

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

So is the Lord's intention from the before the world began that he would adopt children. That's what predestination is unto. For many people, a dirty theological word. But that's just because the flesh resists, all the truth of God. And it is a precious. Theological truth. Have a predestination of course is not just that we would be forgiven of our sins that say necessary step in the middle of God's accomplishing what it is for.

But as you know from Ephesians 1 it's predestination unto adoption as the children of god. I chosen in the beloved. And and the Lord Jesus. And then Romans 8, praise destination is to be predestined to be conformed, to the image of the sun. That he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

So all of creation, all of history, all of redemption is the execution of an adoption plan. And when the Lord was making these creatures, whom he would make in his image, the only ones The only things in all of creation or new creation that would be made in his image.

He made first for us a material world. His idea, it's not a bad thing. Material world in which to enjoy his goodness. He created the world and he created our capacity to perceive it and experience it and to act in it that we might know him who had made us for himself.

And he gave us a place of imaging him in this material world that he made in a way that displays that, of all his creatures. These are the ones who are made in his image. These are the ones where made for himself who are made not only to work in his world, but especially to have fellowship with the living god, to have aspects to our knowledge of and interaction with him.

That not only none of the lower creatures have, but not even the angels hat. In the fellowship that we have. With God in our adoption as his children and are being made in his image. And so the material world as the first way by which We enjoy him by which we serve him and by which we display that we are in his image is very important.

The Sabbath day was not the only important work that was given to man. Yes, on the Sabbath day. We rest from our works, in the creation, we act upon God, it's the crowning event at the climax of the whole creation account. But that which we do in the 6th being fruitful and multiplying subduing, the earth, Taking Dominion over the creatures.

Is also very important and it is as we do those things that we facilitate our ability to keep the sabbath. And it's in doing those things that we demonstrate that we are made in the image of god for the enjoyment of god. So there's always been this. This worship facilitating worship serving aspect to our work in the creation.

Throughout the week. And this is something that back when, and it's been long enough, now that will probably recover not recovery, we haven't lost XX, but we're going to cover again. Act 6, but when we were in act 6, we saw that in the establishing of the diaconal, leadership of the church, over the diagonal service of the church.

And remember, those are two different things. Everyone of the Lord saves us called to deaconal service is called to enjoy the Lord and steward in stewarding the material things that he has given us and using them to minister and display. Not now only that we have been created in his image, but that in Jesus Christ, we have been redeemed, renewed, into the image of God Christ, who is the last Adam, who is Adam as he was supposed to be, but fell from and who is Israel as Israel was supposed to be but never was this redeemed.

People who is good laws, both governing their worship and their Their work, their treatment of the poor and material things. And Caring about others and how you own your property. And all those things that we saw Israel was supposed to be a display in part of the difference in how we function in God's world.

The difference that is made by God's redeeming us out from under sin, but Israel as a nation was never a display of that. And now finally Christ is the perfect display of that and his church is supposed to be a display of that. That's one of the places where church discipline and diagonal ministry overlap.

Is not just in the inward spiritual graces, but the outward working of those graces in our lives. Christians are supposed to be demonstrating that our use of and approach to material, things has been renewed in Christ. The true Israel, the last atom to the glory of God who has adopted us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In fact, the first great act of church discipline that the Holy Spirit carried out himself was in a context of Diagonal mishandling. Wasn't it Ananias since fire up? Using the giving ministry of the church to try to advance themselves and exalt themselves? So, we see the significance of the necessity of the church obeying God stewarding material things in a way that reflects the grace of God.

In fact what we have most recently seen, as we have been going through this, biblical theology of the deaconist is that Israel's failure to do, so was actually central to the offenses, for which God judge them for which God, put them out of the land exiled, then and brought them.

Under great and severe judgment. Well, now we are fast, forwarding Two. When Israel has returned and we're even fast, forwarding Past the construction of the new temple which which does have some diagonal aspects to it. But what we are considering now, or what we're looking at now is how even after they had been restored from the exile even after a new temple had been built.

And actually, we're going to look at it a little bit. I see that. I've scribbled in, on my copy. To make sure to say something about Hagiah. So we will, we will look a little bit at that, but we're not going to go through. The Ezrenia Maya material. Of the building of the temple.

But even after they have a new temple, they continue. In the sands and not just a few of them, but as a whole, they continue in those sins in. Facilitating the worship of God with material things in making sure. To keep the Sabbath in a way that shows God is the giver of the six days and the pleasure of the seventh day.

And Failure to care, even for the poor. And that at the, at the close of the Old Testament in Malachi, which we may, or may not get to today at the close of the Old Testament. They are still in the matter of Tizen offerings and the matter of Not honoring God and displaying his goodness and his generosity with what they do, with the poor who around them.

They are still failing to be displays. Enjoyers of God's goodness to them and displayers of his goodness by their goodness to others in the use of material things. So if obviously it's not the

first part of the book but it is the first thing in the use or the the thing of greatest priority in our service of God in the use of material things.

We consider it first. How they continue not to prioritize worship, Nehemiah 13.

You know what? Just stick a finger into my 13. I scribbled it in. Later, but I think we'll go ahead and

Easiest way to get there is Find Zachariah or Malachi at the end of your Old Testament and turn left. Tiny little book. Right before. Zachariah

Now, the Lord had mercifully. Resumed. Some of the covenant curses. He'd hindered their economy.

As you see in verse 6, you have so much and bringing little you eat but do not have enough. You drink, but you are not filled with drink, you, clothe yourselves, but no one is warm and he, who earns wages earns wages to put into a bag with holes.

And this may not have been a hurt that came from the non-productivity of the land. This may well have been A economical hurt that came from lack of contentment and lack of wisdom. In what they did with what they had. The reason we say that is, if you go a couple verses earlier, you will see the problem.

Verse 4 is it time for you yourself to dwell in your paneled houses and this temple to Lion Ruin? Now, therefore, thus is your way of his consider your ways. And then he picks that up after what we read first in verse 6 that says y'all we have hosts considered your ways go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified says y'all.

You looked for much, but indeed it came to little when you brought it home. I blew it away. Why says y'all wave hosts? Because of my house that isn't ruin. While every one of you runs to his own house, therefore, The heavens above you with old too and the earth with hold its fruit.

Tried called for a drought on the land and the mountains. On the green and new wine and the oil on, whatever the ground brings forth on men and livestock on all the labor of your hands. So it was indeed both. That he both restrained what they were able to produce but also, when they whatever they did bring home was blown away or as the proverb describes it riches, sprout, wings and fly away.

So even when they had been restored to the land, they still did not prioritize the worship of God first. This of course, is something that we still learn to do. The Lord gives us not just a type, but a command that we should each determine in our hearts. What we should give So that we made cheerfully give in a way.

That demonstrates the superiority of Christ, over the tabernacle and Temple that came before. And so we should be giving at least 10 and more than 10% of Of what we earn in order to facilitate the worship of God. The discipling of his people in the means of grace and the spread of the gospel, the proclamation of the gospel, to those who have not heard it and in places where it has not been hurt.

And after we have given whatever we and our cheerful, Spirit transformed hearts that recognize that it is the knowledge of God and the worship of God that is the priority of this entire age. And this entire world Than it is that we that we turn to other things. And enjoy and employ what God has given us in a way that recognizes.

He's the one who's giving it to us. So we don't attempt to be miserable and and penny less the seeking of personal poverty does not enjoy him as the giver, but also, as we employ it, we employ it with A generous heart, and an open hand, especially focused. First of all, on our brethren, who are united to Christ, who are the living stones, Out of which the temple is now built the spiritual house.

Spiritual temple is now built, but also doing good to all even though It is, especially to the household of faith. Well, even after they had built the temple. Nehemiah. Returns at one point. To Jerusalem and he discovers At a disastrous condition. He discovers that the temple property is being abused.

Tobia, of course is is not a Jew. And he has been a persecutor of the people of God, and now there are priests and even the high priest is in cahoots with him and allowing him to use. The temple. Not just the temple preset precinct, but even the store room that was for both the worship of god and the scoring of things for the care of the Levites.

And so there is abuse of the temple property. There was failure to take care of the needs of the priests. And there was Sabbath breaking. Which, of course fails to recognize God as the giver. Of all material things, the one who enables us to have anything and the one whom we are to enjoy in everything that we have.

And then these things all combined. But in a failure to maintain religion in the family. And the the mixture of or the alliance connection between Aaliyah sheep's house and Tobias house. Even resulted in. Failure. At. To obey God in him, he would marry Or whom his son, would marry.

And, Failure to lead his house. Spiritually. So we have the Nehemiah 13 verse 4 now before that's Aaliyah, sheep, the priest. Having authority over the store rooms of the house of our god was allied with Tobias. And he had prepared for him a large room, where previously they had stored, the grain offerings, the frankincense, the articles, the tides of grain, then you whined and oil, which were commanded to be given to the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers, the offerings for the priests.

But during all this, I was not in Jerusalem from the 32nd year of our desert, his king of Babylon, i had returned to the king. Then after certain days, I've came leave from the king and I came to Jerusalem and discovered the evil. Did Aaliyah sheep had done for Tobias in preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of god.

And it grieved me betterly. Therefore I threw all the household goods of Tobia out of the room. My commanded them to cleanse the rooms. And I brought back into them the articles of the house of god. With the grain offering. And the frankincense. And so this is a perpetual problem.

Because if the first and best of, Of God's people's material, possessions are being gathered and set aside and given for the work of worship. And for the work of the Lord, there are always those either on the one hand,

Such weak wheat as it were that they appear is tears. Yeah, there's so much remaining sin and so much backsliding. That they are not giving good demonstration of their conversion. And then also, there are always tears In the church, they're always those who are sinful and what do you get?

When you mix people, who either are converted. And, and yet the remaining sin is expressing itself or people who are not at all converted with Collecting the first and best of the material

things of a wider group of people, you get abused of the property. My, my first call was to a Very, very little Old Country Church.

Not quite as old as this one of the thing is 8 years younger than this one. But, There was a session of two and one was a converted man and one was not. And the one who is not was very wealthy. I had married into the church from the Northeast, not that everything Yankee is bad, but that's just the historical fact of his life.

And and her daddy had been an elder in the church. So he kind of married into the eldership, he became the new Elder in the church and They had a farm that they used basically to launder money. The money that came into the farm and ran through the church and came out in such a way that he saved, tens of thousands of dollars in taxes every year, and it was only when we reformed enough to the place that we Ordained.

Our first set of deacons in a long time and took over the books from him, that we discovered What had been done with the money for a couple of decades at that point? This kind of thing, maybe not that scandalously. But this kind of thing where things the, the, the earthly treasure of the people of God is being gathered.

And it is, it is to be employed for the purposes for which it was given. And it is offensive to God, to employ it for other purposes. And we've already mentioned Ananiacin's fire. This is a problem that continues in the church and requires church disciplines. Well, that was that was something that was part of the ongoing sin.

Of Israel, even after they had been restored from the exile, even after the temple had been built. We see also that they were failing to take care of those who were supposed to be leading the worship. Now, how are the Levites going to attend to facilitating the worship of god, if they have to be working full time in order to take care of their own household?

Versus 10 through 14. I also realize that the portions for the Levites Had not been given them. For each of the Levites and the singers who did the work had gone back to his field. So I contended with the rulers and said, why is the house of God? Forsaken, And I gathered them together and set them in their place, Now, one of the things that I've started to hear a lot of In the center and in Church, planting circles and so forth is Is this praise of quote, unquote, tent making ministry.

Right. Taking Paul, who intentionally traveled without a wife and children and maybe his wife had died or maybe he was a very, very odd Pharisee. Who is not married, it would be extremely unusual for him. No, not to have been married. But Paul traveled as a single man, he preached night and day.

And, At times, especially in porn. He worked with his hands and now we are told well, you know, tent making ministry is really, the is really the way to go, but if you have tent making ministry, And if you have, Married ministers, who are the husband of one wife and being fruitful and multiplying and discipling, their wife and their children in the home.

You're running out of space for them to be able to To labor in something else. For. For the earthly maintenance of their family. Indeed, when Paul talks about it, he says you should not muzzle the oxen that those whose labor isn't preaching and teaching should get their living from it.

It is not a good thing for the church to accumulate for itself, tent, making ministers. Is a good thing for the church. To have men who have studied and trained theologically So that they can

in the way that Timothy was advanced by his study in the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of God's word.

And Well, knowledge of theological things and growth in spiritual things, and in spiritual maturity, to advance, even beyond those of more years than he, in the faith, Notice you don't have something similar to the role for the widows and a minimum age of 60. Although it might protect the church from some problems.

Minimum age of 60. But it is good to have those through whom the Lord, facilitates his worship on earth, able to give themselves entirely. To the facilitating of that worship and to that ministry. But that's not where the Levites were. When Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem where were the Levites when near my return to Jerusalem?

They were out in the fields working because their wife and children have to eat. So I contended with the rulers and said, why is the house of God? Forsaken, And I gathered them together and set them in their place, Then all due to brought the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the storehouse.

And I appointed as treasures over the storehouse. Tell him. Yeah the priest is that at prescribe end of the Levites podiah and next to them was Hanan, the son of Zakur. The son of Matania For they were considered faithful. And their task was to distribute to their brethren. Remember me and my god concerning this and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my god and for its services.

Which, by the way. The doctrine of reward for good works. Needs to be recovered. Good works, do not merit anything from God. They can't, they're not good enough to begin with and they were only done by the grace of rice. We do not earn anything by our good works.

But God repeatedly in scripture, tells us that he gives rewards for good works. They're not rewards on the basis of earning. The rewards on the basis of grace, on the basis of gift. And God, who glorifies himself first In making those whom he redeems to be copies of Jesus and how they live.

Also second, Glorifies himself by being pleased to reward them often in this life. But certainly Also, in the next there are lesser and greater. In the kingdom of heaven, there are rewards that can be stored up that moth does not eat and fire. Does not destroy and thieves do not steal.

There is such a thing even as we're going to hear. And God's providence this morning and 1st Timothy 6th. There's such a thing as being rich in, good works. Not only. Laying up a foundation for the future. But, but being rich In those good works. So Nehemiah. Wishes, you know, the darkness hates the light because it's deeds are evil.

But those who are righteous, those who are who do good. They love the light, why? So that it can be seen that their deeds are done in God. Is what John John 3 says. All right, so he addresses the abuse of the temple property. He throws out Tobia. He addresses the failure to pay the priests.

He and he asks gods to remember those things. This is not to, to know, a fact. Remember it was precisely For the disregard of the worship of god, the disregard of doing the right thing, with material things, that was a significant part of why God had judged his people.

And then the Sabbath breaking. And with the But I think with this, we'll have to finish up today. In those days, I saw people in Judah, treading wine presses on the sabbath. And bringing in sheaves and loading donkeys with wine grapes and all kinds of burdens, which they brought

into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day and I warned them about the day on which they were selling provisions.

Men of tired dwelt there also who brought in fish and all kinds of goods. And sold them on the Sabbath to the children of Judah. And in Jerusalem, Then I contended with the nobles of Judah and I said to them, what evil thing is this that you do by which you profane the side of day, Did not your fathers do thus and did not our God.

Bring all this disaster on us and on this city. Yet, you bring added wrath on Israel, by profaning the Sabbath So it was at the gates of Jerusalem as it began to be dark before the sabbath that I commanded the gates to be shot and charged. They must not be open till after the Sabbath.

Then I posted some of my servants at the gates. So that no burdens would be brought in on the Sabbath day. Now, the merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares lodged outside Jerusalem once or twice. Then I warned them and said to them. Why do you spend the night around the wall if you do.

So again, I will lay hands on you. From that time on, they came no more. On the sabbath. And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves and that they should go and guard. The gates to sanctify the Sabbath day. Remember me. Oh my god. Concerning this also.

And spare me. According to the greatness. Of your mercy. This too, we don't have time right now to do it an entire exposition of how. Yeah, as Isaiah 58, this describes its in the age of the Christ, the the suffering, servant the new Israel that Sabbath keeping finally is done as a delight.

It's when you find that Christ is the one who brings you into his rest that he has earned for you. And that he brings you into by his words through which he addresses you, which was prophesied and psalm 95 Hebrews 3 and 4 hammers over and over again, the necessity of continuing with him and responding to his word with which he addresses us because he is arrest.

And he is bringing us into his rest. And when we rest from our works, in this world, we will enter his rest. And that the one of The key things. The one of the key means by which he does that is, by the sabotism on the Sabbath, keeping that remains But Hebrews 4:9.

And and one of the things that we show in that Sabbath, keeping that remains when we set everything else aside and just have the worship of God on his day which is now known as the Lord's day. The special day of Jesus. And one of the things that we show is that we trust that it's the Lord who gives us our daily bread through the work of the other six days.

If we are constantly finding oxen and ditches. Which, by the way, has more to do with mercy, to the ox than it does, with making sure that your business does better. I have to do this, so my business does better is not an ox in a ditch. It is an excuse.

In the flesh. But if we're constantly finding reasons that we have to do this or or it's not going to go well for us economically, we're demonstrating that we don't trust the Lord Jesus to take care of us through 6 days a week of work. Like he gave us and that it's not the Lord Jesus.

At home, at his praise. We are aiming and who's worship. We aim to enjoy.

Nothing will do. Versus 23-30 here. But one of the reasons the Levites really needed. To be taken care of was said that they would be able to set an example to the rest of Israel. In how

they lived, how they disciplined their families, Israel were intermarrying. With the pagans and the land and the Levites.

Instead of being an example of the opposite, we're leading the way, the high priest's family. Was was involved in this and part of the part of the reason was that that the Levites were engaged in employed in, in worldly things.

I think we just got to stop there. Next week. Lord's willing. Lord willing will finish up. And Zachariah and pick up the abuse of the poor in chapter 5 and the end of the, of the Old Testament and Malkai 3. That's not the last chapter in Malcott, but Our Father in heaven.

How we thank you and praise you that you have saved us. From our sin from. What we became in our first father, Adam, we have demonstrated ourselves to be in the nature. That we fell into. With him. We thank you that you have given us Christ, not only to be the righteousness who has counted for us.

But even as you have been making us to hear. And in the midweek that you have also given us a new nature from him. That we might become more and more like him. Until we will have been made. Righteous will have been conformed as image. We pray lords that you would be glorified by the increase of that work of conforming us to his image even And how we approach our daily work, even in what we do with the good things that you provide for us, by means of that work, and especially by prioritizing your worship in all of our life.

Grant then the work of your spirit to bless to us. But we have heard from your word. For we ask it in Jesus name, Amen.