

Theme: God has called us to be His instruments in this fallen world, allowing Him to work through us to bring blessing in every realm of life and every corner of creation.

## I. Intro – What Do You See?

- A. Linda and I at Niagara Falls - unbelievable!
- B. What do we see when we look at this?
- C. 34 million gallons of water per minute?
- D. Incredible source of hydro-electric power?
- E. A great example of erosion through the years?
- F. I see the power, creativity, and wisdom of God!
- G. How do we look at the world around us?
- H. Calling shifts our view the world, and our place in it

## II. How God Works

- A. Humans are the image of God
  - 1. Humans are the image of God (Gen 1:26-27)
  - 2. The image includes ruling God's creation (Gen 1:26)
  - 3. God will exercise His rule through humans!
  - 4. This is critical to this passage (Gen 1:28)
- B. God normally works through secondary instruments
  - 1. We see this in nature all around us - natural laws
  - 2. These describe God's normal way of working
  - 3. No plants growing - no rain, no humans (Gen 2:4-7)

- 4. Humans to work and care for Garden (Gen 2:15)

## C. How God works

- 1. God can choose to directly do something
- 2. These are called miracles - His unusual, rare works
- 3. His normal preferred manner - work through instruments
- 4. This includes natural law - and human beings
- 5. What a joy - we are called to be instruments of God!

## III. The Effect of the Fall

- A. The Fall brings the curse on everything
  - 1. We were called to childbearing and work [Gen 1:28]
  - 2. The work we are called to is cursed (Gen 3:16-17)
  - 3. Both of these are now cursed - but we must still do them
  - 4. Our callings will now be have great difficulties
- B. God continues to work through humans after the Fall
  - 1. Human still called to rule earth for God (Psa. 8:6-8)
    - a. Also restated to Noah after the flood [Genesis 9:1-7]
  - 2. Lord called Cyrus, anointed, equipped (Isa 45:1-7 ESV)
  - 3. God's weapon - works through him (Jer 51:20-23)
  - 4. God's servant to punish evil (Rom 12:19; 13:1-2,4)
  - 5. God reaches the lost by human preaching! (Rom 10:13-15)
- C. God's instruments in this fallen world

1. Veith quote on God giving us daily bread
2. God works through our vocations or callings
3. Calling - God working through us to restrain curse, bring blessing
4. This is true in every realm of life
  - a. Procreation - husbands & wives rather than like Adam
  - b. Feeding - example of bread rather than like manna
  - c. Ruling - through government rather than theocracy
  - d. Saving - through preaching rather than angelic messengers

5. Do we view ALL activities as ways God serves through us?
6. Do we see that to act sinfully is to mar God's work through us?
7. Seeing calling properly causes us to take all our work seriously

#### C. Concluding prayer

### Called To Be God's Instruments In the World

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:4-7; 2:15; 3:14-19

September 23, 2012

Prayer

Genesis 12:2-3

## IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see that God has chosen & delights to work through secondary instruments?
  1. This was God's intent from the very beginning
  2. This is God's choice - and His delight!
  3. Do we understand God works through natural laws?
  4. Do we equally value God's normal & miraculous work?
  5. Do we thank God for His service to us through others?
  6. Seeing calling properly leads to gratitude!!!
- B. Do we see God's is serving others through us?
  1. God works through humans to serve others
  2. This is even true for unbelievers (Cyrus in Isaiah 45)
  3. But as believers we KNOW this is true!
  4. Do we view our activities as God serving others through us?

26 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Genesis 1:26–28

4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens — 5 and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, 6 but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground — 7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Genesis 2:4–7

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. Genesis 2:15

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” 16 To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” 17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” Genesis 3:14–19

6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: 7 all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. Psalms 8:6–8

1 Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed: 2 “I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron, 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name. 4 For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me. 5 I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, 6 that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. 7 I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things. Isaiah 45:1–7

20 “You are my war club, my weapon for battle — with you I shatter nations, with you I destroy kingdoms, 21 with you I shatter horse and rider, with you I shatter chariot and driver, 22 with you I shatter man and woman, with you I shatter old man and youth, with you I shatter young man and maiden, 23 with you I shatter shepherd and flock, with you I shatter farmer and oxen, with you I shatter governors and officials. Jeremiah 51:20–23

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord... 1 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves... 4 For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Romans 12:19; 13:1-2, 4

13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” Rom 10:13–15

“When we pray the Lord’s Prayer, observed Luther, we ask God to give us this day our daily bread. And He does give us our daily bread. He does it by means of a farmer who planted and harvested the grain, the baker who made the flour into bread, the person who prepared our meal. We might today add the truck drivers who hauled the produce, the factory workers in the food processing plant, the warehouse men, the wholesale distributors, the stock boys, the lady at the checkout counter. Also playing their part are the bankers, futures investors, advertisers, lawyers, agricultural scientists, mechanical engineers, and every other player in the nation’s economic system. All of these were instrumental in enabling you to eat your morning bagel.” Gene Edward Veith, *God At Work*, 13.

Calling refers to the specific tasks and responsibilities assigned to us by God, through which God works to serve our neighbors, restraining the effects of the curse and bringing blessing to every realm of life and every corner of creation.