

The Gospel in Genesis

by Glenn Matthews

The sermon explores the Gospel's presence in Genesis, emphasizing creation, human depravity, and the transformative power of Christ as the light of the world.

Duration: 1:04:29

Scripture: Genesis 1:3-27, Daniel 5:5, Matthew 6:33, Luke 24:25-27

Topics: "Creation Story", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by describing God's loneliness and decision to create the world. God brings light into the darkness and shapes the earth, creating valleys and mountains. After observing his creation, God still feels lonely and decides to create man. He forms man from clay and breathes life into him, making him a living soul. The preacher emphasizes that all of human knowledge can be summed up in nine words from the Hebrew Bible. The sermon concludes with a reflection on the earth's initial state of formlessness and darkness, highlighting the transformative power of God's creation.

Transcript

He does not know it, but before he asked me to speak, I had already cleared my calendar and said, I'm going to be here. So I need the fellowship, I need the time of prayer, and I need to hear preaching. I started preaching in February, 1963.

I was four at the time. No. No.

No, I was 17. I was 62 this past December. And I have been in evangelism now since 1976, and I have averaged 43 weeks of meetings a year in the 21, 22 years now.

And I have six radio broadcasts a week, and I get so tired of hearing me preach. I just want to hear somebody else. And so I said, I'm going, and kept the schedule free to come, and then to come, and I got here, and thought, well, I'll go to this first session, and then I will go get cleaned up and look presentable and put on a coat and tie.

And I found out when our brother Peckman started to preach, I didn't want to miss any of the series, so I just stayed and heard it all, the whole series. Wonderful. I get hungry to hear preaching.

I really do. How many of you are preachers? Let me, well, you know what I'm talking about. You want to, like my wife said, I like to eat somebody else's cooking, even if it's not as good as mine.

Just, just, just the change, right? And it's been a, it just blessed my heart already to be here. And I'm certain that any number of you, if not all of you, could be far better at what I am to do today than I would be. But I hope to be a blessing to you, and I suppose we should start at the very beginning.

Open your Bibles, please, to the book of Genesis chapter one. This is my kind of building. I don't see a clock anywhere.

And I don't have the endurance that I used to have, so I will not preach too long. My father was a preacher. He's been with the Lord since 64.

He lacked a month, being 52 years old when he died. My father said the secret is to how long you preach is that you quit two minutes before your congregation does. So I'll try to do that.

Let's read selected verses from Genesis chapter one. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, let there be light, and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness, and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night, and the evening and the morning were the first day. Verse nine, and God said, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together under one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He seas, and God saw that it was good.

And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after His kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth, and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after His kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself after His kind, and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Verse 26, please, and God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He Him, male and female created He them. Heavenly Father, You know my heart, You know my desire, and I wish to glorify Your Son, and I pray to be a blessing to each man here today.

And as we have opened the word, may we also have opened our hearts, and let the Holy Spirit minister to us, and we shall give You praise in Christ's name, amen. I preach to you today on this subject, the gospel as it's found in Genesis chapter one. All of the Bible is about Christ, and you find Him everywhere.

Without question, the greatest sermon that the world ever heard was not preached indoors, but outdoors, and not to a multitude, but to two people who were going the wrong way late in the day with inaccurate, incomplete information. And Jesus caught up with them. And in the course of that conversation, it said that He said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe "all that Moses and the prophets spake, "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, "and to have entered into His glory, "and beginning at Moses,' not the man, the writer, "that's Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, "and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, "He expounded unto them in all the scriptures "the things concerning Himself." Had to be the greatest sermon the world ever heard.

Jesus preaching on Jesus. "In all the scriptures, the things concerning Himself, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets." Where do you think He began? Do you think He began at Exodus 12 with a Passover

lamb? Genesis with a life of Joseph as a type of Christ? Do you think He began at Genesis 22 with the offering, the binding of Isaac? Do you think He began with the ark as a picture of Christ? I suspect He began right here. And so this is where we began.

Wonderful book, the Bible. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and that is both an introductory and a summary statement. 1879, an English biologist, Spencer, wrote a book in which he said, quote, "There's always been five elements, these five, "time, force, motion, space, and matter.

"Beyond these, no man has gone,' end quote." He went on to explain what he meant by time, force, motion, space, and matter. And he identified these five, time, force, motion, space, and matter, as being five umbrellas, as you will, if you will, and that was not his term but mine, under which all human knowledge comes. Anything that is known or knowable falls under one of those five words.

Regardless of what you study, from A to Z, you are studying something related to time, or to force, or to motion, or to space, or to matter. Nobody has ever disproved that statement. Regardless of what you study, it would come under one of those headings of time, force, motion, space, and matter.

Listen to the power of the word of God. In the beginning, that's time. God, that's force or power.

Created, that's motion. The heavens, that's space, and the earth, that's matter. And all of human knowledge, God sums up in nine words in the Hebrew Bible.

If it were possible, let's pretend so, let's stand somewhere off in space somewhere. And if we can pretend we can stand somewhere in space at the morning of creation, let's also pretend that we could see through the dark. And we look through the darkness and we see something out there in the darkness, yet somewhat discernible or distinguishable from the rest of the darkness.

And I should say to you, what is that? And you say to me, I don't know. It seems to be without form, and it's void, and it's dark. What we would be doing is describing the earth.

To say that it is without form is to say that it is without a unifying or life-giving principle. There is nothing that gives it substance, solidity, nothing that gives it cohesiveness. It is without form.

You look at it once, and it looks one shape. You look at it again, and it looks another shape. It's without form.

It's a whole lot of parts, but there's nothing unifying it. And we would say it's void. And the word does not only mean empty, it means worthless, devoid of power, or devoid of value.

And we would say it's dark. And the Bible said, the darkness was upon the face of the deep. And what we have is a description of this geophysical earth.

But let me suggest to you that this is a wonderful description of a life apart from Christ. And my ears perked up earlier when Brother Vaughan said there may be some folks here needing justification. A very polite way of saying you're sinners.

Is it possible that somebody should come to a prayer advance who does not know the Lord? Quite possible. If that's so, then I have just described your life. It is without form.

Where is that unifying source? What is it that gives you stability? Look at the unsaved world around you, and the pursuits, and the seeking of meaning and pleasure. It's without form. Always looking for something to give meaning.

And if you listen behind the hollow laughter and the lilting songs, you hear the sadness even in such Broadway tunes as, is that all there is? Have I stayed too long at the fair? Without form. Life doesn't really begin, friend, until Jesus Christ comes in. That's where your unifying source is.

It's without form, and it's void. Doesn't only mean that it's empty, and a life without Christ is empty, but it means that it's without value. What value is there to come into a world, born, grow, learn, work, reproduce, grow old and die, and go to hell? Far better not to have been born without value and dark.

And dear friend, if it's dark on the surface of an unsaved life, how dark must it be in the depths of an unsaved heart? And if we stood in space and looked through the darkness at that without form void and dark earth, and we would say one to the other, is there any hope for that? Whatever that is, will it ever be different? Will it ever be something better, something else? We would both say, no way. There's no hope for it. It's without form.

It's void. It's dark. We would be wrong, for the Spirit of God began to hover, began to brood upon the surface of the waters.

And you look at the life of the wretched, reprobate, the drunk, the addict, the rapist, the sex slave. You look at the life apart from Christ, and you say, is there any hope? Oh no, he's too far gone. And what you're forgetting is that there is a Spirit of God that begins to hover.

It's been well said, and it's my friend, Jimmy Johnson, whom I first heard said, that all the Bible is in the first two verses of Genesis. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, that's creation, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, that's degradation, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and that's regeneration. And that's all the Bible.

But how does it happen? When the Spirit of God begins to hover, then God said, let there be light. Now, the Spirit of God, Acts 2, Holy, at the day of Pentecost, came as the sound of a mighty, rushing wind. But that's not how it usually works.

The Holy Spirit generally works quietly. And when the verse said that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, don't think of a high, rushing tide of a tidal wave with force. Think, rather, of the ripples upon a soft lake.

That's the way the Spirit of God worked. Did you know that all coming to life is a work of the Spirit of God? It is when God breathed into man's nostrils the nephesh, spirit of life, that he became a living soul. Even the birth of our Lord Jesus was a work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, and that Holy One which is to be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Even the resurrection of our Lord, He was made a deceiver to David according to the flesh, Romans 1, 4, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. All coming to life is a work of the Spirit of God.

So when you read, and the Spirit of God began to hover on the face of the waters, something good is about to happen. And God said, let there be light. What kind of light? You've never seen a light like that light.

Don't think light like sun and moon. They don't come until day four. It's not like that light.

If for no other reason, that's reason enough to reject any idea of theistic evolution because if God did it over a process of millions of years, how do you explain that on day three, you've got grass and you don't have the millions of later sunlight and everybody knows you gotta have sunlight to have grass. It's just simpler to believe the Word of God, amen. And God, what kind of light? You haven't seen any light like that.

May I give you my own translation? And God said, and this comes right from the rabbinical writings of the roots of our Christianity and Judaism. And God said, hear it, let the light that is be. And the light that was, was.

This is not the creation of light. This is the manifestation of preexistent light. And God said, let the light that is be, parenthesis manifested, close parenthesis.

And the light that was, was. Parenthesis manifested, close parenthesis. Now who is that? In Genesis 1, 1, in the beginning, God, Father.

Verse two, and the Spirit, God the Spirit, moved upon the face of the waters. Who does that leave us? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by Him. Without Him was not anything made, that was made in Him was? Light! And the light was the light of men. And the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness overcomes it not, comprehendeth it not.

There was a man sent from God, his name was John. The same came to bear witness of that light. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that, which was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Did not Jesus say, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness. Now, we have creation, degradation, but now we have light.

Let me suggest to you, that if you're writing notes, and I love to preach to preachers. I never understand people who get nervous preaching to preachers. It's fun to preach to preachers.

All you have to do is be fortunate enough to say something that gives them an idea, and they go off and develop their own sermons. Pay no attention to you, and you just go ahead and do whatever you want. But in the event that you are taking notes, let me suggest that you write down light, and equate it with conviction.

For there can be no conviction without light. If our gospel be hid, it is, 2 Corinthians 4, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel, whose image of God should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake, for God who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shone in our hearts to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen. It is light that brings conviction.

In this country, very few people are saved the first time they heard the gospel. I can't tell you the first time I heard the gospel. I started going to church about nine months before I was born, and just kept going.

I honestly can't tell you the first time I heard the gospel. I can tell you the first time I had a consciousness of my sin, I was less than five. Because I was born in that preacher's home, and we had church all the time, you know.

But I was not saved until I was eleven. I've got to take the time to tell you. 1947, spring, at our house in the coal camp in West Virginia, on Sunday we played church.

I don't mean the folks did at eleven o'clock, I mean the kids did in the afternoon. And we played church. My brother played the piano, my sister Nancy led the singing, Marietta Smales, Marietta Smales was our designated shouter.

And sure enough, Kenny and Larry Blake took up the offering, and my cousin Ruby Faye was a designated sinner, and she got saved every Sunday. And though we had different people sing solos and all of that, and though we would have 15, 20, 25 kids to play church, nobody else but me ever preached. That's true.

Always. And if it was nice, we played outside. And we would sit under the tree, and I would stand and preach, and Marietta Smales would shout, and Ruby Faye would get saved.

I'm telling you the truth. And if it was cold or rainy, we met in our living room. And to find out later that the adults would meet in the other rooms to listen to us play church.

And always I was the preacher. I was not saved. I'm talking about five, six, seven, eight, nine.

We buried everything. Anything in the community die, we had a service. Cats, dogs, anything die, we had a service.

I was always the preacher. Wasn't saved, but I could preach. I have to inject something.

1961, I had viral encephalitis, sleeping sickness, and sustained some brain damage. I have an excuse for the way I am. And my memory now is nothing like it was then.

But in those days, I heard it. I remembered it. Just total recall.

And I'm telling you the truth. I could listen to my father preach and preach it verbatim. True.

Even to the gestures. And so when we played church, I'd preach 30, 40 minutes. I mean, just cut loose.

And if he shouted when he was preaching, I'd shout. If he waved a handkerchief, I'd wave a handkerchief. When you grow up in the cold camps, you work hard and you worship hard.

You know, you get into it. And I had gone with my father on a Saturday night where he was holding a revival meeting in another church, not too far from ours, and it was packed. Of course, it was a small building, but they set chairs in the aisle, and I sat in the chair in the aisle.

And he preached that night on Daniel chapter five, the Feast of Belshazzar, mene, mene, tikel, yufarsen, thou art weighed into balances and found wanting. Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians. And that night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, slain.

And my father was preaching, and about 10 minutes into the message, he had that hand start writing on the wall. You're weighed into balances and found wanting. Whose balances are they? Who does the weighing? I could hear it now.

Boy, he could bear down on it. And for the first time in my life, the light penetrated the darkness, and it went further than my head. It down into my heart.

Now, if anybody had asked me for weeks before, are you a sinner, I'd told them yes, and probably smiled about it. You know, you need to be, yeah, I will eventually, one of these days. In fact, I can remember being witnessed to when I was eight.

And this fellow said, why don't you get saved? I said, because when I get saved, I'll have to start preaching, and I don't want to preach. I won't be a ball player. I knew this before I was saved that I would be a preacher.

Don't think that odd. I'm really come lately. Jeremiah was called while he was still in the womb.

And I sat there in that seat that night, and my father pointed his finger, and he preached it. And I said, he's talking about me. I'm waiting to be found.

I'm found wanting. I was scared. What happened? The light.

The entrance of thy Word giveth light. It convicted my heart. For the first time in my life, I gave some kind of response to an invitation.

Several people saved, read, dismissed, 9:30, 10 o'clock at night, whenever. And my dad said, anybody here who would say, I should have gotten saved tonight. I didn't, but pray for me.

Raise your hand. And I saw my hand go up almost by itself on the way home, just he and I in the car. He said, I saw you raise your hand tonight.

Yeah. You know you should have been saved. Yeah.

Are you ready to be saved now? No. Well, when you're ready, we'll talk about it. OK.

The next day was Sunday. And what do we do at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon? We play church. And my daddy had had a guest speaker on Sunday morning who didn't preach very good.

And so I decided I would preach what daddy preached on Saturday night. And we sang, and Marietta Smiles shouted, and Larry and Kenny took the offering. And I got up to preach.

And there were about 15 kids in our living room, sitting on couches and chairs on the floor. And I took my text from Daniel chapter 5. And I had been preaching about 10 minutes. And the finger of God started writing on the wall, mene, mene, teko, you're waiting to die.

I looked down, and Ruby Faye was crying. She's a designated sinner. And I said, Ruby Faye, not yet.

She said, I can't stop crying. And I looked at my sister, and my sister was crying. And I looked at my brother, and Joe Cool was crying.

And when Joe Cool cries, something's wrong. And I looked, and they were all crying. And I stopped preaching, and I started crying.

And my sister and my cousin ran to my mother. And Marietta and Kenny and Larry and the other kids ran home, and my brother ran to my daddy and left me standing there, sobbing. We never, ever played church again.

I literally preached myself under deep conviction. And I was scared to go to sleep. I was afraid the Lord would come, my family would go to heaven, I'd be lost.

Get up in the morning, hadn't slept hardly at all, sit there in front of that coal fire, putting on my four buckle heartaches and my hot top boots to go to school, and the demons coming out of the fire in that fireplace, I was scared. Two weeks later, my daddy was still, three weeks later, my daddy was still preaching that revival meeting at that other church. It only had 100 and some people saved before that thing ended.

This is 1947. And our prayer service was on Thursday night, and an old, tall, flat-headed Dutchman, a coal miner, lay preacher who was taking charge of the prayer service that Thursday night. And everybody testified, and he brought a little devotion.

He said, anybody have anything to say before we go home? And I'm sitting right there, and I said, yes, I do. He said, what is it, Glenn? I said, aren't you going to give an invitation? He said, hadn't thought about it, why? I said, because I've got to get saved. And I got saved.

You know what happened? The light of the glory, the word of God had brought conviction into my heart. For you see, you don't even know darkness until there's light. The truth of the matter is, you have to get saved before you find out how rotten you really were.

That's light equates with conviction, in the evening, in the morning. But come down to verse 9, 10, and 11, and 12, and 13, the third day, and we've already read the passage. Verse 11, and God said, let the earth bring forth grass.

What? Grass? That's life, isn't it? The herb yielding seed, that's life. And the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, that's life. It's interesting that it's not on the second day, but it's on the third day that you have life.

You want to do a good study, just get yourself a good concordance or a good Bible program on your computer, and check out every reference to the third day or three days, like after three days, or upon three days, or on the third day. It's amazing. And as it began to dawn toward the third day, that's resurrection.

So if light is equated with conviction, and on the third day we have life, you have to equate it with conversion. The first miracle of Jesus was what? Turning of John chapter two, and it begins, and on the third day. And I defy you to find which is the second day and the first day, because if you go back into the first chapter of John and the next day and the day after, and the day after, and the day after, you're up to about seven days.

But the Bible very clearly says, so there's a space between John one and two, but the Bible very clearly says that on the third day, there was a marriage in Cana. The third day. Wonder why Cana? Why not Nazareth? Is it just coincidence that it was Cana? The word Cana means the root system of a tree, not the trunk that's visible, but the roots.

What is a marriage? Is it not two coming together, putting down roots, bringing forth life, the third day? Isn't it interesting of all the times in the first chapter of Genesis it says, and it was good, and God said it was good, it is only on the third day that he says it two times. And he does so. On the third day in verse 10, and God saw that it was good.

And verse 12, and God saw that it was good, it's only on the third day that he says it two times. Life is equated with conversion. So we have grass.

Can you think of a more apt description of a new believer than grass? Grows very quickly, but it's very tender, easily trampled, needs water. Desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow. And then you have herbs, shrubs, bushes.

And then you have fruit trees. Now the difference between shrubs, herbs, bushes, and on the one hand, and fruit trees on the other, is not the size, but it's the seed. The fruit tree has a seed within itself, the cherry, the peach, the apple, or whatever.

But the shrub is dependent upon the seed being blown. So you start into the family of God, new growth grows rapidly like grass. Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

And the miracle is not in the sower, but in the seed, dear friend. And so as you begin to grow in grace, and you begin to give witness, you give out your word, the seed. And one of the emblems of the Holy Spirit is that of wind.

And the wind, the Holy Spirit takes your word, and some falls on good ground. Bring forth fruit. And in one verse, you have grass to shrubs to fruit trees.

And every branch that in thee bringeth forth fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Life is conversion. We'll come to verse 26.

This is not the text, by the way. I'm preaching to the text. I will give you the text at the end.

Verse 26, and God said, let us make, what? Let us make. That's different. Now, in the letter part of the verse, or verse 27, so God created, but in verse 26, different word, let us make.

Everything to this point had been creation by fiat, by spoken decree. And God said, and it was so. But not this.

And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness. That's different. Eight times in the first chapter, after his kind, after its kind, after their kind.

And they were to reproduce after its kind, after his kind, after their kind. This is different. And they were spoken into existence.

But not this. Let us make man. James Weldon Johnson, in his little volume called God's Trombones, a famous poet, late 1800s, early 1900s.

And in that little book, God's Trombones, Eight Negro Sermons, is the way he titles it. The first one is called The Creation. I love it.

And God stepped out on space. And he looked around and said, I'm lonely. I think I'll make me a world.

And as far as the eye of God could see, darkness covered everything, blacker than a hundred midnights down in a cypress swamp. And God smiled and the light broke. And that's the way he began.

And he talks about God coming down and looking out over his land. And God stepped down and looked around on the earth and he saw that it was hot and barren. So God stepped over to the edge of the world and spat out the seven seas.

And he batted his eyes and the lightning flashed and he clapped his hands and the thunders rolled and the waters, the cooling waters came down. He goes on to describe the creation. He walked and where he walked, his footsteps hollowed the valleys out and hooved the mountains up.

Beautiful imagery. But he comes to the end of it. And God looked around on all that he had made.

Little stars, sun, moon, little stars and all the world that he made. And God said, I'm lonely still. And then God sat down by a wide river.

He sat down with his head in his hands and he thought, and he thought, till he thought, I'll make me a man. Up from the bed of the river, God scooped the clay. And there, the great God Almighty who flung the stars into space.

There, that God, like a mammy bending over her baby, formed and fashioned in man and then blew into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. I love the poem because of the emphasis at the end. So different.

And God said, and it was so, but now let us make. You're not an animal. Let us make man.

You are formed by God. And then these two important words. Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

And I stuck on those two words. And I went to the commentaries and you've learned by now probably that the problem with the commentaries is they're common. And they have a way of amplifying the obvious and not telling me what I don't already know and what I need to know.

And one commentator said, it's a Hebrew parallelism. An image and likeness are the same thing. And I said, that cannot be because it does not say let us make man in our image and our likeness.

It says, let us make man in our image after our likeness. Can't be the same. So what does it mean? And again, I had to exhaust my sources and I had to go back to the rabbinical readings.

And dear friend, it is wonderful. Let us make man in our image, after, in agreement with, in accordance to our likeness. And so a triune God, Father, Son, Spirit creates a triune universe of height and depth and breadth that can only be understood in terms of time which itself is a trinity of past, present and the triune God makes a triune man, spirit, soul.

So when you read, let us make man in our image, think, position, likeness, person. When you read, let us make man in our image, think, representative. When you read, after our likeness, think, resemblance.

When you read, let us make man in our image, think, dominion. When you read, after our likeness, think, demonstration. For that, dear friend, is unlike every other creation, part of creation.

Man not spoken into existence, but formed by the hands of God was made in the position image and likeness person as God's representative image to resemble him, likeness, to have dominion image and to demonstrate what that God was like. Your Bible, Luke three, trace it. No, no, no, don't turn, don't turn, don't turn, this way.

Luke three, tracing the genealogy of Jesus backward doesn't stop at Adam. He's the son of man in Luke, remember? He goes right on past Adam and goes backwards. Who is the son of Enos? Who was the son of Seth? Who was the son of Adam? Who was the son of God? That's what your Bible says.

And that first Adam, man of red earth, was made as God's representative on the earth. He was to have dominion. He was to represent God's spirit, soul, and body.

And there's that trinity of father, son, and spirit. Two of the three are invisible and only one is visible. Even so with man, a trinity, spirit, soul, invisible, and only the body visible in the image after his death.

And if light equates with conviction and life equates with conversion, then likeness has to equate with. Now with all of that, I am ready for the text. Romans chapter eight.

And I almost hesitate to read it because it is so familiar. Verse 28, may I give you my own translation? And we are coming to know by education and experience by all means possible. That's the learning aspect.

We are coming to know, learning, that all things, limitless aspect, are in the process of working together, working, linear aspect, are working together. That's the logistical aspect. To them that love for good, that's the lifting aspect.

To them that love God, that's the limiting aspect. You say, but not in fellowship with God, you can't say this verse. Things aren't working together for good for you.

To say for them that love God is to go beyond to say them that are saved. That's the limiting aspect. To them that love God, to them who are the called, the loving aspect, according to his purpose.

That's the lofty aspect. And look at that verse and in your mind, decide which is the most important phrase. And all things work together.

We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. What's the most important phrase? It is the last phrase, according to his purpose. There is such a close connection between purpose and counsel and will.

When Hebrews talks about the immutability of his counsel, it doesn't mean advice, it means purpose or will. What is the purpose of God? These, for whom all things are working together for good, these who love God, these who are the called of God. What is his purpose, his will, his intent, his aim, his objective? What is it? And all of verse 29 and 30 is an outgrowth of that last phrase, according to his purpose.

Verse 29, for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, down in verse 30, moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified. Think of these as not five islands, but five links, and you can't separate the one from the other, and none is more important than the other, and they all have to be taken together, and it goes from eternity past to eternity future, and it's already settled in the mind of God from foreknowledge even to glorification. But look in verse 30, verse 29, for whom he did foreknow, this is his purpose, he also did predetermine, predestine, predestinate, conform to the image.

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. What is likeness? When this one is like that one, this one conforms to that one. Likeness is conformity.

So what you see in Genesis 126, let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and in Genesis 126, it is first image, and then likeness is reversed for us in Romans 8, 29, where it is that we should be conformed, flesh and life, unto the image of sin. When that first atom sinned and lost dominion and lost the fellowship of God, and bless his heart, the only thing he had outside the garden that he had inside the garden was the love of God. And when that first atom sinned, he lost that image, and that image was mine, and he could not be God's representative, and he could not resemble God.

But blessed be God, there came a second atom, who is the Lord from heaven, and everybody in the earth has created an image of one of those two atoms. In Genesis 5-1, this is the book of the generations, plural of atom, Matthew 1-1, the book of the generations, singular of Jesus Christ. And in that first atom, he's the head of temporary generations, and the second atom is the head of one eternal generation, because in that first atom, all die, in that last atom, nobody dies.

God has children, but he doesn't have grandchildren, amen. And that second atom came as the representative of the Father, to resemble the Father, did it? How clear was that revelation? So clear that when he was 40 days old, and his mother came in to dedicate him to the temple, to God, because the one that opens the womb, the veil, is to be dedicated wholly to God. An 80 or something year old man who didn't promise he wouldn't depart until he'd seen the Lord's anointing, just happened to be in the temple that day, and just happened to come up, and they just happened to give him that.

And he took that baby in his arms, and looked into the face of a 48 day old infant, and the rest of his eyes said, let now thy servant depart in peace, mine eyes have seen thy salvation, the glory of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. How's that for revealing? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. How's that for resembling? And that second Adam restored everything, the first Adam had lost.

When the first Adam took from the tree, he brought a curse on the earth, and the second Adam became a curse, and got on the tree to remove it from us. Why would he do that? So that we would be conformed to the image. And just like that first Adam was to represent and to reflect the Father, so are we now born again to represent and to reflect that second Adam, the Lord from glory.

His purpose is that we would represent and resemble him, conformed to the image. Why? Don't forget the last part of the verse, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. All hail the power of Jesus' name.

Let angels prostrate fall, bring forth a royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Dear friends, we are to be like the one who has redeemed us. We are a new creation in Christ.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new, not new in time, new in quality, and we're formed to become conformed into his likeness. There's some folks in this crowd, a few perhaps who knew my father, Ralph Matthews. August 23, 1964.

He died, he lacked a day in a month of being 52. Died in 64. And in the hills of West Virginia, people who are 70 years of age and older, who knew my father.

Many by the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds have come to me. And anybody who knew my father, 70 years of age and up in West Virginia, is more likely to call me Ralph than they are to call me Glenn. That was his name.

And they say, you look just like your dad. You sound like your dad. If that's true, it's only natural because he was my father.

No affectation on my father. I do know that when he died, I could have held his clothes, because everything fit, from shoes right on up. Same height, same weight.

Brother's dark complexion, black dark eyes, short. My sister's dark complexion, dark eyes, short. She looks like the Marlins.

My brother looks like the Marlins. I look like the Nazis. My brother, blue eyes, I have blue eyes.

His father, blue eyes. Everybody else, brown eyes. And people see me and they say, hey, Brother Ralph, man, I haven't seen you in so long.

A very famous preacher saw me. He said, Brother Ralph, I thought you were dead. And I said, it was J. Harold Smith.

And I said, but Brother Smith, Ralph died. He's with the Lord. I'm his son.

He dropped his jaw, and he said, I look just like your dad. That's a compliment difference. 1st of April, I will have been saved 51 years.

1st of February, last day of February this year, will mark 45 years. Not too many people have been said to me, you just look like Christ. You really resemble Christ.

I have not apprehended. But I was born in His image. I was to represent Him.

I am to reflect Him. So are you. And it matters not whether you work in secular work or in sacred work, and there's no such thing.

All work is sacred. It matters not whether you're in full-time vocational Christian service or not. If you're born again, you are to represent Him, and you are to resemble Him.

And Gypsy Smith wrote it, Christ the transforming light touches this heart of mine, piercing the darkest night, making His glory shine, and oh, to reflect His grace. Causing the world to see love that will glow till others shall know Jesus revealed. That's why we were made in His image.

By being conformed to the image of His Son, we represent Him as the Gospel. Genesis 1. Let's stand please for a moment. My Jesus, I love Thee, for Thee I'll sin.

My gracious Well, they can have the Super Bowl. They can have the political, the political arena. They can have the economic arena.

But I can't stand my lot with the Gospel. All hail the power of Jesus' name. Let's sing it.

Brother Mike, come lead us. Hymn number 202. We probably know it.

All four stanzas. Let's praise the Lord. All hail the power of Jesus' name.

Let's sing together please.

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