

Humanity's Vocation of Dominion in Faith to God's Glory

From James Jordan's Studies on the Patriarchs in Genesis

1. Implication of Being made in the Image and Likeness of God

a. God's Six-day Creation can be Viewed as Mankind's Five-fold Working Pattern of Extending Dominion over the Earth

- i. Take Hold – *God's said*; because, He takes hold by His Word, merely speaking. Man takes hold of something by naming it and/or handling it.
- ii. Restructure – God does this in first 3 days of creation by separating, ordering and labeling.
- iii. Distribute – God does in the last 3 days of creation by assigning tasks and functions to things, and this is the means by which man engages in transforming work by keeping it, giving it away, or trading it for someone else's work.
- iv. Evaluate – Good, Very Good, Bad. This evaluation comes before consumption or restful enjoyment.
- v. Enjoy – God's Sabbath rest on the 7th day, and man finding satisfaction in his work (which, ideally, is to glorify God). Ultimately, this involves fellowship with God expressed in *walking with God, God is our God and we are His People*, etc. Typified in Garden, Tabernacle, Temple and fulfilled in Christ where man, God and creation perfectly commune. This, however, depends upon the heart/attitude/faith of man.

1. Jordan (p. 17), "It is Adam to whom the world is given; he is commissioned to transform it from glory to glory [for God and as God's *imager* on earth]. It is Adam who has the privilege of guarding the earthly throne of God against His satanic adversaries."

b. Adam was Entrusted with the Protection of God's Garden Temple

- i. Jordan (pp. 15-16), "To grasp the full weight of this we need to consider that the Garden of Eden was not simply a patch of ground. It was also God's holy sanctuary, the place of His earthly throne. Like the Tabernacle and the Temple later on, the garden was the place where God would meet with men and hold court. It was nothing less than the throne of God that Adam was called upon to guard. When Adam failed to do so, the cherubim were brought in to carry out the task (Gen. 3:24). Adam, as guard, had the responsibility to protect the garden and his wife, and thus to rebuke Satan [with the Sword of the Spirit, God's Word rightly sharpened/straightened]. He was to stand as warrior and priest to defend the very sanctuary of God. There is no higher calling."

1. We, especially pastoral elders in the local congregation, have the same call and responsibility to guard the Sound Doctrine (aka:

Deposit of Faith, The Gospel) against false teachers during these Last Days (aka: the Church Age); because, such false teaching and lawlessness are “an abomination that desolates” the End Time Temple of Christ’s Body, the Church. Furthermore, it is the *Gospel (aka: the Word as it is 1.) *handled*, 2.) *received in thanks*, 3.) *broken down for gospel nutrients*, 4.) *distributed by preaching/teaching*, 5.) *heard and evaluated as the Holy Spirit convicts and builds-up*, 6.) *and rest and rejoicing in His work*) that regenerates, by God’s Word and Spirit, the fallen world; expanding the New Creational Kingdom of Heaven through Gospel proclamation as those individually regenerated come under the reign and domino of Jesus Who is the King of kings and Lord of lord’s. It is through Jesus’ Person and work we now accomplish our vocation to subdue the earth and have dominion over it.

- c. “Because all men, whether true believers or renegades, constantly imitate God in their work, it cannot be in the area of works where the final distinction between the righteous and the wicked is found. Rather, it is the attitude or faith that accompanies these works that makes the difference. This requirement of right faith is set out in Genesis 2 and 3 and is seen in God’s placing an additional step in man’s performance of the five-fold sequence of actions. That additional step is the ***giving of thanks***, a conscious act of self-submission to God... This act of thanksgiving is placed immediately after the first step of ‘Taking Hold,’ before the act of ‘Restructuring.’ Adam’s six-fold rite [pattern] for life was as follows:” (Jordan, pp. 21-23).
- i. Lay hold of the cosmos.
 - ii. Prior to working with it, ***give thanks to God*** for it.
 - iii. Break down and restructure the aspect of the cosmos within his God-given grasp.
 - iv. Distribute the fruits of his labor: First, with the best and first fruits given to God on the Sabbath day of judgment for God’s evaluation and as a way of offering the world back to God for His glory as transformed by Adam’s labor, Secondly, with that remaining either keep, give to others, and/or trade
 - v. Adam, and others, would evaluate his labor under the overriding evaluation of God’s evaluating judgment according to His authoritative Word.
 - vi. The works of unfallen Adam would be enjoyed by all in fellowship with God and one another.
- d. “...man’s six-fold action is an act of glorification. Man is God’s agent for the glorification of the world. The world was created glorious, but it is to become more glorious under the hand of man. ...the work of man is to reveal God even

more and bring Him even more glory. Adam himself is progressively transformed and glorified through the six-fold action [while it simultaneously] progressively reveals and glorifies God. Even if the [result of man's labor] does not itself endure...the revelation of God and the glorification of the creation are yet cumulative" (Jordan, p. 24).

2. Faith and Thankfulness(*Adam and Cain*)

a. Adam

- i. "Sadly, this process of glorification was corrupted. The sin of Adam lay precisely at the second step of his rite. He refused to give thanks to God, because, he could not do so. With the forbidden fruit in his hand (an acting of taking; [laying hold of]), and intending to eat it (an act of restructuring), Adam could not give thanks to God" (Jordan, p. 25).
- ii. ***Romans 1:18-24 (especially verse 21)***
- iii. Jordan (p. 25), "Thus, Adam's original sin entailed, among other dimensions [such as rebelling against God's Word to instead listen to the voice of his wife who was deceived by the serpent], the failure to glorify God as God (by restructuring the creation along His desire lines⁰, and the failure to give thanks (by expressing dependence upon God and gratitude for what God had given him). The six-fold action designed for man's good was corrupted. In Cain (Gen. 4) we see this fleshed out."

b. Cain

- i. "Cain laid hold of the creation, intending to restructure it into the city of man.
- ii. "Cain did not give thanks or express dependence and gratitude to God or to anyone else.
- iii. "Cain restructured part of the land of Nod into the wicked city of Enoch.
- iv. "Cain distributed his work to his sons and to his heirs.
- v. "God came down to evaluate the works of me, and He found them evil.
- vi. "God 'enjoyed' man's works by 'delighting' to destroy them in the flood" (Jordan, p. 25).
- vii. ***Hebrews 11:4***
 1. Wenham (p. 104), Calvin, among others, suggest that it was the different motives of the two brothers [Cain and Abel], known only to God, that accounts for their different treatment. ...it was the different approach to worship that counted and that this was reflected in the quality of their gifts."
- viii. Nevertheless, instead of progressively transforming the world from glory to glory to reveal God's glory, man's labors progressively degraded it into greater corruption. Instead of a process of glorification, we have a process of debasement. Instead of an increase in the revelation of God, we have an

obscuring of that revelation. It is through faith that we grow from glory to glory, becoming more like God. What is faith but the attitude of trust that accompanies our actions? We either trust God and become like Him or we trust something else and become like it. Faith is inescapable, and Adam trusted his own judgment rather than God's. The consequences were disastrous. [However], Jesus set at the center of His Kingdom a rite designed to restructure [aka: transform] our thinking and to rest the course of our lives along the true lines of our calling. He did this by establishing the ritual of the Lord's Supper, a ritual that restores us to the holy six-fold action" (Jordan, pp. 25-27).

1. Take Hold - Jesus took break and the cup of wine.
2. Thanksgiving – Jesus gave thanks for the bread and wine; blessing God
3. Restructure – Jesus a.) broke the bread and b.) identified it with His Body and c.) identified the wine with His shed Blood
4. Distribute – Jesus shared it with his disciples present
5. Evaluate – Those present tasted it, and all but one (Judas) determined that it was good.
6. Enjoy – Disciples enjoyed fellowship with Jesus and found rest with Him.
 - a. The Lord's Supper proclaims the gospel of Christ's death until He Returns. This is a gospel proclaiming and assuring event for the New Creational Community in Christ.
 - b. This Six-fold pattern, however, is also present in the first part of the liturgical Service in the Preaching of the Word (*see above).

3. Faith and Worship (*Seth and Enoch*)

- a. Jordan (pp., 32-33), "After Abel's death, Adam and Eve had another son, Seth. 'And to Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh ['Lowly Man']. Then they [plural] began to call upon the Name, Yahweh' (Gen. 4:26). There was true community among God's people. ...they were restored to the basic principle of true dominion – **thanksgiving** – and as they worked with the world, they worked to restore and transform it. [Enoch was a godly hero of this time that] we do know a little about. Writing under divine inspiration, Jude tells us that 'Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with His holy myriads, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the *ungodly* of their *ungodly* deeds that they have done in an *ungodly* way, and of all the harsh things that *ungodly* sinners have spoken against Him"' (**Jude 14-15**). Jude, in **verse 16**, tells us about thankless men. He tells us that the people Enoch called to repent were grumblers. One cannot be both a grumbler and a grateful

man. They were fault-finders. One cannot go around finding fault with others if one has a heart of thankfulness to God. True dominion comes from a thankful spirit and hard work according to God's pattern. In the era before the flood, God determined to let evil have its way, so that the righteous did not gain dominion."

b. Worship and Dominion

- i. "Then worship that God established through Seth and his descendents, especially Enoch, was designed to restore men to dominion. Men would have to hear [God's Taking hold of Him by His Word] and repent of their ungodliness.
- ii. "Jesus gives us the pattern we are to follow in all of life. Because of His work [commemorated in the Lord's Supper] we can, through Him, lay hold on the fallen creation, no matter how perverse it has become, giving thanks for it, and going to work on it, restoring and transforming it progressively to the glory of God [by His Word and Spirit]" (Jordan, p. 35). This is accomplished by the proclamation of the gospel through the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
 1. Christians should be characterized as Thankful People; grateful for God's creation and re-creation through His Word by His Spirit.
- iii. "The distinction between the true worshipper and the renegade thus lies at the point of **thanksgiving**. It is not possible to take hold of the world with the intention of sinning and still give thanks to God for it. A man cannot enter a store, lay hold on goods with the intention to pocket and steal them, and then give thanks to God. 'Eucharist' means 'thanksgiving,' and the Eucharistic liturgy that grew up rapidly and organically around the basic six-fold rite of the [Lord's] Supper stressed thanksgiving. This is still seen in liturgical churches today. The following, or something like it, is found in the worship of all the historic churches that have preserved the early Church's liturgical forms. In the preface the pastor, after the *sursum corda* ('life up your hearts,' and ascent into heaven for worship), says, 'Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God,' to which the people reply, 'It is fitting and right to do so.' [Note how the BCP continues that we should give thanks at *all* times and in *all* places. Then, we come to the *sanctus* hymn which] is very important. The text is 'Holy, holy, holy, Yahweh, God of Armies, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of your glory.' It comes from **Isaiah 6:3** and **Revelation 4:8**, and it is the song sung by the angelic guardians of God's throne. Remember, Adam was originally commissioned to be the guard. He failed and was replaced by the cherubim. Now, in Christ, Christians are restored to the dignity of throne guardians. The historic liturgy reminds us of this incredible privilege. The Eucharistic prayer that follows includes thanksgiving as well... 'Thanks be to God.' In this way,

worship keys the believer into the proper frame of mind for all of life. ...there are certain specific times in the day when, according to the consensus of Christian wisdom of all ages, it is appropriate to stop and give thanks. The most obvious of these is mealtime – after all, it was in connection with a meal that Adam and Eve refused to give thanks and fell into sin. The stress on thanksgiving in liturgical piety is thus key to practical or laborial piety” (Jordan, pp. 36-38).

1. This is our vocation as divine images of God; to take hold of that which the Lord gives us, give thanks, reconstruct it according to His will, and offer back to Him for His glory. In this, we find our most basic human needs met, and this can now, this side of the Fall, be accomplished only in Jesus Who is the Second Adam, True Israel and Only Son of God on our behalf.
2. “Because of sin, men must confess sin before they can give thanks. God sends His people out to convict the world of sin through the proclamation of His message, His good news. When men repent, they lay their hands on God’s Appointed Sacrifice (Jesus Christ) and confess that they deserve to die but that Jesus has taken their sins. Then, they enter into God’s palace and give Him thanks, their hearts and minds being retrained to the proper attitude: gratitude. Only such men can build a lasting civilization, built upon the Rock, so that when the floods come, they will be secure [dare I say, ‘Left Behind’ in the good, positive, biblical sense, as God’s faithful remnant?]” (Jordan, p. 39).

- a. ***Romans 12:1-2***