

and commotions in the world, such as have occurred during much of our present age. What are we to do in this situation? Verse 20 gives the answer: "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feat of the ox and the ass." Whatever may be the condition of the world in any particular era, it is our primary duty to win souls to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to "sow beside all waters."

The command in Acts 1 was to witness to Christ. In Isaiah 32 we are told to "sow beside all waters." Neither of these passages implies that we can expect complete victory in this age.

In recent years there have been some who have said that our task is not to witness to Christ, but rather to Christianize every aspect of life. Some have gone so far as to say that our primary duty is to develop all the potentialities of the culture of this world. Those who take this view lay great stress on Genesis 1:28, which they call "the cultural mandate." They say that this is a command given to Adam and therefore to all mankind to subdue the earth completely. It has even been said that it, being God's first command to humanity, takes precedence over the later command to witness to Christ.

Such an interpretation of Gen. 1:28 is a rather new idea. It seems never to have occurred to the great Bible commentators to interpret the verse in this way. Looking at the treatment of this verse in Calvin's Commentary, which is certainly one of the greatest commentaries written at the time of the Reformation, and also at two of the latest Dutch commentaries by outstanding Christian scholars, I find in none of them any suggestion that this is a command addressed to present-day Christians, or even that it has anything to do with culture.