

English Service (1.20.22) Fill and Subdue

Introduction:

- Over the past three weeks, we have been talking about Imago Dei, how man is created in the image of God. And because of that, there are so many implications that come from this doctrine. Ministry Henry started us off by talking about how God values us because we are made in His image. Another implication of Imago dei is that we resemble God's morality, We resemble God's spirit, We resemble God's mental ability, meaning we exercised logic and reasoning, we create, we plan. We resemble God. And because we resemble God - There is value in every person. Young and old. Healthy and Sick. In the mentally ill person. The poor and rich. Our value lies in imago Dei. And Pastor Jason took us through two very difficult topics, especially for a culture climate such as ours. Imago Dei's has implications for race and abortion. Value of human life is for all people, no matter what they look like, no matter if they are in the womb or outside the womb, no matter if they can care for themselves or not, value lies in Imago Dei. Other Implications as image bearers could be a physical aspect. Because we are image bearers – it gives us purpose as well.
- Again, there are so many implications and ways to explain what Imago Dei means and it's hard to boil it down to just one thing. I was listening to this podcast the other week and Dr. Russel Moore said that if you had to point to one thing about the Image of God: He would say that it is: Longing. Now it's important to note that this longing is not due to us lacking anything. Example: The youth has these lulu fanny packs. I want one now. That's not the longing that's being described. Seeing that God said on the 6th day that everything is very good and Adam and Eve were sinless, "pre-fall humanity", this is not a longing because we lacked something. Rather, one of the podcast hosts explained this longing as living with potential and Adam and Eve are supposed to exercise their image bearing as fulfilling this potential. So the what is this potential? What is it that we all long for to see and live out as Image bearers?
- There is a completion of the Kingdom that is to come and that is what we see in our passage today. The first thing we hear in today's passage is that God blessed Adam and Eve as Image bearers. Bring about this completed Kingdom by filling it with Image bearers. Fill it with the rule and Reign of God. Fill it with the glory of God. This is the complete Kingdom that an image bearer longs for. So God Blesses Adam and Eve in three ways to bring about his Glory in the complete kingdom: Blessing of Expanding, Cultivating, and Flourishing.

Blessing of Expanding

- What we get from this first blessing is God's call to expand the family. Be Fruitful and multiply. Adam and Eve are supposed to grow in number. They were supposed to go out from Eden and fill the earth. Not just the garden, but the whole earth. We see in the previous verses that God created them male and female, and one of the main reasons is for the purpose of childbearing. Without Eve, there's no call to be fruitful and multiply. It just can't happen. Only through a Male and Female can we multiply and grow. I think one commentary mentioned that without Eve – there's no fulfilling of God's plans. Adam alone cannot carry out the goal of completing the kingdom. The picture that Moses wants his readers to see is a world full of rulers. One thing I need to mention here is where the audience of this book is at right

now. The Israelites are in the desert. They have escaped from Egypt but have yet to conquer the land of Canaan. And according to Exodus 1:7 – “the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.” They have multiplied already! They were so numerous that even Pharaoh was afraid of his own slaves, but yet something was still off. The challenge for us is that we may be great in number, but we aren’t fulfilling the heart of being fruitful and multiply.

- Like here at HCC – in the history of our church – there probably is no other time where we have been multiplying as much as we have been right now. Pandemic babies! With all the babies – is this fruitful and multiply? Is that all? Like – should we all just go for one more and we’re set? We’ve multiplied and we’re done. But that’s not the case, is it? We’re not here just to make babies. because we know that following Jesus does not happen just because we want it to happen. Just as Adam was supposed to pass along to Eve the teachings of God, so parents do with children.
 - Deuteronomy 6:4–9 [4] “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. [5] You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. [6] And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. [7] You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. [8] You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. [9] You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (ESV)
- So we disciple our children and teach them what it means to be an image bearer, what it looks like to live a life that loves God and points others to Him. Be fruitful and multiply – Parents discipling your children. So I have to ask – does this mean that we can be fruitful and multiply for only a short time of my life. If you’re college and youth in here – I highly doubt you are trying to have children. Does this mean you have to wait to fulfil your purpose of multiplying? Or those of you with adult children – does this mean your job is done and you can sit back and relax? I’ll do a little Youth Ministry promotion here – but we’re still looking for a few leaders to lead small group on Sunday mornings. We have students who have signed up to be a part of a discipleship group and there’s no leader for their groups right now.
- Be fruitful and multiply happens to discipleship but it also happens through conversion as well. This Summer – As I hope that we can go back out on a short-term missions, one of our options is located in more of an “exotic” location. One of the reasons why this is an option is because of the program, missions and evangelism training that this organization provides. It’s a great opportunity for us but I am worried. Like I said, it’s somewhere if we mentioned to people where we are going, they might be like, “Really? You’re going there for missions??” But as I brought up the opportunity with a friend, my friend simply responded with, “They need Jesus too.”
- Missionaries in Turkey: .02 Christians but really it’s 98.8 percent non-Christians. There is no multiplication happening there. We must Go. There are so many broken image bearers in the world. So many who do not exemplify the rule and reign, and glory of God. What are we going to do? –

Blessing of Cultivating

- The second blessing we see is “to fill the earth and subdue it.” There are two things going on here with the word subdue. The first meaning of the word can be seen in the idea of “actively ruling over it with

physical force or effort.” As we can see in later verses, God gives them seeds and so Adam and Eve is supposed to work the ground, dig into it, and make the land produce vegetation and be life sustaining. They are to use the ground to enable the process of filling the earth. Just as I mentioned earlier that Adam and Eve were to eventually go outside the garden and the world outside is believed to be wild and in need of subduing. What does this mean for us? Do we all need to build planter boxes and start growing fruits and veggies. Does this mean that we all need to make sure our lawns are all green and free of weeds and not be wild? A long time ago I talked about how I killed all the grass in our backyard and there’s still no grass 3 years later. Does this mean I have failed at subduing the earth?

- This brings us to the second meaning for the word subdue and we need to go back to the Israelites again. They are still in the desert, and they hear subdue the earth. So you have to imagine what they are seeing as they hear these words. They are surrounded by sand and dry land everywhere. It’s the complete opposite picture that Moses is painting here. If anything, they are remembering the lush land that they had just escaped from in Egypt. At the same time the land that they are supposed to go into, they are to subdue and cultivate that land in order to multiply. There’s a sense of building up the land that you are about to conquer. And when you conquer this land, you don’t rule over it and the people like the Egyptians over you, but you reflect the good rule of God in this land. Essentially, multiply the rule of God and be good rulers in this land given to you. Live in such a way where you are cultivating life around you. Adam and Eve are supposed to make the earth’s resources beneficial for everyone. The Israelites are to cultivate a city, a culture, a life that is beneficial for everyone around them.
- There’s so much cancel culture going on these days. If someone does anything wrong, we cancel them. we condemn them. we shame them. There’s never a culture of restoration or reconciliation. It’s a shame on you culture. There’s so much tearing down and casting out but God is calling us to cultivate life around you. To build up life around you. Live a life that benefits and uplifts those around you, even those who have wronged you. What this means for us is that we use our talents, gifts, work, abilities for the benefit of other people.
- Back in 2005 – there was a big group of us from HCC, and many of you are in here today, that went to Kenya on a Medical missions and Church planting trip. It just made sense for our church to go on this trip with so many that worked in the medical field. I don’t remember much of the medical camp from the 2005 trip but I did have a chance to go back a few years later and I do remember so many people would come from the villages around to receive free medical services. People would travel from neighboring villages because of these free medical clinics. Cultivate, work, build up the world around you. My uncle, who was let go from his position as an ER doctor ended up working at a prison and now he is able to speak life into all those he comes across in the prison. He tells me that he is able to make such a difference and is able to bring hope to some really dark places because his job. Cultivate, work, build up the world around you.
 - “So grateful that God gives birth to people’s dreams, grants people talents to help along the way, and blesses communities with transformation. Can’t wait for these homes to be filled with laughter, memories, and hope for the future.”
- Maybe you’re not in a job that can help people directly but it’s about where God has placed you. Some of us can walk the hallways of our schools or workplaces and simply ask: Who can I bless today? Who is the unseen person that needs to be made visible? Is there a need that I can fulfil for someone? We

cultivate so that we can bring life to the world around us. We build up the world around us so that it will flourish. And that brings us to our last point. We receive a blessing of flourishing.

Blessing of Flourishing

- If we look at the last verse of Gen 1 – God saw everything that he had made...it was very good. Everything is made, everything is set into motion, Adam and Eve knows their role within creation and multiplication, filling, and subduing is on its way to happening. God's plan for his rule and reign and glory to be seen on the earth has been set in motion. This is Very Good. What we also see here in this passage is that God provides everything we need for multiplying, filling, and subduing. Not only does God provide but he provides abundantly. Look at the language that is used in these verses. Every plant yielding seed. Every tree. To every beast, every bird, everything that creeps, everything that has the breath of life...He gives every green plant for food. God provides all food for all of creation. Every living creature that is breathing, gets food. There is a picture of abundance in this blessing of flourishing.
- This picture of God providing for creation contrasts that of the ancient world. Normally, humans were created to serve the gods and to provide the gods with food. Humans were supposed to sacrifice their food for the gods to appease them. But what do we see in our God? instead of a God who demands we have a God who supplies everything we ever needed. One last time we go back to the Israelites in the desert. They're lived under the rule of a so called god who exploited the Israelites and put them under his service. They were mistreated, oppressed, and kept from flourishing. But we worship a God who came not to be served but to serve. Jesus doesn't demand people to come to Him but it's the abundant life and overflowing joy that he provides that draws people to Himself. It is the life of Christ and His sacrifice that we love Jesus for. John 10:10 says that the thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have some so that you may have life and life to the full, or life abundantly. Every single one of us in here, every single person we know or come across, and every single person in the world, has a longing for Jesus to rule and reign in their lives. Whether or not they see it to be true in their lives is a different matter. When we submit ourselves under Christ, we flourish.
- As I said at the beginning of this message, we all are longing for the completion of the Kingdom. We all await the day when Jesus is on His throne. Humanity can recognize there is something that I'm intended for that isn't yet here. So we continue in our call to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.