

“Triple Gift”

Genesis 1: 28-31

Sunday July 15, 2018

One day a group of scientists got together and decided that man had come a long way and no longer needed God. So, they picked one scientist to go and tell Him that they were done with Him.

The scientist walked up to God and said, "God, we've decided that we no longer need you. We're to the point that we can clone people and do many miraculous things, so why don't you just go on and get lost."

God listened very patiently and kindly to the man. After the scientist was done talking, God said, "Very well, how about this?"

Let's say we have a man-making contest." To which the scientist replied, "Okay, great!"

But God added, "Now, we're going to do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam."

The scientist said, "Sure, no problem" and bent down and grabbed himself a handful of dirt.

God looked at him and said, "No, no, no. You go get your own dirt!" (taken from jokes.christiansunite.com/Creation)

Let us pray?

In the past two Sunday we have viewed God's creating, bring order out of chaos, He created dry land, the sun, the moon, the stars, animals, plants, birds, and finally people. He made human beings of sacred worth.

Then comes God's trio. I immediately gravitate to the words dominion and subdue. I often miss the words about God blessing people.

In the small town that I came from in Texas there is a phrase that used, predominates throughout the south. It is "bless your heart." I am not sure why southern use such phrases. But this is how they use them. If someone tells you something terrible about their lives, then your response is "oh, honey, bless your heart." If someone tells another about a mutual friend's problems, then the reply is "oh, bless their hearts. When someone tells another about something and they don't know what to say, then they say, "Bless your heart."

When good things happen in our lives we may be quick to say that God has blessed me today. When someone sneezes, we may “God bless you.” Or just “bless you.”

The Preamble of our Constitution says: We the People of the United States, to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

A part of the reason that those founding fathers wanted to establish this country was to secure the blessing of liberty. Some have suggested that blessings of liberty are the happiness's that we enjoy like freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to protect ourselves and many others.

In the Hebrew, the original language of the book of Genesis, the word for blessing is Barak. It is the name of a former president of the United States. It means knee. It has the sense of kneeling in worship. It has sense of reference. The Old English word used in the King James version of the Bible means to consecrate...that is to set aside for a holy purpose.

I believe that God blessed human beings thus setting them aside for a holy purpose.

Psalm 8 tells us that God made people a little lower than the angels and crowned them with honor and glory. Is this part of the blessing that God gave humans?

The second part of the blessing is to multiply and fill the earth. People needed to know that they were responsible for creating lots of people, for the human race to survive. We have come a long way in taking on that holy purpose as a human race. In some places like India and China, the governments made some strict rules about how much multiplying could happen. There comes a time when enough is enough. When the resources of the land can no longer support the people on it.

Third blessing is about dominion and subduing. The Psalm 8 goes on to say that He made people to rule over the works of His hands and put everything under people's feet which includes the flocks, herds, animals of the wild, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and all that swims in the sea.

People in this world have surely put a negative spin on the word dominion.

We were given power to dominate. The understanding of that word has led to some interesting actions in the history of the world. Countries want to dominate. History is full of countries that wanted to dominate. The Greeks and Romans are prime examples of domination. Look at countries that sent out ships to explore the new world. Vikings who wanted to explore and take over land. They wanted to dominate. The northern tribes of Europe wanted to dominate. They went south and defeated the Romans.

How did we in our history handle the buffalo? We in our history we have made animals extinct. We did not have the sense of our being put in charge by God to take care of this place. People focused on ruling other people, land, and animals.

There is so much good coming out of the continent of Africa. So many people on becoming Christians. It's not just Methodist who are working on the continent of Africa. All different denominations are doing so. Yet, there is such destructive behaviors. You may be the same color and from the same country yet, you are not of my tribe. My tribe is going to dominate, so we are going kill, rape, and pillage the land of those who are not of my tribe.

God give to humans a sacred duty to take of the things that they rule over. He gave them power to do so. We humans have struggled mightily with this sacred privilege and responsibility. I do believe on a long time we thought that the land was for the taking, the animals were to meet my needs, and all the rest.

Thankful people have been rediscovering their sacred privilege and responsibility. We have given this blessing to take care of what God created. We eat the food, we made it better and healthier. We can still hunt. Limits are set now according to how many would it be healthy to kill and not endanger the animals.

We have work to do. When you see the pictures of elephants who have been killed, their tusks removed, and their bodies laid to waste. We have work to do.

It is my prayer that we will find ways to illuminate waste, recycle, reuse, and repurpose things.

We here in New Mexico are home to 22 Native American tribes. Having pastor in Gallup for 7 year, I heard about the Native American understanding of the land. They are to be stewards of the earth. The land is on load to them.

Amazingly enough that is the Old Testament view of the land. The land belongs to God. We have it temporarily.

What will you and I do with our power and responsibility. How will we address our blessing? Do we see ourselves as stewards of this earth? As I got to know farmers in another state, I realized that farmers these days are tremendous stewards of the land. There is a profound sense of responsibility to take care of it.

I suspect that many of you care about your God given responsibility.