



Renewal (For the Culture)

Genesis 1:27-31

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Dave Lomas

“for the culture”

“‘Culture’ may be pulling itself apart from the inside, but it represents, in its way, a wish. The wish is that a group of people might discover, together, a good way of life; that their good way of life might express itself in their habits, institutions, and activities; and that those, in turn, might help individuals flourish in their own ways. The best culture would be one in which the three meanings of ‘culture’ weren’t at odds with one another. That’s not the culture we have at the moment; our culture is fractured, and so our sense of the word ‘culture’ is, too. But it’s possible to imagine a world in which our collective attitudes and institutions further everyone’s individual growth. Maybe, in such a world, the

meaning of ‘culture’ would be more obvious and we wouldn’t have to look it up.”

- Joshua Rothman, *The Meaning of “Culture”*

“Culture is what we make of the world. Culture is, first of all, the name for our relentless, restless human effort to take the world as it’s given to us and make something else. This is the original insight of the writer of Genesis when he says that human beings were made in God’s image: just like the original Creator, we are creators.”

- Andy Crouch, *Culture Making*

TWO PART GOSPEL:

1. Born a sinner, bound for hell
2. Jesus saves, get to go to heaven

“For two thousand years, the gospel was recited in four chapters titled creation, fall, redemption, and final restoration. It reminds us that we are made in the image of God. This gospel started in Genesis One and can be found in the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creed. Tragically, two hundred years ago the story was edited to two chapters; the fall and redemption. The opening chapter of creation was largely forgotten. The new starting line was Genesis Three. It reminds people that they are fallen sinners. We’re both—made in God’s image and sinners. Yet the two-chapter gospel accentuates our wounds. The four-chapter gospel elevates our worth as image bearers of God. The two-chapter story focuses on our deficiency. The four-chapter story reminds us of our dignity.”

- Mike Metzger

Genesis 1:27-31

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

“In Genesis, God gives what we might call the first job description: ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.’ The first phrase, ‘be fruitful and multiply,’ means to develop the social world: build families, churches, schools, cities, governments, laws. The second phrase, ‘subdue the earth,’ means to harness the natural world: plant crops, build bridges, design computers, compose music. This passage is sometimes called the Cultural Mandate because it tells us that our original purpose was to create cultures, build civilizations—nothing less.”

- Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth*

“The Fall did not destroy our original calling, but only made it more difficult. Our work is now marked by sorrow and hard labor. In Genesis 3:16 and 17, the Hebrew uses the same word for the ‘labor’ of childbearing and the ‘labor’ of growing food. The text suggests that the two central tasks of adulthood—raising the next generation and making a living—will be fraught with the pain of living in a fallen and fractured

world. All our efforts will be twisted and misdirected by sin and selfishness.”

- Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth*

How Christians Have Historically Tried to Act in Culture:

1. Condemn Culture
2. Critique Culture
3. Copy Culture
4. Consume Culture

Create Culture

False Starts to Culture Making:

1. Evangelism
 2. Politics
- James Davidson Hunter, *To Change the World*

SHALOM

Micah 6:8

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

“A blessing is a visible, perceptible, effective proximity of God.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer