

# WHAT IS A HUMAN?

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WHAT IS MAN THAT YOU ARE MINDFUL OF HIM?

# Explicit Implications of the *Imago Dei*

1. Man is unique from other creatures who are not in the image of God.
2. Man is the closest creature to the likeness of God.
3. All of mankind carry the likeness of the Godhead within them.
4. God desired that mankind would represent Him among His creation.

# Man is like God!

## Then the Fall.

1. Moral Aspect: Moral purity was lost. Man's will became bound to his selfishness (Rom 6).
2. Spiritual Aspect: Spiritual death took place. Man was condemned (John 3).
3. Mental Aspect: The mind became dark and futile (Eph 4).
4. Relational Aspect: Relationships are no longer harmonious (Gen 3 & 4).
5. Physical Aspect: Physical death begins at birth (Gen 3).

# Renewal of the Image

1. Jesus came as mankind as the perfect image bearer, the second Adam (2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15).
2. Believers are to be renewed in the image of God (2 Cor 3:18; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).
3. Believers will be recreated in the image of the Son of God (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49; 1 John 3:2).

# Implications of the Image of God

All of humanity is created in God's image. This means that regardless of race or ethnicity, unborn or elderly, mental retardation or seriously ill, believers or unbelievers, all deserve full protection and honor as human beings.

# The Cultural/Creation Mandate

God's revelation of His purpose for the creation of mankind within His image.

Who Am I?

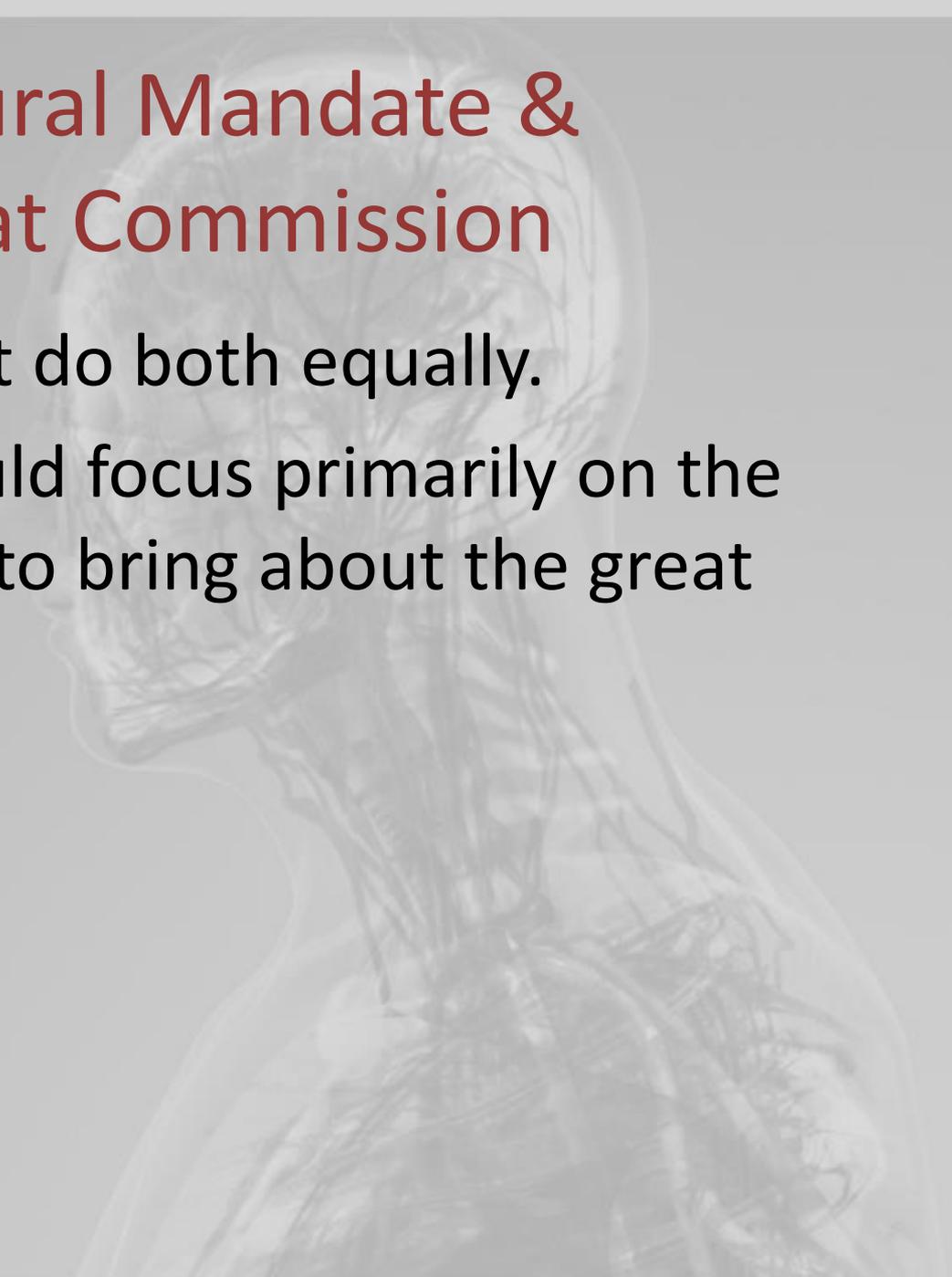
An individual created in the image of God.

Why Am I?

A representative of God in His creation to rule and have dominion.

# The Cultural Mandate & The Great Commission

1. Every church must do both equally.
2. Every church should focus primarily on the cultural mandate to bring about the great commission.



# Redeeming Culture

If Christians do not seize the moment and act on the cultural commission, there soon won't be any culture left to save. But when we do our duty, we can change the world. Look at Christians like William Wilberforce, who spent most of his life fighting — and winning — the war against slavery in Britain, and bringing about a great cultural renewal in that country.

Chuck Colson

# The Cultural Mandate & The Great Commission

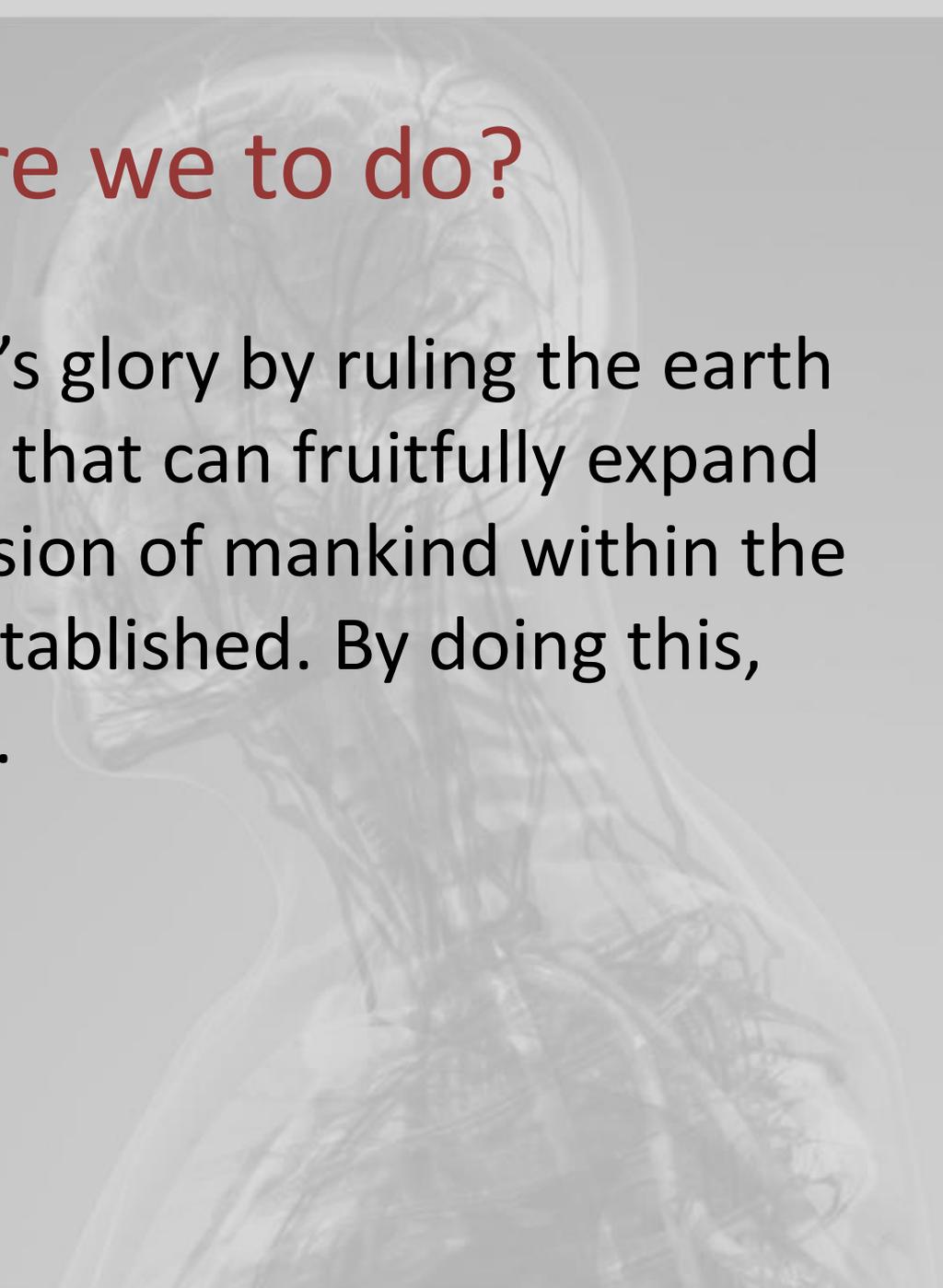
1. Every church must do both equally.
2. Every church should focus primarily on the cultural mandate to bring about the great commission.
3. Every church should focus exclusively on the great commission which will result in the cultural mandate.
4. Churches should focus on the great commission, while individual believers should equally be faithful to the cultural mandate.

# Elements of the Cultural Mandate

1. Dominion: Genesis 1:26-2:4
2. Relationships: Genesis 1:27; 2:18, 21-25
3. Fruitfulness/Growth: Genesis 1:28; 2:15, 19-20
4. Provision: Genesis 1:29-30; 2:8-14
5. Limits: Genesis 2:3, 17

# What are we to do?

We are to reflect God's glory by ruling the earth through relationships that can fruitfully expand creation for the provision of mankind within the limits that God has established. By doing this, we fulfill our purpose.



# Dominion Principle

To work in God's image is to exercise dominion.

"Exercising royal dominion over the earth as God's representative is the basic purpose for which God created man.... Man is appointed king over creation, responsible to God the ultimate king, and as such expected to manage and develop and care for creation, this task is to include actual physical work."

# Dominion Implication

We are to act as if we ourselves had the same relationship of love with his creatures that God does. Subduing the earth includes harnessing its various resources as well as protecting them. Dominion over all living creatures is not a license to abuse them, but a contract from God to care for them. We are to serve the best interests of all whose lives touch ours; our employers, our customers, our colleagues or fellow workers, or those who work for us or who we meet even casually.

# Relationship Principle

To work in God's image is to work in relationship with others.

The God of relationship is the God of love. One could merely say that "God loves," but Scripture goes deeper to the very core of God's *being* as Love, a love flowing back and forth among the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This love also flows out of God's being to us, doing nothing that is not in our best interest.

# Relationship Implication

Relationships are not incidental to work; they are essential. Work serves as a place of deep and meaningful relationships. The demonstration of God's love is an essential part of our representing Him within the creation.

# Fruitfulness Principle

To work in God's image is to bear fruit and multiply.

God could have created everything imaginable and filled the earth himself. But he chose to create humanity to work alongside him to actualize the universe's potential, to participate in God's own work. It is remarkable that God trusts us to carry out this amazing task of building on the good earth he has given us. Through our work God brings forth food and drink, products and services, knowledge and beauty, organizations and communities, growth and health, and praise and glory to himself.

# Fruitfulness Implication

Adam and Eve are given two specific kinds of work in Genesis 2:15-20, gardening (a kind of physical work) and giving names to the animals (a kind of cultural/scientific/intellectual work). Both are creative enterprises that give specific activities to people created in the image of the Creator. By growing things and developing culture, we are indeed fruitful. We bring forth the resources needed to support a growing population and to increase the productivity of creation. The human task is to extend the creative work of God in a multitude of ways limited only by God's gifts of imagination and skill, and the limits God sets. Work is forever rooted in God's design for human life. It is an avenue to contribute to the common good and as a means of providing for ourselves, our families, and those we can bless with our generosity.

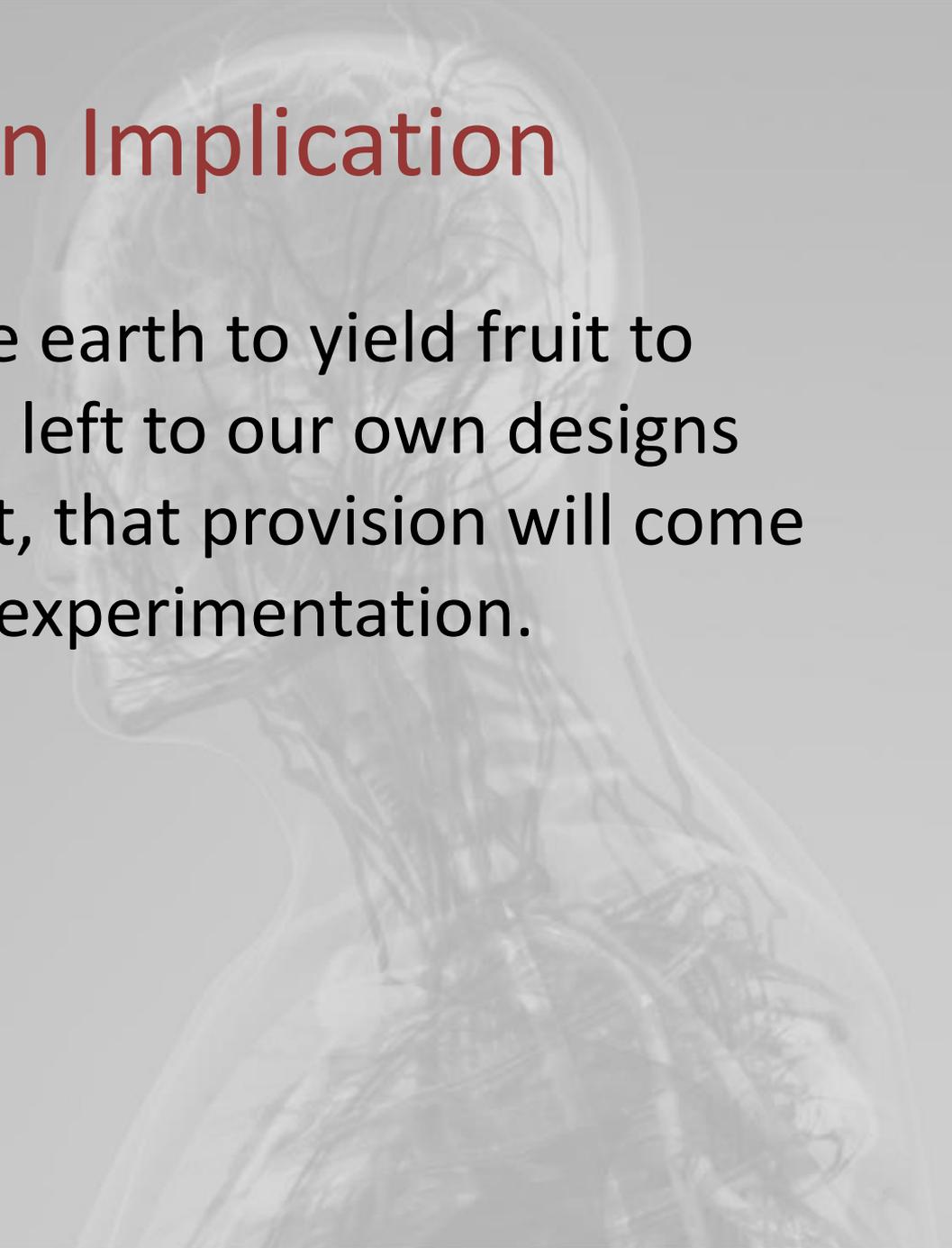
# Provision Principle

To work in God's image is to receive God's provision.

Acknowledging God's provision warns us not to fall into hubris. Without him, our work is nothing. We cannot bring ourselves to life. We cannot even provide for our own maintenance. We need God's continuing provision of air, water, earth, sunshine, and the miraculous growth of living things for food for our bodies and minds. On the other hand, acknowledging God's provision gives us confidence in our work.

# Provision Implication

God has arranged the earth to yield fruit to mankind. We are not left to our own designs and imaginations. Yet, that provision will come via effort, work, and experimentation.



# Limitation Principle

To work in God's image is to be blessed by the limits God sets.

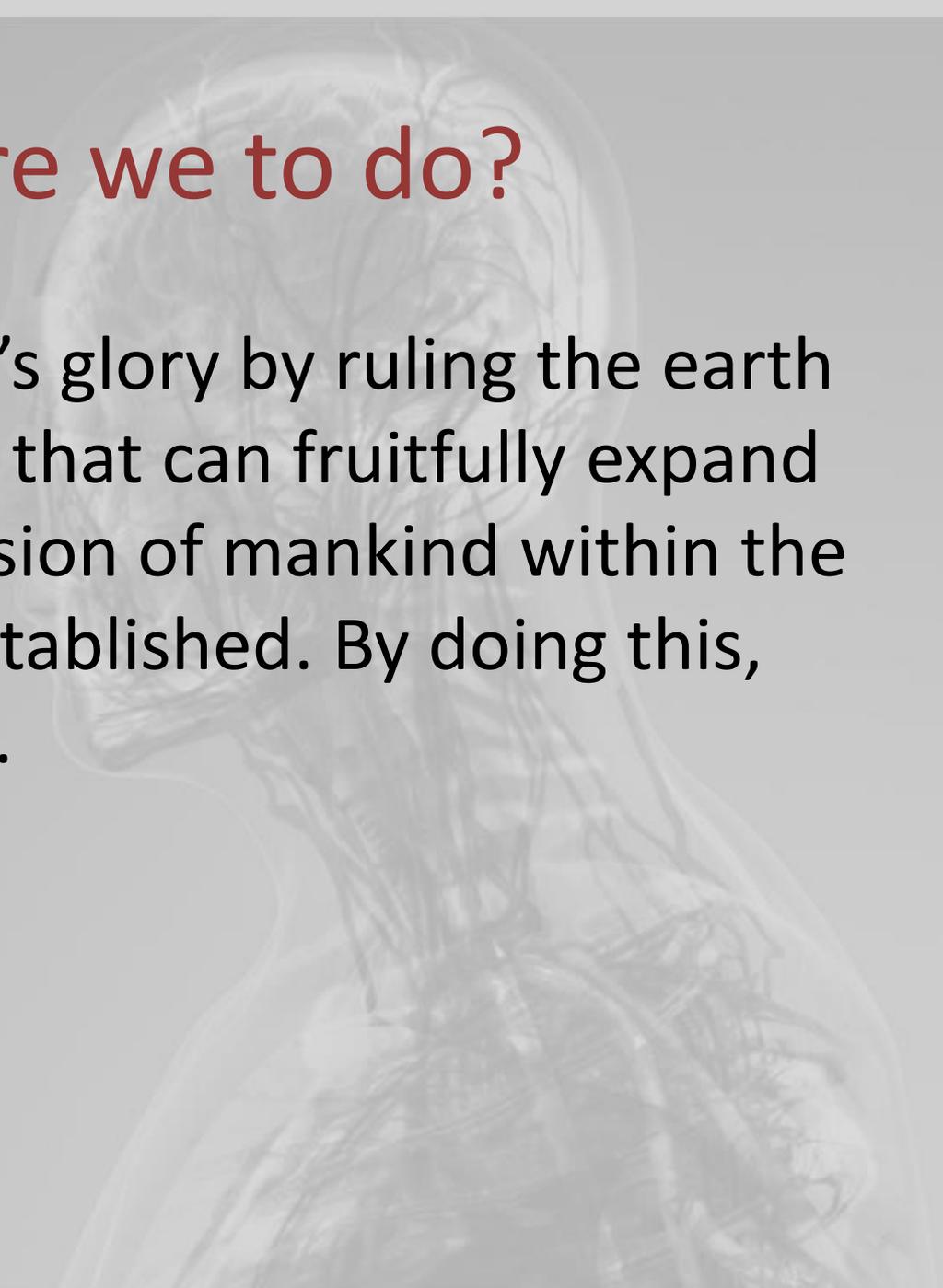
When, like God, we stop our work on whatever is our seventh day, we acknowledge that our life is not defined only by work or productivity. A break provides a visible testimony that God is at the center of life—that human production and consumption take place in a world ordered, blessed, and restrained by the God of all creation. In a sense, we renounce some part of our autonomy, embracing our dependence on God our Creator. Otherwise, we live with the illusion that life is completely under human control.

# Limitation Implication

All good work respects God's limits. There are limits to the earth's capacity for resource extraction, pollution, habitat modification, and the use of plants and animals for food, clothing, and other purposes. The human body has great yet limited strength, endurance, and capacity to work. There are limits to healthy eating and exercise. There are limits by which we distinguish beauty from vulgarity, criticism from abuse, profit from greed, friendship from exploitation, service from slavery, liberty from irresponsibility, and authority from dictatorship. In practice it may be hard to know exactly where the line is, and it must be admitted that Christians have often erred on the side of conformity, legalism, prejudice, and a stifling dreariness, especially when proclaiming what other people should or should not do. Nonetheless, the art of living as God's image-bearers requires learning to discern where blessings are to be found in observing the limits set by God that are evident in his creation.

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