



I think most (if not all) Christians today would say that much of the religious establishment in Jesus' day focused on externals – to the neglect of the heart. For example, many thought that if they fasted often or prayed in certain ways or giving to the Temple, they were “good” before God. Jesus' own disciples had to be confronted with their tendency to focus on externals to the neglect of the heart. Are you familiar with the scenario when Jesus speaks to the rich young ruler, and he walks away from Jesus. Then Jesus says, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”<sup>26</sup> And they were exceedingly astonished, and said to him, ‘Then who can be saved?’<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.’<sup>1</sup> I’ve heard many people interpret this to mean that it’s harder for wealthy people to get saved than for poor people. But that’s not what Jesus is confronting. Listen, if it’s easier for poor people to get saved, then we should want to ensure that everyone in this world is poor because it’ll heighten the chances of salvation.

That can’t be what Jesus means otherwise, salvation can be more guaranteed for some than others – and that makes salvation by works and not by grace! And that’s exactly what Jesus is confronting. In the first century, the people thought that if you had more money, you were more blessed by God. If you were more blessed by God, you were definitely more guaranteed to enter the Kingdom. So, when Jesus says to his disciples that it’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle, it makes sense why they say, “Then who can be saved?!” In other words, if very blessed people can’t make it into Heaven, then that means NO ONE can make it into Heaven – not the rich or the poor! Then comes Jesus’ words: With man it is impossible. Meaning, human beings can’t guarantee salvation for themselves. Only God can. Jesus is pointing everyone back to their *need* for God. While we benefit from money, a pain-free life, fun vacations, clothing. And while some of these things are necessary for survival on this planet, we cannot rest our eternal salvation on any of these things.

Yet, we can fall into this trap, can’t we? We can look at people who have a lot and say, “Wow, God’s really blessed them.” We can say that about ourselves. Someone can say, “How do you have that car or that house?” And the response is, “God’s really blessed me.” Well, it’s true that he’s given you those gifts. But did you know that the word “blessed” in the New Testament is never related to physical things? It’s always related to the blessings we have in relationship to God!

So, why do I say all of this? Because as we’ve been looking into Genesis, and even looking at last week’s text with Cain’s descendants clinging to physical affluence and security, we see that those things don’t indicate God’s blessing. Instead, those kindnesses of God should lead us to love God more – not cling to the stuff more. Yet, even in Jesus’ day, so many in Israel forgot that message. They clung to the stuff.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mk 10:25–27.

And, in our day, apart from Jesus' saving work in people's hearts, people cling to stuff and neglect the heart.

But we're confronted with that when we look at last week's text. Will we turn to the Lord as our satisfaction or will we numb ourselves of our need for the Lord? This is exactly what the wandering Israelites needed to hear when Moses wrote these words. Are those cities they're coming across truly blessed or are the wandering Israelites blessed? Is it better to wander in a wilderness with God or to be settled in a city without God? As Moses continues to write, we move into Genesis 5, and we come to a lengthier genealogy (which I know you're all excited about because we love genealogies)! But **Moses wrote these genealogies to help further emphasize that God keeps his promises. The serpent-crusher will come!**

So, last week, we saw a shorter genealogy for Cain (who murdered his brother and left the presence of God). This is symbolic to show that Cain and his descendants followed the serpent. But now, we're transitioned to chapter 5, where we have a new offspring of Eve: Seth. **1) This genealogy points to the fulfillment of the "seed of the woman" promise.** The promise that God would crush the head of the serpent. We read about how Cain's descendants only get worse, and you can wonder, "God, where are you in this mess?! Do you care about all this sin?" And then this genealogy comes up to remind us that God sees, and God is the One who always brings order from chaos. But that's not the only thing this genealogy reveals. **2) This genealogy highlights important truths for human beings to remember.** If you read this genealogy, you'll notice that with each person, the same phrases are used, but in three places, the words change! In Bible study, we should always recognize when repetitions are broken! That is very purposeful. In ancient genealogies, the first, seventh and tenth person mattered. And that's what we have in this list. The other names matter in showing movement to the next. But the first, seventh and tenth proclaim important truths. So, this sermon today is going to focus on the truths emphasized in these three people. Finally, **3) This genealogy emphasizes the Lord's faithfulness in the midst of the curse.** Throughout this genealogy, the word death is incessantly repeated. As God had stated to Adam, human beings will continue to be eaten by the ground. But in the face of death, is there hope? What's the point if we keep dying? This genealogy says that there's a movement towards redemption and salvation. There's hope in the midst of pain. There's order and beauty and life coming even in the face of face.

So, now we can come into the text and ask this: **In the face of death, how are we to live until the serpent-crusher comes?** We are not to follow Cain's seed-of-the-serpent ways. But it's not enough to just know what not to do. We need hope to empower us to actually live for the Lord. So, to put the main idea in statement form, this genealogy reveals that **Humanity's identity, life, and rest are found ultimately in the LORD.** If we know our identity, life, and rest are in the Lord, we will follow him in the face of death, and we will be convinced that death doesn't have the last word over us. So, with this understanding, let's jump into the genealogy.

### **1. Humanity's identity is found ultimately in the LORD (vv. 1-6).**

Let's read verses 1-5: This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. <sup>2</sup> Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. <sup>3</sup> When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. <sup>4</sup> The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. <sup>5</sup> Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 5:1-5.

Moses begins by taking us back to Adam and Eve's creation – stating that they were created in the likeness of God. This is what we looked at previously, and discovered that being created in God's image and likeness means that human beings are more like God than anything else in the created realm! We're blessed with closeness to God, and representing him to the world uniquely as male and female! We continue on into verse 3 and we see that after Adam was 130 years old, he had a son named Seth. Seth is after Adam's own likeness and image. What does that mean? That means that even after humanity's fall into sin, human beings are still in the image and likeness of God. We are marred and broken, but we are still more like God than any other created thing. We still are called to be representatives of God in the world.

Please hear this because there are people today who will say that before the Fall, humans were in God's image and there was only male and female. But after the Fall, there's more genders. But in this text, we're told that Adam and Eve were in his image and likeness, and after sin, we have children in God's image and likeness and there are sons and daughters. While God's image-bearers are broken, and while there is death; they still are image-bearers, and God is calling them to himself.

This emphasizes the reality of this point: humanity's identity is found ultimately in the LORD. We are in God's image and likeness. We are in the most privileged status. But the question is, "will we be like Cain who turns from the Lord and seeks to find identity and meaning apart from him – who sought identity in the city he built with music, sciences, and food? Or will we turn to the Lord and trust him as our identity?"

Think about this, Ventura. In what ways are you tempted to find your ultimate identity in things of this world? Maybe it's in being a mom or a dad. If you are successful in your parenting, you feel you have more value and worth. If you don't do all these things just right, you might feel shamed and miserable. Or, maybe it's in money. You lose money or can't control it, and then you feel like a failure or that your life is falling apart. Many have taken their own lives because of losing their wealth or even status in a company. We can take good gifts of God – like Cain did – and turn them into our identity. Is that you today? And, just to be sure, don't say, "Well, I'm doing a good thing; so, my ultimate identity can be found in both God and this." No, it can't. Jesus said clearly you can't serve *two* masters.

Generally, I've found that the safest test in knowing if you are finding your ultimate identity in something is how anxious, fearful, angry you are if that thing is taken away or threatened to be taken away. Ask the Lord if this is you in any area. It's not worth living like Cain! In this fallen, broken world, our humanity's identity is in the Lord. Will you embrace that? Do you embrace that? If you are a believer in Christ, you *must* repent of these sins and follow him! Turn from those things today and turn to him!

This is the first point God wants us to see in this genealogy. Then, we move to the 7<sup>th</sup> person in the genealogy: Enoch. With him, we see that

## **2. Humanity's life is found ultimately in the LORD (vv. 21-24).**

Let's read verses 21-24 now: <sup>21</sup>When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. <sup>22</sup>Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>23</sup>Thus all the days of Enoch were 365 years. <sup>24</sup>Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 5:21–24.

Humanity's life is found in the Lord. Ok, now is the time to acknowledge how long these lives are. Be honest here, how many of you have ever struggled with these long lifespans? Some have suggested that these lifespans cannot be literal. There is ancient evidence that certain cultures would put more immense lifespans or time periods for kings in order to emphasize how great and powerful they were. They weren't literal. Could that be what's happening here? It could be, but I'm not convinced of that because there are actually multiple ancient records that speak to ages of people pre-flood and post-flood. And guess what? The ages are astronomically higher before the flood than after the flood. It's more than an intriguing discovery to me. I think that speaks to a reality of lifespans before and after the Fall. While at the same time, I do believe that these numbers of years (just like their names at times) can speak to greater realities.

Having said this, we can look at the ages of people and think to ourselves, "Well, I think they did pretty well for themselves! Look how long they lived!" People could be tempted to think that they're fine without God, but the fact of the matter is that 1) they still died, and 2) they don't come close to God's "age." God himself is outside of time. He's eternal. And I think of the Psalm 90:4: **For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night.**<sup>4</sup> The longest life, which comes right after Enoch, with 969 years, is to God like thinking about yesterday. It's just one day. It's just one watch of the night. People have nothing on God. And if you live 969 years, you still die.

So, where is eternal life – real life – found? In God himself! This is what God shows us through Enoch. We have the shortest life recorded with Enoch, and yet we may all be most jealous of Enoch: **<sup>24</sup> Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.**<sup>5</sup> Question: Would you be content with a shorter life and walk with God or do you want a long life and die? Now, I'm not saying that Methuselah was necessarily an unbeliever. I'm just saying this for contrast. And I think this can help us contrast with Cain's line. What do you want? Cain chose to ignore the reality of God and his sin. He chose to find his hope, life, identity, meaning from this world. And many people today choose that path as well. But, as Jesus once said, **<sup>26</sup> For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?**<sup>6</sup>

Enoch is to be emphasized here. He's the 7<sup>th</sup> in the genealogy. This is an important number in ancient genealogies, calling us to look carefully at this individual. What is uniquely stated about him that speaks to us? It is unique that "he was not, for God took him." The author of Hebrews says this of Enoch: **<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.**<sup>7</sup>

Enoch went up to Heaven. This is the first reference in Genesis to some sort of life that exists beyond the grave. There is a life that supersedes this cursed life. Well, how do we experience this eternal life? The author of Hebrews says it's through faith. Enoch trusted in and depended on the Lord. And **Genesis shows how Enoch's trust played out in his everyday life: he walked with God.**

What does it mean to walk with God? This is an integral question to ask because the Israelites were commanded to walk with God. And, in the New Testament, Christians are called to walk with the Lord. What does it mean to "walk" with God? I love how a man named Allen Ross puts it: **The expression became a common description of the life of fellowship and obedience with the Lord, as if to say that walking with the Lord was a step above mere living** (pp. 174-75, *Creation & Blessing*, Ross). But what does this look like in everyday life? This means your whole life is one of communing with the Lord.

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<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 90:4.

<sup>5</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 5:24.

<sup>6</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mt 16:26.

<sup>7</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 11:5.

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, God comes to your attention because you know he's near. You aren't simply walking *to* him or walking *near* him. You are walking *with* him.

Ventura, I pray you'd understand this because oftentimes people settle for so much less than *walking* with God. They read their Bible and pray mechanical prayers. They walk away from that time and simply say they "did their devotions." But my question is, "Did you commune with the Lord?" And also, what about the entire day? Is God your guide? Are you speaking to him and looking to him and trusting in him? To walk with God is fellowship. To walk with God is relationship. To walk with God *is life!* And that's what Jesus himself said: <sup>3</sup> **And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**<sup>8</sup> Eternal life isn't simply knowing about God. The "knowledge" is relational and communal. How beautiful. Enoch walked with God and then he was not because the Lord had taken him.

I'm jealous of him! I think of a child holding their parents hands and then, the parent lifts them up in their arms and carries them. This is what God did for Enoch. Sure, Enoch's life was about 1/3 shorter than the rest. But Enoch walked with the Lord! I pray that's what said of us! Even in thinking about this, I ponder what might be said on my tombstone. May it be said of me, "He walked with God, and entered the arms of his Father." Humanity's life is found in the Lord, and finally we see that:

### **3. Humanity's rest is found ultimately in the LORD (vv. 28-31).**

Let's read verses 28-31: <sup>28</sup> When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son <sup>29</sup> and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." <sup>30</sup> Lamech lived after he fathered Noah 595 years and had other sons and daughters. <sup>31</sup> Thus all the days of Lamech were 777 years, and he died.<sup>9</sup>

Here, the genealogy comes close to an end. We have Lamech from Seth's line who significantly contrasts with Cain's Lamech. Cain's Lamech brings vengeance and death. Seth's Lamech yearns for relief from the curse. Prophetically, Lamech speaks of his son, Noah, saying that he will bring relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.

There is irony here, and I think multiple meanings. First, I think we can say that Noah was going to bring relief to God's heart. The world was so incessantly sinful, and God's judgment was going to come through Noah's message and the flood. This judgment was necessary. Second, I think Noah is bringing relief for humanity through judgment. Even though the people on the earth when the judgment happened aren't experiencing relief of the soul. There is a stopping of sinful work, and a type of new creation that's coming after that will further lead to the seed of the woman. But in all of this, we see that there's a yearning for rest from the curse. As we put the three points together, we see that humanity's identity, life, and rest is found in the LORD. And notice, I use the word "LORD" in all capitals – referring to the God who makes and keeps his promise.

Do you trust him? Do you know he's worthy to be trusted? He ought to be trusted because we know that this lineage continues until we get to *the* serpent crusher, Jesus. Take a few moments with me as I seek to show you how Jesus fulfills *each of the points* in this sermon! Jesus is our identity, life, and rest! Watch with me.

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<sup>8</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 17:3.

<sup>9</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 5:28–31.

We're told that Jesus is “. . .**the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. . .**<sup>10</sup>” The exact imprint means he himself is God. But he is also man, the New Adam, the greater Noah. The one in whom we find our identity, and Romans 8:29 says that all of us who trust him are **“predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. . .”**<sup>11</sup> Jesus is our identity! And in Jesus' ministry, he then says, **“<sup>28</sup>Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**<sup>12</sup> If you turn from your sinfulness and turn to him for rest of soul, he grants this, because he actually grants us to *walk with God*. This is one reason why I believe the early Christians were referred to as followers of the Way. Jesus is the Way. *The Way* emphasizes relationship and communion *right now*. Dependence and reliance right now. To walk with God means the curse is reversed. In the curse, Adam and Eve hid from God. In the curse, Cain walked away from the presence of the Lord. But by God's grace, people call on the name of the Lord and begin to walk with God. This is what we discover about Jesus in Ephesians 2. He reverses the curse. Listen to these words: **“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked. . .”**<sup>13</sup> And then Paul writes of those of us who Jesus has forgiven and says of us: <sup>10</sup>**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**<sup>14</sup> He reverses the curse! Therefore, later in Ephesians, Paul wrote, **“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”**<sup>15</sup> And then to the Colossians he said: <sup>6</sup>**Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. . .**<sup>16</sup> Live in dependence always on the Lord, for the Lord!

Do you see how Jesus fulfills this genealogy? Jesus, God's promised offspring, reverses the curse so that we experience afresh our identity, life, and rest in the LORD. But to those of us who have been rescued by Jesus, through faith in him, death does not have the final word and someday there will be a day when the circumstances of Enoch happen to those who follow the Lord: <sup>16</sup>**For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore encourage one another with these words.**<sup>17</sup>

Let's now move into communion and celebrate our Savior's victory.

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<sup>10</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 1:3.

<sup>11</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ro 8:29.

<sup>12</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Mt 11:28.

<sup>13</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Eph 2:1–2.

<sup>14</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Eph 2:9–10.

<sup>15</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Eph 5:1–2.

<sup>16</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Col 2:6.

<sup>17</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Th 4:16–18.