



Sunday, February 20, 2011: The Covenant and the University

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:4-7; Matthew 28:16-20; Hebrews 11:13-16

Speaker: Scott Masson

Sermon Notes:

1. Abandonment of the word of God has led to a crisis of truth-telling in our culture, which in turn has led to financial breakdown, marriage breakdown, heresy in the church, perjury in the courts, doctrinal multiculturalism, and a crisis of political trust.
2. Education is fundamental to the life of the church given that God reveals Himself through His written Word.
3. The blessings of learning and sharing the knowledge of our God through education applies not only to parents, but to the whole covenant community.
4. The commands to keep covenant in Deuteronomy 4 are the condition for blessing in the cities Israel would possess.
5. The city will flourish with the broad teaching and application of the word of God to all areas of life.
6. This is done not only by teaching but also by exemplifying Godly character, enacting fair business practices, etc.
7. To say that every culture is equivalent is to deny that there is truth and falsehood.
8. The city is a place of particular shaping influence nationally and internationally, as the kingdom of God is lived out.
9. Proverbs 11:11 states that by the blessing of the upright a city is exalted.
10. God's plan for His kingdom especially involves the engagement of Christians in the life of the city.
11. The retreat from this vision is seen in Toronto's empty churches.
12. The Bible begins in the garden of Eden and it ends in a garden city in Revelation 21-22.
13. Like Babylon (Babel of old), which symbolized everything opposed to God's rule, the university of our day has as its goal to "make a name for ourselves and to reach up to heaven."

14. We are to take the cultural capital of the city for the glory of our God, just as Israel plundered the Egyptians, redeeming the gold to make a place of worship to the true God.
15. The city in Revelation 21-22 is for the healing of the nations, and it has no walls because all opposing cities have been vanquished.
16. Some would arrogantly claim that all good since the 11th century comes from the influence of the university.
17. The university offers something valuable in the provision of the liberal arts curriculum which unifies all knowledge under God.
18. The collapse of western Christendom in the dark ages was due to loss of the biblical legal and educational tradition.
19. The Justinian code was rediscovered and taught by the western universities, bringing Roman and biblical law into prominence.
20. The character of Christian education is not putting the Bible alongside education. It is rather imparting a thorough biblical worldview into all areas of learning.
21. In the modern university, Christianity is not only disestablished but it is banished.
22. The call upon us is to seek the welfare of the city.
23. As universities separated from their Christian confessional origins, they were without any basis for claiming to teach *truth*.
24. The university no longer provides what it claims to provide – a good liberal arts education and superior cultural leadership.
25. Science is not the source of ultimate knowledge as secularists have claimed.
26. John Milton rightly observed that the aim of true education is to recover the ruin wrought by our first parents in the Fall.
27. Let us live in our city for its blessing as designed by God.

Application Questions

1. What is the importance of cities in the biblical view of civilization and the life of the covenant people?
2. How does Jeremiah 29:4-7 guide our engagement of the city we're called to?
3. Why is it that evangelical culture thrives in cottage country, and not in places of influence and cultural formation?
4. Why is the development of Christian schools strategically important to engaging the city?
5. What is the distinctive character of Christian education?
6. How am I seeking the welfare of the city? Have I been called to live in the city? To Toronto?
7. What should be our kingdom vision according to Habakkuk 2:14?