

Genesis Chapter Two: v. 1-25 – “A perfect relationship with only one rule.”

Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. ⁴ This *is* the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground; ⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground. ⁷ And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. ⁸ The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹ The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. ¹² And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. ¹³ The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel; it *is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates. ¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” ¹⁸ And the LORD God said, “*It is* not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” ¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. ²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. ²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said: “This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Introduction

Last week we covered God’s great creation week from Genesis Chapter One. This week we are going to concentrate on the main points of Chapter two.

There are three things in this chapter that I would like to concentrate on. These are firstly God’s creation of a seventh day as a day of rest and reflection. Secondly the creation of Man and women which we briefly touched upon last week. Thirdly the one prohibition between God and man and the consequences of any potential disobedience to God’s one rule.

1. The Creation of a 7th day to rest and reflect – v. 1-3.

Although God finished His creative week on day 6, we are told that there was a 7th day in God’s creative week. God created a 7th day in order to designate a day of rest. In v. 3 we are told that God sanctified this rest day.

It is important that we realize the significance of this rest day.

Everything that God created in His wonderful world was for the benefit of man, including a rest day.

The first thing we need to realize is that the one day in 7 rest day is for the benefit of man's physical and spiritual well-being.

Much research had been made by doctors on the physical health of men and women. All the doctors have concluded that our bodies function at their best if we have 1 day rest after working for 6 days.

For the last 2,000 years most western countries have followed the rule of having one 24 hour day rest every 7 days. However over the last 40 years or so many countries including America have ignored this practice and as a result the people are becoming more depressed in these countries and their bodies are suffering from mystery illnesses which are diagnosed as "Stress related".

In a recent survey it was discovered that America was the worst place in the world for depression and stress related illnesses and Japan was second.

So it really is important that you have a day of "Complete Rest" for the sake of your health, every 7 days.

God created our bodies so He should know how they function best.

Having a day of rest will mean a different thing for different people. It really depends what you do for a job or how you spend the 6 days prior to your rest day.

Somebody who works in an office might want to do sport on his rest day, but a professional sportsman might want to chill out in a coffee shop and read a book or watch a film at home. It all depends on how best you can relax.

The important thing is to take one day off in 7 for the sake of your health.

In Exodus 23: v. 10-12 we are told that God instructed His people not only to take a rest on the 7th day, but to rest their animals and their servants.

Many years ago somebody decided to test if it was actually important to rest animals one day in seven. They decided to load up donkeys and take them on a three week journey. Three of the donkeys did not stop to have a day of rest, they just continued on their journey, hoping that they would arrive at the destination 3 days earlier.

However the exact opposite happened.

The donkeys that were given a day of rest arrived three days earlier. The reason for this was that their day off refreshed them and they were fit for the next week

The donkeys that walked for seven days without a break got tired during the second week and walked slower. During the third week they were even slower so that they were over taken by the rested donkeys.

Man thinks that he knows better than God, but in the end God's word is held to be wisdom for all.

The second purpose for this rest day is for our spiritual welfare.

If we turn to the 10 commandments in Exodus 20: v. 8

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

For the Jew in the Old Testament the Sabbath was a day to call to mind two particular acts of God. The first was creation and the second was redemption.

In v. 11 the people were told to remember this day and reflect on God's creation.

There is a real sense that our rest day must never pass by without us reflecting on God's creation in some way.

There is a warning in Deuteronomy 8: v. 11-18.

¹¹ "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹² lest—*when* you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell *in them*; ¹³ and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; ¹⁵ who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, *in which were* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end— ¹⁷ then you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.' ¹⁸ "And you shall remember the LORD your God, for *it is* He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day.

We live in a modern society that wants to declare their self-sufficiency from their creator God. The Bible is clear that everything that we are and everything that we have is because of our creator God. We forget this at our peril.

The second significance of this rest day or Sabbath can be seen in

Deuteronomy 5: v. 12 - 15.

¹² 'Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵ And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

When the Law was repeated a significant addition was made to this commandment.

The significant addition was to focus upon God's redemption.

Redemption is never fully understood, unless we understand the character of God.

God hates sin and yet He wants to be the friend of the sinner.

For the Israelites, deliverance from Egypt was gained at the cost of the first born killed throughout Egypt. The Jewish people were only protected if they covered the door posts and lintel with the blood of a male lamb without defect.

God set aside a special day to remember this.

In the same way God wants every Christian to remember their "Redemption". It was not a rescue from slavery in Egypt but a rescue from eternal death and punishment.

This is the reason why we have communion once a month at OIC, so we do not forget our "Redemption" (Salvation through Jesus)

We should remember the death of the Lord Jesus, once a week.

I try to incorporate this into my sermon each week as it is important to remember the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for us each week.

So in conclusion God has created a special day, one day in 7 so that our bodies will be refreshed and that our souls will be refreshed as we meditate on God's creation and upon His redemption through His Son Jesus Christ.

As a challenge to those who choose to work on a Sunday for justifiable reasons I would like to quote from a famous English Victorian Story book called "Black Beauty".

Black Beauty was a famous horse that spent the last years of his life working as a cabman's (taxi) horse in London. Before the days of cars, people travelled by horse and cart. I am sure that you have seen some old films of these days in America and the U.K.

Black Beauty's owner was a taxi driver whose name was Jerry Barker. At one point in the story Jerry is talking to a fellow taxi driver named Larry who also had a horse taxi.

Larry said to Jerry that he couldn't afford to take Sunday as a day off, because he needed the money, and also because he needed to take Church goers to their favorite preachers.

Jerry had high principals and defended the importance of taking a rest on Sunday.

Jerry said to Larry – "If a thing is RIGHT it can be done, and if it is WRONG, it can be done without."

He went on to say "A good man will find a way and that is true for us taxi drivers as it is for those who want to go to Church."

That is an excellent principle in this context. "If a thing is right, it can be done, and if it is wrong it can be done without."

We now need to move on to the second important thing in Genesis Chapter two. That is the creation of Man and woman from Man.

2. The Creation of Man and Woman. – v. 7, 18, 21-24.

Last week we focused upon chapter 1: v. 27 where it tells us that God created man in his own image. We discovered that image referred to mental, moral and social characteristics.

Today I would like to focus upon what the text tells us about the roles of men and women and what God's purposes were at creation.

Firstly we discover from v. 7 that Man was created from the earth, and through the breath of God, he became a living being. So man was both physical and spiritual.

The Bible tells us in v. 8 that God planted a garden and placed man in that garden.

Next it tells us that the garden was very pleasant to the sight of man and there was ample provision of food within that garden.

In v. 15 it tells us that God took the man and put him in the garden to tend and keep it. We are told that the garden was called "Eden", the word means delight and pleasure.

The command by God for Adam to work and keep the garden came before Adam sinned. Therefore "Work" is not seen as a punishment but part of the fulfilling purpose of man. So we see clearly that "Work" in all its shapes and sizes is one of God's purposes for man on this earth.

This is the reason why men when they are unemployed and can't find work, often get depressed. They do not feel fulfilled in themselves. It is natural when men can't function in the way God intended them to function, that they will get depressed and feel unfulfilled.

Over the last 20 years I have counseled lots of people who were unemployed and depressed. I have always advised them to do as much unpaid voluntary work as they can during their time of unemployment. In this way they not only feel better in themselves but are able to present themselves to prospective employers as not being lazy and not shy of hard work. I have been around long enough to know that the longer you are unemployed, the harder it is to get a job. Most employers rate long periods of unemployment from a negative point of view.

Retirement can be a challenging time for men if they don't find some small part time position. Japan is one of the few countries that give work opportunities to retired people. This is one of the positive things about the work place in Japan for retired people.

We may not always get paid well for our work, but God wants men to work as part of our fulfilling purpose.

However from our text we notice that God doesn't just want man to be a gardener, He wants man to be a guardian also.

The word "tend" and "keep" in the Hebrew can also mean to cultivate.

God was giving man a leadership role to "care "for creation.

In v. 19-20 we are told that God brought the animals that He had created and asked Adam to name them. God accepted whatever name Adam gave the animals as its proper name. There was a respected trust between God and Adam. God delegated a job for Adam and trusted Adam to do the job.

Here we have proof of man's intellect and knowledge and God's desire for man to have authority.

Now we come to verse 18 where God decides to create another person.

In v. 18 we are told why God decided to create another person.

We are told that it wasn't good that Adam was alone and that God's solution to the problem was to create a person on the same lines as man to act as a helper for him.

The Hebrew word that is used here as "helper" means in Hebrew "one who supplies strength in the area which is lacking in the helped person "

The term does not imply that the helper is either weaker or stronger than man. The idea here is a person who complements a man. In v. 21-24 we are told how God created His second person.

²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said: "This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

So God created two people from one person, so that later on, two people would create one person.

In Matthew 19: v. 4-6 Jesus uses Genesis 2: v. 24 to support God's view on marriage. This is a significant reference not to be missed as it also tells us that Jesus supports the book of Genesis.

So in conclusion God created two unique but different people to complement each other. He chose them for an exclusive relationship with man as the head who had authority and responsibility for creation.

We now come to the final and important section of Genesis chapter two. This is the conditions and consequences set down by God for Adam to live in harmony with Him in the Garden of Eden.

3. Conditions of living in God's created garden – v. 16-17.

We live in a world today that is controlled by lots of rules and regulations. Every year new rules and regulations are added to the existing ones. Last year in Texas alone 50 new rules and regulations were added to the law books. They were a mix of everything from highway rules to agricultural rules. However when God created Man, he only gave him one rule.

This is amazing, imagine living in a beautiful world with only one rule.

Read verses 16-17.

¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

We read that there was one rule, with one consequence.

In v. 16 we are told that Adam could eat from every tree in the garden.

In v. 9 we are told that Adam could eat from the tree of life. If Adam ate from the tree of life, he could live forever and that would be no problem at all.

However if Adam ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil there would be consequences, Adam would die.

Adam knew about "Good" because everything that God had created was "Good".

However knowing about "Evil" was another matter.

Adam had been created as a perfect being, he was innocent of all wrong doing.

Adam's experience was limited to God's goodness.

This single tree was what distinguished man as a human and not a robot. Man had a choice. His choice was to eat or not to eat, to obey or disobey.

Having the ability to choose is what gives the word "obey" meaning and depth.

It is choice that makes a relationship genuine.

There is a very real sense in which God was testing Adam in their relationship.

In v. 29 of chapter 1 we notice that God had given Adam "Everything". God had given Adam all the food from all the trees on the earth. Adam had a great variety of foods to choose from. He didn't need to worry about the one prohibited fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Although God had formed a Woman from Adam later on, at the time God spoke to Adam, he was on his own. It was Adam who was being held responsible and accountable for not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

We now have to leave Genesis Chapter two as we have covered the three main points of the chapter. All that is left is to make some personal application from the chapter.

Personal Application

1. God's Creation of our day of rest.

It is really important that we take one day of rest every week. If for any reason through our work we can't take a Sunday then we need to take another day in the week. If we can have Sunday as our day of rest then coming to Church and thanking God for our Salvation through Jesus, and praising God for His creation is the right and proper thing to do.

If we can't come on a Sunday for any reason then we still need to set aside time to thank God for these two things.

When we "Rest" on our day off we are honoring God spiritually and giving our bodies rest physically.

If we don't do this then both our physical lives and our spiritual lives will be damaged in some way.

2. We must recognize the unique roles that God has created for Men and Women.

In the passage that we have studied today it is clear that women have a special role to compliment that of the role of men.

It was God's idea to create women for this role and not man's idea. If women kick against the authority of men, then they are kicking against God's authority, who instituted different roles for men and women.

It is men not taking their correct role of leadership and responsibility, and women who try to defy that role that causes a lot of problems in society today.

In 2011 there were 13.7 million single parent families in America. In most of these cases the fathers abdicated their responsibilities for taking responsibility for supporting their child in a marriage relationship.

On the other hand 67% of Mothers with children were working in the 2010 census.

I know that there are mitigating circumstances on both sides concerning single Mums and working Mums, and Fathers that get girls pregnant and then run away.

However over the last 50 years the trend has been to defy God's created positions for men and women.

As a result of this both men and women have suffered.

About 33 years ago when our first child was born, my wife Wendy and I took the decision for her to stay at home and give 100% support to our children, while I was responsible for working to pay all the bills.

In spite of having to live with no income for two years and a very low income for 15 years, God has honored our decision and provided all that we have ever needed.

So I can say with my hand on my heart that God is right, and anything we do to go against His plan will not work out.

3. The things we do to dishonor God have consequences.

God has created spiritual laws and if we defy or disobey those Laws then we must face the consequences. The biggest spiritual Law we all face is the "Law of sin and death".

Romans 6: v. 23 says "The wages of sin is death....."

Romans 5: v. 12 says “....through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.....”

If we are honest we have all sinned in some shape or form. We have all broken one of God’s 10 commandments and we are all guilty. If we don’t find a way of escape from the consequences of our sin then we will face the punishment of eternal death spiritually.

The good news is that God has provided a way of escape from the consequences of our sin. God is Holy and He must punish sin. Therefore He must punish our sin.

However God provided a way of escape through sending His only Son Jesus Christ to leave the glory of Heaven and come to this world to take the punishment for our sin.

If you put your faith and trust in Jesus, then the consequences of your sin are still there but they are placed upon Jesus Christ as a substitute sacrifice.

Jesus died in your place so that you avoid the wrath of God for your sins.

Failure to put your faith and trust in Jesus will always result in God’s punishment for your sin.

Perhaps today you want to trust Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior from the consequences of your sin?

Let us pray.