

# Sermon Outline

## BAPTIZED NATION

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### IN OUR IMAGE: BAPTIZED EDUCATION (GENESIS 1:26-28)

#### I. Why Education?

- A. Education is one of the major components of a humane and just quality of life
- B. In Singapore, education is a major element of national development because people are our only natural resource.
- C. But the question “Why education?” has not always been answered well.
  - 1. How we teach our children about why they have to study hard can determine how they view knowledge acquisition for the rest of their lives.
  - 2. If we answer “So that you can make more money in the future,” we are teaching our children that buying power and the treasures of this world are the supreme motivation for study.  
*—Should education be in the service of Money?*
  - 3. If we answer “So that you can get a respectable job,” we are teaching our children...
    - a. to see that the worth of a particular educational program depends on whether it can deliver a highly esteemed job.
    - b. to follow the tastes of the majority culture.  
*—Should the tastes of the majority always determine what is worth learning?*
  - 4. If we answer, “So that you can stay ahead of your peers,” we are teaching our children to see that competition for jobs and other goods is the driving motivation for education.  
*—Should competition determine what and how much we learn? What happens if we reach the height of our careers? Does learning cease then?*
- D. Having a respectable job, making money, and staying ahead of the game are not unimportant. But is there more to education than just those things? *Does God have deeper intentions for a Christian’s education than just those reasons that are cited?*
- E. But why should we mix our religion with education?
  - 1. Because Jesus Christ is Lord of all (Mt 28:18).
  - 2. Because in Christ are “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 1:3).
  - 3. Because God ordained the work of education.  
*—God did that by making us thinking and learning creatures.*

- F. God does not want education to be simply a means to more wealth or elevated social status. Rather, God desires for education to help us become increasingly competent at functioning as his priest-kings in the world.
- G. Genesis 1:26-28 is fundamental to us if we want to think about education because it is here where God lays out two things:
  1. What the human race is.
  2. What the human race is called to do.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What are some deficient ways in which we educate about education? Why are each of these ways deficient? (2) What is God’s intention for education? (3) How does Genesis 1:26-28 lay the foundation for our educational task?

## II. God States His Intentions to Make Man (Genesis 1:26)

- A. When Genesis 1:16 begins, God is set to create the lord of the earth—*man*.
- B. What plans does God have for this new creature?
  1. God says that he wants man to be made “in our image” and “after our likeness.” (Gen 1:26)
  2. By making man a little copy of himself, God indicates that he wants the first human and his descendants after him to represent him to the world.
- C. God also uses the plural to refer to himself: “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness.”
  1. This may be a reference to the Trinitarian nature of God.
  2. Like God, man will also be relational and communal.
- D. The Lord reveals man’s job description.  
—Man is going to be a ruler, a king.
- E. Because man does not have God’s knowledge of all secrets and mysteries, man has to be open to learning.  
—Proverbs 25:2: “It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is *to search things out*.”

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What plans does God have for mankind? (2) What is an implication of being made in the image of a triune God? (3) Why does man have to be open to learning?

## III. God Creates the Human Race (Genesis 1:27)

- A. In verse 27, God proceeds with the creation of man.
- B. Three facts are presented.

1. God has successfully made man in his own image.
2. God first made man as a singular and masculine person—Adam.
3. God made mankind both male and female.

**\*Questions for reflection:** What three facts about mankind are presented in 1:27?

#### **IV. God Blesses and Instructs the First Humans (Genesis 1:28)**

- A. Following the creation of mankind, “God blessed them.”  
—This may have been a kind of royal investiture event.
- B. God gives mankind their work, *the cultural mandate*, which includes...
  1. the work of procreation.
  2. the work of civilization building.
  3. the work of creation care and stewardship.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What is the cultural mandate? (2) What three things does the cultural mandate involve?

#### **V. Education for the Image of God**

**Because God has brought us into his Kingdom, we must recover a God-centered vision for our education. In the end, whatever education we receive must help us function as God’s image in the world. As such, we need to be educated in three areas. Since we were made in the image of God, we must be educated to be servants of God. Since we were made to be relational beings that complement one another, we must be educated to be servants to one another. And since we were made to subdue the earth and rule its other beings, we must be educated to be servants of the animal rulers and stewards of the environment which we share with them.**

- A. What does this ancient vision of the human race mean for education today?
  1. It does mean that education is massively important.
  2. It does mean that education is part of a just and humane society.
  3. If we were made to function as God’s representatives in the world, it means that education must ultimately serve what God has made us to be.
    - a. It is not enough for us to be educated merely in one narrow sphere of disciplines, whether it’s the humanities or the sciences.
    - b. It is not enough for us to be educated simply to fill a particular line of work (as in vocational training).

- c. Above and beyond those motivations, education must somehow equip us to better function as God’s image in the world.
- B. Based on Genesis 1:26-28, our education must be in at least three major directions—toward God, our fellow human beings, and creation at large.
- C. We must be educated to be servants of God.
  - 1. Why is this our top priority?
    - a. Because God is ultimately the One for whom we live.
    - b. Because only God knows how we can best perform the other two areas of our service.
  - 2. What does education to be God’s servants involve?
    - a. It involves instruction in the Word of God, beginning with...
      - i. The history of salvation (creation, fall, redemption)
      - ii. The basic doctrines of Scripture (the Apostle’s Creed)
      - iii. The Ten Commandments, God’s Law
      - iv. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, God’s salvation
    - b. It involves further instruction in five biblical disciplines:
      - i. Biblical theology
      - ii. Systematic theology
      - iii. Church history
      - iv. Apologetics
      - v. Practical/applied theology
- D. We must be educated to be servants to our fellow human beings and image bearers.
  - 1. The best place to begin is to start with the second half of the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17).
    - a. We start there because the second table of the Law lays down the rules and principles governing human-to-human interaction.
    - b. The Ten Commandments are the foundation of education because they provide the proper motivation for it.
    - c. If we are not motivated by God’s Law, education becomes mere careerism.
  - 2. The academic domain that is most focused on human-to-human relationships is *the humanities*—history, literature, philosophy, art, religion, sociology, politics, economics, the study of other cultures, etc.
    - a. The humanities help us understand how humans and their societies work.
    - b. The humanities help us figure out our purpose in life.
  - 3. We study the humanities because God made us relational creatures and therefore, people of the humanities.

- E. We must be educated to be servants to the animal realm and stewards of our earth.
1. Our dominion over the animal kingdoms must be a dominion of compassion and servanthood (Mk 9:35).
  2. While God gives the animals and the earth to us for our sustenance, that does not mean carelessly ransack the earth or treating animals with contempt.
  3. The academic domain that is most focused on the human-to-earth/environment relationships are *the sciences*—mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, astronomy, geology, environmental science, etc.
    - a. The sciences enable us to discover...
      - i. the “rules” that God has placed into creation
      - ii. the basic components that make up that creation.
    - b. This knowledge enables us to manipulate creation and use it to serve God’s purposes.
  4. God’s permission for us to exercise power over creation leads to two implications.
    - a. This would mean that we are to craft the earth and raise it to a higher level of usefulness for human civilization.
    - b. This would also mean not carelessly misusing creation.

**\*Questions for reflection:** (1) What are three dimensions of education we can glean from Genesis 1? (2) How do each of these dimensions correspond with the fields of theology, humanities, and the sciences? (3) What does education as God’s servants involve? What must we know? (4) Why are the humanities important? (4) What role do the sciences play in creation care? (5) Which field of education are you strongest at? How can you be growing in the other fields?

## VI. An Exhortation to Parents and Students

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“A Calvinist who seeks God does not for a moment think of limiting himself to theology and contemplation, leaving the other sciences, as of a lower character, in the hands of unbelievers; but on the contrary, looking upon it as his task to know God in *all* his works, he is conscious of having been called to fathom with all the energy of his intellect, things *terrestrial* as well as things *celestial*; to open to view both the order of creation, and the ‘common grace’ of the God he adores, in nature and its wondrous character, in the production of human industry, in the life of mankind, in sociology and in the history of the human race.”

Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, p. 125.