

**The 1689 Confession of Faith, Chapter 4 – “Of Creation”, Session # 10 –
“Adam’s Headship and Dominion”, presented by Pastor Paul Rendall
On January 6th, 2019, in the Adult Sunday School.**

Paragraph 1 – “In the beginning it pleased God the Father, a) Son, and Holy Spirit, for the manifestation of the glory of b) his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, to create or make the world, and all things therein, c) whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.”

a) John 1: 2-3; Hebrews 1: 2; Job 26: 13; b) Romans 1: 20; c) Colossians 1: 16; Genesis 1: 31

Paragraph 2 – After God had made all other creatures, he created d)man, male and female, with e)reasonable and immortal souls, rendering them fit unto that life to God for which they were created; being f)made after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; having the law of God g)written in their hearts, and power to fulfil it, and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was h)subject to change.

d) Genesis 1: 27; e) Gen 2:7; f) Ecclesiastes 7: 29; Genesis 1: 26; g) Romans 2: 14-15; h) Genesis 3:6

Paragraph 3 – Besides the law written in their hearts, they received i) a command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which whilst they kept, they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion k)over the creatures.

i) Genesis 2: 17; k) Genesis 1: 26-28

Genesis 1: 26-28 – “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air; and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

Genesis 2: 18-24 – “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.’ “Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them.” “And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.” “So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field.” “But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.” “And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.” “Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and brought her to the man.” “And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

1. A Definition of Dominion

Very simply, being given dominion meant Adam’s being given the right to rule; to rule over all creation, and to righteously and lovingly rule over his wife, and his family, his children when they would be born and raised in his household. I want to speak to you this morning about Adam, the first man, having been given dominion over all the creatures by God. We want to take a closer look at this Commission, this Mandate, that was given to Adam, and think about it in the context that it was given; that is, when Adam was walking in his original righteousness, happy and holy before the Fall, and even before the creation of woman. This study is therefore important to us, in the day in which we live, when people are asserting things that are not true concerning the roles of men and women, the responsibilities of men and women, and not understanding really the difference between Man and the animals; not really being able to discern correctly why Man is superior to animals, what his greatest purpose is, which is the glorify God and enjoy Him forever, and the fact that he has been created to live eternally; having been created in the image and likeness of God.

a. What does dominion over the creatures mean? To be given dominion means that Adam and Eve and all of their descendants would have the right to righteously rule over the creatures. This authority to rule was delegated to man by God. This would glorify God for man to rule in this way. We need to see that God created Adam as the Federal Head of all of our Race of mankind. He was the one who this dominion was given to, but because he was the representative head, this dominion comes down to all men through him. And so, he would be given dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and every living thing which moves on the earth.

Psalm 8: 1-9 – “O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens!” “Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.” “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?” “For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.” “You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen – Even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas.” “O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

I want you to grasp the truth this morning, that Adam and Eve were given this dominion, in the Beginning of the world, before they fell from their original righteousness. They had dominion over all the works of God’s hands. Every created thing was placed under his rule – All sheep and oxen and every beast of the field and bird of the air, and fish of the sea, they were there for his use and service; to help meet all of his needs, and to help establish all of his ends of his labor in the garden and in his home.

Edward Reynolds in Vol. 6 of his works, Page 271 says – “This dominion of man over the creatures, shows itself in several things: in the admirable skill that man has to use the creature unto rational and artificial ends, which no other creatures can do: as the fire is an instrument to the smith, the founder to the chemist, to every artificer: the wind and water ordered to grind corn, to carry up and down vessels: stones and timber, to make goodly frames of a building.” “There is not the meanest of creatures, whereof the reason of man hath not found out some needful use, tending either unto life, or health, or pleasure, or ease, or facility of operation, or some-one or other end for the service of man.” *The Dominion given to man is seen* in the fear that even now God has placed in many great and strong creatures towards man, so that one child is able to drive a whole herd of them before him; and to make use even of vipers and poisonous creatures unto wholesome ends.” “In the power which he has to instruct docile creatures, as the elephant, the dog, the horse, the bird, to obey the dictates, and to imitate the expressions of human reason.” *It is seen* in the strange instinct that God hath put into some hurtful creatures to fear man, as the serpent; into others, to come abroad at such times only when man stays in; and when the sun arises for man to go forth unto his work, then they lie down in their dens.”

b. The Dominion of Adam over Eve as being her Husband and head, in the sense of holy, loving, and thoughtful Leadership.

Since Eve, the first woman, was created out of Adam the man, and for Adam the man, and because this was God’s purpose in her creation, He ordained that Adam would rule over her in a righteous and loving way because He was created as the head of the woman. Together they would have dominion over the creatures. That was a very extensive dominion. Well, we can see from verse 28, that Adam’s having dominion first of all would mean that Adam would be fruitful with his wife sexually and they would multiply; that is, they would have children, and then through the generations his descendants, over many thousands of years, would eventually fill the earth, and subdue it according to the will and purpose of God.

I want to build off of what I said to last Sunday on this subject. I want you to notice that when Adam received this Commission, this Mandate, of receiving the right to rule over the creatures, that he was still a single man; there was not a helper found among all of the creatures that God had created who was

comparable to him. And so, God being the wise God that He is, He created the first woman and brought her to Adam.

We have seen in our past study that God created man male and female and I spoke to you about how it was not good that man should be alone; that God would make a helper suitable, or compatible with him. We thought about how God made a Helper for Adam who would be his closest companion and best friend. I said to you Man is a being who was not created by God to think of himself as having everything that he needs within himself. He needs help in many ways, and he needs the right kind of help. He doesn't simply need the help of other men. But he needs the help of a particular woman in the bonds of marriage to complete him in regard to the way that he thinks and feels and lives. He needs close, steady, continuing companionship and he needs one to meet his intellectual, emotional, and physical needs as his best friend and female counterpart. He needs someone to complete him in a complimentary way; to bring balance to his perspective on many issues, because he may not see all the different sides or implications of an issue. And therefore he needs someone who will be intimately close to him, in regard to his thoughts, his plans, his actions, and especially to be his helper in regard to his children. In her original design apart from sin, God created her to be comparable and compatible to Adam, and someone who would bring good thoughts and ideas to his attention; things that he may not have thought of, and she bringing these things to him in a thoughtful, loving, and submissive way.

2. The Headship and Dominion of Adam before and after the Fall.

a. Before the Fall - I want us to think of dominion in terms of Adam's right to rule in his marriage and his home and family; this was designed and intended by God to be a righteous and holy and loving authority exercised over Eve so that she, being made for him, the man, would be her highest desire to lovingly interact with him and submit to him.

1st Corinthians 11: 3 – “But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.” And in verse 7 he says, “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.” “For man is not from woman, but woman from man.” “Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.”

I want you to see Adam's Headship as representing what all men are, what they are supposed to be like, in relation to their wife, in a general natural sense of governing and leading, began right here in the garden. Adam before the Fall was able to love Eve and exercise his headship over her in a righteous, loving, and thoughtful God-glorifying way. This was because he had within him the natural law of a righteous nature. You can see here from the verses in 1st Corinthians 11, that the man is first in order in being. He was first formed and the woman then formed out of him. She was made for him, and not he for her, and therefore he must be the head of their marital relationship. This is true; that the man is responsible to be the leader of their family and she to follow that lead unless he is leading her into some sinful way. But even though this is so, the man is to see his wife not as one who he needs to lord over or rule over her in some harsh or tyrannical fashion, but that he always share with his aspirations and plans and then talk these matters over with her and convince her of the wisdom of his decisions on their behalf as a couple whom God has made one flesh.

b. The Fall did affect both Adam's ability to exercise dominion over the creatures and his wife, and it affected Eve's ability to submit to his leadership.

1st Timothy 3: 4 - An elder must be one who – “Rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)”

Genesis 3: 16 – “To the woman God said : ‘I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.’”

Genesis 3: 17 – “Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it: ‘Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.’ “Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.” “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground.”

c. So, Man’s Dominion over the creatures was affected by the Fall, but it was not lost.

Genesis 9: 1 – “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.” “And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea.” “They are given into your hand.” “Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you.” “I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.” “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.” “Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man.” “From the hand of every man’s brother I will require the life of man” “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.” “And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply in it.”

This was the reinstatement of the dominion given to Adam, the right to rule, that was at this time after the flood, given to Noah. It includes everything in the first Commission, and adds something very important; Capital Punishment for those who take the life of another person created in the image and likeness of God. And here we see the institution of human government and the beginning of nations which comes into being here as a part of man’s having dominion. We will speak more of this later. But we need to understand that when Adam fell, and every aspect of his being was marred by sin, that the only way that he and Eve could be restored to God’s favor and the image of God in them restored and be made perfect, would only come through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 8.

d. The Fall affected Adam’s believing descendants in terms of men in the church having to teach and enforce the truths about headship and submission in the church.

The elders must instruct the congregation concerning the command that women should be silent in the church and submissive in regard to not teaching and exercising authority in the church.

1st Timothy 2: 11 – “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission.” “And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. (He is talking about the woman’s silence in the public worship services of the church; not becoming a teacher, or exercising rule in the church over men.) Why is she to learn in silence with all submission? “For Adam was formed first, then Eve.” “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” “Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.”

I want you to notice that the first reason for woman’s silence in worship is because God created her for Adam’s sake. He created Adam as her head, and therefore the man should teach and lead in their relationship when it comes to spiritual things. And then, because of Eve’s deception in the Fall, she should be silent in the corporate worship. As it says in 1st Corinthians 14: 35 – “And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.” Again, the reason for silence is God’s having Adam and all married men since, the head of their household and therefore also in the public worship of the church.

e. Christ, the 2nd Adam, has fulfilled God’s holy law, purchased redemption for all of God’s elect people, and thus He shall have dominion, and rule the nations.

Psalm 72:8 – “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.”
Also – Hebrews 2: 6-9

