



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

July 08, 2020

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Humanity's Place in God's Creation

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Please read Genesis 1:26-28 and Colossians 1:15-23

Stewardship and Discipleship (Proclamation of the good news)

The story is told of a young man who was burned out from riding his bike across the country, he stopped at a church and gave his bike to the caretaker, including everything on it, a backpack tent, saddlebags, and a number of bike tools. Included among the tools were a couple of gadgets that the caretaker had no idea what they were for. Since then, the caretaker has figured out what one of them does, but the purpose for the other one still eludes him. Tools that you don't know the purpose for are of no use.

More important than knowing the purpose for tools is knowing the purpose for your life. Why did God create human beings? **The true value of a thing is ultimately found only in the value God places on it.** And these two passages show us that God places immeasurable value on human life and our place in God's creation. This place is that of a steward or as I have deemed us, managers.

The scripture tells us that God created us in God's image to be like him. God obviously did not create us exactly like himself because God has no physical body. Instead, **we are reflections of God's glory.** It is easy for persons to feel that our motives, creativity, speech or self-determination is the image of God. More likely, it is our entire self that reflects the image of God. We will never be totally like God because God is our supreme creator. God is the owner of this entire universe. God has created us in God's image to be managers over God's creation and we have the ability to reflect God's character in our love, patience, forgiveness, kindness and faithfulness.

Knowing that we are made in God's image and thus share many of God's characteristics provides a solid basis for **self-worth.** Human worth is not based on any possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness or public acclaim. Instead, it is based on being made in God's image. Therefore, because we bear God's image, we can feel positive about ourselves and our place in God's creation. God made both man and woman in his image.

Neither man nor woman is made more in the image of God than the other. From the beginning, we see where the Bible places both man and woman at the pinnacle of God's creation. Neither sex is exalted and neither is depreciated. Both given the same place in God's creation to be stewards. Genesis 1:28 instructs us to fill the earth and govern it, reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky and all the animals on the ground. To govern and reign over means to have absolute authority and control over it. Similarly, stewardship is utilizing and managing all resources God provides for God's glory and the betterment of God's creation. In other words, **the central essence of the biblical view of stewardship is, managing everything God brings into the believer's life in a manner that honors God and impacts eternity positively.**

When we see our place in God's creation as stewards, knowing that we own nothing, -not even our lives- then we would not only want to protect that which God has entrusted to us but we will also seek to expand that which we have authority over.

We can expand God's kingdom through the proclamation of the word. Our world has many negative proclamations that focus on glorifying men rather than God. But as stewards we are called and placed, positioned to spread the news of God's saving grace. **Spread the news of God's loving kindness, spread the news of God's solution to our sins which is available to all.**



God has ultimate rule over the earth and God exercises God's authority with loving care. When God delegated some of God's authority to the human race, God expected us to take responsibility for the environment and the other creatures that share our planet. We must not be careless and wasteful as we fulfill this charge. God was very careful about how God made this earth. Therefore, we must be extra careful about how we treat that which was entrusted to us.

When we represent someone, everything we do is a reflection of that person. God created humanity to represent God and to declare God's glory. The command to be fruitful and multiply as recorded in Genesis 1:26 was a command to spread God's glory as God's image-bearers to the ends of the earth. Sorrowfully, some of us have abandoned this high calling, bringing shame upon the image of God. But God in all his wisdom does not allow our failure to be the end of the story. Through the work of Jesus Christ, God is in the process of restoring what we have ruined.

The Colossian church had several misconceptions about Christ which Paul directly refuted as he continually brought the arguments back to Christ. When we share the Good news, we too, must keep the focus on Christ. We must consistently remind ourselves that our place in God's creation is as stewards or managers, and not owners. We own nothing, not even our lives, but we all belong to God. As stewards we are called to protect and expand that which we were given to us to 'control over'. In protecting, we are accountable to God, we must trust God (the owner), we must remember that we have a God-centered purpose. We expand God's kingdom by spreading the good news which tells us that no matter what you have done or what you have been like, God's forgiveness is for you.

**LIFE IS NOT ABOUT
FINDING YOURSELF.
IT IS ABOUT
DISCOVERING WHO
GOD CREATED YOU TO BE.**

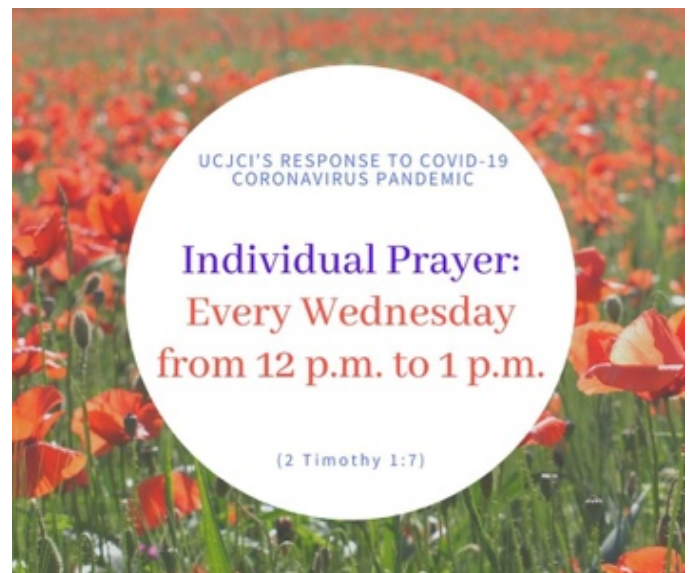
Tony Evans



Secondly, crises take two basic forms: those that are preceded by some kind of warning and those that are unpredictable. The most likely incidences of the former will be hurricanes. These types of crises can be planned for and, normally, additional, specific preparations made once a warning is given. For the unpredictable, some mitigation can, and should, be put in place, e.g. fire and health care insurance, fire alarms and extinguishers. (The Church should strongly encourage members to put in place adequate insurance protection so as not to be dependent on, or a burden to, others and the Government.)

It may be advisable for the Church to find creative ways to help persons secure such protection, rather than rely on helping them find the larger resources that will be needed in the case of severe damage to buildings or major medical expenses while un- or under- insured. A basic plan can be prepared for some of them – e.g. fire escape routes and routines that will help to alleviate fear. In the case of national or global pandemics, we should ensure we closely follow procedures announced by the national medical authorities. As Christians we have heightened obligations to offer help, sensibly, in all cases.

(to be continued next week)



Crises Preparedness and Response Capability Guidelines for Congregations and Council

Part 1. THEOLOGICAL REASON

Crises come in a number of forms and this year we are all experiencing the effects of COVID-19, even as we have already entered the Hurricane Season.

We cannot protect ourselves from all of these, and here our faith that nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ, must play an overriding role. It is important to remember also that personal crises (accidents, death, life threatening disease, abandonment, loss of home by fire, etc.) can affect an individual or a family as much as a national disaster and the persons so affected need the love, care and concern of the Church as much as when national disasters strike.



on Radio Cayman 89.9 every Sunday at 7:45 am

July 12. Mr. Roy McGregor

July 12. (Sunday) 6th Sunday after Pentecost

All local United Church congregations are open- Please contact the offices for details.

Worship Services will still be available via video links.

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