

what is imagined in the mind.”

- At that time, the word was used by sculptors and artists in Greece.
{Illustration}
- There was a Jewish painter, Marc Chagall, who left many famous paintings. He was known as the “painter of love” and was devoted to his wife, Vera. He produced many paintings on the theme of his love for Vera and his marriage. Therefore, he was called “the painter of love.”
- I am an amateur painter, but I can tell you which paintings were made by Chagall because in his paintings, Chagall himself appears.
- The same is true of Pablo Picasso’s paintings. I feel that many of Picasso’s paintings are outlandish. When you look at his paintings, you can tell that they are Picasso’s paintings. It is because Picasso appears in them.

(2) My friends, listen closely, a work of art shows its author. In other words, in my work, God, the author, appears. That is what we call *poiema* here, “God’s work.”

- God created each of us as a different being (person). It doesn’t mean that we all change into the same face because we became Christians. But when we become Christians, we are fortunate enough to know that we are Christians. That is because we have a Christian face.
- The face of a Christian is not about how high your eyes are, or how high your nose is, or what your eyes look like. It is not. Whether a painter paints a picture, or a sculptor makes a sculpture, the artist himself is represented in it, just as the Christian is the manifestation of God in him.
- This is a wonderful thing when you think about it. I, who am a worthless piece of material, became God’s work of art by His hand.

- My friends, I will say it again. When God makes us, what appears? It is God/Jesus, who appears. The Bible says this:

2 Corinthians 3:18 we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- This is truly a life of grace. We do not become good works of art by our own efforts. God has made an image in my heart of the work (*poiema*)

that is me. The work of art expresses the creator himself.
How are God's works created?

2. Works That God Blesses

2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- God's works have some fortunate characteristics. There are two points.

(1) Regardless of the material.

- God created us in Christ Jesus to do good works. But are we capable of doing good works? No, we are not the kind of people who can do good deeds.

- So, what are those "good works"? The word used here is "good" which is *agathos* in Greek. It is not *agathos* (good) on a human level. It means good, precious, very worthy, on the level of God who created the world.

- *Agathos* is a level that no amount of human effort can attain. The depths of it are hidden in the hand of God who makes the works.

- How, then, is God supposed to make his people do good works?

⇒ God makes his works in Christ.

- God Himself took the form of Jesus, became a man, and came into the world of man. What happened to Jesus is what happened to me. Yes, it did! When Jesus died on the cross I died to sin too. When Jesus rose from the dead in the body of sin is that I rose from the dead. Eventually, it becomes tangible. In time, it becomes tangible: as the work of God.

- The fact that Jesus went back to heaven one step ahead of me and sat at the right hand of God the Father indicates that in time I, too, will be with the Lord in the grace of the divine. That is an event that will take place and be completed.

- Therefore, in Christ's faith, there is no need to be afraid to say, "Don't do this, don't do that, etc. Jesus' work of cleansing is complete. If there is any failure, we can have it cleared up before God. What a blessing!

- The Bible says this:

Hebrews ***** And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- God knows our failures, our weaknesses, and our shortcomings. God knows these things, yet He chose us and saved us. ⇒ The saved are made “holy”. Thank you!
- By the way, artists make a “**prototype**” before making a large statue. which is small but very elaborate.
- {Illustration} There is a profession called a **prototype maker**.
- In Japan, if you go to restaurant, you can see samples of sushi, curry rice, pork cutlet, etc. are displayed in restaurant cases. They look as good as the real thing. The manufacturing process of mannequin dolls is extremely complicated and is said to be divided into several steps.
- The process of mannequin production begins with the creation of a one-sixth the size of the full-size model. A soft aluminum rod is used to make the skeleton, and oil-soaked clay is used to add flesh to the skeleton.
- The sculptor objectively expresses and molds what is imagined in the mind (*poiema*). In the same way, God makes me, in Christ, a work of art.
- As we have learned, it is not through our human efforts, good deeds, etc. that I am created. No, God makes us in Christ.

(2) God's Creations Have Profound Meaning (Or Secrets)

- The creation (works) that God makes have hidden depths.
- God's wisdom is broad, deep, great, and immeasurable. What kind of depths are they? What is it? God's esoteric knowledge has many facets, one of them is faith.
- What happens when faith works in God's creation? We will walk in. “agathos.” (good deeds)
 - ⇒ The condition is “in Christ”.
- If the condition is “in Christ” , then what did Jesus say about faith? Jesus said, “ He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say

to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20

• The impossible becomes possible. Faith (trust) is a growing thing. There are infinite blessings in God's work.

⇒ That is the Christian who is God's handiwork.

{Remember the disciples of Jesus.}

• They were all weak. Peter took a courageous step. On the lake He saw the Lord on the water and cried out, "Lord!" But when he saw the big waves, he began to sink. He made a big mistake.

• Thomas was skeptical about the resurrection of Jesus. Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus. They were not willing to accept that Christ's redemptive work.

• After the work of Christ's redemption was complete and after the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were made wonderful handiworks of God (*poiema*).

• And so are we. Thank God!

Conclusion

Subject: "You are God's Workmanship"

-His Best Work of Art-

• We are God's workmanship. How are God's works created?

1. They are created to do good works.

God "prepares in advance his good works." God is a God of provision.

2. God's works are created "in Christ" .

• God wants to make you His best work. What do you think? Are you not the work that God wants to bless? The work that God blesses will be made in Christ.

• It is to bear witness to God through you. What a blessing!