

01-02-03.wpd—The 7th Day of Creation
 creation, activity, rest, Sabbath, work, resurrection, Sunday
 Gen 2:1-3
 God's Sabbath rest is always a prelude to more activity.

INTRODUCTION:

–Technically, there is no 7th Day of creation. God did His creative work in 6 days and *rested* on the 7th. In another sense, *yes*, there were 7 days of creation, if you see how the rhythmic cycle of activity & rest works. Imagine a workweek with *no weekends*, no time off for a rest. We'd call it *inhuman*, and because showed us the importance of rest after His creative activity, we should also call it *ungodly*.

–But what if there was **no work-week**, **no** activities, **no** housekeeping, **no** chores at all, **no committee meetings!** That would also be *inhuman*, because we were built for activity, and because we're *in God's image*, it would also be *ungodly*, because God is a *living, active, creative God*.

–In view of this rhythm cycle which weds *activity & rest* inseparably together, **what was the next work-week going to be** after God rested? **HOM.idea.** God's next cycle of activity after His *day of rest* was to start training His representatives, made in His image, for their ultimate job. Our *Creator* took the role of our *Instructor*....

I. God Was Instructing Humanity in a Training Program

- A. A general curriculum (Gen 1:28, God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.):
1. **Reproduction:** “Be fruitful and increase in number” (male and female sexual relationship is not only God's idea, but His 1st command)
 2. **Expansion:** “fill the earth” (God wants His image everywhere [Tower of Babel] episode); Why? We *image* God to the created order)
 3. **Appropriation:** “subdue it [the earth]” (it starts with our own cosmic dust, our bodies, then this planet, and finally, all cosmic dust in the entire universe.... A REALLY BIG JOB!)
 4. **Jurisdiction:** “rule over the fish... the birds... over every living creature...” (from the microbe to the sea monster, from the ant to the highest *archangel*..... ARCHANGEL?!!! Yes– 1 Cor 6:3, Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!)

B. Specific assignments (Gen 2:15, The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.):

1. **Cultivation:** “to work it” (nature is beautiful, but God wants us to make it better [Audrey Hepburn's *Gardens of the World* documentary])
2. **Conservation:** “take care of it” (This is a divine mandate for our involvement in ecology, protecting the environment)
3. **Categorization:** Gen 2:19b, He brought them [the animals] to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (God's encouragement to name things is the divine basis for *scientific* and *linguistic vocabulary*.)

TRANS: God's new work (after His rest) was to walk us through this curriculum and these assignments. But we ate knowledge that made us independent from His guidance. We didn't graduate! We are stuck in kindergarten (*without the Garden!*) Creation is in *disarray* (v.1, Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array[ordered like a military host]). Death came from the forbidden fruit. But God personally entered His fallen creation, in the midst of our failure. He continued to be our Teacher, but to finish out that work-week, He now became our Savior.

II. God Was Pointing Humanity Toward a New Sabbath

- A. Since the Fall, we've lived and worked in a world “subjected to frustration” (Rom 8:20)– Gen 3:17-19, To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”
- B. In Jesus, God became one of us, and He brought us a message of “rest” from our *failed work-week*– Mat 11:28-30, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”
1. By coming to Christ, His Kingdom comes to us, and a change takes place, which Jesus spoke about when He prayed to His Father– John 17:14-16, I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are **not of the world** any more than I am of the world. My prayer is **not that you take them out of the world** but that you protect them from the evil one. They are **not of the world**, even as **I am not of it**.

2. Christians live in two worlds, this *old work-week* that is passing away and the coming *day of rest* that precedes a *new work-week*.
- C. Our hope in Christ's 2nd Coming is not only for resurrection, but for a *new work-week* in a "new heaven and new earth."
1. Until "that great and glorious day" of His return, our hearts can reside in that coming Day of Rest (a place we enter by faith in the same way the faithful Israelites entered the promise land— **Heb 3:17-4:11**. And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief. Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' "And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work." And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest." It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.
 2. That's a mouthful, but let me translate it with the 3 words Jesus spoke from the cross: "***It is finished.***" (The *failed work-week of the old race of Adam* was *nailed to the cross*—Jesus brought it to an end— and the new Sabbath rest of God has begun!)

CONCLUSION:

--**God's Sabbath rest is always a prelude to more activity.** By living in that Sabbath rest provided by Christ's Cross, we look at each Sunday in a new way. It's on the 1st day of the week that Jesus rose from death. His resurrection points to the 1st day of a *new work-week*. **Each Sunday celebrates His resurrection and anticipates our own. Each Sunday looks forward to the coming "new heaven and new earth"** promised by His 2nd Coming. And **each Sunday focuses us on the holy activity of living out Christ's Kingdom** before the eyes of those who still need His Sabbath rest in their hearts.

Genesis 2:1-3 (NIV)

- 1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.
- 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.
- 3 And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.