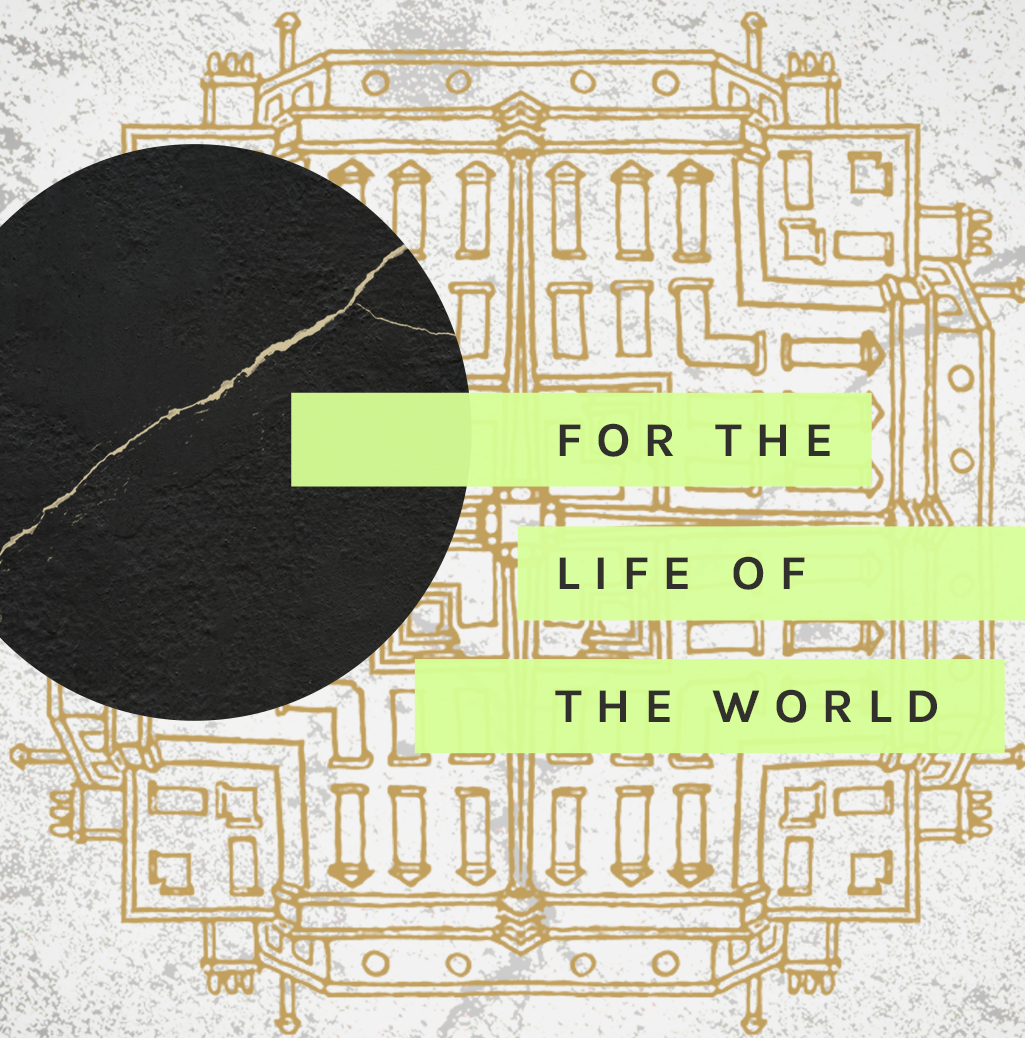


FOR THE

LIFE OF

THE WORLD



CULTURAL RENEWAL

CONTEXT

A Culture in Ruins

A Promise of Cultural Renewal

WHAT IS CULTURE?

The English word derives from the Latin *colere*, which began as an agricultural term meaning to till or take care of a field or garden. Over time its use expanded to include the cultivation or care of other things, such as the body, mental abilities, virtues, and even the gods and their temples...Later, the word culture began to be used as a synonym for civilization or to be civilized...A broader concept of culture, informed by anthropology, refers to a particular way of life, whether of a specific people, group or period...In sum, cultures are enormously complex webs of convictions, practices, institutions, and narratives that give shape and meaning to the material realities of people's everyday lives.

Philip Kenneson

Culture is what we make of the world. Culture is, first of all, the name for our relentless, restless human effort to take the world as it's given to us and make something else...We make sense of the world by making something of the world.

Andy Crouch

Cultural Mandate

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.” So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth.”

Genesis 1:26-28

In Genesis, God gives what we might call the first job description: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.” The first phrase, “be fruitful and multiply,” means to develop the social world: build families, churches, schools, cities, governments, laws. The second phrase, “subdue the earth,” means to harness the natural world: plant crops, build bridges, design computers, compose music. This pass is sometimes called the Cultural Mandate because it tells us that our original purpose was to create cultures, build civilizations - nothing less.

Nancy Pearcey

Cultural Ruin

The effects of sin touch all of creation; no created thing is in principle untouched by the corrosive effects of the fall. Whether we look at societal structures such as the state or family, or cultural pursuits such as art or technology, or bodily functions such as sexuality or eating, or anything at all within the wide scope of creation, we discover that the good handiwork of God has been drawn into the sphere of human mutiny against God.

Al Wolters

**HOW DOES JESUS BRING
CULTURAL RENEWAL?**

What was formed in creation has been historically deformed by sin and must be reformed in Christ.

Al Wolters

The difference between the Cultural Mandate and the Great Commission is that the former precedes the fall and the work of Christ; the latter follows these. Otherwise they are very much the same. Of course, it is not possible for people to subdue the Earth for God until their hearts are changed by the Holy Spirit. So, 'taking dominion,' following the Resurrection, begins with evangelism and baptism. But baptism is not the end and evangelism is not simply bringing people to an initial profession of faith. It is making disciples and teaching them to observe comprehensively all that Jesus has commanded, with the assurance of Jesus's continuing presence. Jesus's commands deal not only with repentance, faith, and worship. They also concern our treatment of the poor, sexual ethics, marriage, divorce, anger, love of enemies, fasting, anxiety, hypocrisy, and many other subjects.

John Frame

God cares not only about redeeming souls but also about restoring his creation. He calls us to be agents not only of his saving grace but also of his common grace. Our job is not only to build up the church but also to build a society to the glory of God. As agents of God's common grace, we are called to help sustain and renew his creation, to uphold the created institutions of family and society, to pursue science and scholarship, to create works of art and beauty, and to heal and help those suffering from the results of the Fall.

Chuck Colson & Nancy Pearcey

HOW CAN WE PARTICIPATE?

We are not “changing the world”

James Hunter's “three false starts”

- **Evangelism**
- **Political activism**
- **Social reform**

Cultural change at its most profound level occurs through dense networks of elites operating in common purpose within institutions at the high-prestige centers of cultural production. In light of this, the cultural economy of contemporary Christianity has strongest, in the main, where cultural leverage is weakest - on the social periphery rather than the cultural center.

James Hunter

How Christians have approached culture:

- **Condemn Culture**
- **Critique Culture**
- **Copy Culture**
- **Consume Culture**

Creative Minority

To become a creative minority is not easy, because it involves maintaining strong links with the outside world while staying true to your faith, seeking not merely to keep the sacred flame burning but also to transform the larger society of which you are a part.

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

**A creative minority is faithfully
present within culture**

**A creative minority creates culture
within their local spheres of influence**

**A creative minority takes
responsibility for stewarding
institutions not savaging them**