

# Grace at Work

Ephesians 2:10

**Point: grace restores divine purpose**

FCF: purposelessness/apathy, consumerism    APP: the joy of mission, vocation as calling

4 words: creation, fall, redemption, restoration

CONTEXT [*creation*]

**For we are God's masterpiece.**

Poima - where we get the word "poem," (does not capture the original meaning)

Paul uses this once in Romans 1:20,

For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

...referring to creation

"For we are his creation" (HCSB)

Point of v10 - we are a part of an original design

Design: Genesis 1:26-31 [READ]

"Let us make human beings in our image" (26a) (community)

"to be like us" (26a) *how?*...

- "reign" (26b)
- "fruitful" (28a)
- "multiply" (28b)
- "fill" (28c)
- "govern" (28c)
- "to tend and watch over it" (2:15)

God made us to bear his image, and gave us stewardship, to reflect his glory.  
We bear his image; we reflect his glory.

CONFLICT

Adam fails to represent God.

Adam fails to obey God.

Adam fails to steward creation.

Adam fails to love and lead his wife.

Sin enters the world through Adam.

[Fall]

Romans 5:12 (NLT)

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

Image = broken, but still there

Like listening to a scratched CD of the Philharmonic

That's why people can still create some beauty, and do good things

God chose one person, Abraham,

and then through him one people, Israel,

To be God's priests and rulers in this world on God's behalf.

Like Adam, Israel failed, and so did its kings.

## **So God sent his Son**

What Adam failed to do, God did through Jesus Christ...

- Jesus was in right relationship to God
- Jesus was in right relationship to others
- Jesus was rightly relating to all of creation

Then he dies, and an exchange happens.

Romans 5:18 (NLT)

Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.

So when Paul says to the Ephesians...

## **He has created us anew in Christ Jesus,**

He's saying, "God has re-created you according to what he intended you to be"  
Jesus Christ has...

- restored our intimacy

**illustration:** like listening to the Philharmonic live, instead of a busted CD!

- restored our mission

**Jesus creates the Church, and commissions them for  
gospeling the story of the gospel.**

John 17:4 (NLT)

I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do

John 17:22

I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one.

John 20:21

As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you

"I'm bring back what Adam lost so that yo might walk in it"

**God restores our original design and mission through his Son, Jesus, Until he restores all things.**

**Creation - Fall - Redemption - Restoration**

We gotta make sure we know the whole story.

Gabe Lyons: "The truncated gospel"

**If you remove the bookends of creation and restoration**, you're left with only the fall and redemption, which not only misses the grand scope of God's plan, but creates for us, an individualistic gospel.

Individualistic gospel...

Self-esteem: I have no point in my life, and God makes me special.

Consumerism: God saves me so that I can be happy.

Truncated Gospel makes the universe revolve around you

The full Gospel story makes the universe revolve around God, and his eternal purpose for creation, while sweeping you up in the story

*How?*

The story of creation realigns our self-esteem (image of God)

The story of restoration removes our consumerism (it's about God's glory)

**God gets the glory; we get the joy.**

Social gospel...

In the 1900's, the church began to apply this on a corporate scale...

Social Gospel: seeing sin as collective, not just personal

But we went to far, and defined the good news as just doing good things.

**If you remove the middle of sin/redemption**, you get a truncated gospel that cannot support the whole, that won't get to the heart of the problem: sin  
(Clean water doesn't transform people!)

Corporations, collectives, power structures, organizations, families, and even marriages, are capable of evil because they are made up of *individuals* who sin against one another.

Revelation 21:22-26 (NLT)

I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the world will enter the city in all their glory. Its gates will never be closed at the end of day because there is no night there. And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city.

The universe will reflect God's glory, in wholeness, perfection, togetherness, integration, and harmonization.

The Hebrews described this with the well-known word, "Shalom"<sup>1</sup>

## RESOLUTION

### **So we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.**

Participating in the *shalom* of God

To walk in his original plans for us...

- To be in right relationship to God
- To be in right relationship to others
- To rightly steward creation...
  - culture
  - society
  - workplace

Christian: you are not called to go to work.

**You are called** by divine mandate to spread G.of.eden in the workplace.

**You are called** to live shalom in your workplace.

#### DRIVEN

- Some of us are driven out of our minds at our work (no shalom for you)
  - that's because you ain't in the garden, yourself

#### LAZY

- Some of you are waiting for a more spiritual work environment (no shalom for others)
  - For some, you're slackers that are wasting God given opportunity

For others, you really do struggle with calling...

### Remember the Gospel:

*You are not loved because you are valuable, you are valuable because you are loved.*

*It is not the nature of employment that makes you special, but the image of God in you*

What gospel does is,

1. Takes those who are overlooked, and gives them purpose
2. Takes those who are overworked, and gives them joy

Because your employer is not a man/woman, but God, who from the beginning of time, looked at you and declared, "mine."

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<sup>1</sup> Marvin R. Wilson. *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*. 274

You are called to be faithful with your job, faithful with your co-workers, faithful with your clients, faithful with your enemies, and faithful with your God.

When you let go of control, and step out into obedience...

When you stop thinking about later, to faithful with where you are now,  
You will begin to think about your job-place differently.

**Grace doesn't just traumatize you, it shakes up your whole environment.**

Michelangelo, when approaching a slab of rock, stated...

"I'm liberating an angel from this stone"

You have been liberated to bring liberty.

**You cannot work with God, until you have understood how he has worked for you.  
Until you are traumatized by the grace shown towards you in Jesus Christ...**

The one who created you for his glory, and recreated you when you fell.

Hebrews 13:20 (ESV)

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.