

INTRODUCTION

We most definitely did not become human beings by evolving from lower life forms over the course of a long time, as it says on the pages of pseudo-science books. That is not the truth. Instead, the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were made by God on one day, only six thousand years ago, as it says right on the pages of the Bible. That is the truth.

And when God made us, He also made provisions for our happiness. Or, to put in another way: When God gave us our being, He also gave us arrangements for our well-being. The Bible presents those arrangements to us as four things in two pairs:

- marriage and childbearing
- work and sabbath-keeping

Those arrangements were made for us when we were innocent, and living in The Garden of Eden. But what about now that we are sinful, and living outside The Garden?

- Clearly we, the race of men, have trouble now with marriage.
- Clearly we, the race of men, have trouble now with childbearing, and bringing up children.
- Clearly we, the race of men, have trouble now with sabbath-keeping.
- Clearly we, the race of men, have trouble now with work.

What is the will of the Lord for us regarding these things now that we are in a fallen state, living in a fallen world?

Our study together these days is The Ten Commandments. We have made a study of the first three commandments, but before going on to the fourth commandment, I am walking with you through the biblical doctrine of these two pairs of things God instituted at creation. God willing, we soon will get to where these arrangements are addressed in The Ten Commandments. After seeing how they are addressed in some other parts of the Old Testament scriptures, we'll see what our Lord Jesus said about them, and what the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles to say and to write about them. After that study, we should be ready to understand how The Ten Commandments apply to us in these areas of life. Throughout, we want to see how God so blesses these things that He causes them to be not only for our physical, temporal good, but also for our spiritual, eternal good in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Last time, I began to show you how these things appear in the history of Noah and the great world-wide flood. We addressed only the first pair: marriage and childbearing. Today, we continue working from that same historical account, and address one item in the second pair: man's work.

Man, being sinful, mis-uses the arrangements God made for our well-being; and so those things are corrupted. But God, being exceedingly patient and longsuffering, still allows us to continue using them despite our mis-use of them. And God, abounding in mercy, makes perfect use of those very things we have corrupted for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

BODY

- I. Man turns his God-given ability to work into violence
 - A. Genesis 6:11-12 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.
 - B. Man found that the same faculties God had given him to do work could be used to do violence
 1. the same intelligence that can plan a garden also can plan an ambush
 2. the same skill that can fashion tools also can fashion weapons
 3. the same strength that can plunge the spade into the soil also can plunge the sword into the heart
 - C. Man found that rather than working to produce something good, he could use violence to get what someone else's work had produced
 1. he could kill his fellow man, and steal what he had worked to produce; or
 2. he could threaten to kill his fellow man, and steal what he had worked to produce, then repeat the process later
 3. he could just steal his fellow man, enslaving him to take the produce of his work that way
 4. this could be done by
 - a) one individual, more powerful than others in his willingness and ability to do violence; or
 - b) by some small group, like a gang or mob; or
 - c) even by some large group, like an army
 - D. That is a corruption of the arrangements that God made for us
 1. God ordained that we would work six days to get the things we need; then we would rest for one day
 2. wicked men wanted to rest from work all the time, and use violence to get others to do their work for them
 - E. (Gen 6:13) For such rebellion against God, such corrupting of what God had instituted, such filling the earth with violence, God declared that man deserved to be destroyed
 - F. APPLICATION: Think of your own case.
 1. if you have done this kind of thing, or if you have wanted to do this kind of thing to your fellow man, that is sin against God, who made you and who ordained that you work.
 2. if you have hated to do your work, have neglected your work...
 3. especially if you have used violence to take what belongs to someone else
 4. you deserve to be destroyed by God for how you have corrupted what He ordained

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- II. Being merciful, God saves us from His wrath that is coming on the wicked, by the work of one man
- A. God used the work of Noah for our temporal salvation
 1. Genesis 6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.
 2. Genesis 6:22 Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.
 3. Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.
 4. when we read that Noah had such a great work to do as building the ark, and that he had three sons, we imagine that they helped him with the work; but the Bible actually says repeatedly that Noah built the ark, and says nothing of anyone helping him; so we are right in saying that the ark was built by one man, Noah
 - a) APPLICATION: it is important to believe what the Bible actually teaches us, and not what men might add to it; here is a place where that can be seen
 5. in the days of the great flood, the whole world was drowned by the waters of God's wrath; but because of the work Noah had done in building the ark, those with him were saved from the flood
 - B. God's salvation of our race through Noah stands as a type or shadow of the salvation that was to come in the Messiah
 1. it foreshadowed the work of Christ before He came
 2. it instructs us now that He has come
 - C. God used the work of Jesus Christ for our eternal salvation
 1. Jesus came here to do the work God appointed for Him to do, to effect our salvation
 - a) Luke 2:49b Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?
 - b) John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."
 - c) John 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.
 - d) John 19:30b ...He said, "It is finished!"
 2. 1689.8.7 speaks of Christ doing the "work of mediation"
 3. 1689.11.1 says that God saves us through faith; "...imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death for their whole and sole righteousness..."
 4. on the day of the great final judgment, the whole world will be destroyed by the fires of God's wrath; but because of the work Jesus has done, especially in dying for our sins on the cross, those who are with him through faith shall be saved to eternal life

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III. God graciously continues blessing our work

- A. As I was just saying, God's arrangement for man's work finds its ultimate fulfillment in the work of Jesus Christ for our eternal salvation
- B. Yet we continue to work during this life, and God blesses our work
- C. Genesis 8:21-22 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. 22 "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Winter and summer, And day and night Shall not cease."
 1. God demonstrated that man deserves to be destroyed for his evil, and that God has the ability to destroy man for his evil
 2. yet God graciously granted that man may continue to work God's earth, to plant seeds and to harvest
- D. Genesis 9:3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.
 1. God granted that we may, by our work, use the animals He has created for our food
- E. Genesis 9:5-6 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.
 1. God gave us a system for protecting our work from violence, for keeping the earth from being so filled with violence as it was before the flood
 2. this is the origin of the institution of government
 3. this is part of the justification for use of deadly force in self-defense

CONCLUSION

Man turns his God-given ability to work into violence

Being merciful, God saves us from His wrath that is coming on the wicked, by the work of one man
God graciously continues blessing our work

Understand that the nature of the creation ordinances, the arrangements God made at creation for our well-being is that

- man corrupts them by sinful use of them
- God communicates His grace through them, proclaiming salvation by them
- God saves us through how Jesus Christ fulfills them
- God continues to bless our use of them in this life, until the Lord Jesus comes back

Man, being sinful, mis-uses the arrangements God made for our well-being; and so those things are corrupted. But God, being exceedingly patient and longsuffering, still allows us to continue using them despite our mis-use of them. And God, abounding in mercy, makes perfect use of those very things we have corrupted for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

Rita - Prelude

Rita - Trinity 151 "O Come, All Ye Faithful" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 2 "God, My King, Thy Might Confessing" - Andrew lead

Audrey - Trinity 178 "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"

Jeremiah - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 145:1

Roel - Scripture Reading - Psalm 145:2-20

Thad - Congregational Prayer

Jeff - Benediction - Psalm 145:21

IV. The Seven-Day week from creation

A. In God's salvation

1. Genesis 7:1-10 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation. 2 You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made." 5 And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth. 7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, 9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.

B. In Noah's observing of the seven-day week God instituted at creation, Noah learned that the earth was dry, and safe for man again.

1. Genesis 8:8-13 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. 9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. 10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. 11 Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. 12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore. 13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry.

C. How this is fulfilled in Jesus Christ

V. After the great flood, God once again pronounced His blessing on our race through child-bearing.

- A. Genesis 9:1 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.
- B. Genesis 9:7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it."

John 4:34

John 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

Calvin:

though the chief part of it still remained to be accomplished, namely, the sacrifice of death, by which he was to take away the iniquities of us all, yet, as the hour of his death was already at hand, he speaks as if he had already endured it

Poole:

But how could Christ say this, who had not yet died for the sins of men, which was the principal piece of his work?

Answer. It was so nigh, that he speaks of it as already done:

Henry:

Though he had not, as yet, gone through the last part of his undertaking, yet he was so near being made perfect through sufferings that he might say, I have finished it; it was as good as done, he was giving it its finishing stroke

Gill:

by "the work" is meant obedience to the will of God; the destruction of all spiritual enemies, as sin, Satan, the world, and death; and the redemption and salvation of his people, which was "given" him to do

he speaks of it as done, because the time was come to finish it, and he was sure of the accomplishment of it

Clarke:

Our Lord, considering himself as already sacrificed for the sin of the world, speaks of having completed the work which God had given him to do

Barnes:

When he says "I have finished," he probably means to include also his death.

JFB:

must be supposed to include in His "finished work" the "decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem

Spurgeon:

Jesus regards his work as already done, although he had yet to die, to pay the ransom price for his people, yet by a leap of holy faith he says, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Ryle:

The meaning of these words I take to be this: "I have completed the work of redemption which Thou didst send Me into the world to accomplish,—My death and resurrection being so near that to all intents and purposes it is finished."