then they needed clothing. Fallen man needed clothing.

And we read in Genesis three that God gave them clothing also. So what are the things God gives man? Food, clothing, shelter, job, marriage partner. And the whole world is interested in these five.

There's one more thing, commandments. And we can never be sons and daughters of God unless we value those commandments as much as we value the other five. And until we learn to seek God as much for his commandments as we seek God for the other five.

But let's remember this, that one who is a son of God has a right to expect God to provide all these for him, like he provided them for Adam. Very blessed to see it. And out of the ground, verse 19, the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky and brought them to the man to see what he would call them.

You see, the beast and the bird were also made from the same dust that Adam was made. And whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. Verse 20, And the man gave names to all the cattle and to the bird of the sky.

Have you studied a little bit of biology or zoology in your school days? I never did. But I see some of the books, some of our children study now. Think of even remembering the names of a few birds and animals.

And here was Adam giving those names. This one's going to be called a lion. This one's an elephant.

This one's a tiger. And he didn't mix them up. He didn't forget.

Oh, did I give that name before already too? No. I just mentioned that to show you what fantastic mental powers Adam had. Tremendous mental powers to be able to give a name to every bird and every animal.

And he never got two of them confused. That's just to teach us the tremendous power of this brain that God gave Adam. And just like when Satan fell, God didn't take away his powers, when Adam fell, God did not take away those tremendous mental powers that man has.

Of course, it's degenerated in 6,000 years quite a lot because of sin and many other reasons. But still, man's mental powers are so great. In fact, this whole world of hypnotism, magicians, is a mixture of this human soul power in the mind plus demonic power.

The devil encourages man to develop his mental powers. A lot of heathen people in yoga, they seek to develop these mental powers so that they can do things which appear absolutely supernatural to other people. It is the development of these powers, it's the development of the soul, killing the spirit, crushing the spirit, like a cancer.

You know what a cancer is? A cancer is a good cell in the body that suddenly becomes sick. And one mark of a sickness is it becomes bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and crushes out the life out of all the other cells. When a man becomes like that in the body of Christ, he's a cancer.

We got to operate on him and remove him. And the same way, when the soul can become like a cancer, develop the mental powers so much, so much, so much, so much, so much, even in a religious way, then finally there's no place for the spirit, there's no place for God. It's a human religion and it's one of the best counterfeits to the devil.

Bible schools develop it in Christianity and yoga develops it in Hinduism. The development of the mind and the spirit, the heart, that's ignored. There's just something that gives us an idea of the tremendous powers that Adam's mind had.

And the fall did not take away those powers. It's diminished a little, but we got to be careful about this intellect, this fantastic intellect that we have inherited from Adam. Beware of it.

And it says here that man looked at all these animals. It's very interesting that it says here at the end of it, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. I don't know whether he was looking, which one shall I marry? And all these ones are going by.

He says, not one of them is suitable for me. And we know from the New Testament, that's the picture of Christ in the church, that Jesus looks at all these human beings who call themselves Christians, going past him like the animals went past Adam. And he sees these Christians so earthly-minded, just like the animals, occupied with the things of earth, just like animals, all fighting for a bone, fighting for this, fighting for that, running after earthly things.

And like Adam says, next, next, next one, next one. Jesus says, next one, next one, next one. And they all pass by.

But finally, it says, God gave Adam someone who had the same nature as him. And that is what God is going to give Jesus Christ, a bride who will not be earthly-minded like the animals, but who will have the same nature as him, who will not weep when earthly things are lost or broken, who will not rejoice when they get some earthly things. That is the mark of earthly-mindedness, to weep when earthly things are lost or broken, to be happy when we get earthly things.

That's the mark of earthly-mindedness. No, God says, next, next, next, next, next. And then he picks out one out of a million who is heavenly-minded, lives on earth, but is heavenly-minded.

His interests are on things above. Think of that. The Lord caused the deep sleep to fall upon Adam.

And that's the picture of the deep sleep that Jesus was put to on Calvary's cross, where he died. And out of his side, he took one of his ribs. The side of Jesus was pierced with a spear, and the blood flowed out and closed up the flesh of that place.

And from that rib, from that broken heart of Jesus, came the bride. From that rib, the Lord God fashioned a woman. He built a woman, it says in the margin.

Why does he use the word built? Why not made? Because it was to be a picture of that church, which is going to be built in later ages. He built a woman, a picture of the church. And he brought her to the man.

He says, here is your bride. None of these animals. Here is the bride.

Brothers and sisters, it's good for us to close there, to think of what that means in relation to us. We who call ourselves as those who are longing to be the bride of Christ, think that God is preparing a bride one day to present to his son. Say, here is your bride, a people whom I have tested on earth.

They are not earthly minded. They are heavenly minded. Don't ever think, my brothers and sisters, that just because we understand the new and living way, we come to see a sea, that we'll be in the bride of Christ.

No. I go up to God and say, Lord, I went to see a sea. He may say, next.

That's no qualification. He say, I know where you went, but I also know what you were interested in. I saw what you were interested in all your life.

Don't tell me which assembly you went and sat in. I saw what you were interested in day after day after day after day of your earthly life. I saw what you were interested in.

Next. Think of that after hearing all these wonderful things. Think that we can miss being a part of that which God is speaking to make us.

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