

Part 1: The origin of mission

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- [0 : 0 0] And so I just thought that it'd be nice if we, to draw us closer if we do it this way. So if you'd like to turn in your Bibles, first of all, to Genesis, chapter 1.
- So in Genesis, chapter 1, picking it up in verse 26, we have the reading, Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.
- So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.
- And God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of the earth, and every tree with seed in its root.
- You shall have them for food. It goes on to continue that. If I can get your attention to 2 Corinthians chapter 4, please.
- [1 : 5 5] Sorry, 1 Corinthians chapter 4.
- There you go. Not even the pastor knows where it is. There you go. No, that's not it either.
- Do you know what? These are done for my memory. I'm going to go back to... I've got it here on my notes. I was not going to look. Hang on. Yeah, 2 Corinthians chapter 4.
- It's right the first time. Yeah, sorry. I was looking at 2 Corinthians chapter 2. That'll be it.
- No, sorry, I meant Hebrews. No, that was a joke. That was just joking. It was 2 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 4, not chapter 2. I was looking at the wrong chapter.
- [3 : 1 0] I apologize. It says this. In this case, in this case, in their case, the God of this world has blinded the mind of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
- Well, may God take those readings that we've eventually got to, and the ones to come as we continue through our service and bless them to us. The next reading is from Genesis chapter 3.
- I'm going to assume, if I can, most of you know that Genesis chapter 3 is the introduction of the serpent, the woman, and the man in conversation.
- And, of course, through the woman and the serpent's conversation leads to her taking the fruit of the tree that she should not have taken from and giving some to her husband who was there.
- And I don't know if you remember when we were studying the artwork of the fall, and I showed you pictures of Leonardo da Vinci's pictures of that.
- [4 : 2 8] Just tremendous pictures and tremendous theology within those pictures of what's actually happening there. So, the fall has already happened.
- And now, the Lord God in verse 13, sorry, the Lord God in verse 8 is now beginning to walk in the garden. So, this is where we'll pick it up from.

And they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees in the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself. He said, Who told you that you were naked?

Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.

[5 : 29] Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all livestock, And above all the beasts of the field.

On your belly you shall go, And the dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your offspring and her offspring.

He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise his heel. And we'll leave the reading there. We're going to sing.

So as we begin this evening, I'd like to draw your attention to that this is something that many of you have heard before, At least many of you have studied before in the original mission.

This is the first of ten, And those who actually went through the study will understand there are similarities that are going to be coming out here. But because many of you have gone through the study, What I didn't want to do is simply just go over it.

[6 : 47] And so this evening, And the other evenings that will follow, I'm going to be concentrating on a few of the particulars, As well as the general overview. So you're on familiar ground here, But we're going to be going down certain paths, That will look into some of the particulars that perhaps you did in your own study, And in your own discussions, But not that we actually did together as a group, On a whole.

So because this is a sermon series, I can give particular attention to particular aspects, As we go. So let me just lay out the ground, As it were, Where, How to understand the mission of God.

First of all, There are two missions in scripture that we know of. There is the pre-full mission of God, And then there is the post-full mission of God. The pre-full mission is Genesis 1 and 2, What God commanded man to do in a garden without sin.

You know, Be fruitful and multiply, And you know, Everything is yes, And there's only one no. And that's the kind of place that I think most of us would actually want to live.

And so the mission was fairly straightforward. Go and enjoy yourself. Okay? This is a good world. Go take hold of it with both hands and enjoy it.

[8 : 12] But of course, It went wrong quickly, In that sin entered into the world. And so when sin entered into the world, And God comes walking in the garden, And that last passage that we read out, Introduces the new mission.

Genesis 3.15, In short, Is the promise of Jesus Christ coming into the world, By the seed of a woman, Not the seed of a man. Which is strange language, Because we're all grown-ups, There's a few children, But we all know how children come into the world, But not this child.

This one who will come, Who will crush the serpent's head, The head of Satan, Is the promised one. And so that's the new mission. Now, Before we even get to the church, We understand that mission precedes the church.

The church doesn't make up a mission, And then go on it. The church is simply co-opted, Into God's mission, That already began back in Genesis 3.15.

There he outlines the plans and purposes that he has, To deal with sin. And so, Just as a basic overview, You have a pre-full mission, Which is pre-full, And then you have a post-full mission, Which takes up largely, The rest of scripture.

[9 : 35] And that's probably a very basic way, Of understanding it. When you get, Of course, To the gospels, And you get to the end of Matthew, It's then, In the act of discipleship, That the church is co-opted, Into God's mission.

The mission already exists. Hence why Matthew calls it, You know, It's often titled, The great co-mission. Because you are being brought in by God, To serve God in this world, By making disciples, And teaching them everything, That Jesus has taught.

So the mission just simply continues, Through the church now. But we're still in, That post-full mission. Now what I've just said, Is of course a sweeping statement, It's a general idea of the whole of scripture, Without actually focusing, On any of the particulars.

But they are the basics, If you hold on to those, You're not going to go wrong, If you understand, Where you are in the story, You understand where you've been, And where you're going.

But what I'd like to do, Is perhaps concentrate, On a few particulars. Perhaps things that you picked up on, Or things that you didn't pick up on. And in order to do that, I just want to raise two questions.

[10 : 53] The first is this, What is the image of God? Many Christians know, That we were originally created, In the image of God. Many Christians know, That the Lord Jesus Christ, Makes us a new creation.

But then if you then, Go a little bit further and say, Okay, What is the image of God? Many are short of giving an answer. It's almost that they've got to, Well we know we're made in the image, But then they don't actually know, What that image is.

Another, You struggle to find, An answer. So I want to concentrate, On that particular. The second thing, Of course, Which follows image, Is communion. Communion, In scripture, Is, Has very much to do with, Likeness.

So in the same way, A son is like his father, There's communion between the two, Because there's likeness between the two, And also because there is that, Generation between the two.

Well, Adam, Is, A creation of God, In the likeness of God, And therefore he has, Communion with God. And you begin to notice, Quite quickly, That when the image of God is lost, The communion is also lost with it.

[12 : 10] So the relationship, Between the image of God, And communion are very closely related. And so these are the particulars, I'd like to focus on this evening. That it's your duty, As a Christian, To understand the gospel, In order to be able to explain the gospel, And these are basics.

Okay? Basic one, Image of God. Basic two, The image of God naturally, Leads us to understand, Communion with God. If you don't have the image, You don't have communion.

If you have the image, You have communion. That is a very simple understanding. You can't have one, Without the other. So, When we understand that, Now we begin to understand, The need for Jesus.

We begin to understand, The need for this being made right. And the reason for concentrating, On those two, Is that by the time you get, To the end of scripture, And of course, The end of history, What's going to be true about you?

Well, One thing is, You're going to have communion with God, Because, You're going to be restored, Back into the image of God. So, That's how it began, Image and communion.

[13 : 22] How does it end? It ends with image and communion. And everything in the post-ful mission, Is about getting you back there. Getting you back to what it was like, In the beginning.

So, Let's begin, With the beginning. It should be fairly familiar, To you now, That God is known by what he does.

In fact, The way that you know God, Is by what he has done. Now, You get to know what he has done, And see what he has done, Through hearing his word.

Now, Look at this, From Adam's point of view. Man, The first man's point of view. He knows God, By what God has done. Okay? The very first day, That he's created, He finds himself, In an environment, Where God's been busy.

God's created all of this, And I just so happen to live in it. And not only that, God has given me dominion, Over all of it. So, What does he know, About God?

[14 : 26] What can he, Work out about God, By understanding, What he sees, In God's actions? Well, Quite a lot. That God clearly, Is a God of love. He's clearly a God, Who speaks, And things happen.

He is a God, Who provides. He's a God, Who gives calls, And missions, And you know, Commands. He can work out, Quite a lot, About God.

God spent, Five days, Creating, Before he created man. Five days, Making the world ready, To make, That which he would then create, That had his image on.

Okay, Five days, Making the world ready, To then create that, On the sixth day, Which would have his image on, To put in that creation. And then on the seventh day, Of course, He rested.

Now in a fallen world, The same questions, Are still there, But now they get, Far more complicated. Because God is known, By what he does, And of course, By what he, Doesn't do.

[15 : 30] But of course, Questions about God, In a fallen world, Are far more difficult. God's love, Can be called into question, And often is, God's character, God's nature, God's power, All of these things, Are as it seems, Up for grabs.

They are, Debatable, Some would argue. Now of course, They're not, But in a fallen world, That is the way, God and his actions, Are treated.

Because we don't get, We're unable, We do not have the wisdom, To be able to figure out, The type of fallen world, That we live in. None of us, None of us know, How bad it is.

Okay? Because we've, We've made a good living, Down here, Some of us. And so, By that good life, We've shielded ourselves, From more of the, The bad things, That are out there.

And so, Different people, Living in different parts, Of the world, In different circumstances, Are going to have, A whole different set, Of questions, As you well know, Because they perceive things, Through what they experience.

[16 : 34] What God is doing, And what God is not doing, There and here. And that's, One of the key things, That I'd like us, To at least, Remember. Questions, Questions, In a fallen world, Are far more complicated, Than any questions, That the first man, And woman might, They may not have even had, Any questions.

This is good. Okay? This is good. Or, Even the commands, Are straightforward. Everything is yes, Apart from one no. I mean, That's not complicated.

So, In the pre-ful mission, Man, In an uncomplicated world, Lives in, Wonderful communion, With God, With everything, Up for grabs.

Everything. The world is full, Of potential. Okay? God created a world, That was good, But he did not create, A world that was complete. And that's how you're meant, To read the creation account.

The creation account, Is good. It's not complete. God tells the man, And the woman, To be fruitful, And multiply. In other words, Go make things. Go, Go build things.

[17 : 40] Go, Go plant, Go, Go do all those things, And, And see what happens. Now, The potential, Of a world, Pre-full, Means that the potential is good.

Okay? If it's good, Then the potential is further goodness. And that's the world that man lived in. The fruitful multiplication, Of further goodness.

Because the world was not complete. It was created with potential. It was good, But not complete. When we stop and think then, What's actually happened in the original creation?

None of us should sit here thinking, That Christ wasn't involved, Because he's not mentioned. But when you read the New Testament, You realize that he is mentioned, In Genesis 1.

Right there in all the words, Every time God speaks and creates, There is Jesus. And so, When we look at Adam and Eve, Or she's not called Eve until after the fall, When we look at the first man and the first woman, What do we notice about them?

[18 : 52] Well, You ought to notice that they are created in Christ Jesus. That's what you ought to see when you read Genesis 1. And the reason we ought to see that, Is because Colossians 1, Verse 15, Tells us, That everything was created through Christ Jesus, And for Christ Jesus.

Everything. Which means that as you go back, And you read Genesis chapter 1, You read that Adam, Therefore, Is created in Christ. The woman is created in Christ Jesus.

Not only created in Christ Jesus, But for Christ Jesus. Everything is created through him, And for him. Adam is created in union, With the Godhead.

And so we shouldn't sit here thinking, No, Adam didn't have what we had. Okay, Adam was created in Christ pre-full, Without the need for Christ to go to the cross.

We are created in Christ post-full, With the need for Christ to go to the cross. But whether Christ creates pre-full or post-full, Makes no difference. The central fact, Is that Christ is in all creation.

[20 : 00] That Adam is in Christ, In that sense. In a different kind of sense, Granted, But nonetheless, The world is made through Christ.

Now Adam, Is given responsibility. And his responsibility, Is not only over trees, And shrubs, And animals, And birds, And fish, And all of those kind of things, The environment, And all that's in the environment, That he lives in.

But also over people, In terms of how he represents them, Before God. You'll notice that when the fall happens, God takes issue with Adam.

Sin came into the world through one man. And the untrained Bible reader, Wants to put their hand up and go, It was the woman who got there first. That's clearly a misunderstanding of scripture.

Paul is very clear in Romans, That the sin came into the world through one man, Not through one woman. Okay? And that's a failure of responsibility, On Adam's part.

[21 : 07] This is why he blames God, For giving him the woman. He doesn't blame the woman. He says, The woman you gave me, Okay? Led to this. He's blaming God.

He's not taking responsibility, For what has happened, And neither did he step in. He just went along with her. Okay? Does it taste nice? And off you go.

So Adam is created with responsibility, As a representative, For everyone who's going to follow. And the reason we know that, Is because when we get to the New Testament, We read that Christ, Is a representative in salvation.

That just as sin came into the world, Through one man, And through that one man, Sin spread to all people. That's how it happened, Through one man. So too, Christ, Okay?

The new Adam, The second Adam, Comes into the world, And salvation in him, Is possible for those who believe. Okay? Why? Because Christ is a representative, In salvation.

[22 : 13] He, He dies the death, That we should have died. He, You know, He's lived the perfect life, That we haven't lived. And Adam, Was the first Adam, Where it all went wrong.

And Christ, Is the second. So, As you read scripture, Whether you read, Original creation, Or new creation, It doesn't move you away, From the central point, That everything's created, Through Christ, And for Christ.

Everything, Is in relation, To Christ. Now why is that, So important? Well, It's important because of, Who Christ is.

It's important because of, The image of God. When, Jesus says to Nicodemus, You must be born again. We understand the familiar language, Of generation, We understand the familiar language, Of likeness.

You look like your father, You look like your mother, You know, Ship off the old block, We understand that. So here Jesus is, The image of the, Of, The invisible God, The visible image, Of the invisible God, Telling us, That we must be born again.

[23 : 23] Why? Because by being born again, Into him, By him, What do we then become? Or the image of God. Okay, It takes the image of God, To make us new, So that we can become, The image of God.

Jesus is the creator. The reason why Adam, Is made in the image of God, Is because, The world was created, Through Christ. And the reason why Christ, Makes us like God again, Restores us back into the image of God, Is because Christ in salvation, Makes us like God.

It's because he is the image of God. So we get this beautiful picture, Beautiful consistency, Between the beginning, And the new beginning. Between the original creation, And the new creation.

And Paul calls you, In 2 Corinthians 5, A new creation in Christ Jesus. That's who you are. The reason, You are being restored, Into the image of God, Is because you're saved, By the image of God.

Christ, Jesus. Jesus. That's the connection. That we're not to read, Genesis 1, As though Jesus isn't there. We're meant to read it, And understand the image of God.

[24 : 37] And as we get into the New Testament, And read the new creation, We can clearly see, How the image of God, Is being restored in us, Through the one who saved us. Because he is, As Hebrews puts it, The visible image, Of the invisible God.

A visible God. A visible image, Might I add, That we've never seen either. But we see by faith. So, What does it mean then, To be created in that image?

What does it mean, To be the image of God? Now, I want to point out, That when children are born, In this world, After Adam, They are not born, In the image of God.

Unbelievers, Are not made, In the image of God. God. And that's a, That's a, It's something, That you must grab, Hold onto.

Because that's the way, The Bible tells it. So, What does it mean? Well, When God created Adam, He made him, In his likeness. In the likeness of God, He made them, Man, And woman.

[25 : 39] But what is that image? Well, First of all, It's knowledge. It's that ability, To be able to reason well. God made people, Who could reason. And reason well.

He also made them holy, And he also made them righteous, Full of righteousness. That's what they were, Originally. And we know that again, Because the New Testament, Confirms, What the image of God is.

Paul says this, That new life in Christ, Is like this, He speaks, Is being renewed, In our minds, Knowledge. That renewal of the mind, Is to have the mind of Christ.

It is to have the knowledge of God. Not his entire knowledge, But it is that ability, To be able to reason well. That we are created, In the likeness of God, In true righteousness, And holiness.

Ephesians chapter 4, Verses 23 to 24. That's the image. That's the image of God. That ability, For you to be able to reason well, With the knowledge of God.

[26 : 40] For you to be holy, Before God. And for your life, To be righteous. That's the image. So when you, Try to define, What the image of God is, There you have it.

Scripture tells you, Clearly, What that image of God is. In Colossians 10, Paul focuses on, Being renewed, In the knowledge, After the image, Of the creator.

There we go again. The focus is on knowledge, But nonetheless, It is a reminder, Of what, That image of God, Actually is. Now, It doesn't take, Us long, To be able to, Lift our eyes up, From scripture, And look around the world, And go, People don't look like that.

That's not what I see, When I watch the news. I don't see, People reasoning well. I don't see holiness, And I don't see righteousness.

I don't see the image of God, In the world. And I don't see the image of God, In the world, Where God put it, In people. So, What's the explanation for that? Well, We know, Genesis 1 and 2, That God made, Adam and Eve, In his image.

[27 : 53] But then, After the fall, And Adam had children, We know that, His children, Did not look like God. The image of God, But rather looked like, Their own father.

So, Genesis 5, Clearly points out, That after Adam lived, A certain amount of time, Okay, We can actually, Read it. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God, Verse 1, Verse 2, Male and female, He created them, And he blessed them, And named them man, When they were created.

When Adam lived, For 130 years, He fathered a son, In his own likeness, After his own image. And that's the image, Of fallen man.

So, Adam is made in the image of God, But his son, Is made in the image of Adam, After the fall. And that image, Is the image of fallen man. And when you look at fallen man, You don't see a person, Who reasons well.

You don't see a person, Who's full of holiness. And you don't see a person, Who's full of righteousness. The image of God, Is not there. At least by, How Paul defines, What the image of God is, In the New Testament.

[29 : 02] Hence the need for Jesus. Hence the need, For the image of God, To be restored, So that communion with God, Can be restored. What a person needs to become, Is the image of God.

What the new creation creates, In a person, Is that image of God, Restored back to them. Because the fall, Took it away from them.

Sin destroys it. Now, Plenty of, Ink has been spilled, Over what actually happened, To the image of God, After the fall.

Because, We don't want to use words like, Well the image of God, Is marred, It's shattered, It's a shattered reflection. Though all of these are, Adequate, To describe what's happened. It's fairly silent.

But, When you read the New Testament, And understand what it means, To be renewed in the image of God. And you can look at the world, And go, Okay, That's not there. So we can conclude, That the image of God in people, Isn't there either.

[30 : 04] They're not reflecting that knowledge, That holiness, That righteousness. And so, Everyone that comes, After Adam, Is born in sin, Born out of communion, Because the image of God isn't there.

That there's just no, And so the need for, The serpent crusher in Genesis 3.15, God's son who is, The visible image of the invisible God. Okay, That's who he is, 2 Corinthians 4.4.

Okay, The reason that he needs to save us, Is because what gets restored, Is the image. We're born again in Christ Jesus, And we take on the likeness of the one, That we're born from.

Okay, So, It's that simple, It's really not that complicated, Is it, To understand, That we take on the likeness of the person, That we're born from. Now I know that when, Parents have children, And you're out and about, And someone says, You know, She looks just like you, Not me, The mother.

And you don't, You don't always naturally, See it, You know. And, I was visiting my nan, Back in the summer there, And the next door neighbor, Just down a couple says, You just look, Like your granddad.

[31 : 21] Well, I can remember visiting him in hospital, When I was very young, I don't remember what he, Was like, At all. But other people do, And they, They look at me and go, Look at the similarities there, That, I've taken on the likeness of those, That have come, Before me.

Okay, I can't help it. And, You can't help it, Either. You've taken on the likeness, Of those who brought you into, This world. And, When Christ, Brings you into a new creation, What happens?

Well, You take on his likeness. That image of God, Is then reintroduced, As it were, Into, Your life. So, Having dealt with image, We now move on to, Communion.

When the image is dealt with, Communion naturally, Follows. Communion with God, Is likeness. It's not just, Sat together, Friendship, Communication.

Communion, Is a form of likeness, Hence why we can see this, Throughout, Scripture. Those who are created, In Christ Jesus, By virtue of their union, Get to share in, All the blessings, That God has.

[32 : 34] Remember, God is in need of nothing. And that's the best news, Because it naturally, Leads you to grace. It naturally leads you, To the fact that God loves you. If God doesn't need me, Then what does he want, With me?

Well, He's, He created me, So that I might come, To share in his goodness. That I might come, To share in what he, Has. And Adam enjoyed it, So did the woman, For a time.

And now we enjoy it, In Christ Jesus. There's benefits, Of being in union, With Christ Jesus. And those benefits, Do not exist, Outside Christ Jesus.

Now there is a common grace, And that is, That God's general goodness, Is still poured out, Onto the world, If it wasn't, Things would be far worse, Than what they are, But what we enjoy, In communion with him, Is blessing, Answered prayer, Assurance, The knowledge that he is here, There's so many blessings, That are not material, In nature.

And we can just point to them, Almost every single day. And of course, There are material blessings, As well. Now, Because of this, The world is created, With potential, And those blessings, Lead to potential, But since the fall, There's a potential, For what?

[33 : 56] Well, The absence of goodness, And evil, Is really the absence, Of that good. It's the potential, For further evil. In fact, When you look at the commands, And you look at what happens, Be fruitful and multiply, Is soon replaced, With one person, Killing another person, Which is hardly, A multiplication, Of fruitfulness, But rather, A taking away, Of life.

And that's a real, Observation, That we ought to make, How evil, Sin, Takes away, That goodness. It takes, It's taking away life, Killing your brother, Is taking away, Good life.

Even in a fallen, World. And so, This happens, Because people, Do not live, In communion with God, And therefore, The difficulty of living, In communion with each other, Is just, Exaggerated.

What else does it mean? Well, It means that the environment, That you live in, The communion with the world, That in terms of, How you live, And what you have, Everything's now up for grabs, In a whole new way.

Okay, The resources of the world, Become exploited. I'll never forget, When I read, I think it was the, I think it was a book called, The Bottom Billion. And, I'm pretty sure it was that book.

[35 : 19] And, In one of the paragraphs, In one of the chapters, Somewhere in the book, It says, I'm sure God is going to have, Something to say, To all those countries, That have robbed other countries.

And he goes on to say, There must have been a reason, Why God put diamonds, In some of the poorest countries, In the world. Why God put oil, In some of the poorest countries, Of the world.

And yet, You actually look, At who those companies are, They're not, They don't originate, From the country, Where there are diamonds. They originate, From other countries. And so, The world, Falls into an exploitation, Of resources.

We'll just, We'll just steal. We'll just take it. Who's going to stop us? And then, Of course, There's further exploitation, The unfair distribution of food. Okay?

It's not that there's not enough food, In the world. But, No one cares, Enough to be able to distribute it, Wisely enough. That these things, Could be solved, But the enemy, Is man.

[36 : 23] Man's the problem. Sinful, Fallen man, Stops these, Potentially, Things, For goodness, From happening. Okay? Not the environment, The environment gets exploited, Because man is fallen.

There's the world. So now the mission. God promises to sort it all out. And the promise is made here in Genesis 3, 15.

In short, This is the first promise of the Lord Jesus Christ, What's known as the proto-evangel, That God would send one, Who would crush Satan.

And crush the destructive power of Satan. And through his obedience, Rather than Adam's disobedience, Would reverse what has happened.

Through his accomplishment, He would bring people back to God. Saving them, Restoring them, Making them back into the image, That they are meant to be.

[37 : 28] True humanity, True humanity, True humanity, True humanity, Is meant to look, Like Jesus. The definition, Of a human, Is someone, Who is, Reasons well, Holy, And righteous, In Christ.

And anything out of that, Is less than what God created, It's less than human. Which is hard to think, When you look at your friends, And your family who are not saved, You would never say to them, You're less than human.

But nevertheless, It's clearly the case, They're not fully human. Because to be fully human, Is to be created in the image of God. Living in communion with God.

And anything short of that, Is short of what they were created, To be. That's the beauty of God's mission. For God so loved the world, God so loved that created order, He so loved what he made in the beginning, That he gave his son, Into a fallen world, So that he could make it, Back like it was.

That's why God so loved the world, That he gave his son, That whosoever believes in him, Should not perish, But have eternal life. That's what's happening. And you know what, You know, When something perishes, It means that it no longer serves, The purpose for which it was created.

[38 : 51] It's perished. Like a wineskin. When it perishes, It can no longer serve the purpose, For which it was created. People who are unsaved, Are perishing.

And that means, They cannot serve the purpose, For which they were created. They can serve a few other, Man-made purposes on earth, But not the one, That they were truly, Created for.

Here's a few considerations, Then as we close. While much can be taught, About creation, Two truths, I think, Remain clearly there.

The first, Is that people, Are made in the image of God, In order to reflect, The image of God, On earth. And therefore, People live in communion, With God. And that's the definition, Of a true humanity.

Being the image of God, Living in communion, With him. And while it's also true, That Christ is the visible image, Of the invisible God, And we understand, That we can only become that again, If we are born again, In him.

[39 : 56] Born again in the one, Who is the image of God. By him making us new, By him making us a, New creation. That when we recognize that, We understand, That that accomplishment, Of Christ, Is the news, That transforms.

That work of Christ, Is the transformation, God making peace in the world, That we go ahead and tell. And therefore, As Paul says, When we look at another person, 2 Corinthians 5, We no longer look at them, According to the flesh.

Okay? We don't look at them, According to the flesh. To a worldly standard. And of course, There are worldly standards, Of what is a good person, And what is a bad person.

What is a successful person, What is an unsuccessful person. What is an attractive person, Or an unattractive person. The world is not short, In coming up with its own standards.

But they are all short, Far short, And even sinful in cases, Of what people are meant to be. So here's the exhortation.

[41 : 05] You cannot afford, To be like the unbelieving granny. And what I mean by that is, There are plenty of unbelieving grannies out there.

Atheistic grannies. Who think that life is complete, For their grandchildren. If they're married, They have a home. They have perhaps a couple of children. They've got a car, And they've got a good job.

Life's complete. Okay. I have one of those grannies. Life is not complete. Okay.

You look at, You look at all these young people, You know, They're getting married, They're moving into the house together, They have families on the way. Okay. They're both holding down good jobs.

Life's good to them. What life is that? Not if you're looking at it from scripture, Can you conclude that that's any kind of life at all?

[42 : 02] They're the very people, That God is telling us to go to. That's the very mission, That God is coming to this world, To reach those settled, Complete people.

As well as others. So, Don't leave here with an idea, Of the atheistic granny. That all is well, If people have, A nice house, A nice car, A nice family, A nice job, A good job.

Okay. That is not the definition, Of a life, Well lived. Don't, Judge people, According to worldly standards.

But look at them, Through the eyes of scripture, That sees them as, Not being, Restored in that image, And not having communion, With God.

The purpose here, Is to go tell them, That they can be, What God made them, To be, Or what God made man, To be, Originally. So this means, As a church, We have a mission.

[43 : 08] And if the mission of God, Is on our mind, We understand, How God has co-opted us, In, To it. We also know, What the result should be, And I think, And I think that's the most important thing.

Okay, As Andy Hunter said this morning, It's, It's not either or, It's both and. You know, We want people to, Have good marriages, And a nice home, And you know, Somewhere to live at least, And good jobs.

But, We don't want them to have that, We don't want to make it, Spurgeon says, If you give a man, A coat on a winter's day, And not the gospel, You just make his journey to hell, That much more comfortable.

Okay, That's him, You've got a problem with that, Take it up with him, When you get to heaven. Okay, But that really, Puts the point, It's both and.

It's not that we don't want people, To not have those things, And have, What it means is, Is that Christ, Triumphs over all of them, He's over above all of them, And if we forget that, Then we can look at their life, And go, They're settled.

[44 : 15] They're not settled. They're on their way, To the judgment of God. There's nothing settling, About that. And so, That is something, A reality I'd like you to keep, In your mind and heart, As I'm sure we all do.

So we remember the command, That Jesus leads us with, That the extension of Genesis 3.15, Is the commission. Go tell people about me. Go and make a disciple, Make disciples.

Okay, Teach them, To observe everything that I taught, Which includes, Go and make disciples. So that the mission continues, From one generation, To another generation.

God's mission, In God's way, Which God has co-opted us into. Amen.