

Series: The Book of Ephesians

Scripture: Ephesians 2:10

Sermon: Identity #4 “The Masterpiece of God”

“His workmanship are we, having been created *by God* in Christ Jesus unto good works which God prepared beforehand so that we might walk in them”

I. Check the word order

1. “His” comes at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis!

(a) It points to divine origin or possession

(b) Eph 2:8 By grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

(c) Eph 2:9 it is not from works, so that no one can boast

2. The emphasis is on God

(a) God is the one who brought about our status change

(b) A masterpiece cannot be of its own making

II. “Having been created,” or “created,” or “has been created”

1. The verb is in passive voice!—a divine passive!

2. It should be read as “having been created by God”

III. The word “create” means “to create something into existence”

IV. “In Christ”—the (new) creation has happened within Jesus’ birth, death, burial, and resurrection (cf. verses 5-6)

1. Made alive together with Christ

2. Raised with Christ

3. Be seated along with Christ

4. The expression “masterpiece” or “workmanship” comes from the Greek word *poiema*

V. In Greek literature and the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the word *poiema* and its related words refer to God’s creative activity

1. Gen 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”

2. Gen 1:27 God created the man as male and female (cf. Matt 19:4)

3. Isa 43:1 Now, this is what the LORD says, the one who created you, O Jacob

VI. God is known partially through His creation

1. Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork
2. Psalm 143:5-6 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands. I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land
3. Rom 1:20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God

VII. The Scripture makes a huge claim “we are a masterpiece of God”

1. An individual does not become a masterpiece of his own (explain)
2. The masterpiece of someone else—there is an emphasis with “His”

VIII. What makes this “masterpiece” special/unique?—it’s a “masterpiece” out of “a complete mess”

1. Mess

- (a) Dead in transgressions and sins (verse 1, 5)
- (b) Association with God’s enemy (verse 2)
- (c) Indulging the flesh (verse 3)
- (d) Deserving God’s condemnation—nothing good in us!

2. Transformation of the mess

- (a) Grace, salvation, gift (verse 5, 8)
- (b) Making alive (the mess) with Christ (verse 5)
- (c) Raising (the mess) with Jesus
- (d) Lifting (the mess) to the right hand of God (verse 6)
- (e) No boasting because it is not a human effort (verse 9)

3. The new destiny for “the mess turned masterpiece”—^{2:7} to demonstrate in the coming ages the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus

IX. The purpose of God’s masterpiece is “good works” (verse 10)

1. When God regenerated sinners, he implanted in the Church and believers the ability to do good
2. Because the recreation happened in the realm of Jesus, the Church and believers are purposed to do works which they were unable to do prior to their regeneration
3. What makes a work “good work”?
 - (a) Anything that pleases God,
 - (b) Anything that has God’s approval
 - (c) Anything that are beneficial to others

4. From this verse we understand that good works are God's will for the believer
5. "Good works" are the fruit, never the root, of salvation (Edmond Hiebert)

X. The origin of the "good works" is God Himself in Jesus Christ

XI. Look at the expression "to prepare beforehand"

1. Every believer is assigned with divinely prepared good works—"That we might walk in them"
2. These good works are the fruit of God's regeneration
3. Their fruit points to the nature of their status change

XII. Principles

1. God's *poiema*/masterpiece is your new identity and call/mission
2. You are part of God creative activity
3. Your past or upbringing do not determine what you are and what you need to do
4. By virtue of you being part of the *poiema*, you are called to live in "good works" that God has assigned to you
5. Just as God is partially known through His creation, God may be known a lot better through this local church, the *poiema*

XIII. TAKE AWAY

Live your life based on your new identity and be a pointer to the Divine Poet