



4 | GENESIS 2:1-7

JESUS AND REST

True happiness in Jesus comes from living life the way God designed it. Jesus designed life for you to get your joy in him alone, finding rest from all your burdens in him.

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Call to Worship

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
² Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts! ³ Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! ⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! ⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created. ⁶ And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away. —Psalm 148:1-6

Songs

Creation Sings (Gettys)
For the Beauty of the Earth
Rejoice (Gettys)
All Creatures of Our God and King
Indescribable

Announcements

WELCOME: We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet if you are visiting with us.

Introduction

My sons have loved to put together the **most complicated Lego sets**. My natural instinct is to just go for it, but **my sons would spread out the instructions sheet and meticulously follows it**. The difference is when I try to put it together, we end up having to take my strange creation apart and look back at the instructions. As a man, I hate to admit it, but **it's best to follow the design of the designer** if you want the order and function of the designer. So it is in life! We are called to live life the way God designed it. God has given us four pillars for thriving in his universe in Genesis 2.

We've looked at the **order of God's creation, how God has created us in his image**, how God created humanity to be **male and female**. God created marriage to be between a male and a female until death parts them. These very foundations of our society were established by God at the creation of the world: **God's image in man, his assignment of gender, the need for rest, the importance of work, and the picture of marriage**. If we **rearrange** the order of creation, we will **create chaos, confusion, and misery**.

Consider how we as a society have rejected the Lord's Day of rest, respect for life, the work ethic, and we are now redefining marriage and gender. God is **not a God of confusion but of order and peace** (1 Cor 14:33). When we attack or disregard God's foundations, we take away the joy of human flourishing and replace it with human misery.

Oh the joy of true rest in Jesus. One of my favorite verses on rest is found in Matthew 11.

Matthew 11:28 | Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

True sabbath rest is found in Jesus alone. That rest is given by God in the beginning of Genesis. God takes the seventh day and rests and reflects on his whole creation.

Key thought: True happiness in Jesus comes from living life the way God designed it. Jesus designed life for you to get your joy in him alone, finding rest from all your burdens in him.

1. THE DAY OF REST (2:1-3)

The first order of creation is the day of rest **for man to cease from his normal work and enjoy God in a special, intentional way**. God orders a rhythm of rest one out of seven days so that we will remember that worshipful rest in God is the pathway to happiness. **Man's first full day on the earth was a day in which he is called to rest** and reflect with God on all that the Lord had done!

Genesis 2:1-3 | Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ²And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

God rested on the seventh day. Of course, **God was not tired**. He never slumbers or sleeps. The purpose for God's rest was to show that God created something amazing and holy and wonderful that reflected the beauty of God's holiness.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SABBATH: REFLECTION

The **purpose** of the Sabbath is for humanity to pause and reflect and **worship the Lord for all he has done**.

Genesis 2:1 | Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

When God completed his work, it was perfect. There was nothing that could be added to make it better. It was very good. Everything was in order. **There was no sin on the earth at that time.** The **animals were all tame.** Adam and Eve were without sin. Everything was harmonious.

It is called the Sabbath day. **The Sabbath day was instituted before the law of Moses,** but it was not made to bind people to rules, but instead to enjoy God. It was meant to be a blessing. The Sabbath is made for man to stop from his normal labors and enjoy God, reflect on God's goodness, and worship him. Jesus said as such in Mark 2.

Mark 2:27 | The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.

The **Sabbath was made for man to enjoy rest** and to reflect that God is the absolute ruler of the universe (*cf* Mk 2:27). God finished his activity of creation and took the helm of the universe to rule over man as man rules over part of God's glorious creation. **God didn't need vacation.** He is **inexhaustible.** He actively holds every atom in place.¹

Would you say that your soul is at rest in Jesus, or are you weary? Are you tired? Are you burdened by your sins? Go to Jesus. He wants you to rest in him—not just one day out of seven, but every day and every moment.

That very first day that man was created, he enjoyed the presence of God in perfect worship and he and the Lord reflected on the glorious creation on the seventh day. It's **not that the Lord is exhausted** and needs a breather.² God rested, not because he was tired, but to teach Adam how to reflect and worship.

Isaiah 40:28 | Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. **He will not grow tired or weary.**

God wasn't tired! This is the rest of achievement, not of weariness.³ The omnipotent one is inexhaustible. God's work was so amazing, that he instituted a day for humanity to celebrate his almighty power and mercy and reflect his marvelous creation.

THE PICTURE OF THE SABBATH: OUR REDEEMER

Genesis 2:2 | And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.

The way Moses puts the Hebrew here is with a huge emphasis on “seventh” day. It's important that the word for seventh is very close to the word for “swear” an oath for a covenant. Because of this **the number seven became representative for God's covenant of promise to bring a Redeemer into the world.** Thus it is no surprise that the Sabbath became the **day to**

¹ Nathan Carter. “Rest”, *Genesis* (Chicago: Immanuel Baptist Church, September 23, 2007), sermon manuscript.

² Randy Frazee, *Making Room for Life: Trading Chaotic Lifestyles for Connected Relationships* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 64.

³ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1967), 53.

remember of God's covenant (Exo 31:13, 17).⁴ The Sabbath is not an end in and of itself, but points, as does all of God's word, to the rest we have in Jesus Christ.

God was saying from the beginning, "I'm going to rest. I know what's coming." Soon **Satan would come and rob Adam** and all his posterity of their rest through **the fall into sin**. But God is saying: I promise to bring you rest. The rest of Scripture will point to this covenant that a **redeemer will enter humanity** and take our chaos and bring us rest.

Today, our Sabbath rest is Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 3 and 4, the author of Hebrews talks about how most of the children of Israel died in the wilderness, and never entered into God's Sabbath rest. In chapter 4, he compares the entering into the promised land with the believer resting in Christ by faith. We need to rest in the work of Christ.

Hebrews 4:9-11 | There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God,¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.¹¹ Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

What was the disobedience of the people of Moses' day? They **didn't enter the promised land because of unbelief**. Our ultimate Sabbath is rest in Jesus Christ. We rest by living by faith and abiding in Christ.

NO NORMAL ENDING TO DAY SEVEN

To highlight our rest in Jesus, notice this day of rest does not have the normal ending. While it was a 24-hour day like the other six, there is not the formula ending we've come to expect such as: **"and there was evening, and there was morning – the seventh day."**⁵ Like everything else in this chapter, this is intentional.⁶ God's rest for us, his reign over us, his sitting on the throne of the universe is to continue uninterrupted.

Adam would lose fellowship with God, but Jesus regains it, and by Christ's victory, he restores our worship. And our worship is to never, never end. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor 15:22).

THE PATTERN OF THE SABBATH: OUR RHYTHM

The pattern for the Sabbath is that mankind is the rest one out of seven days, just as God rested. As we said, **God was not tired. He was not exhausted**. This rest was not to sleep but to reflect and enjoy what he had brought into existence. He set apart the Sabbath as a "holy" or special day for man to be blessed by God, causing those who are submitted to God to flourish under his love and care.

Genesis 2:3 | So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Adam and all mankind are to remember that God is worthy of worship. Isaiah says we are to "call the Sabbath a delight" (Isa 58:13). One day out of seven, you should have a rhythm in your life. Your neighbors should be able to observe that if it's Sunday morning, your car is gone.

⁴ Allen P. Ross, "Genesis," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 29.

⁵ Carter, *ibid*.

⁶ Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, revised edition, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), 63.

NECESSARY FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL

This **pattern is as necessary for human survival** as food, family, and shelter.⁷ We are not like the inexhaustible God in this way. We are dependent and weak creatures. So God gave us an example to copy and follow. He wants to bless us!

WHY SUNDAY? THE LORD'S DAY

The rhythm of the Sabbath changed when Jesus rose from the dead. The early believers, including the apostles would meet not on Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath) but on Sunday, since Jesus had risen from the dead on that day.

Though our ultimate rest is in Jesus Christ, we still rest one day out of seven. **It is not called the Sabbath per se in the New Testament, but simply the Lord's Day** (Rev 1:10). The early believers gathered on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2).

1 Corinthians 16:2 | On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.

THE DAY OF ETERNITY

Ours gathering together **each Lord's Day is also like a dress rehearsal for eternity** when we will be able to praise God forever without interruption.

There is coming a day when sin and sorrow will be no more, and **we will forever be at perfect rest**. We have a record of the saints in heaven singing in Revelation 4, reflecting on God's good creation without interruption from sin.

Revelation 4:11 | Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

We ought to order our lives around the Lord's Day, which in the New Testament is Sunday, because Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday.

THE PRACTICE OF THE SABBATH: OUR ROUTINES

Here are some practical helps for honoring the fourth commandment:

- *Get good rest Saturday night.* Sunday is the market day, so you'll need to come rested and ready to receive a good stock of **truth** and **love** and **fellowship**. Stock up for the week!
- *Come ready to worship the Lord.* Don't be halfhearted in your worship. Be all there. Get free from all distractions. The corporate body is gathered together with Christ as head. Be ready not just to receive but to give of yourself and your gifts to the body and your love and worship to God. Even if you can't sing, you should "make a joyful noise." **God deserves your praise** in the midst of the congregation (Psa 22:22).
- *Try to arrive early.* You really miss out when you get here later for a service. I know sometimes we cannot prevent it, but if there was a million dollars waiting at the door, you would not be late. Your worship to God is worth more than many millions. If you come late, don't linger out in the hallway, but come and join in worship.

Early **Christians did not celebrate the Lord's Day like the Jewish Sabbath**, first, because they knew that the Sabbath is far more than the Jewish Sabbath, but it is rest in Christ

⁷ Gordon J. Wenham, "Genesis," in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 61.

every day. Also, a great majority of the early Christians were slaves and could not rest, so they met much later on Sundays after work. Yet, as the secular culture became transformed by the power of the gospel, the Lord's Day activities began to slow down, and Sunday became a time of rest for most societies even as it is today. By the second and third centuries more and more congregations began meeting on Sunday mornings for the Lord's Day.

WAYS WE CAN HONOR AND ENJOY THE LORD'S DAY

Today there are at least **seven ways we as believers can enjoy the Lord's Day rest.**⁸

(1) *We Remember God as Creator*

The Sabbath is a *memorial of creation*. Everything, including your very existence, began with God. In the beginning, God! This command is certainly included in the ten commandments (Exo 20:11), but **it was instituted at creation**. Why do we need to stop once a week and remember that God created us? Because we are so forgetful!

For the first five days, God filled the earth with gifts for man, and then on the sixth day, God gave man the greatest gift he could have—the gift of life. Contrary to popular science, human beings were not an accident in the universe. We are the unique creation by of the infinite God. In God **"we live and move and have our being"** (Acts 17:28).

(2) *We Celebrate God's Order and Give Thanks*

The Sabbath is a *day of worship and reflection*. God lovingly provides everything we need.

One of my favorite holidays is Thanksgiving. Thankfulness is a wonderful evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit. It does us so much good one day out of seven to pause and give thanks for all the Lord has done for us. God cares for us!

The Jews had a rhythm of reflection in their lives (*cf* Lev 23:3). The Sabbath was made so God's people would be reminded of God's care. We are not to be lazy, but neither are we to be crazy. We don't exist for work. We exist to give glory to God.

The six plus one alternation of work and rest is a rhythm set in place for human flourishing. It gives us the balance of worship and work.⁹ This is God's order and design for humanity.

There have been experiments with defying God's order of Sabbath rest, **such as in 1793, France. In an effort to increase human productivity, de-Christianized the calendar** by modifying the seven-day week to a **ten-day week**. New clocks were even invented to reflect the revised week. The experiment, however, radically failed: suicide rates skyrocketed, people burned out, and production decreased. Why? It turns out humans were not made to work nine days and rest only one in a week. We were made to work six days and rest one. The seven-day rhythm is sacred. The seven-day week is not the result of human ingenuity; rather, it reflects God's glory.¹⁰

(3) *We Reflect on Our Dependence on God*

The Sabbath is a *statement of dependence*. **We are weak, dependent creatures.** We did not create ourselves. We need to reflect continually that every breath we take, everything we have is a gift from God who made all things.

⁸ *Cf* Carter. "Rest", *Genesis*.

⁹ David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11: The dawn of creation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 49.

¹⁰ A.J. Swoboda, *Subversive Sabbath: The Surprising Power of Rest in a Nonstop World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2018) 10-11.

Not working on the seventh day is a statement of dependence on God. It said, “I trust God to meet my needs, and to show that I’m not going to work.”

Resting in this sense is an act of faith, a tribute and honor, recognizing God as sovereign provider of all things. Working on the Sabbath is a manifestation of not trusting God to meet one’s needs. Not working, then, would be a statement of dependence.¹¹

The children of Israel in the wilderness had their needs met: manna each day, but **for the Sabbath, they were to collect double the day before (Friday)**, and their food supply would last two days instead of just one (Exo 16:23-26).

We are so weak and dependent, but aren’t you glad that God promises to provide for all your needs? “And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19).

(4) *We Remember Christ’s Redemption*

The Sabbath is a *memorial of our redemption in Jesus*. When Moses gives the ten commandments again in Deuteronomy, he says it’s a day to remember how **God brought them out of Egypt** and delivered them from slavery (Deut 5:12-15). We too are to remember on the Lord’s Day, that God brought us out of our Egypt (the world) and delivered us from slavery to sin through **our Redeemer** who is greater than Moses because he created Moses.

(5) *We Rejoice in God’s Humanitarian Blessing*

The Sabbath is a *humanitarian blessing*. Every person on earth is weak and needs rest. God made Sabbath for **man’s blessing**. Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mk 2:27).

Our mortal bodies can’t go non-stop. We are not to be lazy, but neither are we to be crazy! **We need physical rest and rejuvenation**. The Sabbath is for man so that we “may be refreshed” (Exo 23:12). The Sabbath was made to give humans a much-needed break.

(6) *We Reflect our Sovereign, Caring God*

The Sabbath is a *mark of identity*. The Sabbath marked the Hebrews with a unique ethnic identity (Exo 31:13), and the Lord’s Day marks Christians today.

The fact that the Hebrews didn’t work on the seventh day, marked them off from the other nations around them. It ought to mark believers today. In most states in our country, you are able to specifically request to not work on the Lord’s Day for a religious observance.

(7) *We Celebrate the Coming New Creation*

Today, by resting one day out of seven, **we are celebrating that one day Jesus is coming again to bring a new creation!**

The Sabbath is an *eschatological pointer*. Eschatology refers to things to happen in the latter days, the future. The weekly Sabbath pointed the Hebrews constantly to a future period of rest. For them, they were waiting for the rest of Messiah. For us, now we are awaiting the new creation!

All the saints of all ages look forward to a “better country” since “God is not ashamed to be called their God, for **he has prepared for them a city**” (Heb 12:16). I can’t wait until there will be **no need for any more elections and politics because Jesus will be King of kings** on this earth. Let his rule and reign come quickly! Oh, how we long to see Jesus in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:2). What glorious rest!

¹¹ Scott J. Hafemann, *The God of Promise and the Life of Faith: Understanding the Heart of the Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), 50.

2. THE LIFE OF REST (2:4)

We come to a brand-new section that enlarges the rest God has promised for the people of God. Moses uses the word “generations” or “account” to give us a close up of his creation of man. It could be translated, “Here is a **fuller development** of the story of creation.”¹² It could also be translated “**family records**” referring in this passage to the creation of Adam.¹³ In Genesis we have the family histories of Adam, Noah, and ultimately Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s sons, the twelve tribes of Israel.¹⁴

LIFE IS COVENANTAL

We begin with the first appearance of God’s covenant name: Yahweh, translated “LORD” in our English translation.

Genesis 2:4 | These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

Up to this point in the story, Moses has used only one designation for God, the name *Elohim*. But now for the first time, we are introduced to the covenant name of God: **Yahweh-Elohim, “LORD God”** (2:4ff). *Yahweh* is the personal covenant name of God who relates to and redeems his people (cf 15:7 and Exo 3:14, 15).¹⁵

Man is about to be brought into the picture, and when he enters, **he’s in covenant with God**. Life is a gift of fellowship with God in a beautiful paradise created for man’s fellowship with God and his joyful worship of God.

To say life is covenantal is to say it is to be lived in covenant with God. We **cannot flourish in life without God**, but only by dependence on the power of God. **We are not lone rangers**. We are dependent creatures. **We are finite, weak, and in need** of Yahweh’s love and care.

PUT JESUS FIRST

Living life in covenant today means living in the rest and joy of Jesus. Put Jesus first by honoring him on the first day of the week.

Matthew 6:33 | Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

That means before you accept a job, you should find out if they require you to work on the Lord’s Day. **Why?** Because **your first commitment is not your income or your bank account**, but the Savior who provides you everything you have. Give him honor. Don’t sleep in for Sunday School—honor God by coming at 9:30am for the Sunday School teaching time. Put Jesus first in your life.

According to Illinois law, you can request at least a part of a day for religious observances. Put God first before you accept a job that would take you away from the people of God.

Of course, **the exception to this is first responders** and those in health care who are on call in emergency situations.

¹² David Atkinson, *The Message of Genesis 1-11: The Dawn of Creation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 54.

¹³ Rousas John Rushdoony, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch: Genesis* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2002), 21.

¹⁴ John Phillips, *Exploring Genesis: An Expository Commentary*, The John Phillips Commentary Series (Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp., 2009), Ge 2:4–7.

¹⁵ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 49.

LIFE IS PROVIDENTIAL

We see that God is guiding all things. He's bringing it into existence and putting it all in the right place. He does "all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph 1:11). We call that providence.

Genesis 2:4 | These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were **created**, in the day that the LORD God **made** the earth and the heavens.

The word for "created" (Heb. *bam*) means God brought everything into existence. **Through a deliberate act God brought the cosmos into being.**

The word translated "made" (Heb. *casah*) means "appointed." God put everything together and directs all things for his covenant.¹⁶

Jesus "appointed" the sun, moon, and stars to be the exact distance they needed to be for life to flourish and exist on this planet. He put all the laws of science into place. He appointed all things.

But Jesus' providence is not just for creation, but for you personally. He loves you. He's guiding you. He's placed all things in your life so that you might be "conformed" to his image (Rom 8:29).

Because he loves you, even before you or even Adam existed, God appointed all things from the beginning so that Jesus would enter this creation. He's appointed his Son Jesus Christ to be born, live, and die for sinners. Chapter 3 of Genesis was no surprise to God. Jesus is **"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Rev 13:8).

JESUS GAVE US LIFE AS CREATOR AND REDEEMER

Jesus not only gave us life as creator, but when we forfeited that life, he gave it back to us as Redeemer!

1 Corinthians 6:19b-20 | You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Praise him for that! Your life is not your own, it is bought with a price. Life is not about you and your success. Life covenantal. It's all about Jesus. He's worthy!

3. THE REASON FOR REST (2:5-7)

Here is a fuller account of the creation, specifically of man (2:4-7). In creating man, we already told that his first full day is spent in worship of God. The reason God gives life to man is that we would rest in the Lord completely. You cannot live a fulfilled, flourishing life outside of a life of faith in Jesus.

We've **already heard of the creation of man in Genesis 1:26-27**. God says, "Let us make man in our image." But here we have a fuller account.

GOD CREATES A PARADISE FOR WORSHIP

The earth is described as a place of **paradise and enjoyment** with no thorn bushes or weeds ("small plants").¹⁷ The garden hadn't yet become wild and untended. None of the animals were beastly. God had created a paradise for worship, but it was missing one important component: the worshipper.

¹⁶ Rousas John Rushdoony, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch: Genesis* (Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 2002), 21.

¹⁷ John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 45.

Genesis 2:4b-6 | In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,⁵ when no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground,⁶ and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground.

Eden was truly Paradise on earth. But it was an untended place of worship. Moses describes the *untended* condition of the earth prior to man’s creation.¹⁸

We read about the “mist” that was watering the whole face of the ground. This is a Hebrew metaphor for the streams, like referring to the flooding of the Tigris and Euphrates.¹⁹ But without man there, it would be *untended*.

APPLICATION: Is your life untended?

What about you? God has given you a family perhaps, a home, a job, but **without you worshipping and serving the Lord, your home, your life, your job is untended**. Now that sin has entered into the world, you need to ask yourself, how can I be that person of worship and dedication to God?

God creates that garden paradise to bring man as a worshipper and reflector of God into it, to keep it and tend it and to glorify God in that garden paradise.

GOD CREATES A PERSON FOR WORSHIP

God has created the paradise, the garden-temple, a place for worship, but now he needs the person who will reflect and worship him. It was in that glorious environment, on the sixth day, that God formed man, and breathes into him the breath (literally like a “kiss”) of life.

God’s Care as Potter

Genesis 2:7a | Then the LORD God **formed** the man of dust from the ground.

God formed Adam with great care in his divine design. The term “formed” indicates that the act of creation was by careful design.²⁰ **God’s creative work is highly anthropomorphic** in this chapter. He is depicted as an **artist or better yet, a potter who sculpts the man** (vs 7).²¹ Such personal attention and care in the making of the first human is comparable to the contemplation of God in 1:26, “Let us make man in our image.”²²

Isaiah 64:8 | Now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Are you living in submission to the Potter? You may want something different for your life, but God is not forming you to be successful by worldly standards. He is shaping everything in your life to be successful by heavenly standards that people might know Christ through you and be conformed to him.

¹⁸ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 50.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 51.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Victor P. Hamilton, “Genesis,” in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, vol. 3, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), 12.

²² K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 195.

WHEN EARTHQUAKES COME

The Bible says that you are God’s “workmanship”—his masterpiece” (Eph 2:10). God is the artist. You are his masterpiece. God cares for you, and truly we are built to care for humanity. There is **nothing more valuable on the face of the earth than human life**.

When **an earthquake topples massive cities** to the ground, we do not mourn the buildings very much. We go searching... for what? **Gold, silver, jewels? No**, those things are worthless compared to human life. **We go searching for souls in danger!** And we mourn and are devastated by the loss of any human life. Knowing your life is precious, here are three daily responses to the life God has given us.

God breathed into us the breath of life, so that we could be worshippers of him, not so that we could waste our lives in aimless living.

God’s “Kiss” as Father

Genesis 2:7 | Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and **breathed into his nostrils** the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

The main point is that God’s breath of life is a kiss of love to man. The LORD God loves us creatures of dust. “Breathed” is so warmly personal—it carries with it **“the face-to-face intimacy of a kiss.”**²³ The point is: life is a marvelous love gift from God. It is to be lived in loving covenant with him. We are just dirt and dust without God’s life-giving kiss of creation. But with the breath of life, we are creatures hard-wired for worship.

Do you know child of God that you have been **“kissed” by the Father** with all the gifts and abilities and even your weaknesses to do his glorious will. **He’s worthy of your worship, and your affection.**

With this “kiss” of life, the incredible journey of humanity begins. Adam is a “living creature,” **formed by direct act of God**, and this was an act of love. This not only tells us how man is **accountable** to Yahweh, but also that man is **deeply loved** by God. Indeed, we are “loved with an everlasting love” that occurred before God ever formed one molecule (Jer 31:3).

We cannot find true rest and happiness, until we find rest in God. We’ve been ripped away from that through our own rebellion. Satan is glad to kidnap those who choose to sin. He’s the “strongman.” But if you want to truly find rest in life, you have to find it in Jesus.

Have you found that rest in Jesus? It is like St. Augustine prayed, “Our hearts are restless ‘til they find their rest in Thee.”²⁴

God’s Miracle as Life-Giver

Genesis 2:7 | Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the **man became a living creature.**

God did a miracle when he formed man out of the dust. “Man became a **living creature**”—a *nephesh*(נֶפֶשׁ) – This depiction of “inbreathing” (*nāpah*) has a close parallel in Ezekiel’s vision of dry bones (37:9–10), where the reconstituted skeletons of the slain are brought to life again by the inbreathing of the “spirit.” Here Ezekiel has “spirit” (*rûah*) for “breath of life” (*nišmat ḥayyim*),

²³ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1967), 60.

²⁴ Philip Schaff, ed., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, Book 1.1.1., trans. J.G. Pilkington (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 45.

but the two are treated as virtually the same here and at times elsewhere.²⁵ In other words, God gave the one who was dead life! Before he had nothing, and suddenly he has intellect, appetite, sight, hearing, blood flow!

This “breath of life” means that each person is an ever living being. We will live forever somewhere. This is why the first creation of man points us to the new creation of man. We know Adam is going to “die” when he sins against his creator. He’s cast into judgment. He is cast out of the garden. So he, as well as all humanity today, needs the new birth, the new creation.

Have you been born again? Have you come to Jesus Christ by grace through faith in Christ alone? God offers his rest to weary souls. Here’s how.

Our main source of restlessness and turmoil comes from our sin within our hearts. We’re at odds with God. And the main reason why so many of us are so exhausted is because **we’re working so hard to make God love us.** Stop trying to earn God’s favor through performance, and rest in what Christ has already done.²⁶ **Rest in the work of Christ.** You can only be made alive and acceptable through the substitution of Christ for your sins. **You must make the great exchange: his righteousness for your rags of sin!**

Conclusion

I remember when **GPS (Global Positioning System) first came out.** I was 22 years old, trying to navigate around Philadelphia with my father-in-law, who was old school. There was a ton of construction, and I was following the GPS carefully. **The satellite would check the traffic patterns** and tell us the fastest way to go. **This was some kind of wizardry** to my father-in-law.

Suddenly, Dad would say, “Turn here!” And we would. And then I would hear, “Route Recalculating.” It happened several more times, and I would hear the now very familiar, **“Route Recalculating.”**

Finally, we decided we either had to follow Dad or the GPS but not both. **Dad decided we should follow the GPS** and suddenly we were back in the flow of fast moving traffic headed to our destination. So it is that **we must decide we are going to follow God’s GPS, the Bible,** including **his order of creation.**

We have a better “eye in the sky” than GPS. We have the all-knowing and all-seeing Savior. He is all wise and has told us how to order our lives for maximum glory to him and maximum human flourishing. A massive part of human flourishing is finding rest in Jesus Christ. It is in our worship of Christ that we find clarity, purpose, and true meaning for life. We need to follow what he says about the image of God in man, about marriage and gender, as well as his prescribed rest found in Jesus Christ alone.

Benediction

May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.—*Ephesians 3:17-19*

²⁵ K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 196.

²⁶ Cf Carter. “Rest”, *Genesis*.