

TRUSTING GOD'S PLAN, PURPOSE, AND DESIGN

"God..." Genesis 1:31-2:3

April 21, 2024

INTRO.: This past week there were two mission teams from this fellowship that were the hands and feet of Jesus. One was a medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic and the other was a construction team with Samaritan's Purse that went to Kentucky to help with the rebuilding of homes in a neighborhood that was devastated by a tornado. It was so encouraging to hear and see (pictures) what God was doing in and through these teams. God was at work as these teams served! Both teams have stories to tell of how God powerfully worked. I want to show you a picture from the Kentucky trip that really struck me with the awesomeness of God. The team had the opportunity to attend the home dedication (picture) for a family that had lost everything in the tornado! Most likely several teams were involved over the course of time to finish this project. What joy and what celebration with their home being restored. They would have been unable to accomplish this on their own. God used His people to step in and minister to this family. The house is finished! This brings me to my mind the country of Haiti. We took 13 trips to this country providing medical, construction, and children's ministry teams. This all began after the devastation caused by a massive earthquake that struck this country in the afternoon of January 12, 2010. Over the years I was struck by the many buildings that were partially rebuilt but never finished. (picture) I always found this very sad. This church continues to support missionaries in Haiti: Pastor Guillo/Edline and Pastor Francklin/Nerlie. Currently it is too unstable to send teams there and we are looking to adopt another country. It saddens me that we can't go back to Haiti. There is unfinished work. In Kentucky, the team helped with two homes and was able to attend the dedication of another home that had just been finished. The DR team saw many medical needs met and had opportunities to share the hope of the gospel. There will continue to be many needs. Each of these teams look to meet the physical needs while opening the door to share the gospel. This morning, as we continue our series, Trusting God's Plan, Purpose, and Design we want to observe some things about God and His work as the week of creation comes to a close as recorded at the end of Genesis 1 and beginning of Genesis 2. Let's read together Genesis 1:31-2:3 and see if you can pick out what these verses tell us about God.

Genesis 1:31–2:3 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

These verses are all about God, the One who created all!! Four things in particular we see in what we just read.

***GOD DECLARED** 1:31
***GOD COMPLETED** 2:1
***GOD RESTED** 2:2
***GOD BLESSED** 2:3

***GOD DECLARED** 1:31

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day

What did God declare in this verse? At the end of the sixth day, God says, "*it was very good.*"

Henry Morris (*The Genesis Record*) "Six times before, He had seen that what He had made was "good"; but now that it was complete, with every part in perfect harmony with every other part, all perfectly formed and with an abundance of inhabitants, He saw with great joy that it was all (literally) "exceedingly good."

Everything God created was good. It would go against His very nature for it to be otherwise. What God created was perfectly made and a reflection of His character. He is good in His very essence, without sin. Goodness is not only who He is but also what He does. Do you and I truly believe that God is good? Do I understand that what comes into my life has come through God first? Can I make sense of it all the time? Of course not. This reminds me that He is God, and I am not. Satan challenged God with the following after God described Job as being "blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."

Job 1:9–12 "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. **10** "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. **11** But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." **12** The LORD

said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

What does the Bible have to say about the goodness of God? Think about the life of Job, who in a very short time lost everything, including his children. God allowed Satan to do this. Job's response to these difficult events:

Job 1:20-22 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship **21** and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." **22** In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Satan goes before God again, asking God to allow him to affect Job's physical body, which God allows with the limitation that Satan couldn't take his life. So, Satan afflicted Job with terrible sores from his feet to his head.

His wife's response:

Job 2:9 His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!"

Job's response to her:

Job 2:10 (NIV84) He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

David's prayer:

Psalms 86:1-5 Hear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. **2** Guard my life, for I am devoted to you. You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you. **3** Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to you all day long. **4** Bring joy to your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. **5** You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.

Do you and I believe that God is orchestrating the events in our lives for our good and His glory?

Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

"we know:" (perfect, active, indicative) A point in the time in the past and continuing on into the future.

"works together:" (present, active, indicative)

"love:" (present, active, participle)

God has a much bigger goal than yours and my happiness.

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Do you and I trust the goodness of God? God declared that what He had created was very good!

GOD COMPLETED

2:1

Genesis 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

What God started with creation, He finished. No one or nothing can thwart the purposes and plan of God for He is omnipotent (all powerful).

This is far different than you or me. Have you ever begun something and failed to finish completely the task or project? This past week was the meeting of the Trustee Board. I almost always write a report and email it to the board members, so they have a chance to read it before the meeting. So, I wrote the report and when my report came up during the meeting I began with this, "I will share some highlights from my report which I emailed to you earlier." Someone said, "I didn't get your report." Then others, "I didn't get it either." I had written the report but failed to send it out. I don't like to do things like that. Can anybody here relate?

God always completes His plans. What other places in Scripture do we see God completing what He began?

In the incarnation, Jesus, God the Son, became a man. What was God the Father's purpose in sending His Son to earth, born of a virgin? Jesus came to live, die, and raise again for your sin and my sin. Judas, one of the disciples, betrayed Jesus. Jesus was illegally tried, beaten, and crucified. It appeared to many that what He had come to accomplish had failed, but that is not so. Look what Peter has to say to the crowd in Jerusalem:

Acts 2:22–24 “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. **23** This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. **24** But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Hear the last words of Jesus in John 19:30, as He died on that cruel cross.

John 19:30 When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

What about God’s work in the lives of His children? The Apostle Paul shares with the believers in Phillipi how he is praying for them.

Philippians 1:3–6 I thank my God every time I remember you. **4** In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy **5** because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

“*began*.” to begin in. Used only twice in the New Testament and both times it is in reference to salvation. (MacArthur)

God is the One who begins the work of salvation in any person who comes to faith. We do not get any credit for our salvation!

“*completion*.” fully completed

“*day of Christ Jesus*.” this refers to the time when believers will be glorified, when our salvation is completed. God will carry us through to that day! Are you thankful that you are secure in Jesus Christ? When someone truly comes to faith in Christ, it is a work of God, that is secure in God.

We had several people testify today of their faith in Jesus as their Lord and Savior as they were baptized. Isn’t it wonderful to know they are secure in Jesus Christ. Upon the moment of belief this is what happens:

Ephesians 1:13–14 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

God declared: “it was very good;” God completed: Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array;

GOD RESTED

Genesis 2:2

Genesis 2:2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

“*he rested*.” (from Arnold Fruchtenbaum) this is the Hebrew word, *shabbat*, which means “to complete,” “to cease,” “to rest.”

So, God rested, not in the sense of recuperating from tiredness, but in the sense of cessation at having completed or finished His work.

This is not the beginning of the Sabbath, and it wasn’t until the Exodus that God gave the command to keep the Sabbath. **Exodus 31:14–17** “ ‘Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people. **15** For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death. **16** The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. **17** It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.’ ”

Just a couple of notes:

The sabbath is observed from sundown Friday to sundown on Saturday.

The Sabbath is the only one of the ten commandments not repeated in the New Testament; although I firmly believe that we need to have times of rest where we read and meditate on the Scriptures (the Bible) and pray.

This idea of God resting because He had completed the week of creation reminds me of how Jesus is described in Hebrews.

Hebrews 10:11–12 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. **12** But when this priest (Jesus Christ) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.

We live in a time when it is a badge of honor to be continually busy. People many ask, “How are you doing?” We like to be able to answer, “I’m really busy.” We take pride in always having something to do. How many times does God get whatever time we have left over?

Psalms 46:10 “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

People can connect with us and us to them wherever we are because of these (cell phones).

So, why do we gather together on Sunday to worship? It is in remembrance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

God instructs us to put an emphasis on gathering together to worship.

Hebrews 10:23–25 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. **24** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. **25** Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

True rest comes from God and sin will keep us from rest.

God declared (it was very good); God completed (He will finish what He’s started); God rested (it was complete);

GOD BLESSED

Genesis 2:3

Genesis 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Bruce Waltke, “God blesses the Sabbath and makes it holy in the best interest of all people and all animals.”

Exodus 20:8–11 “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. **9** Six days you shall labor and do all your work, **10** but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. **11** For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

As time went on the priests and religious leaders attached all kinds of rules and regulations to the Sabbath. They complained about Jesus’ healing on the Sabbath, the disciples picking heads of grain to eat on the Sabbath.

They made laws about all kinds of things: Anything that could possibly be construed as work was prohibited. Carrying anything heavier than a dried fig was forbidden. One couldn’t kill an insect, light or extinguish a candle, nothing bought or sold, egg couldn’t be boiled, a sick person was only allowed enough treatment to keep them alive not improve their condition, and women couldn’t look in a mirror lest they see a gray hair and pull it out. (John MacArthur)

Jesus has to remind the religious leaders: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

God gave the Sabbath to be a blessing not a burden. God made the seventh day holy, having set it apart. As I mentioned earlier, the command to observe the Sabbath is not repeated in the New Testament and Sunday is not the new Sabbath. We are to gather on the first day of the week (Sunday) to celebrate Christ’s victory over sin and death provided by His death and resurrection. This should be a day of rejoicing.

As we meditate on God's blessing on this seventh day and His making it holy, we are reminded of God's desire for the lives of His children.

2 Timothy 1:9–10 He (God) has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, **10** but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 Thessalonians 4:3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

"it is:" present tense

"sanctified:" set apart, it is where we get the word holy from

The lives of followers of Jesus Christ are to be different! Again, I draw us back to the baptisms this morning. Going under represents the death of Christ and coming up represents the resurrection of Christ. Going under represents the old man and coming up represents the new man. We are called to pray for each of these people as they continue on their journey with Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

"has come:" (perfect tense) from point in time in the past (moment of salvation) and is ongoing

SO WHAT???

I hope and pray that you and I can grasp the riches of life changing truth found in the Word of God. This is a book about God, the One we need to know and love here on earth and the One with whom we will be with for eternity. I go back to the picture of the completed house in Kentucky and how the new owner had difficulty expressing his immense gratitude. As God finishes this creation week in Genesis, what is my response?

*Do I know the One who came to die & raise again for my sin?

*Am I trusting that God is good in ALL that He does? (God declared)

*Take some time this week to reflect on and list how I have seen and see God working in my life. (God completed)

*Do I need to review my schedule and prioritize my time with God? (God rested)

*Through the power of the Holy Spirit living inside of me, am I displaying the fruit of being a new creation in Christ? (God blessed and sanctified)