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**ENCOUNTER BIBLE STUDY**  
**Lesson 2**  
**CREATION, WORK AND REST**  
**Tim Keller**

**I. GENESIS 1 and 2: CONFLICT OR COMPLEMENT?**

“God’s record of creation and all of Genesis should be considered not as a collection of preserved human documents subject to contradictions but as God’s inspired revelation with its deliberate repetitions and change of style used for the emphasis of different aspects of God’s character.” Kidner

A. Different aspects of one truth:

1. Chapter 2 merely complements Chapter 1.

a. God made male and female in his own image 1:27 - vertical action

b. God formed man from dust breathed into his nostrils giving life so man became a living person 2:7 - horizontal action

**II. IS WORK PART OF GOD’S DESIGN?**

A. To rule over fish, birds, livestock, wild animals, every living creature: 1:26b and 1:28b

B. To reproduce off spring: 1:28a:

C. To have a different nature than other living things: 2:7; 2:19-20;

“Man is distinguished from the animals by superior physical and mental endowments, extraordinary capacities of the soul such as reason, conscience, morality religious affections and by spiritual endowment which enabled him to experience fellowship with God and the influences of the Spirit operating in his soul. Bultema

D. 1:28: “...fill the earth and subdue it...” 1:29-30; 2:8-9

**Application: How do you delight in your present work and see in it God’s gift for you in total development of your personality?**

**III. WHAT IS GOD’S PURPOSE IN REST?**

A. The crowning glory of man is his relationship with God.

“As long as we are human we are, by definition, in the image of God. But spiritual likeness -- in a single word, love -- can be present only where God and man are in fellowship: hence the fall destroyed it, but our salvation recreates and perfects it.” Kidner

B. God created us to have communion with himself and others and also his creation. 2:2-3

1. To be created in God’s image means that humans represent God on earth as they form relationships of love for one another and for God and his creation.

“Human life is meant to include more than labour, more than the struggle for the appropriate income for providing what we and others need.....The six plus one alternation of work and rest is not the rhythm of work plus recovery so as to be able to go back to work, it is the engagement of the world in work, and then thankful enjoyment of the world in worship. By ‘worship’ we do not mean simply--or even primarily church activity. Our worship is offering back to God, for him to enjoy, our enjoyment of the world he created. Motyer

C, All was finished and God was resting. 2:2-3

D. Pictures throughout Biblical history that God desires that humans also find a place of rest as he does.

1. God’s rest: Do you suppose that the Garden of Eden was a resting place for God at the completion of the 6 days.

2. Is there a resting place amongst all that he created?

Isaiah 66:1: “This is what the Lord says: Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me, where will my resting place be?

3. Was there a rest for the people of Israel?

“...the building of the temple has been presented in the image of the creation of the world, and signified as an extension of a process begun at the creation.” Walton

Exodus 39:43: The Israelites had done all the work just as the Lord had commanded. So Moses blessed them.

4. Where is the rest for the child of God?

Hebrews 12:2: The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

D. So what does the Sabbath mean for the believer?

“Is the Sabbath a law that we Christians have to keep? The answer is that if we have to be reminded, commanded, or coerced to observe it., it ceases to serve its function. The Sabbath is not the sort of thing that should have to be regulated by rules. It is the way we acknowledge that God is on the throne, that this world is his world, that our time is his gift to us. It is “big picture time.” And the big picture is not me, my family, my country, my world, or even the history of my world. The big picture is God, himself.

We need to stop looking at Christianity as being defined as a set of rules we have to keep. Christian freedom doesn’t say there are no rules, but rather that we shouldn’t need rules. The Bible is not a book of rules. The Bible reveals the God whom we serve, and we should serve him gladly. For too many of us it is too easy to think of our faith in terms of what God has done for us. That becomes a focus on self.” Walton

E. Conduits of grace celebrated in a wholesome way:

1. Bible reading
2. Prayer and meditation
3. Worship, formally or informally
4. The arts: music, art, dancing
5. Nature and all God has created
6. Christian book reading

Amazon

**In His Steps**, Charles Monroe Sheldon, Hendrickson Christian Classics.  
(Free for downloading on a Kindle)

**The Practice of the Presence of God**, Brother Lawrence,  
(Kindle eBook, \$3.56)

Application: What conduits of grace do you presently use in your relationship with God?  
In what ways do you find these meeting your spiritual needs?

**PRINCIPLE: God's plan was to bring about a perfect creation, maintained by the humans he'd created, to in turn have fellowship with Him.**

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