**Lessons From GENESIS**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Introduction**

**Often people turn to the first chapters of Genesis and begin to read but then jump ahead to the “unfamiliar stuff”. What do I mean?**

**Those first 11 chapters have so many “stories” like Adam and Eve, then the genealogies…(which no one likes to read)... then Noah’s Ark ... and then the tower of Babel…all “familiar stories,” especially if you have grown up going to Sunday School. People seem so familiar with these “stories” that they make the decision… (if they keep reading, since some are lost at the genealogies)… to simply skip ahead to the next narrative section starting with chapter 12. Our problem today is that we are so “into” newer and better that we forget all too often to go back to the basics…those things that ARE familiar, sound, and true. It is the reason that the Reformers used to say that we need to have the gospel preached to us daily.**

**I have made the case for years that the first 11 chapters are crucial for us to understand the rest of Scripture and sometimes we must go back to the familiar to see things we never knew, missed or have even forgotten which will strengthen our faith in ways we can’t imagine. We need a “grander” vision of God then we usually carry with us and these chapters do that for us, for they set the stage for God’s activity in the rest of the book of Genesis and the entirety of Scripture.**

**Have you ever told someone, “I must have missed the first part of your story, I don’t understand”? Without a context most stories lose meaning. So it is with the story of humanity. Ignorance of our beginning breeds confusion and purposelessness. Even the drama of salvation by grace makes sense only in light of history’s opening act.**

**In this study we will be going through the entirety of the book of Genesis, for this book of the Bible, like no other can and will open our eyes to the God of history, in all His love, justice and creativity, putting the world together and dealing graciously with every facet of His creation. This book also opens our eyes to look at man, made in God’s own image, valuable, capable of making right and wrong moral choices…the amazing abilities given by God along with the tremendous evil perpetrated by men on one another. And finally, this book opens our eyes to look at ourselves enabling us to discover where we fit in relation to God, to our fellow man and to the world in general. Hopefully, in this study you will come to see the God of history caring about His world, His people and you and maybe, just maybe, you will come away and never be disinterested or discouraged by the “familiar stories” found in its pages again.**

**Augustine explained in the paragraphs following his claim that the Scriptures are all about Christ in his defense against Faustus. Adam was a type of Christ. Abel died in the field; Christ died on Calvary. Noah’s story foretells Christ. Isaac carried the wood for his sacrifice; Christ did the same.**

**Some of my source material: Bonar on Genesis; The Bible Commentary-1872 version; Schaeffer’s work on Genesis (which was never completed…really just the highlights), From Creation to Consummation Vols. I-III by Dr. Gerald Van Groningen, Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4-In Light of the Changing Scientific Paradigms, by Douglas Kelly and years of study on my own after being convinced about how important this book is by the guys at the Institute for Creation Research...a long time ago in a galaxy far far away!**

**The outline of studies will progress this way with the most emphasis placed on the first 11 chapters.**

1. **Gen. 1:1-2- “In the Beginning…”**
2. **Gen. 1:3-2:3- “Creation Explained”**
3. **Gen. 1:26-31 and 2:4-25- “In the Image of God”**
4. **Gen. 3- “Paradise Lost”**
5. **Gen. 4- “Sin’s Consequences”**
6. **Gen. 5- 6:8- “Genealogies: Our Family History”**
7. **Gen. 6:9-8:14- “The Flood”**
8. **Gen. 8:15- 9:29- “Covenant with Noah”**
9. **Gen. 10-11- “Babel”**
10. **Gen. 12-14- “The Call of Abraham”**
11. **Gen. 15-20- “The Covenant of Grace”**
12. **Gen. 21-27- “Isaac- The Long Awaited Son”**
13. **Gen. 28-36- “How do you solve a problem like Jacob?”**
14. **Gen. 37-50- “Joseph in and over Egypt”**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**August 18, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Introduction**
3. **When you hear the word “creation,” what comes to mind?**
4. **For many Christians, the notion of creation is bound up in concerns about the age of the Earth or the important battles between The God of the Bible and His story, intelligent design and naturalistic evolution.**
5. **In these instances, considerations of creation are primarily focused on *how* the world was made.**
6. **Genesis= *“Bereshith= In the beginning”***
7. **Moses is the author/narrator/ writer for God. Some want to make the case that Genesis is anonymous and somehow that matters.**
8. **Truth is, Genesis is formally anonymous.**
9. **However, the authorship of Genesis is inseparable from the authorship of the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is a literary unit.**
10. **So it would be artificial to consider the authorship of Genesis in isolation to the authorship of the Pentateuch as a whole since other Pentateuchal books indicate Mosaic authorship. That, in turn, reflects back on Genesis.**
11. **Moses’ knowledge of these events was the result of direct revelation from God the Holy Spirit as we are told in the New Testament.**
* **II Tim. 3:16-17- *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God2 may be complete, equipped for every good work.”***
* **II Peter 1:20-21- *“…knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God las they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”***
1. **Moses wrote Genesis in the early to mid-2nd millennium BC.**
2. **Interpreting the book doesn't depend on which date we choose for the Exodus, especially since all events in Genesis considerably predate the time of composition.**
3. **Moses wrote Genesis to the emancipated Jewish slaves in the Sinai desert so they could know the truth of their God who had just delivered them miraculously from Egypt.**
4. **It filled in the backstory of their history as a people-group.**
5. **It clarified the identity of the one true God.**
6. **The God who delivered them from Egypt was the same God who made the world, saved Noah, and guided the patriarchs.**
7. **The God who delivered them from Egypt isn't a local God or tribal God. He is not one god among many. Rather, He is the Creator of the world. All other concrete entities are creatures...or in the case of man, a *“being”* created in His image…unique among His creation.**
8. **After completion of the text Moses would have deposited it in the Ark of the Covenant.**
9. **Today, many more liberal commentators want to use comparative ancient Near Eastern literature to interpret Genesis.**
10. **To some extent this can be useful, but it's easily overused.**
11. **The first task of a commentator is to interpret the text before him, not compare it to another text and then use the other text as the frame of reference. The Bible must always be the “source text” for it is unlike any other…for it is God’s Word!**
12. **Even if we assume that the narrator is interacting with common ancient Near Eastern conceptions, the question at issue is what that means to the Moses, and not what it might have meant to the authors and editors of comparative literature.**
13. **We must interpret Genesis on its own terms, according to the Moses’ own vision and inspiration from God.**
14. **In addition, using comparative literature to interpret Genesis assumes we know how to interpret the comparative literature. So the exercise can quickly devolve into vicious circularity.**
15. **This desire to compare and contrast as if the sources are equal are normal since we perceive God’s revelation through a glass darkly…our perception is obscured by our sin and our limited capabilities to grasp the things of God.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**August 25, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What’s the big deal about what as a Christian you believe about creation?**
4. **As important as the HOW of creation questions is, as Christians, there is a better question to consider, especially in a culture like ours. What are the implications from both of these: *that* God created the world and *why* God created the world?**
5. **Another way to think about it is that Christians need to be clear on what creation is *for* and what *our* place is in it.**
6. **It’s tempting for some to see the biblical story of creation as God’s Plan A, something discarded on account of our sin.**
7. **In this view, Christ’s work to redeem the world and the work of the Church is just the backup plan.**
8. **In this view, the Christian life is often reduced to personal salvation, and the world around us to a kind of ticking time bomb waiting to be destroyed. This, however, is not consistent with the deep hope that the Gospel offers.**
9. **To get a better picture of God’s eternal purpose for His people, we must go back to the beginning, back to creation—**
10. **Not just how He created the world but that He created the world and why.**
11. **Have you ever walked into a conversation and then said to them, *“I must have missed the first part of your story, I don’t understand”?***
* **Without a context most stories lose meaning. So it is with the story of humanity.**
* **Ignorance of our beginning breeds confusion and purposelessness.**
* **Even the drama of salvation by grace makes sense only in light of history’s opening act.**
1. **From Genesis to Revelation, God’s goals for creation have been the same:**
2. **That His world and especially His image bearers would be in unbroken fellowship with Him.**
3. **Another way to say it is what was true about God’s plans for His creation in the beginning remains true today for His elect.**
4. **The redemption of His own through Christ isn’t a new idea. It’s simply the fulfillment of God’s original plan. Gen. 3:15- *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”***
5. **Which was already in place …it wasn’t thought up on the spot according to the rest of Scripture.**
6. **This plan had been put in place before the foundations of the world…agreed upon in the Godhead and executed in time and space as the Covenant of Grace.**
7. **God’s redeeming work does not scrap creation but remakes it and renews it.**
8. **God’s Covenant of Grace is the foundation and the cornerstone in this.**
9. **Remember, there is a bigger picture here as well and that is, that it is not only God’s people who are longing for Christ’s return, but it’s creation itself.**
* **Romans 8:19-23- *“For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”***
1. **In Christ, Christians are called to participate in God’s renewal of His creation as His representatives.**
2. **The biblical story certainly includes our personal salvation in Jesus Christ. And if that’s all there was to it that would be fantastic.**
3. **But the better news is there’s even more to the story. In addition to what we are saved *from*, there is also what we are saved *for*…Communion with God , fellow believers and His world.**
4. **We have talked generally so let’s look at this more specifically. The Gospel Is Grounded in Genesis.**
5. **Genesis is foundational to all of our major Christian doctrines, and that includes the Gospel! Christianity is based in history, and that history is recorded for us beginning in Genesis 1–11.**
6. **Yes, Genesis really is foundational, as every single major Christian doctrine is either grounded directly or indirectly in the history in Genesis. Here are just a few:**
7. **The Doctrine of God. It begins here at the beginning.**
* **Not that He had a beginning but the doctrine of God…and all His attributes are evident in the first 3 chapters of Genesis.**
* **By His mere commands: as appears in Genesis 1, *"Let there be light… let there be heavens,"* argues His omnipotence, His aseity (of and from Himself in need of nothing or no one), His immutability, His omnipresence, His Omniscience, His Sovereignty…just to name a few.**
1. **Death and suffering. Why does death and suffering exist if there’s a good God? Genesis teaches that God created a *“very good”* creation (Genesis 1:31) and that death became part of this world after Adam sinned against God. Death isn’t God’s fault—its God justice that He decreed if His command was rejected… as it was (Genesis 3)!**
2. **The Gospel!Why did Jesus need to come and die? (Gen. 2: 15-17, 3:15)**
* **Because death is the penalty for sin.**
* **God DOESN’T enter into this story for He is THE STORY!**
* **BUT God…(the Gospel)… promised something better for His own.**
* **Oh, we will all surely die, unless the LORD returns first…**
* **But life eternal is simply being *“gathered to our fathers”* in the community of God’s elect so we can worship Him forever.**
* **The gospel is first proclaimed in Genesis 3:15. The gospel is grounded in a literal Genesis and a literal Adam and Eve!**
* **Think about this a minute—if death is not really the penalty for sin, if death had existed for millions of years and Adam and Eve were going to die anyway, then what does it mean that Adam and Eve would die because of sin?**
* **Just consider what God says through Paul:**
* ***“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.”* (Romans 5:12)…**
* ***“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”* (1 Corinthians 15:22)**
1. **Depravity.**
* **Gen. 3 begins with the fall which caused the separation from God, from one another and from creation.**
* **Then we see the extent of it with Cain and Abel (Gen. 4)…Cain’s murder of his brother over a whole assortment of sinful actions and attitudes,**
* **And then all the way through to the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11).**
* **When the people were commanded to spread throughout the earth they opted to build a city.**
* **Rejecting God and in their pride they decided to build a tower to show off their own perceived greatness…and we are still doing this today.**
* **The story of sin, judgment and restoration goes on throughout the Bible culminating in Christ, but we see it first in Genesis 3.**
1. **Mercy and Grace. We see it from the beginning really but this is evidenced when Adam and Eve are restored even though the consequence of their sin would be death and expulsion from the Garden, Eve receiving her name and children (Gen. 4) symbolize God’s mercy and grace to them.**
2. **Unconditional Election.**
* **There is the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent (Gen. 3:15) set apart by God.**
* **We see Abel and then Seth as representing the children of Eve and Cain and his descendants and offspring of the serpent. Gen. 4**
* **We see Abram being called and the rest of Ur left in darkness. Gen. 11**
1. **Substitionary Atonement. Sacrificing the animals…shedding their blood… and then making skin for Adam and Eve after they sinned begins the process (Gen. 3).**
* **An obvious inference is to the sacrifices that were expected in chapter 4.**
* **Also, a type…the clothing by the skins of sacrificed animals points to the clothing of us by Jesus’ righteousness when He went to the cross and sacrificed Himself then resurrecting gaining victory over death. I Cor. 15: 55-58**
1. **God with Us. The Immanuel principle is from the beginning where Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden but also after the Fall when God came to Adam and Eve.**
2. **Perseverance. God chose a people…His elect…before the foundations of the earth (Eph. 1) and this theme has carried through and will continue until the end when those who are His will be with Him forever and those who aren’t His will be cast into the lake of fire forever.**
3. **Marriage. What is marriage? Well… we don’t get to define marriage—God has done that, because He created it! He created marriage when He created one man and one woman and brought them together as *“one flesh”* (Genesis 1:27, 2:24).**
4. **Gender. Gender is not on a spectrum as our culture likes to claim. God defines gender and sexuality, and He has said that He created us male and female from the beginning (Genesis 1:27). There are only two sexes of humans!**
5. **Sanctity of human life. Human life is sacred, worth far more than any animal, plant, or anything else. And the reason for that is because we’re made uniquely in the image of God (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 9). We aren’t just animals (in fact, we are *“beings”* Gen 2:7—we’re image bearers of our Creator.)**
6. **Race. There’s only one race, the human race. (Gen. 1:27-28).**
* **Every single person is descended from Adam and Eve; therefore there can only be one race.**
* **We have people groups/ethnicities (not races, no matter what politicians, news pundits, or preachers say) around the world because of the event of the Tower of Babel when God confused their languages, scattering them around the world.**
* **Biblical history explains not only why we’re only one race but also why there are different people groups.**
1. **Now let’s look at Gen. 1:1 and consider it generally:**
2. **How shall we interpret the creation account? Fact or Fiction? Why?**
3. **The familiar opening line of Genesis that *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,”* introduces a simple, but profound idea.**
4. **Everything that exists, visible and invisible, was created by God. If true, the world is infused with purpose and design…which it is!**
5. **Life is not random but ordered.**
6. **And yet, as significant as these implications are, there is much more to the doctrine of creation than *“God created.”***
7. **Other passages throughout Scripture, for example John 1 and Colossians 1, claim that God’s creative work is not confined to the distant past.**
8. **Rather, God remains present, involved, and sovereign over and in His creation.**
9. **Specifically, it is in and through Christ that God remains present, involved, and sovereign over and in His creation….and since His coming His kingdom has been expanding and will continue until the Day He returns.**
10. **In Colossians 1:16-17, Paul wrote that it was by Christ, the *“image of the invisible God and firstborn of all creation, that all things were created.”* And *“in Him, all things hold together”*.**
* **In other words, God is more than a first cause. He not only created the world; He sustains it.**
* **Twentieth-century theologian Robert Capon helpfully described this truth in this way: *“If God wanted to get rid of the universe, He would not have to do anything; He would have to stop doing something.”***
1. **At the same time, it would be inaccurate to think of God’s sustaining work as a kind of animating, impersonal energy.**
2. **This is what older generations called “vitalism” (and Star Wars fans know as “The Force”).**
3. **God is intimately and personally involved with His creation.**
* **Psalm 124:8- *“Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”***
* **This passage links the God who created heaven and earth as the same God who helps us personally.**
1. **He is, Scripture reveals, mindful of the sparrow (Matthew 10:29) and the number of hairs on our head (Luke 12:7).**
2. **It’s a remarkable thing that the God who created and sustains all things knows and cares for His creation intimately.**
3. **He not only delights in His work, He does not grow weary of it.**
4. **As G.K. Chesterton beautifully remarked, God is unlike grown-ups who become wearied by monotony: *“It is possible that God says every morning, “Do it again” to the sun; and every evening, ‘Do it again’ to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately but has never got tired of making them.”***
* **Like a child who you are playing with who never tires of a particular game… “Again”, they say with delight in the voice and eyes.**
* **Every night as we prepare to go to sleep when we are on vacation at the beach with my grandsons I tell them… *“You know what? We get to wake up and do it all over again!”* And we all smile!**
1. **In a Christian worldview, the creation is more miraculous than mechanical, than we often realize.**
2. **Of course, the world is orderly and works according to identifiable and predictable laws.**
3. **And yet, as Paul wrote to the Colossians, it is graciously and lovingly held together just as it was brought into being, by the very Word of God.**
* **Col. 1:16-18- *“For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent.”***
* **It must be fact, in every detail, or nothing is to be trusted as truth in all of Scripture since creation takes such a prominent role throughout the Bible.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**September 1, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Genesis 1**
3. **When does the Bible tells us that God created?**
4. **In the Beginning! LOL!**
5. **It is that simple when we are assured that the Bible is the Word of God …our source material.**
6. **Again, what is basically being communicated with the words, *“In the beginning, God created…”?***
7. **Basic truths:**
8. **There was a beginning…things have not always existed.**
9. **God is.**
10. **God created.**
11. **God was before the beginning… He is eternal!**
* **Job 36:26- *“Behold, God is great, and we know Him not; the number of His years is unsearchable.”***
* **Ps. 90:2- *“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.”***
* **Isaiah 57:15- *“For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy…”***
* **There was no “time” when He did not exist. He never came into being and He will never cease to exist.**
* **The fact that He created tells us that He existed before the beginning as we have it registered for us.**
* **He has existed forever and WILL exist forever.**
* **Duet.32:40- *“For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, As I live forever”* God Himself, who cann0t lie, swears that He is forever.**
* **I Tim. 1:17- *“To the King (Eternal) of the ages, immortal (imperishable, incorruptible), invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”***
* **The Bible agrees He is eternal!**
1. **Breaking down the sentence with the Hebrew words. The Hebrew paints an interesting picture that unfortunately the English doesn’t even begin to capture.**
2. **Hebrew= Be reshith= “beyt”= “in”…which pictorially means- a floor plan/design or even closer a tent…but more precisely the family within the tent.**
* **This meaning also correspond with the meaning of the Hebrew word for “trust”.**
* **So that which was in God’s plan and design is trustworthy…and should gives us a sense of home in that it is the place of truth…the place of refuge…the place we can trust over every place else except in God’s presence.**
1. ***“Reshith*”= THE BEGINNING… the plan or design is beginning to unfold.**
* **The Hebrew word ראשית (reshiyt) may be interpreted as “beginning,” but it’s more literal meaning is related to the idea of “height,” as in the height, origin or beginning of an event, the height of someone in rank or the height of importance….or height as in climax of an event….wide range of meaning to make the point. At the height or climax of time God created.**
1. **Before time commenced. God did not have Moses write *“very***

 ***early on” or “In a galaxy far far away in a time long ago”* because time itself was part of creation.**

1. **“Be reshith bara Elohim”= *“In the beginning, God created…”***
* **Bara= create, created…select, chose…fashioned or formed.**
* **Bara from the Qal stem in Hebrew=*created***
* **To shape, to fashion and it is ONLY employed with reference to divine agency…to God/Elohim (Godhead) working alone.**
* **The Hebrew verb speaks to the unique and absolute action being attributed to God alone …it is not the same word for create in the way we use it to talk about what we do…taking something and making something else out of it…being creative.**
* **In other words, this word means that an infinite, personal Triune (Elohim) God of the Bible made something out of nothing…*ex nihilo*…without preexisting material.**
* **St. Augustine defined it this way, *“For you created them from nothing, not FROM your own substance or FROM some matter not created by yourself or already in existence.”***
* **Edward Leigh (an English lay writer known particularly for his works on Christian doctrinal topics. A divine of the Westminster Assembly)- *“Creation is the action of God, whereby out of nothing He brought forth nature itself and all things in nature, both substances and accidents, in and with the substances, and finished them in the space of six days, both to His own glory and the salvation of the elect.”***
* **To sum up it speaks of the action of God in bringing about His creative work.**
1. **The Jewish Targum (written in the first Century A.D. as a type of transliteration) interprets these words as *“In wisdom God created…”***
* **They do this to go along with Prov. 3:19-20- *“The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens; by His knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.”***
* **This *“wisdom of God”* then is then broken down further by the early Church Fathers to mean the Logos- The Word…Jesus Christ Himself who was with the Father at the beginning along with the Spirit of God.**
1. **It also clearly asserts for future generations that Aristotle was wrong …the world has not always existed. In fact, it had a beginning because of the power and wisdom of God, the First Cause and the author of all things!**

 **b. Since Moses began *“In the beginning…”* we have no account of what**

 **happened before.**

1. **A people being curious always want to know what**

 **happened before.**

1. **Jonathan Edwards responded one day to such an**

 **inquiry by saying, *“God was making Hell for the curious!”***

1. **The Object and Subject of Creation**
2. **God is the first object and subject of Genesis according to Gen. 1:1- *“In the beginning, God…”* and by virtue of the placement here in this literature we know He will be the subject of the whole book. Everything else speaks to define His activity. How do we know this and why is that important?**
3. **The comma is placed here after the word *“beginning”* to emphasize the subject…God as the Creator!**
4. **We also know because this comma is there that God was there at the beginning…so in a sense for our purposes…since we need things defined in time and space language… we can say He existed before time…the rest of Scripture tells us that He exists apart from time.**
5. **What are some of things that the Bible says that God was doing *“before time”…before the foundations of the earth”*…before the beginning?**
6. **John 1:1-5 *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”***
7. **John 17:5,24- *“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.* … *“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”***
8. **Eph. 1:3-7-*“*** ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption to Himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved.”***
9. **Col. 1:16-17- *“For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”***
10. **I Peter 1:20- *“He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”***

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**September 8, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Genesis 1:1- *“In the beginning, created the heavens and the earth.”***
3. **Having talked about this last week, who did we say is The Object and Subject of Creation and why is it important for us to be clear on this as Bible believing Christians?**
4. **God…**
5. **For Gospel context consider II Peter 3:1-13…concerning how important it is to have creation settled in our minds.**
6. **2 Peter 3:1–13: Scoffers = escarnecedores “ Empaiktes” (the people that offend the others reputation in order to affect its reputation = ridicule or the opposite of empathy)**
7. **The Day of the Lord Will Come. *“This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, [2] that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, [3] knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. [4] They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” [5] For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, [6] and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. [7] But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.[8] But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. [9] The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. [10] But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.[11] Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, [12] waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! [13] But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*” (ESV)**
* **Note: V-8 - DAY=1000YEARS does not apply to the 6 days of creation Genesis 1:5…And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. (ESV) WCF Chapter -IV Of Creation. (page 6).**
* ***It refutes a line of human thought:* Evolutionism — The book of Genesis states that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He then describes that God did this on six days of the**
1. **Consider Isaiah 44:6-8- *“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.”***
2. **Is it settled in our minds, who God is? See. Rev. 1:17-18- *“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, ‘Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”***

**As I said, all the great biblical themes have their point of origin in the book of Genesis. The truth about God, the truth about the world, the truth About man, about sin, about judgment, about salvation, about the church and so on all have their point of origin in the book of Genesis. It refutes several lines of human thought, such as:**

1. **Atheism — Atheism denies the existence of God and affirm that the universe arose spontaneously. Can matter and energy create themselves? The universe is governed by laws, and laws do not create themselves.**
2. **Pantheism —God is everything and that everything is God.**
3. **Materialism — The book of Genesis states that God created the heavens and the earth without pre-existing matter, because before the beginning only God existed. Therefore matter is not eternal, as the Greeks thought; it was created, and created by God.**
4. **Adauto Lourenço says that this first sentence of the Bible defines the origin of the three main basic elements with which science works: time, space, and matter. Consider the order: In the beginning [time] God created the heavens [space] and the earth [matter].**
5. **Genesis illustrates that the purposes of the whole Bible is to reveal God. Sadly many in the church ignore God’s perfect, clear, and inerrant Word to their own confusion and detriment. They all too often choose to mold it into their own image rather that standing back in awe of its glory that is the perfection of His wisdom.**
6. ***“We need a great dose of the doctrine of creation in our lives these days to bring fiber into our spiritual being, to strengthen our souls, and to enable us to grasp that this same God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts. That's the glorious thing."*— Eric Alexander**
7. **The title for God here is Elohim. What do we know about this title of God?**
8. **It is used at least 35 times in Chapter 1-2:3. Moses favorite title for God.**
9. **It is plural…describing for us, first of all His majesty…but it is the type of plural that means more than 2 so it is also a hint at the Trinity… a plurality within the Godhead.**
10. **In Genesis 1:1, the plural noun “Elohim” (“God” in the ESV, is joined with the singular verb (Bara)*“created”:* *“In the beginning, [Elohim] created the heavens and the earth.”* The Godhead created together!**
11. **The pattern is repeated in Genesis 1:27: *“So [Elohim] created man in His own image, in the image of [Elohim] He created him; male and female He created them.”***
12. **These examples of subject-verb disagreement seem to be intentional on the part of the author. What is he emphasizing?**
* **That the Godhead alone created all things by means of His singular agency. He is One…in 3 persons!**
* **The Godhead alone created heaven and earth,**
* **without any guides; Isa. 40:12-13-*“*** ***Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows Him his counsel?”***
* **or helpers; Isa. 44:24- *“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself*.”**
1. **In emphasizing this point, Genesis 1 provides the first and fundamental building block of Trinitarian theology: monotheism.**
* **One God in tri-unity created all things, rules all things, and directs all things to His own glory.**
* **Apart from monotheism, belief in the Trinity would be a form of polytheism.**
* **Only in the context of monotheism is faith in the Trinity… faith in one God in three persons.**
* **It refutes a line of human thought: Polytheism — Although the term Elohim [God] is a plural noun, the verb bara [created] is in the singular. There is only one God, who subsists in three Persons.**
1. **According to Genesis 1, God, His Word and Spirit are the means whereby God produces, forms, and fills all things.**
2. **God speaks (His Word) days and creatures into existence (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26), God’s Spirit is the almighty *“breath of God*”.**
3. **God names the various species He brings into existence (Gen. 1:5, 8, 10).**
4. **And God blesses the creatures He brings into existence (Gen. 1:22, 28).**
5. **Along with God’s speech, God’s Spirit is also active in the work of creation, hovering over it like a mother bird (Gen. 1:2; cf. Deut. 32:11- *“Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bearing them on its pinions,”*) the unformed, unfilled world God produced, ready to endow it with life, energy, intelligence, and fullness by means of His life-giving presence (Ex. 31:3; 35:31; Num. 24:2).**
* **In identifying God’s Word and Spirit as the means whereby God produces, forms, and fills all things, Genesis 1 includes God’s Word and Spirit within God’s singular agency.**
* **To say that God creates by His Word and Spirit is another way of saying that God creates by Himself and not by the agency of another (Ps. 33:6–9; John 1:3; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).**
1. **Genesis 1 doesn’t indicate the full significance that the names “Word” and “Spirit” will have for Trinitarian theology.**
2. **The full significance of these names only comes with the appearance of the Word made flesh and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost.**
3. **Nevertheless, by including God’s Word and Spirit within God’s singular agency, Genesis 1 puts another fundamental building block of Trinitarian theology in place.**
* **Whatever distinctions Scripture later reveals between Elohim, His Word, and His Spirit, they should not be taken as distinctions between the one God and something that is not God.**
* **They should be taken as distinctions within the one God Himself.**
1. **Also, there are 3 plural personal references to Himself in verse 26… *“us, our and our”*… and three in verse 27, as well… *“His…He …and…He*”…this give us a clue to the Trinity as well.**
2. **Elohim’s basic meaning is “strong One” but it is used of God in three persons…Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It also means Sovereign, Creator, Judge, Almighty One…over 2500 times it is used in the OT.**
3. **So why does it matter that God is a personal absolute?**
* **Well, first, it gives us a very good reason to think that God would speak to His people.**
* **If God is a personal being, and He created humans as personal beings, then it is quite reasonable to think that God desired a relationship with humans.**
* **And if God wanted to relate to humans, then it would require some form of communication. God would need to speak to us in a language that we understand and comprehend.**
* **The book Aristotle’s Categories– Explains that we can understand things only into human categories so: One million of years minus one year we don’t have one million anymore, but how about taking one million of the eternity.**
* **What is the balance?**
1. **Define God.**
* **Children’s Catechism-What is God? God is a Spirit, and has not as body like man.**
* **WCF #4-*God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice goodness and truth.***
* **WCF Q5: *Are there more Gods than one? There is but one only, the living and true God.***
* **WCF Q6: *How many persons are there in the Godhead? There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.***
1. **The plural we see in Elohim and the plural references to Himself in verse 26 and 27 also communicates *“fullness or completeness”.***
* **He is complete in Himself. He has no need of anything or anyone to be in relationship with.**
* **God alone acts by means of His singular, sovereign agency: *“I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself”* (Isa. 44:24).**
1. **Some have suggested that God’s plural self-address in Genesis 1:26 and the descriptive address in vs. 27 is sometimes explained as an example of the so-called “royal we,” an idiomatic expression whereby a king addresses himself in plural form.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**September 15, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Summary of last week (09/08/2024): Genesis 1:1- *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”***
4. ***Foundation of all foundations. It refutes, for example, : Atheism (There is no God) , Pantheism (God is <->everything ),Materialism (Matter is eternal).***
5. **Introduces, at least, three science basic elements : “…beginning [time] …the heavens [space] … the earth [matter].“ Adauto Lourenço.**
6. **The title for God here is Elohim. What do we know about this title of God (Gen 1:1 &27)?**
7. ***“Elohim”* (Plural noun) + “created” (Singular verb) -> Godhead alone created all things without any guides; (Isa. 40:12-13) and helpers (Isa. 44:24).**
8. **Trinitarian theology : One God in tri-unity created all things, rules all things, and directs all things to His own glory (Monotheism).**
9. **God, His Word and Spirit -> God produces, forms, and fills all things:**
	1. **God speaks (His Word) days and creatures into existence.**
	2. **God’s action = speaks things into existence, names them, and blesses them.**
	3. **Spirit actively participating by infusing life and fullness by means of His life-giving presence.**
	4. **“Word” and “Spirit” full significance with the Word made flesh and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost.**
10. **Elohim -> “Strong One" , Sovereign, Creator, Judge, Almighty One, “Fullness or Completeness”, “royal we” (king addresses himself in plural form). Allah is singular…Elohim is a plural…Trinitarian…tri-unity. So Allah and Elohim are not the same God.**
11. **God desires a relationship with humans and would communicate with them in a comprehensible way.**
12. **Why do you suppose that God doesn’t tell us how He came to be in the pages of Scripture…or even seek to prove His existence?**
	1. **It is just what we need to know.**
13. **Looking further in Genesis 1:1**
14. **Next the text tells us, *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”***
15. ***“Be reshith bara Elohim eth ha shamayim v’eth ha’arets.”-* *In the beginning created God the heavens and the earth.***
16. **The statement says God created everything that was created…everything that is out of nothing!**
17. **The main aim here is that God is telling us who made everything! A crucial place to begin and a crucial fact to believe!**
18. **Bara = “created out of nothing”**
19. **“eth”= is an untranslated definite article “the” is the closet English word to translate…for it is a form more than it is a word ...it marks the direct object(s) of the verb… *“created the heavens and the earth”***
20. **“Ha shamayim”= the heavens. Ha=the… shamayim= heavens/skies.**
* **Almost always is plural.**
* **How big is His heavens?**
* **A typical galaxy contains billions of stars.**
* **Our galaxy alone ids said to contain 200 billion stars all on its own.**
* **And we are told, again that the average distance between galaxies is 20 million trillion miles or 390 light years.**
* **The Hebrews had no single word to describe the universe. When they wanted to express the concept of all reality they spoke in terms of *‘the heavens and the earth’* (hashamayim ve’et ha’arets).**
* **Isaiah 40:12- *“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?”***
* **Isaiah 48:*13- “My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand forth together.”***
1. **V’eth”= and the …vav= and…eth-both together or separate like this usually only means “and”.**
* **The “vav” is a conjunctive that is often connected to another word with its primary function to mark the direct object of a verb, indicating that the following noun is being directly affected by the action of the verb.**
* **In this case the verb is “created” and the following nouns are heavens and the earth and they are being directly affected since they are being brought into existence.**
1. **“ha arets”= the earth**
* **So, when Melchizedek blessed Abram in the name of the Sovereign God of the universe, he said, *‘Blessed be Abram of El Elyon (God the Most High), possessor of heaven and earth’* (Gen. 14: 19).**
* **The expression *‘the heavens and the earth’* is a figure of speech in which two opposites are all-inclusive. Thus, when Melchizedek commented that God owned heaven and earth, he meant not only the places of heaven and earth, but also everything in them and on them.**
* **As well, when Moses stated that God created the heavens and the earth, he meant that God fashioned everything that is in the entire universe.**
1. **For Gospel context consider II Peter 3:1-13…concerning how important it is to have creation settled in our minds.**
* **Consider Isaiah 44:6-8- *“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.”***
* **Is it settled in our minds, who God is? See. Rev. 1:17-18- *“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, ‘Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and zI have the keys of Death and Hades.”***
1. **What is the most important truth in this statement other than letting us know who the object and subject is going to be of this whole book?**
2. **That God Created all there is!**
3. **Mainstream science tells a different origins story.**
* **But at least one leading biochemist admits that*, “At present all discussions on principle theories and experiments in the field” concerning the problem of the origin of life, “either end in a stalemate or in a confession of ignorance.”***
* **Many like to make the case that chance alone is at the source of every innovation. Pure chance, they say is absolutely free but blind and is at the very root of the myth of evolution.**
* **In reality, Scripture and nature say the same thing. We don’t always see how they harmonize. We might misinterpret scientific data or misunderstand Scripture.**
* **But our first allegiance is to the Bible through which God communicates “more openly.”**
1. **What did God create FROM according to the text?**
2. **God existed within Himself; Father, Son and Holy Spirit…He had need of nothing or no one else for He is all in Himself. So there was “nothing” except God.**
3. **The theological term is *“ex nihilo”* =out of/from nothing…but it means more…**
* **It also means that there was a prior cause.**
* **By His Word He created…His spoken Word is the cause of creation.**
* **When He commands, it happens. See Hebrews 11:3- *“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.***
1. **Three attributes especially manifest themselves in this work of creation: God's power, wisdom, and goodness.**
* **His power in that He made all things by a word and out of nothing…**
* **Psalm 33:6- *“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made and by the breath of His mouth all their hosts.”*.**
* **Rev. 4:11- *“…for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”***
* **His wisdom is seen in the order and variety of his works and their exceedingly wonderful and particular uses. Psalm 136:5- *“…to Him who by understanding (wisdom) made the heavens…”***
* **His goodness is shown in that He would communicate being to the creatures and to man.**
* **Gen. 1:24- *“Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds…”***
* **Gen. 1:26 and 2:7- *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”…* *“…then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a ‘living being’.”***
1. **When we think of the HOW of creation why is the correct answers and the acceptance of those answers crucial to our faith today?**
2. **They are the faith issue here.**
3. **We will talk about the days of creation and we may not all come away with the same explanation concerning the length of the days…but we all must believe these two simple truths to be able to call ourselves “believers” :**
* **That God created all things**
* **That God created all things from nothing by the power of His Word. This is the true faith issue.**
1. **See again Hebrews 11: 3- *“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible”*.…gives a clear description of the faithful…that is this is what true believers believe.**
2. **WCF-CHAPTER IV. Of Creation.**

**I. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.**

**II. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.**

1. **What Scientists say**
2. **There is much talk in this discussion about the 2 laws of thermodynamics. So what about the first 2 Laws of Thermodynamics that evolutionists and atheist like to use? What do they actually teach us? And do they take away from the creation account or do they actually support it?**
3. **The first Law of Thermodynamics is called “the law of conservation of energy’. It states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Energy can change from one form into another, but its total amount remains the same.” “Energy” includes all created reality, for in terms of Einstein’s famous equation: E = mc2 [Energy is equivalent to matter times the speed of light squared], matter is just another form of energy. Hence physical matter is included within the range of the laws of Thermodynamics.”**
4. **The Second Law of Thermodynamics, or the law of entropy, further confirms the verdict of the First Law: that energy, matter cannot be accounted for within present physical processes. It provides an illustration that a system cannot be both closed and consistent at the same time. To be consistent, it must be open to a higher level of reality. The law of entropy states that in every interchange of energy in the cosmos, there is a tendency for a certain amount of that energy to pass into non-reversible heat energy, which is no longer available for productive work. The law of entropy also indicates that given enough time and enough interchanges of energy, so much non-reversible heat energy will be built up, that the universe will suffer a heat death. The law of entropy further indicates that the cosmos is not infinitely old, for if it were, there would be no more heat. This excludes a steady state universe.”**
5. **Another way to phrase the First Law is: *“… energy (matter) cannot be naturally created from nothing.”* Something, or rather, someone, outside the natural space/ time process is required to explain how a world in which material reality is not being created could have come into being.**
6. **A shortened form of the Second Law would be this: *According to the law of entropy, all physical reality is ‘running down’.* Entropy is increasing, which leads to disorder and finally to a uniform distribution of all heat energy, the results of which would be death. But the creation (with its high order and productive life) had to have occurred under non-entropic conditions; under conditions that are no longer operative.**
7. **A final point to be made is that the second law of thermodynamics and the principle of increase in entropy have great philosophical implications. The question that arises is how did the universe get into the state of reduced entropy in the first place, since all natural processes known to us tend to increase entropy? … This second law actually tends to increase conviction that there is a Creator who has the answer for the future destiny of man and the universe.**
8. **Taylor B. Jones relates in creative fashion the laws of thermodynamics and the overall plan of salvation: *“Being able to observe the Fall using the unique lens of thermodynamics to focus on the effects of Adam’s sin and our participation in it affords insights that are otherwise unavailable. Thermodynamics reveals aspects of the attributes of God that are truly remarkable. To design a universe that will always have all the energy it needs for its lifetime vividly displays God’s omniscience and omnipotence. The rebellion of Adam can be more fully understood in light of the severity and pervasive presence of dissipative entropy. One can only marvel at God’s justice and, yet, His mercy. The pain and agony of the randomness of the second law is surely something that is calling us back to Him–for relief in this age and deliverance in the age to come. And that deliverance is rooted in the comforting thought that the Lord Jesus Christ will come back and restore the creation to its original function to the praise of the glory of God (Rev. 22: 20).”***
9. ***“In summary, the two laws of Thermodynamics indicate the necessity of some power outside present, known processes to have originally brought it all into existence. Something outside and above the vast complex of space, time, energy, material is required to have initiated it; something not relative to it, but free from it (which is the root meaning of the Latin word absolute: ‘loosed’ or ‘free’–solutus, ‘from’–ab). That is, the laws of Thermodynamics can tell us that an absolute creation is necessary.”* (This point comes from Douglas Kelly’s book, Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4-In Light of the Changing Scientific Paradigms)**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**September 29, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **I have a lot of details because we live in a day and age where so many inside and outside the Church are confused over what should be a “simple” doctrine…a doctrine that really wasn’t seriously questioned until the middle to the end of the 19th Century.**
4. **Concerning Thermodynamics and why it actually prove a First Source- *“In summary, the two laws of Thermodynamics indicate the necessity of some power outside the present known processes to have originally brought it all into existence. Something outside and above the vast complex of space, time, energy, material is required to have initiated it; something not relative to it, but free from it (which is the root meaning of the Latin word absolute: ‘loosed’ or ‘free’–solutus, ‘from’–ab). That is, the laws of Thermodynamics actually tell us that an absolute creation is necessary.”* (This point comes from Douglas Kelly’s book, Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4-In Light of the Changing Scientific Paradigms)**
5. **American astronomer and cosmologist Carl Sagan used to say at the beginning of his famous TV series, Cosmos, *“The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be”.* What is wrong with this statement?**
6. **This statement controlled the world’s thoughts since Aristotle first theorized it until the 17th or 18th Century even in the Church of the day.**
7. **According to John Lennox (British mathematician, philosopher of science and Christian apologist has said, *“That is not a statement of science, to be put in the same category as, for example, the scientific statement that gravity obeys an inverse-square law. Sagan’s statement is simply an expression of his atheistic belief. The problem is, many people give to all statements by scientists the authority rightly due to science, simply because they are stated by a scientist."***
8. **But interestingly Sagan made this concession: *“It is not known whether open-system thermodynamic processes in the absence of replication are capable of leading to the sorts of complexity that characterize biological systems.”***
9. **You gotta love this: John Lennox says again-*"Einstein once said that scientists make poor philosophers. I am sorry to have to say that Hawking, brilliant scientist though he was, certainly demonstrated that weakness. The British Astronomer Royal, Baron Rees of Ludlow, who was a friend of Stephen Hawking, was asked by the Guardian newspaper what he thought of Hawking’s pronouncement that the creation of the universe did not require a God. Rees replied, ‘I know Stephen Hawking well enough to know that he has read little philosophy and less theology, so I don’t think his views should be taken with any special weight.’ He made the same point in Hawking’s obituary."*- (from Can Science Explain Everything, by Dr. John Lennox)**
10. **It is clear that the horizon on the cultural landscape is run over with forces bent on assaulting God’s good creation. Science is one of the banners leading the charge. But science, it must be remembered, is predicated on a religious axiom. Without God there is no true science because every hypothesis is founded upon the idea of biblical realism or truth.**
11. **Since science is actually the “daughter” of theology…as many were seeking to verify God’s word about His creation…why are scientists seemingly so opposed to God’s Words view of creation?**
12. **One…a great many are not opposed to this view it is just that they are silenced at every turn.**
13. **Non-belief MUST seek to refute Go’s truth!**
14. **It is clear that the horizon on the cultural landscape is run over with forces bent on assaulting God’s good creation. Science is one of the banners leading the charge.**
15. **But science, it must be remembered, is predicated on a religious axiom. Without God there is no true science because every hypothesis is founded upon the idea of biblical realism or truth.**
16. **Back to the main text- *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”***
17. **Many have said, *“This is the most important verse in the Bible.”* Why?**
18. **This is the Bible’s first assertion of the existence of God.**
19. **It is basic…it is foundational.**
20. **It is the supreme article that defines every bit of truth and is not something we should take lightly.**
21. **This is a foundational assertion central to our faith that defines all truth…everything we see and experience must come from Him.**
22. **This is also the first verse that affirms God’s self-existence….eternal…there was not a time when God did not exist…and He exists within His own power…which is key to creation! Because everything else is dependent upon His power to exist and to live and have its being.**
23. **D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones maintained: *“The Bible starts with God; you remember its great opening statement which really tells us everything: ‘In the beginning God.…’ The knowledge of God is ultimately the foundation of all other doctrines; there is no sense, there is no meaning or purpose, in any other doctrine apart from this great central, all-inclusive, doctrine of God Himself. There is no point in considering the doctrine of salvation, nor the doctrine of sin, unless we have started with the doctrine of God.”***
24. **These are 10 thunderously important words.**
25. **They should change everything, from the way that we think about our identity, meaning, and purpose… to the way that we approach even the most incidental of human duties.**
26. **Everything that was created was made by God and for God. All the glories of the created world were designed to point to His glory.**
27. **The universe is His, designed to function according to His purpose and plan. That includes you and me.**
28. **We were not made to live independent, self-directed lives. We were not meant to exist according to our own little self-oriented plans, living for our own moments of glory. No, we were created to live for Him.**
29. **Where is this Godward living meant to find expression?**
30. **It is meant to be expressed not just in the religious dimension of our lives, but in every aspect of our existence.**
31. **I love how Paul captures this in 1 Corinthians 10:31: *“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”***
32. **When Paul thinks of the call to live for the glory of God, he doesn’t first think of the big, life-changing, self-consciously spiritual moments of life. No, he thinks of something as mundane and repetitive as eating and drinking.**
33. **Even the most regular, seemingly unimportant tasks of my life must be shaped and directed by a heartfelt desire for the glory of God. Now, I don’t know about you, but in the busyness of life I lose sight of God’s existence, let alone His glory!**
34. **So let’s remember to remember to admit that there is nothing less natural for us than to live for the glory of another.**
35. **This admission is the doorway not to despair, but to hope.**
36. **God knew that in our sin we would never live this way, so from before the beginning He (the Godhead) planned to send and then did send His Son to live the life we couldn’t, to die on our behalf, and to rise again, conquering sin and death.**
37. **He did this so that we would not only be forgiven for our allegiance to our own glory, but so we would have every grace needed to live for His glory.**
38. **So let us remember and ponder daily that we only exist to glorify and enjoy God…that is why these words are here at the very beginning… *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”***
39. **In the center of all that is, there is a God of incalculable glory.**
40. **The first four words of Genesis say it all: *“In the beginning, God.”***
41. **Here is the ultimate fact through which every other fact of life is properly understood.**
* **There is a God.**
* **He is the Creator of everything that exists.**
* **He is glorious in power, authority, wisdom, sovereignty, and love.**
1. **Since we are His creatures, knowing Him, loving Him, worshiping Him, and obeying Him define our identity, meaning, and purpose as human beings.**
2. **What makes this statement so radical that so many want to call this creation account a story or myth?**
3. **God sets Himself up as “over” His creation…for He is the one who creates.**
4. **Even here there is a clear distinction being made between God and everything else.**
5. **People say they do not accept the Bible’s account of origins in Genesis when it speaks of God creating supernaturally in six consecutive days and destroying the world in a global catastrophic flood. This cannot be said, however, without overlooking the clear teaching of our Creator, the Lord Jesus, on the matter (Mark 10:6; cf. Matthew 24:37–39) and the clear testimony of Scripture (Genesis 1:1–2, 3:6–9; Exodus 20:11; 2 Peter 3:3–6), which he affirmed as truth (Matthew 5:17–18; John 10:25, 17:17). If we confess Jesus is our Lord, we must be willing to submit to him as the teacher of the church.**
6. **What does this statement communicate to all the “isms” of the world?**
7. **Mormonism, Atheism, Naturalism, Pantheism, Deism, Polytheism, Monotheism, Dualism, Humanism Evolutionism all begin with what was created or they emphasize man. They all express the same unbelief.**
8. **All “isms” worship the created over the creator. This was a clear message to the pagan religions of Moses’ time...and for ours today. This statement is like another absolute … *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life…”***
9. **Atheism seeks to undercut the Christian view of divine creation because if they can then the whole Christian worldview would collapse.**
10. **Another reason for knowing what the Bible says about creation and believing it.**
* **For God was ..in the beginning**
* **Self-existent and eternal in His being.**
* **He alone had the ability to create all there is out of nothing.**
* **Hebrews 11:3- *“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.”***
* **God did call into existence all there is…from the smallest part of a molecule to the largest expanse of the universe…He has all power and authority at His command…at His whisper.**
* **God says “Let there be…” and there is!**
* **That is the divine imperative because even NOTHING answers to the command of God….God created out of nothing…**
1. **What about theistic evolution or what is called today by many Christians.. “evolutionary creationism”?**
2. **Theistic Evolution claims to provide the Biblical answer to the origins question, but it falls far short of its lofty claim.**
3. **Theistic evolutionists generally are professing Christians; many are even professing evangelicals.**
* **They believe that God created the original matter that exploded in the “big bang” about 13.8 billion years ago.**
* **In their view, He built into that original matter the laws of nature that scientists have discovered.**
* **By natural processes, matter evolved into stars, galaxies, planets, and the first living cell.**
* **Over the last 3.5 billion years, that first cell has evolved by natural selection and mutations into all the plants, animals, and people that have ever lived, including you and me.**
* **Most theistic evolutionists hold that either Adam and Eve were myths or, if historical, they evolved from some apelike creature over millions of years.**
1. **The intensity of debate on creation is swirling within the Church…interesting…of all places. You would think we could all stand together on what seems to be such a clear statement by God.**
2. **Crossway publishing, published a 962-page response to this view—written by 25 concerned Christian scholars—titled Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical and Theological Critique (2017).**
* **Its 33 chapters helpfully present very strong reasons for rejecting biological (neo-Darwinian) evolution, including human evolution.**
* **But the book intentionally ignored the question of the age of the creation for the obvious reason that most of the authors accept as fact the millions or billions of years of geological and cosmological evolution.**
* **Other books have been published with titles like Thank God for Evolution, Finding Darwin’s God, I Love Jesus and I Accept Evolution, Evolutionary Creation, and others.**
* **In recent years, evolutionary views have been firmly embraced by many prominent and popular evangelicals, including Bruce Waltke, Francis Collins, Peter Enns, Joel Hunter, Os Guinness, and many more.**
1. **Not only are there many who are demanding that Christians must embrace evolution in its various forms, some are also demanding that Adam and Eve were either evolved from ape-like creatures or that they did not even exist. These are the issues involved in the discussions surrounding theistic evolution.**
2. **Unfortunately, there is a great deal of intentionally ambiguous language used by different groups within the discussion.**
* **There are those (who may say they believe in God) who fully believe in the idea that humans evolved from apes and that the universe began 14 billion years ago with a big bang,**
* **And at the same time will look people in the eye and say, “I am not a theistic evolutionist.”- Hence the need for change of terms…Evolutionary creationist!**
1. **Theistic evolution, old-earth creation, evolutionary creation, BioLogos, progressive creation, and intelligent design are all labels of groups interested in promoting evolution in one form or another.**
* **To be clear—it is difficult to put any single person’s views into a box with a tidy little label.**
* **Even if they label themselves, there are shades of nuance coloring their understanding of specific topics related to the origins issue.**
* **Because you can’t tie down a lie…for lies by their very nature grow trying to explain themselves.**
1. **It may come as a surprise to some, but many who are part of what has been called the Intelligent Design (ID) movement would fit into the category of theistic evolution.**
* **Many involved in the ID movement believe in the big bang, an old earth, and the general concepts of evolutionary progression over time.**
* **They reject Darwinian (or neo-Darwinian) evolution because it has no goal or purpose and is random, but they embrace some form of guided evolution.**
* **When certain aspects of a biological system are determined to be “irreducibly complex,” they suggest God may have guided the evolutionary process at this point to allow the process to continue to produce new kinds of organisms.**
1. **Another basic view, one many would not typically consider part of the theistic evolution camp, is known as progressive creation—**
* **This is a form of day-age creation where the days of Genesis 1 represent vast periods of overlapping time.**
* **However, in general, progressive creationists accept that the big bang is the explanation for the origin of the universe that the earth gradually formed from debris as it orbited the sun, and that the earth is 4.5 billion years old.**
* **But interestingly enough, they reject that biological evolution accounts for the history of life on earth.**
* **For this reason, progressive creation is not typically included within the range of theistic evolution.**
1. **Thinking through what we have said…and we haven’t even begun to plume the depth of this subject. How might theistic/evolutionary creationism be a problem?**
* **Theistic evolution is indeed *a problem*. But the problem is that any view of creation and the age of the earth that denies some or all of the literal history of Genesis 1–11 significantly undermines the authority of Scripture and the foundation of the gospel.**
* **But that is what all old-earth views do.**
* **They attempt to harmonize the Bible with the mythological story of millions of years of geological and cosmological evolution which simply cannot be done without doing serious damage to the truth of Scripture.**
* **All old-earth views are false because they deny the Bible’s clear teaching that God created in six literal days just a little over 6,000-10,000 years ago.**
* **All old-earth views are false because they contradict the Bible’s teaching on death.**
* **All old-earth views are false because they assault the character of God.**
* **God says He created the world to be inhabited by man (Isaiah 45:12, 18). But if millions of years happened, then most of the earth’s existence was before man.**
* **God says He created the sun, moon, and stars so man could measure literal days, seasons, and years (Genesis 1:14). But if billions of years happened, then for most of their existence those heavenly bodies did not fulfill their purpose.**
* **God also commanded Adam and Eve to rule over all other living creatures (Genesis 1:26–28). But if billions of years happened, then most of those creatures lived and died and many became extinct long before Adam and Eve could ever rule over them.**
* **What kind of a God would do and say these things? Not the omniscient, omnipotent, all-wise, good God of Scripture!**
* **All old-earth views are false because they often ignore or reject the global flood of Noah.**
* **What does the flood have to do with the age of the earth?**
* **Simply this: if the flood happened as described in Genesis, it would have caused massive erosion and sedimentation and buried lots of creatures that would later be turned to stone as those sediments dried out and hardened.**
* **It could not possibly have happened and left no physical evidence all over the earth.**
* **But evolutionary geologists deny that there is any evidence for the global flood, though they believe in a global flood on Mars where there is no liquid water! They are blind to the evidence because of the naturalistic worldview glasses they are wearing.**
* **All old-earth views are false because they contradict what Jesus and the Apostle Paul said.**
* **In Mark 10, Jesus was asked a question by the Pharisees about divorce. Jesus answered (in 10:5–9) by taking them back to Genesis and affirming that God created only two genders (male and female) and that God created marriage to be between one man and one woman for life. And Jesus said this was so *“from the beginning of creation.”* So in Jesus’ mind, Adam and Eve were back at the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning, as evolutionists claim about the origin of the first human beings.**
* **Paul revealed his young-earth creation view in Romans 1:18–20. He said that unrepentant sinners were under the wrath of God as they suppressed the truth about God’s existence, and that at least some of his attributes revealed in the physical world were discernable *“since the creation of the world.”***
* **All old-earth views are false because they implicitly undermine biblical morality!**
* **You cannot with biblical consistency argue against the LGBTQ agenda, adultery, abortion, euthanasia, racism, or critical race theory without the literal, historical truth of Genesis 1–11. This is because a biblical position on sex, gender, marriage, the sanctity of life, and racism is rooted in the literal historical truths of Genesis 1–11.**
* **The church needs to rebuild the foundation, not only by rejecting biological and human evolution, but also by rejecting the millions of years and believing all of Genesis 1–11.**
* **All old-earth views are false because they ultimately undermine the gospel!**
* **The biblical worldview (i.e., the big picture, metanarrative of Scripture) is Creation—Fall—Redemption—Restoration. In the big bang, billions-of-years story that old-earth creationists of all stripes try to harmonize with Genesis, there is no fall.**
* **All old-earth views deny the original very good creation, the cosmic impact of the fall, and the global flood of Noah’s day. All these views impugn the character of God.**
* **All these views undermine why Jesus came the first time and what his redemptive work will accomplish at his second coming.**
* **Therefore, all old-earth views seriously undermine the coherency of the gospel.**
* **I’m sure that few, if any, Christians who advocate old-earth views are intentionally and knowingly undermining the doctrine of the fall and the character of God, which undermines the gospel.**
* **But all the old-earth views do undermine the gospel, precisely because by ignoring or twisting Scripture those views are undermining the authority, reliability, inerrancy, and clarity of Scripture.**
* **The issue is not Christianity vs science. The issue is the authority of Scripture vs the authority of the consensus view of modern scientists.**
* **The issue is whether we will believe the infallible, inerrant Word of our holy God or the fallible opinions and dogmatic claims of sinful men and women who don’t know everything and make mistakes.**
1. **As an aside…but maybe not…C.S. Lewis who taught about “myths” on a graduate level stated that there was nothing in the creation account that could “mark” it a myth.**
2. **Interesting fun facts: especially for those who are always looking for something to complain about concerning the Scriptures:**
3. **Herbert Spencer, a famous scientist who died in 1903, announced that everything in the universe fits into one of five categories: time, force, action, space, and matter. This is all contained in the first verse of the Bible. *“In the beginning [time] God [force] created [action], the heavens [space], and the earth [matter].”***
4. **Marcos introduced us to Adauto Lourenço who you remember said that this first sentence of the Bible defines the origin of the three main basic elements with which science works: time, space, and matter. Consider the order: In the beginning [time] God created the heavens [space] and the earth [matter].**
5. **John Owen weighs in:**
6. ***“Thus, “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1: 1). He created for Himself two distinct, rational families that should depend on Him and obey Him, giving Him glory.***
7. ***He also created two distinct habitations for them according to their nature and use: earth below and heaven above.***
* ***For the habitation of man, God created the earth, which was every way suited to the constitution of our nature, the preservation of our being, and the purpose of our creation—to give glory to God.***
* ***For the habitation of angels, God created heaven, which was also suited to them for the same purposes.***
* ***Man has power and dominion over all things here below, and we are required to use them all to the glory of God, which gives Him glory even through the parts of creation that are otherwise brutish or inanimate.***
* ***In the same way, the angels have dominion over the celestial and heavenly bodies that God had designed for their habitation, that through their contemplation and use, God might have a revenue of glory and praise from them as well.***
1. ***So, to suppose any other race of intellectual creatures, apart from angels in heaven and men on earth, is not only without any evidence from divine testimony but also disturbs and disorders the whole representation of the glory of God made in Scripture as well as the whole design of His wisdom and grace declared therein.***
2. ***Any other intellectual creatures, (aliens???? Hahaha) which are not revealed in the government of God or His wisdom in Christ, are an illusion framed in the imaginations of those who are barely sensible of what it is to be wise.”***

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**October 6, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What is the difference between thinking of the world as “nature” and thinking of it as “creation”?**
4. **“Nature” is impersonal and takes the emphasis off the Creator…as if it has always existed on its own.**
5. **“Creation” speaks of a relationship and it is very personal. A Creator created with a purpose! See Ps. 24:1-2- *“The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.***
6. **In a word or two why are old earth views of creation wrong biblically?**
7. **Why did God create? To reflect His glory is the short answer.**
8. **Just a word (or 2..or 3) about Evolution**
9. **Is Evolution compatible with God’s Word?**
10. **Just to be clear as possible: Evolution is incompatible with God’s Word and His character.**
11. **The Bible is the starting point and absolute authority in all matters. Those who reject God and his authority do so by falsely appealing to man as a greater authority than God—which is arbitrary (and wrong!).**
12. **Unbelievers must suppress the knowledge of God in an effort to try to defy his Word.**
13. **Sadly, many Christians still choose to trust the words of fallible men more than the Word of God, which is never wrong.**
14. **Why is one of the biggest challenges to biblical creation today evolutionary ideology?**
15. **The idea of evolution (i.e., biological evolution), big bang (i.e., cosmological and astronomical evolution), abiogenesis (chemical evolution), and millions of years (geological evolution) doesn’t fit with the Bible because it is rooted in the religion of secular humanism (man’s word)—a religion that tries to explain the world without God.**
16. **Because the world/man in general, seeks to disprove God’s existence.**
17. **What is it and why is it incompatible with God’s character?**
18. **Biological evolution is the supposed process by which the first cell evolved into the diversity of life we see today.**
19. **Natural selection and mutations are considered its driving force; however, evolution has never been observed despite numerous claims to the contrary.**
20. **Natural selection and mutations cannot add the information necessary to change one kind of organism into another.**
21. **And it doesn’t take a science degree to understand why molecules-to-man evolution is impossible.**
22. **Evolution is a word that is used a lot but is poorly defined. Evolutionists themselves frequently equivocate on the term, using it to mean multiple things, sometimes even within the same sentence.**
23. **Macroevolution is used to describe the large-scale changes believed to be able to turn a blob of protoplasm into a person.**
24. **Microevolution, by contrast, is intended to describe the small-scale changes in populations, such as those exhibited by Darwin’s finches—the finch populations change beak sizes regularly in response to environmental pressures. However, they remain finches. No new traits or major changes take place.**
25. **Since the term evolution is so strongly associated with the particles-to-people myth, many tend to use the word *speciation* to explain adaptation and variation within the created kinds, such as that exhibited by the finches.**
* **Because the small-scale changes generally lead to a loss of genetic information rather than a gain of new information needed to create new traits like arms and eyes, microevolution can never lead to macroevolution.**
* **Evolutionists tend to use these ideas interchangeably. For this reason, many avoid these terms, preferring to speak *of speciation* within created kinds (which can be observed and verified) as opposed to molecules-to-man evolution (which is unobservable and unverifiable).**
1. **The Genetic Challenge to Classic Darwinian Evolution**
2. **Darwin had no knowledge of genetics, even though Mendel’s groundbreaking work on genetics was published during his lifetime.**
* **When genetics made its way into mainstream science, evolutionists adapted Darwin’s ideas to fit the emerging study of genetics, forming what is called the Modern Synthesis of Darwinian evolution, or neo-Darwinism.**
* **Most evolutionists today are adherents of neo-Darwinism to one extent or another.**
* **Neo-Darwinism emphasizes four major forces:**
* **gene flow- refers to the movement of genetic material between different populations of a species,**
* **genetic drift-is a random change in within a population, occurring due to chance events and not necessarily related to adaptation, essentially, genetic drift is a random factor that can influence evolution alongside natural selection within the Neo-Darwinian framework.**
* **natural selection, and**
* **mutations.**
* **From these four forces, Neo-Darwinists believe that they can explain the diversity of life on earth.**
1. **Natural selection is the primary mover in the evolutionary dogma.**
* **Natural selection allows organisms that are best suited to their environment to survive and pass on their genetics with greater frequency.**
* **These organisms, because they are best suited for their environment, produce the most offspring.**
* **Over time, the traits of these organisms become dominant in a population. This is where mutations come in.**
1. **Evolutionists regard mutations as the force that creates new variation.**
* **While they acknowledge that mutations almost always remove genetic potential, they believe that on rare occasions a mutation will occur that can create an entirely new trait that is beneficial in a certain environment. All by chance!**
* **Natural selection will then increase this trait in a population. Given enough time, and enough beneficial mutations, Neo-Darwinists believe that one kind of organism can turn into another kind of organism—a fish can become a philosopher.**
1. **But what is actually observable does not fit evolutionists’ dogma.**
* **Natural selection does happen, but it works just as a preservative, weeding out the worst mutations to preserve the health of a population.**
* **Scientists acknowledge natural selection is not the same as evolution.**
* **Mutations likewise occur, but most if not all mutations described as beneficial are only beneficial in certain, often unusual, situations.**
1. **There is no known observable process by which new genetic information can be added to an organism’s genetic code, let alone how that information could arise from random chemicals in the first place.**
* **Information requires an intelligent source, since it requires not only data but also the ability to decode that data.**
* **This alone is enough to refute evolution because there’s no way for a fish to become an amphibian without new information.**
1. **Any ideas about how life could have started on earth overlook one important rule in biology: life doesn’t, cannot, and will never come from non-life.**
* **Life always comes from life. “Life makes a way!” That’s the law—the law of biogenesis, to be exact.**
* **Scientists who try to simulate the origin of life really show how much intelligence is required for life to begin in the first place.**
* **Darwin himself never addressed the origin of the universe and rarely touched on the origin of life, both are key aspects of evolutionary dogma.**
* **While many evolutionists attempt to distance themselves from these, particularly the origin-of-life question, both are fundamentally necessary for evolution to be true.**
* **Since most evolutionists insist on a naturalistic explanation for everything, the origin of life and origin of the universe are both fundamental questions evolutionists must answer to support their dogma and a naturalistic worldview.**
1. **The Fossil-Record Problem for Evolution**
2. **The fossil record is regularly trotted out as containing the finest examples of evolutionary changes in organisms.**
* **Yet within the evolutionist community itself, there was a massive schism in the 1970s when the late Stephen Jay Gould and Niles Eldredge proposed the idea of punctuated equilibrium.**
* **This idea acknowledged a virtual absence of transitional forms in the fossil record and proposed that evolution was not a gradual process.**
* **Instead, it was a jerky, jumpy process that mostly involved stasis before great leaps of change.**
* **While less common today with the influence of the dynamic Gould removed, the mere fact that this idea gained popularity attests to the lack of transitional forms in the fossil record.**
* **Evolutionists prop up their dogma by claiming the earth is millions or even billions of years old.**
* **The most common proof of these great ages is radiometric dating.**
1. **It is not carbon-14 dating, despite Hollywood being fixated on this dating method.**
2. **Carbon-14 dating would only work on carbon-containing materials that are “only” a few thousands of years old.**
3. **Yet carbon-14 has been found in diamonds, which are supposedly billions of years old. It should be long gone, but it isn’t.**
* **Other forms of radiometric dating include uranium-lead dating, potassium-argon dating, rubidium-strontium dating and so on. All are governed by three basic assumptions.**
1. **Scientists assume they know how much of both the parent and daughter element existed in the rock when it was formed.**
2. **They assume that none of either the parent or daughter element was added or lost during the decay process.**
3. **Finally, they assume that the rate of decay has been constant.**
4. **None of these assumptions can be empirically proven.**
5. **In fact, creationists have done radiometric testing on rocks of known ages, such as those formed in the Mount St. Helens eruption, and found that they dated at tens of thousands of years old despite being formed in 1980.**
6. **Radiometric dating does not work as a reliable indicator of the age of the earth or its rocks.**
7. **Evolution’s Effects on Christian Theology-** **consider what happens when you attempt to add evolution into the Bible.**
8. **Adam and Eve are no longer the first humans, and original sin goes out the window. This does irreparable damage to the biblical redemption narrative.**
9. **The Bible says that death came into the world because of man’s sin (Romans 5:12) and that all of creation labors under a curse because of sin (Romans 8:22).**
10. **Scripture also says that Christ is the last Adam, come to redeem us from the sin brought into the world through the first man, Adam (1 Corinthians 15:22, 45).**
11. **If Adam were a mythical figure, which is what evolution demands, even in a Christianized form, the entire parallel between the two Adams and the kinsman redeemer concept is destroyed.**
12. **By advocating evolution, theistic evolutionists are undermining the very tenets of Christianity...and God’s very truth and character.**
13. **The first verse of the Bible, is actually a scientifically accurate statement that accounts for everything that exists.**
14. **The rest of Scripture supposes this presupposition; See Jeremiah 10:12-13- *“It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding stretched out the heavens. When He utters His voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and He makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning for the rain, and He brings forth the wind from His storehouses.”***
15. **Because the Bible is true, we expect to see evidence of God’s fingerprints all over his creation. Even the building blocks of life—DNA—is a confirmation of what we expect to find because God created all things. This Creator revealed himself to us through his Son Jesus Christ and through his Word, the Bible.**
16. **Science Confirms the Bible**
17. **The Bible states that God made distinct kinds of animals and plants. We observe genetic change today but only within certain boundaries (i.e., the cat kind only breed offspring within the cat kind).**
18. **The Bible states that all humanity came from Adam and Eve. Genetics confirms that all people are one race—the human race.**
19. **The Bible states that there was a global flood. As expected, today, we see billions of dead things buried in rock layers laid down by water all over the earth which is a powerful confirmation of what we read in Scripture.**
20. **The World Doesn’t Make Sense Without God**
21. **There’s no reason to believe in right or wrong if man is just rearranged chemicals. As the Creator, God has the right to make the rules….impose the rules and expect that we all will as well.**
22. **The God of the Bible cannot deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13), which is the basis for the law of non-contradiction.**
* **A logical and all-knowing God made us in His image, and this is why we can understand logic and knowledge and learn how a logical God upholds his creation.**
* **A logical God created our senses, so they are basically reliable in a biblical worldview. Of course, due to sin and the curse, people sometimes make logical errors, have sense problems, and so forth.**
* **But God’s Word, which comes with the authority of God Himself, is always right and the standard by which we can judge all matters.**
* **If the universe came from nothing and has no meaning, then why do the laws of logic and laws of science even exist if the universe is random and always changing?**
1. **Most importantly, a biblical creation mattered to the Lord Jesus:**
2. ***"But from the beginning of the creation, ‘God made them male and female’”* (Mark 10:6).**
3. **Jesus taught that Adam and Eve were made at the *“beginning of creation,”* not billions of years after the beginning.**
4. **If the universe is billions of years old, Jesus’ statement was a lie. But Jesus did not lie. He affirmed creation, reasoned from creation, and taught the truth of a biblical creation.**
5. **What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer? God created and He created everything that there is out of nothing by the power of His word.**
6. **Generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? Explaining what He is doing when it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Step by step… sequentially.**
7. **Is the theory of evolution compatible with God’s truth and His character? Why or why not?**
8. **Why is the correct answers and the acceptance of those answers crucial to our faith today?**
9. **They are the faith issue here.**
10. **We will talk about the days of creation and we may not all come away with the same explanation concerning the length of the days…but we all must believe these two simple truths to be able to call ourselves “believers” :**
11. **That God created all things**
12. **That God created all things from nothing**
13. **That God created all things from nothing by the power of His Word.**
14. **This is the true faith issue.**
15. **See again Hebrews 11: 3- *“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible”*.…gives a clear description of the faithful…that is this is what true believers believe.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**Oct 13, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Is the theory of evolution compatible with God’s truth and His character? Why or why not?**
4. **What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer?**
5. **God created and He created everything that there is out of nothing by the power of His word.**
6. **See again Hebrews 11: 3- *“By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible”*.…**
7. **Must believe in creation as God laid it out or your belief is in question.**
8. **Gives a clear description of the faithful…that is this is what true believers believe.**
9. **Why is the correct answers and the acceptance of those answers crucial to our faith today?**
10. **They are the faith issue here.**
11. **The length of days in creation is NOT a faith issue. We will see how the divines of Westminster considered it in a couple of weeks.**
12. **We may not all come away with the same explanation concerning the length of the days…however we have seen that an old-earth view is not compatible with the way creation is presented in the Scriptures and confirmed by Christ Himself.**
13. **But we all must believe these simple truths to be able to call ourselves “believers” :**
* **That God created all things**
* **That God created all things from nothing**
* **That God created all things from nothing by the power of His Word.**
1. **Moving on: Verse 2? *“The earth was without form and void/empty, and the darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”***
2. **But before we get into this text and break it apart let’s consider yet another issue the Church has set up to help keeps us in sync with science.**

1. **There is another theory in the Church, maybe you have heard of it: The Gap Theory that tries answer the questions of creation from a different perspective…seeking to answer the question; how much time would you say elapsed between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2? Was there a gap between God’s creation of the heaven and the earth and the 6 days of creation?**
2. **Many have tried to say that this was the event of a great pre-flood catastrophe.**

1. **That there had been a full creation in verse 1 but here we see the results of some unknown event that set everything back to its beginning, if you will, and verses 3 begins a second creation.**
2. **This has been known historically as the Gap theory.**
3. **Scofield held to this view as do many dispensationalists of his age. He even changed words in his Bible to reflect this gap.**
* **Geneva Bible says, *“… the earth was without form…”* Scofield’s KJV says, *“…the earth became…”*as in became again.**
* **Another name is the Restoration Hypothesis…or Gap theory!**
1. **According to R.C. Sproul…most translations translate the word *“was”* as in *“… the earth was without form…”* ... not *“became”,* which indicates the existing state in the original process of creation. All primary (read normal) renderings of this word is *“was”…* hundreds of times in the Hebrew.**
* **The Gap theorists render this word “became”, which is an extremely rare usage...**
* **Biblical translation categorically uses the primary (read normal or natural) use of the word unless there is something outstanding in the context to cause you to do otherwise.**
* **And as I said there is such little support linguistically or hermeneutically.**
* **They translate it this way to reconcile their view…the Gap theory...to form that bridge between science and the Bible.**
* **Since there were so much debate within the church as to the age of the Earth…so maybe the first earth before the angels fell and everything became chaotic…according to this view…was extremely old but the re-creation …not so much.**
1. **This is a speculation seeking to reconcile what they perceive to be a problem.**
* **The Gap theory says there is only one verse in Genesis that refers to God’s initial creation. Vs. 1**
* **Vs. 2 in not part of the account of the original creation but the first verse in the re-creation of the original creation that had fallen into chaos.**
* **This “Gap” between verse 1 and verse 2 could be thousands or billions of years.**
* **What follows then is the 6 Days of re-creation.**
* **It would be below God’s nature to create anything that was less than perfect. How is it that anything that God creates be without form and void? Sequentially there would be a moment/time just before He put form on to things.**
* **The Gap Theory is not impossible but there seems no compelling reason to assume...it is better to act and believe on what God has readily revealed in His Word.**
1. **Why such speculation? The Church needed something else to fight about!**
2. **It seems because of the onslaught of evolution and the whole age of the earth issues.**
3. **Scofield himself said, he was seeking a bridge between science and the Bible and this theory conveniently solves this supposed dilemma.**
4. **If vs. 1 was the only verse that speaks of God’s initial creation then it could be assumed that there might have been an initial creation and that this was a re-creation after some cosmic catastrophe that had Satan leading the fallen angels and then afterwards God responds by repairing the damage of such a battle.**
5. **Also, Scofield is known for using obscure translation to “prove” his other theories…like, and especially dispensationalism…which is built on God having do-overs…anywhere from 3-8 different dispensations… each one a sort of do over since people didn’t cooperate with God.**
6. **Do we have 2 separate creations in mind? No, the formless and void/empty is just the next step in creation…just before He begins to put form to formlessness , filling up what is empty and bringing light to darkness.**
7. **Why do you suppose it is that Christians in general have a hard time defending the creation account?**
8. **Don’t know the Scriptures…**
9. **Don’t think it matters to the overall aspect of their faith.**
10. **They will say it is true but they don’t know why because other “doctrines” are more important.**
11. **IN light of “evidence” by modern science this explanation can sound too elementary to be included in any rational discussion.**
12. **Then to be labeled as one of those “ID” (intentional design) folks or fanatics could be uncomfortable.**
13. **Comment from the crowd: *“Because of our pride…we don’t want to talk about things that we are unsure of. We would rather focus on some of the aspects of creation…length of days, image of God, analyzing each day… things that we can talk through rather than on the majesty of God, His preeminence, His omnipotence and His total creation… which is His point.”***
14. **So what we have, then, at this point or stage of His creating is the heavens and the earth were empty. (Vs.1) THEN God begins to put together the things needed for His creation. Vs. 2- *“The earth was without form and void/empty, and the darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”***
15. **What do we observe here in vs 2?**
16. **The Hebrew actually reads *“va ha a res”… “And the earth…”*…Some translate this, *“Now the earth…”* Given what we have said so far about the different understandings of creation how do the words “And’ or “Now” help us with our biblical view of creation against the other views?**
17. **By connecting these two verses together we can say there were NOT 2 creation events.**
18. **These word communicate connection and sequence of events giving us an overview or summary of creation which is afterwards filled in with the details actually beginning in vs 2.**
19. **Also, with these words we know that that verse 1 is not merely a heading/title for a grand story, poem or allegory.**
20. **The next Hebrew words of note here are *“tohu va bohu”-* literally “was *“wasteness and emptiness.”***
21. **The words in the Hebrew were so similar and harsh that they passed into ancient times as a proverb describing what is dreary and desolate.**
22. **See Jeremiah 4:23- *“I looked on the earth, and behold, it was without form and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light.”***
23. **The words express the state of no cohesion between separate particles.**
24. **At the moment of creation just before He began to give form that is all that there was.**
25. **Imagine God standing over a workbench and on this workbench in His hands is the beginning of creation.**
26. **This “substance” in His hands is defined as *“…formless, empty (with no meaning/application), and dark (no life)…”* from our understanding of matter*--* so this substance was not “chaotic” it was formless, from our perspective…not evil…in a real way this is the true primordial matter that God had brought into being as the first stage of creation….a yet incomplete work of divine creation.**
* **Think(inadequately) of a sculptor/potter…who seeks to bring form out of clay, stone or wood…the illustration breaks down, obviously, because each of these have “form” in and of themselves, but the sculptor takes one of these and forms it into something else…with all its flaws this might communicate the basic idea.**
* **This is where the concept of “Ex Nihilo”= “Out of nothing.”**
1. **He had just called them forth… there is nothing implied in the words that anything was wrong…or evil was in this darkness…rather what can be implied is that this would have been normal… for God was progressing through His creating.**
2. **Before God actually create light and the rest there would naturally be a point in the process where there would be darkness and emptiness…formlessness….since none of these are as yet created by the Power of His word.**
3. **God will ultimately bring form out of formlessness…He will fill up what was empty and bring light to that which is dark…in verse 3 and following.**
4. **This is common within the Scriptures for the big concept to come first and then what follows explaining or outlining the details of what was just said.**
5. **Paul in Eph. 5 gives us the big picture of what is expected of God’s people…how we must live, if you will and then he breaks that down with wife and husband, parent/child, employee and employer…Revelation 1-11 gives the big picture of all of Redemptive history and the last 11 chapters fill in the details.**
6. **God was creating…and these verses 1:2-2:3 are telling us what He went on to do.**
7. **In the Old Testament, God’s Word and God’s Spirit are parallel figures speaking to the unity…Trinity.**
8. **God’s Word is the Almighty’s speech; God’s Spirit is His Almighty breath.**
9. **The speech and breath of God appear together here is the beginning of the record of creation. *“The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”***
10. **Ps.33:6- *“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath (Spirit) of His mouth all their host.”***
11. **Both convey God’s power in action.**
12. ***The Spirit of God*- the *“ruah Elohim”* in Hebrew which equals “*wind or Spirit, or life*”… here and in the rest of the OT.**
13. **This word assures us that this is no ordinary wind.**
14. **It is not a “natural” created wind.**
15. **The first act, if you will, of fitting this world for habitation for man was for the Spirit of God to move upon the face of the waters.**
* **Till that time everything was formless and empty/void.**
* **This is not a discussion of time… that is “how long” but one of sequence just like the rest of creation.**
1. **But is the very power of God that was *“hovering” or “brooding”* like a hen brooding with its eggs.**
* **The word connotes a sense of relaxation.**
* **The hen sits upon her eggs without a problem often falling asleep for she is so relaxed.**
* **Again noting as we will see later that there was not a lot of effort as we think of effort put forth is creating and bringing formlessness into form.**
* **In Verse 3 God will simply speak forth and there will be light…no sense of having to yell…just simple conversational speech.**
* **The Hebrew term, we translate as *“moving or hovering or brooding”* is…speaks of the Spirits role in containment and protection of all the God was doing.**
1. **The world is formless and void/ empty at this moment the Spirit is the One that will watch over this and along with the rest of the Godhead bring form and order in the creation to come He will bring fullness to the things created.**
2. **The rest of chapter 1 tells us how this is all carried out… God speaks and by His Word things and then people will be created.**
* **Bringing order …form to disorder.**
* **It is the spirit who begins every work of creation and re-creation.**
* **Our life before faith was chaotic at best…life was formless and void of any “good thing”.**
* **When the Spirit of God comes upon us He brings faith in Jesus Christ…and in that brings us form and fullness of life…a new identity that corresponds with the old one but with a new nature.**
1. **Some say that this word *“hovering”* also speaks to the Spirits creating the reason and place for worship.**
* **Psalm 19 tells us clearly that creation was made to praise the LORD…to bring Him glory. *“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them He has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.”* (Psalm 19:1-6)**
* **So this day of creation with the work of the Spirit could also be a type for the church to worship God…glorifying Him wherever we are…corporately and individually.**
1. **Genesis 1 doesn’t indicate the full significance that the names “Word” and “Spirit” will have for Trinitarian theology.**
2. **The full significance of these names only comes with the appearance of the Word made flesh and the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost.**
3. **Nevertheless, by including God’s Word and Spirit within God’s singular agency, Genesis 1 puts another fundamental building block of Trinitarian theology in place.**
* **Whatever distinctions Scripture later reveals between Elohim, His Word, and His Spirit, they should not be taken as distinctions between the one God and something that is not God.**
* **They should be taken as distinctions within the one God Himself.**
1. **While creation was going on step by step… sequentially… the Spirit is hovering over it all watching over it…shepherding it…giving it life already in its infancy. What does this communicate to you?**
2. **This demonstrates the biblical worldview of God whose hand and direct presence have never been lifted even from the elements and the working of the material order.**
3. **This is important in that at no time was not the Godhead directly involved.**
4. **Generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? Explaining what He is doing when it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Step by step… sequentially.**
5. **What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer? God created and He created everything that there is out of nothing by the power of His Word.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**Oct 20, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What is the faith issue concerning creation for the true believer?**
4. **But we all must believe these simple truths to be able to call ourselves “believers” :**
5. **That God created all things**
6. **That God created all things from nothing**
7. **That God created all things from nothing by the power of His Word.**
8. **The length of days in creation is NOT a faith issue. We will see how the divines of Westminster considered it in a couple of weeks.**
9. **We may not all come away with the same explanation concerning the length of the days…however we have seen that an old-earth view is not compatible with the way creation is presented in the Scriptures and confirmed by Christ Himself.**
10. **Generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? Explaining what He is doing when it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Step by step… sequentially.**
11. **Now let’s look at Gen. 1:3-2:3**
12. **In this section, what are some of the main repeated words and phrases…and what are their significance?**
13. ***“God…”***
14. ***“And God said…”***
15. ***“Let there be…”***
16. ***“Day”***
17. ***“God made”***
18. ***“God called…”***
19. ***“God created…”***
20. ***“…according to its kind…according to their kinds”***
21. ***“…evening and morning…”***
22. ***“And God saw…”***
23. ***“good” … “very good”***
24. **Which came first the chicken of the egg? You just can’t start a study on creation without asking this question…☺ ☺ What proof do you have from this text that supports your conclusion?**
25. **Christians should appreciate the significance of the order/structure of creation.**
26. **When we read from Genesis 1: 3 all the way to Genesis 2: 3 we will have for us, in short, described the seven days of creation: the six days in which God creates and the Sabbath day on which He rests. This is God’s explanation of the first verse…His continued plan unfolded. Let’s look at the passage briefly:**
27. **I want you to note that whereas Genesis 1:2 says that the earth was formless, days one, two and three are all devoted to giving the world form.**
28. **If you’ll look from verse 3 to verse 10, you will see that each of those days speaks of God’s shaping the world, ordering it into form out of formlessness.**
29. **Days four, five and six are all devoted to God’s bringing fullness to the creation from emptiness/void.**
30. **You have noticed then that days 1-3 are devoted to form; 4-6 are devoted to fullness.**
31. **Interestingly, the first day of form (Day 1) and the first day of fullness (Day 4) are both devoted to what? The creation of light.**
32. **So from formlessness and emptiness and darkness, God brings into the creation order and fullness and light.**
33. **And so He impresses on the creation the stamp of His own character. His light.**
34. **That is why the Scriptures can say, *"The heavens declare the glory of God"* (Ps. 19) because His order and His fullness and His light have been built into the creation as we see it. And so day to day utters forth praise to Him.**
35. **That is why Jesus can say*… “I am the light of the world.”***
36. **And since we, who are His Elect, reflect His light we can be called *“You are the light of the world.”* (Matt. 5:14)**
37. **And that is why the apostle Paul can say in Romans, chapter 1 that we see in the creation the reality of God. It testifies that He is the maker of heaven and earth and that we ought to worship Him.**
38. **But also, light is not dependent upon the Sun and Moon. Rev. 21:23- *“And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.”***
39. **Now what about the length of the DAYS of creation? How are we supposed to understand this and is it crucial?**
40. **WCF 4-1- *It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.***
41. **The Divines did not define for us the length of days.**
42. **Most at the time were young earthers…saying with Bishop Ussher that the earth was probably 4400 years old.**
43. **But recognizing the gaps in the genealogies, I would still say a young earth theory is still good somewhere between 6000 and 12,000 years.**
44. **Most were okay with the regular definition of *“day”* …but it is interesting they were more focused on the fact that God created ex nihilo, by the power of His word and all was very good... then to define the length of days.**
* **Not a salvific issue?**
* **Just understood to be 24 hour days?**
1. **As we begin this discussion concerning the days of creation it is significant that every culture and people all over the world all know how to define a “day” …a “week”…a “month”.**
2. **Everyone thinks of a day as 24 hours…a week as 7 days…and a month 30 or 31 days.**
3. **It seems it is only in some groups within Christianity that we believe we know better what God meant by these things.**
4. **They are not concepts or ideas…they are real.**
5. **I like the whole “Just the Facts” approach….which squares more with the hermeneutical/narrative interpretation of things than any other possible account of the days. Hermeneutics= the science of biblical interpretation.**
6. **Comes from Hermes- Mercury who was considered the messenger of the gods in Greek and Roman mythology.**
7. **It helps us to know that the same rules that apply to poetry do not apply to something like historical narrative.**
8. **So with this in mind we interpret literally according to the manner in which it was written and was intended to be understood which is most often the easiest interpretation is usually the right one.**
9. **But when people say they believe in the “literal” interpretation of Genesis they are saying that they believe in a literal 6- 24 hour days of creation.**
10. ***“Day” = YOM* in the Hebrew….most often used…that is its normal use is to promote a 24 hour solar day or the daylight portion of those hours in the Hebrew. In fact, Yom seems to be used in very specific sense here in the creation account.**
11. **Vs. 5 is the first use of the word…and day is defined as a period of time that is light.**
12. **Vs. 5 mentions *“day”* a second time at the end after it is defined by the phrase *“evening and morning*”. It is here where things get a bit tricky:**
* **Is it a Cardinal number as in “one day”…evening and morning equals one day, in this context, this word is defined as an evening plus a morning totaling one day...exactly the way Jewish people currently divide a 24 hour day.**
* **Since there is no definite article attached to this particular “day” this one seems to set the stage for defining the rest in sequential order. I wonder… could Moses have been any more clearer?...or…**
* **Is it an Ordinal number as in the first day? Normally in Hebrew an Ordinal number has a definite article attached to the word “day” if it is to be translated as in “the first day”.**
1. **Vs. 8 reads *“evening and morning a* (“the” in the ESV) *second day”*.**
* **Here it seems that Moses, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit uses an ordinal number the *“the second day”* seems correct.**
* **But following the use of the Cardinal number in verses 5 twice it would seem to only indicate that this is a second period of evening and morning has been completed and it is the same length of time as the one day.**
* **Either way when modified with a number or the sequence of numbers 1st, 2nd, etc.…. it is universally used in Hebrew as a solar day. (Universally means when dealing with Hebrew…:at least 90% of the time” )**
* **In fact, of the 702 instances of the plural form “days” it never means anything other than literal solar days.**
1. **Vs. 14 and 16 seems to affirm this use as well when the “lights” are separated for specific functions, *“…for signs and for seasons and for days and years.” …* and… *“The greater light to rule over the day…”* Clearly meaning a 24 hour day here.**
2. **This seems to reveal the sequential and chronological order of the creative action in the creation narrative.**
3. **Biblical translation categorically uses the primary (read normal or natural) use of the word unless there is something outstanding in the context to cause you to do otherwise.**
4. **Gen. 2:4 seems to use the word “day” to go along with the term “generation” to speak of the the age/time period in which God created.**
5. **However as is usual for translation the normative use of this word throughout the Scriptures is to speak of 24 hour day- Exodus 20:8-11, “*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.***
6. **But when it stands for something else…say a longer period of time…context dictates…as in 2:4.**
7. **Christian Scientist Henry M. Morris seems correct in marshalling the evidence that ‘day’ in Genesis 1 and 2 signifies a normal solar day: *“Furthermore, ‘God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.’ As though in anticipation of future misunderstanding, God carefully defined His terms! The very first time He used the word ‘day’ (Hebrew yom), He defined it as the ‘light’, to distinguish it from the ‘darkness’ called ‘night’. Having separated the day and night, God had completed His first day’s work. ‘The evening and the morning were the first day.’ This same formula is used at the conclusion of each of the six days; so it is obvious that the duration of each of the days, including the first, was the same… In the first chapter of Genesis, the termination of each day’s work is noted by the formula: ‘And the evening and the morning were the first [or “second,” etc.] day.’ Thus each ‘day’ had distinct boundaries and was one in a series of days, both of which criteria are never present in the Old Testament writings unless literal days are intended. The writer of Genesis was trying to guard in every way possible against any of his readers deriving the notion of nonliteral days from his record.”***
8. **Just a reminder:**
9. **Herbert Spencer, a famous scientist who died in 1903, announced that everything in the universe fits into one of five categories: time, force, action, space, and matter. This is all contained in the first verse of the Bible. *“In the beginning [time] God [force] created [action], the heavens [space], and the earth [matter].”***
10. **Marcos introduced us to Adauto Lourenço who you remember said that this first sentence of the Bible defines the origin of the three main basic elements with which science works: time, space, and matter. Consider the order: In the beginning [time] God created the heavens [space] and the earth [matter].**
11. **Considering all that we have said, further confirmation of the Genesis ‘days’ as plain, solar days is provided by the reason annexed to the fourth commandment (‘ Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy’) in Exodus 20: 11: ‘*For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.’***
12. **The crucial point here is that God’s creative work, followed by rest, forms the pattern of wholesome life for His image-bearer, mankind.**
13. **Apparently, mankind is so important to the infinite God that He arranged His creative activity specifically to set the structure for human life. That must be a major reason why God created over six days rather than in a split-second (or a hundred billion years).**
14. **Such a conclusion is far from preposterous once we take seriously the incarnation of the eternal Son of God as a true human in order to redeem humanity.**
15. **A couple more quotes:**
16. **One has to appreciate the exegetical honesty of the liberal, nineteenth-century Scottish Professor Marcus Dods, when he wrote that *“if, for example, the word ‘day’ in these chapters does not mean a period of twenty-four hours, the interpretation of Scripture is hopeless.”***
17. **4Th -century church father, St Ambrose of Milan, faithfully summarized the biblical usage of day in his Hexameron: *“The beginning of the day rests on God’s word: ‘Be light made, and light was made.’ The end of day is the evening. Now, the succeeding day follows after the termination of night. The thought of God is clear. First He called light ‘day’ and next He called darkness ‘night’. In notable fashion has Scripture spoken of a ‘day’, not the ‘first day’. Because a second, then a third day, and finally the remaining days were to follow, a ‘first day’ could have been mentioned, following in this way the natural order. But Scripture established a law that twenty-four hours, including both day and night, should be given the name of day only, as if one were to say the length of one day is twenty-four hours in extent.”***
18. **But, of course, there are uses that speak of God being timeless…to God a day is like a 1000 years and a 1000 years as one day.**
19. **But once again to spend too much time on this takes away from what God is communicating: which is that all that is… is God’s creation.**
20. **Of the many New Testament references that refer to or suggest anything to do with Chapters 1-11 of Genesis, in none of these references, nor in any of the larger contexts in which they are located, is there the slightest indication of anything other than the literal, chronological understanding of the six days of creation and the succeeding patriarchal history.**
21. **The loose, ‘anti-literal’ atmosphere of the ‘literary’ Framework Hypothesis is not suggested by the New Testament writers.**
22. **Nor does a careful exegesis of Genesis 1 and 2 reveal it.**
23. **In this chapter we see the number 7 playing a prominent role…some are obvious…some are not.**
24. **This number is symbolically important through Scripture and to the structure of this chapter.**
25. **Francis Schaefferpointed out: *“Not only are there 7 days of creation, but there are 7 natural paragraph breaks in the Hebrew. In the first verse in the original Hebrew, there are 7 words and 14 in the 2nd sentence. The 7th paragraph contains 35 words. God/Elohim is used 35 times, heaven and earth are used 21 times. The phrase “it is good” is used 7 times in reference to some aspect of creation. On the 7th time, the creation is said to be “very good.” The words light and day are each used 7 times in the 1st paragraph. Light is referred to 7 times on the 4th day. Water is mentioned 7 times on the 2nd and 3rd days. This detailed structure didn’t happen by chance. It shows that the author intended to do things with this structure.”***
26. **Can you think of other books structured around the number 7?Revelation!**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**Oct 27, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Concerning the creation account in the Bible…Is it fact or fiction? How does our answer affect our worldview and the way we look at the rest of Scripture? If this is not absolutely true then the rest of scripture is suspect!?**
4. **What is the easiest understanding biblically of the word “day” in the days of creation? Support your answer the best you can.**
5. **Biblical translation categorically uses the primary (read normal or natural) use of the word unless there is something outstanding in the context to cause you to do otherwise.**
6. **Most all primary (read normal) renderings of this word is *“Day”…* hundreds of times in the Hebrew. There are exceptions…but the exceptions are NEVER the rule.**
7. **General overview of the days of creation:**
	* + 1. **Someone read the first 3 days Gen. 1:3-13. The 1st 3 days God is giving form to what was formless. What ALL is represented by these words, *“And God said, Let there be…”?***
8. ***“And God said…”*- Ps. 33:6 and 9- *“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host…For He spoke, and it came to be; He commanded, and it stood firm.”***
9. **All creation is dependent upon God for its existence…**
10. **All creation belongs to God since He spoke it into existence.**
11. **He created from nothing by the power of His Word…**
	* + - 1. **When we think of power we think of exertion …force… How much work does it take for you to talk, really!**
				2. **Think about God…from our perspective the amount of force exerted compared to other things within Himself was minimal just like the fact that it takes minimal exertion for us to speak.**
				3. ***“ex nihilo”* also has in its meaning that God’s creative acts were completely effortless.**
				4. **It reveals there was a plan…He was speaking forth from His plan…He wasn’t making it up on the fly.**
12. **The little Word *“Let”* speaks of God’s divine commands by fiat or decree do what he does all through Scripture…or simply His command of us as well like, *“Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.”* (Mark 10:14) There is to be no question concerning our obedience.**
13. **What do the words, *“… and there was…”* communicate to us? They represent the accomplishment of that act that God called forth by His Word.**
14. **What does the term, *“and God saw that it was good”* communicate?**
* **It was complete…that act was finished.**
* **Good …in that it glorified Him.**
1. **Why do you suppose Moses used such repetition in this creation account…from *“and God said…”* to *“God saw that it was good…”* to *“And there was morning and there was evening the \_\_\_ day.”*? What is Moses teaching us by repeating these so often? (Because God told him so is not a good enough answer. ☺ ☺ )**
2. **Repetition aids learning…we need to be reminded because we forget…**
3. **It is the nature of a chronological and sequential narrative to see repeated phrases to show God’s continual action.**
4. **In the 2nd day, what specifically is being talked about? The atmosphere of the earth.**
5. **Why at the end of the 2nd day do we NOT read, *“it was good”*? Simple…don’t hurt yourself…He wasn’t done… that carries over into the next day.**
6. **What else does He do on the third day?**
7. **The point of these first 3 days is that He is giving form to what was formless…**
8. **Verse 3 to verse 10, you will see that each of those days speaks of God’s shaping the world, ordering it into form out of formlessness.**
	* + 1. **Someone read verses 14- 31. In these next 3 days we see God filling up what was empty…adding fullness to the form. What is happening in day 4?**
9. **Day 1 He gives us light… separating the darkness that existed before…**
10. **On day 4 He brings expression of fullness to the light by placing it in physical objects.**
11. **Why are no names given for the Sun and the Moon…they are simply called the lights?**
12. **This is done on purpose. Who were Moses’ audiences?**
13. **Jews and the Egyptians who had names for the Sun and the Moon elevating them to god like status.**
14. **God is making the point that these are simply a part of His creation.**
15. **They and the seasons are controlled by Him they function at His command they cannot function.**
16. **Think a minute about the stars that He made and how many will be Abraham’s descendants who will be innumerable: People who determine these things have said:**
17. **If a computer were to start observing 10 million stars per second, it would still take 63 million years to count all the stars that God made. Such is the power of God in creation.**
18. **A couple more images to consider concerning stars:**
	* + - 1. **Ps. 8:3- *“When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place.”* says, the stars are the work of His fingers…imagine that…fingers!**
				2. **Ps. 98:1-*“***  ***Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things! His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for him.”*  says, that salvation is the work of His strength**
				3. **In a wonderful way… God’s work in making believers new creations in Christ Jesus demonstrates and even greater power than commanding the world and the stars into existence.**
19. **By day 5 we have all that is necessary to sustain life as we know it. So God does just that… creates life.**
20. **Where does life begin according to this passage? In the seas.**
21. **In verse 1 we see the word *“created”* and here we see it again when God begins to create life in verse 20. What do you think might be significant about that?**
	* + - 1. **Think surrounding nations at the time of this writing and the rampant paganism and what God is communicating with these words appropriately placed.**
				2. **Oh, and by the way, I think God was also looking down the corridors of time knowing we would be having this Evolution discussion so He emphatically says “I created” rather than saying they evolved or I allowed them to evolve.**
				3. **He actually puts a period on the discussion for anyone who wants to consider themselves a Theistic evolutionist and a Christian at the same time.**

 **Those 2 don’t go together.**

**For in saying “*I created”* He is also saying *“I keep what I create”*… so there is on-going work involving Him.**

**Not of creation but of oversight…of salvation- a re-creation, if you will.**

**Nothing happens outside of His oversight and control for all of it belongs to Him.**

* + - * 1. **He didn’t create things to evolve…He created them and He directs them so that they are able to glorify Him in the way He intended.**
1. **Day 6 brings us creation of life on land. We will look specifically about man in God’s image another week. What is meant by the phrase, “*According to their own kinds…”?***
2. **There is no room for evolution from one species to another. (Macro-evolution)**
3. **There is nothing wrong with “evolution” within a species (micro-evolution)…we have actually seen that happen and that does not negate God’s creative force…all creation is created to adapt to the environment God creates for it.**
	* + 1. **Someone read Gen. 2:1-3. The chapter division is unfortunate for the creation account continues through day 7 which ends at 2:3.**
	1. **It is important for us to realize that the creation account does not end with man. It ends where it began… with God! Why would that be significant?**
4. **The objective of creation is not man as many want us to believe but the solemn rest of the 7th day.**
5. **Because of all that God has done He is only One worthy of praise and honor.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**November 3, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **When asked about the days of creation how would you answer the inquiry drawing from faith and evidence?**
4. **What is meant by and how significance are these words here in the account “*According to their own kinds…”?***
5. **Someone read Gen. 2:1-3. The chapter division is unfortunate for the creation account continues through day 7 which ends at 2:3.**

**It is important for us to realize that the creation account does not end with man. It ends where it began… with God! Why would that be significant?**

1. **The objective of creation is not man as many want us to believe but the solemn rest of the 7th day.**
2. **Because of all that God has done He is only One worthy of praise and honor.**

**What is happening on day 7?**

1. **His rest is a symbol for His achievement.**
2. **He stopped and rested because creation was through…it was finished! Sound familiar?**

**What doesn’t happen?**

1. **He didn’t rest because He was tired…**
2. **There is no evening and morning of the 7th day. What might that communicate?**
3. **That the day is NOT finished…**
4. **Then what does it mean when the Scriptures say…then God rested?**
5. **It pictures the Sabbath rest that can only be found in God and,**
6. **It looks forward to the ultimate rest when redemption comes to its fullness. See Hebrews 4:11-13- *“Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. 12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from His sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”***
	* + - **We are commanded here to strive to enter into His rest…what does that mean…given that all of us who are in Christ are guaranteed that rest at the appropriate time?**
			- **Why do you suppose the striving to enter His rest is linked with an image of double edge sword that pierces and discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart?**
			- **One last thought, How does verse 13 help us in our walk toward His rest?**
7. **When we look at this grammatically, by being referred to as the 7th day.**
8. **God through Moses is telling us/them that what is unique about this day is that it is NOT a work day.**
9. **It is a day God set aside as a day for worship, for service and for rest for man from *“normal/regular”* work (as the Hebrew usually says).**

**If the 7th Day is not finished yet, what could possibly be the reason for even speaking of a 7th day…why not stop at 6 days and all was very good?**

* 1. **7 again is an important number for completion.**
	2. **The pattern for work and rest is established codified and commanded as a pattern for us.**
	3. **Sets the stage for the Sabbath commandment as this pattern is established as a Creation Mandate.**
	4. **So there are 7 days in a week…4 weeks of 7 days in a month with a pattern for work and for rest for God’s glory and our spiritual, emotional and physical health!**
	5. **The 7th Day is a gift from God to us…not because we deserve it or have earned it but because of His love for us.**

**How important is the Sabbath for us today…really?**

* + - * 1. **It has been commanded of us…on one hand that ought to be enough motivation…but… we don’t give it that importance any more, do we?**
				2. **In fact, historically when the Church neglects the Sabbath as it is in the habit of doing today…the Church is weakened, disciplined by God and confused in general.**
				3. **The same is true for us as individuals and married couples. For the Christian one day in 7 is to be a celebration of what God has done as we come together as His people to celebrate together…since we were not created to be alone.**

**Why do I need to have a clear position on creation as I look forward to the end of the world… the consummation? One comment among many: “According to *Col. 1:16-17- “For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in him all things hold together*.”…if we don’t have a clear position on creation…that Christ was there at the beginning it would be hard to understand His preeminence…and the end times wouldn’t make sense.”**

**So how might this information, so far, help us in ascertaining the age of the earth; a topic that has and does divide even the staunchest Christians?**

1. **Basing our discussion in science doesn’t always help:**
2. **On one hand we have the astrophysical argument that seeks to explain the birth, life and death of stars.**
	* + - 1. **This approach seems to support an old earth theory because of how long we theorize it takes for light to travel in the universe many theorize the age of the universe as we know it has to be old to account for all the math.**
				2. **Of course this depends on a few of things:**

**That what we theorize about light is true science…that light does travel at 186,000 miles per second… in space…we supposedly have proven that to be true here in atmosphere.**

**However, is it the same in space where we cannot do any more than theorize since we have absolutely no way of knowing when the light from a distant start was actually sent out?**

**All the laws of physics are absolute…or are they? Beyond my pay grade to be sure…but we can’t confirm any stars that have died since according to the theory we haven’t lived long enough and perhaps …just perhaps all the light hasn’t gotten to us yet.**

* + - * 1. **Do we really think that God is bound to astrophysics when He can stop the Sun at will?**
1. **Geophysical evidence actually supports a newer earth since Mt. St. Helen’s explosion has proved that settling and strata do not need millions of years to form.**
2. **Archeology and paleontology don’t really support an old earth theory either.**
	* + - 1. **The fossil record is so incomplete …even though many seek to “make” it complete….whether it is pseudo-man, man or dinosaur.**
				2. **Our best method of testing and dating is still Carbon 14 which only conclusively goes back about 6000 years with a plus or minus factor for another 2-4000 years.**

 **Anything beyond that is speculation and theory since we do not have a scientific apparatus/method to prove age beyond that.**

**Some prefer the radiometric dating…with the assumptions that still have to be made to fit into their old earth paradigm.**

1. **That is where we need to begin with a more reliable source with more reliable methodologies for discovery…which is the Bible…the one true source text. Gen. 1 speaks of 6 days…Exodus 20 speaks of 6 days…nothing disputes that but men.**
2. **The positions on creation “approved” by the PCA as acceptable exceptions to the Westminster Confession of faith chapter 4.**

**Calendar-Day- This position maintains that God created all things out of nothing in the space of six literal days. It accepts the 1st chapter of Genesis as historical, chronological and literal in character and for the most part views the creation week as six twenty-four hour days, followed by a twenty-four hour Sabbath. Since Adam and Eve were created as mature adults, so the rest of creation was the first of its kind fully mature. Most who hold this view believe that this is the easiest and most normal understanding of the creation account. They also hold that this has been the most common understanding in both Jewish and Christian history. Young earth position…4000 to 15,000 years.**

**Day-Age- This position is much more complicated. Three explanations that have been and are held within conservative and Reformed circles govern this position.**

* 1. **The 6 days are understood in the same sense as “in that day” of Isaiah 11:10-11- that is, as periods of indefinite length and not necessarily a 24 hour duration. This view takes into consideration the much lesser uses of the Hebrew word for day.**
	2. **Another argument for this approach is that the 7th day is not concluded with the customary phrase, *“and there was evening, and there was morning”* as with the other days.**
	3. **The six days are taken as sequential, but also as overlapping and merging into one another. An example of this thinking would be, Jesus’ day(the time of His earthly ministry) overlapping the Old Testament and the New Testament periods.**
	4. **It is difficult to understand the duration of the first 3 days because the sun and the moon weren’t created until the fourth day. Young earth view but not as young as above…15,000-65,000 years.**

**Framework- Exegesis indicates that the scheme of the creation week itself is a poetic figure and that the several pictures of creation history are set within six weeks of days framework that is not chronological but topical.**

1. **In distinguishing simple description and poetic figure from what is definitely conceptual the only ultimate guide, here as always, is comparison with the rest of Scripture.**
2. **In other words, the distinctive feature of the Framework position is its understanding of the week (not the days as such) as a metaphor. Moses used the metaphor of a week to narrate God’s acts of creation. Thus God’s supernatural creative words and events are real and historical, but the exact timing is left unspecified. We will talk a bit more about this in a minute.**

**Analogical Days- The “days” are God’s work days, which are analogous, but not necessarily identical, to our work days, structured for the purpose of setting a pattern for our own rhythm of rest and work. Each "day" represents a period during which God performed a major activity. Again the days are: *"successive periods of unspecified length. They may overlap in part, or may reflect logical rather than chronological criteria for grouping certain events on certain days."* (God set the pattern for our seven-day week. It would seem to me that if the days of Genesis are indefinite long periods of time, then this pattern is destroyed.-- Me)**

**These are the major views on the days. All of them still believe that the faith issue is that God created and that He created out of nothing all that there is. All positions teach that Genesis is God’s verbal revelation and they all affirm the historicity of Adam.**

**Rational from the Study:**

1. **Question: *What is the work of creation?* Answer: *The work of creation is God’s making all things of nothing, by the word of His power, in the space of six days, and all very good.* Question 9 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism.**
2. The answer to this question became a source of controversy in the PCA in the late 1990s leading up to its 25th anniversary. The debate centered on one phrase*: “in the space of six days.”* Did this mean six literal 24-hour days? Or could “days” be interpreted in some other way?
3. The answer to those questions had not always been a source of discord within the denomination. When the PCA was founded in 1973, there was a range of opinions on the nature of the creation days, reflecting the diversity of opinion among theologians PCA leaders saw as their forefathers (Hodge and Dabney, for example). The differences were generally accepted.
4. But during the next two decades, several factors undermined that acceptance. The footprint of the **Christian Reconstruction** (Think Theonomy) movement in the PCA grew, and many in this movement saw 24-hour creation days as a test of orthodoxy. At the same time, the homeschool movement was spreading within the denomination, and the curricula used by many was written from a “young earth” creationist perspective. And as this culture war heated up, many “Calendar Day” proponents charged those holding a “non-Calendar Day” view as accommodating the secular culture and undercutting the inspiration and authority of Scripture.
5. These differences rose to the General Assembly through a New Jersey Presbytery study committee report on the interpretation of Genesis 1. One of the propositions the presbytery adopted from the report affirmed that the 24-day positions were one natural interpretation of Genesis 1, but denied that this was “the only exegetically possible” interpretation.
6. The review of the presbytery’s records at the 1997 Assembly led to extensive debate on the matter, and that same year a complaint about it came before the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC). When that case came before the 1998 Assembly by way of an SJC minority report (the only occasion on which that provision has been exercised), the Assembly narrowly ruled that New Jersey had a constitutional right to resolve this question of doctrine — without endorsing its conclusion. Later that same meeting, the Assembly approved a request from Central Carolina Presbytery to create a committee to study the “exegetical, hermeneutical, and theological interpretation of Genesis 1-3.”
7. Though the members of the study reflected the spectrum of views on creation days, they quickly discovered they were in full agreement on several points:

• **Their belief in the historicity of Genesis 1 and 2, and their denial that Genesis 1 and 2 represent a mythical account of creation or that the two chapters present two accounts that are inconsistent with each other;**

**• Their belief that God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing;**

**• Their denial that the universe or anything in it was co-eternal with God;**

**• Their affirmation of God’s special creation of Adam and Eve as real, historical individuals.**

1. After two years of study, the committee was unable to come to unanimous agreement about the duration and nature of creation days, but it presented a unanimous report with the understanding that committee members held different viewpoints on the question. The report surveyed the history of the church’s interpretation of creation days, defined key terms in the debate, and examined three different views of the original intent of the Westminster Standards regarding creation days.

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**November 10, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Questions from last time?**
4. **Considering the views that the PCA has said can be acceptable “exceptions” to the Westminster Confession of Faith 4.1concerning the definition of *“in the space of six days”*…Day-Age, Analogical and Framework…what do they each have in common with the Calendar Day/Confessional view? WCF 4.1- I. *It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.***

1. **In what do they differ from the Confession, hence, making them an acceptable “exception” to the Confession, according to what we talked about?**
2. **A Couple of more things before moving back into the text.**

**But let’s consider the Framework Hypothesis a bit more…which has caught on in our denomination.**

1. **This is an approach avoiding the force of the normal sense of the word *“day”* during creation week.**
2. **This hypothesis/theory evades the chronological sequence of six twenty-four hour days (and one day of rest) by a novel method: introducing a disjunction between ‘literal’ chronological order and ‘literary’ framework within the text of Scripture.**
3. **Professor Arie Noordzij of the University of Utrecht in 1924 first developed this ‘framework theory’. He noted a parallelism between the first three days and the second three days of creation, and drew unusual consequences from it. Interestingly, this scholar did not believe in the historicity of the Bible.**
4. **Herman Ridderbos a Dutch biblical scholar picked up on this view and made it more biblical in its approach.**
5. **As far as realism and the dualist interpretation which distinguishes between ‘literal’ and ‘literary’ in the early chapters of Genesis are concerned, we must not forget that any philosophical assumption, especially when it controls exegesis, must be questioned in light of the Scriptures.**
6. **Meredith Kline, biblical Scholar and covenant theologian, supports this Framework Hypothesis as well other Christian scholar like Christian historian Mark Knoll and so it has achieved marked success in the church specifically the PCA among many of our pastors.**
7. **But the down side is this: Dr Kline, for instance, clearly admitted his openness to evolution: *“In this article I have advocated an interpretation of biblical cosmology according to which Scripture is open to the current scientific view of a very old universe, and, in that respect, does not discountenance the theory of the evolutionary origin of man.”- Space and Time in the Genesis Cosmology-* 1996**
8. **The down side for Dr.Knoll is the same as above: Dr Mark Noll, a notable church historian, whose evangelical writings are widely read and respected, also held the same point of view: *“…evangelicalism must accept some form of evolution, or else cause ‘a scandal’ for respectable modern people.”-* The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind ,1994.**
9. **So the distinctive feature of the Framework position is its understanding of the week (not the days as such) as a metaphor. Moses used the metaphor of a week to narrate God’s acts of creation. Thus God’s supernatural creative words and events are real and historical, but the exact timing is left unspecified.**
10. **Another of the many internal problems with the Framework Hypothesis is that it grafts a non-sequential arrangement onto a sequential arrangement.**
	* + - 1. **On the one hand, it views the days as a week of days.**
				2. **The reality is we see a 7-day week, based on a 6-day workweek, with one day off (the Sabbath). That's sequential, though it regards that as figurative schema.**
				3. **There is, what many have termed *“the enigmatic relationship”* between “light” on day 1 and “lights” on day 4.**

**Part of the rational true sequential explanation is that you can't put lights in the sky before you make the sky.**

**In that respect, day 2 must precede day 4.**

**Likewise, it's the sky as seen in relation to the land, from the perspective of a ground-based observer.**

* + - * 1. **In that respect, day 2 must precede day 3, while day 3 must precede day 4–inasmuch as you can't see lights in the sky from earth until the earth (i.e. dry land) is made.**
				2. **Even without the “day/night” refrain, the sequence in Gen 1 still has a functional or teleological progression.**

**Certain things must be in place before other things can be put in place.**

**You can't have fish without bodies of water.**

 **You can't have land animals without dry land.**

**You can't have trees without land.**

 **You can't have birds without a sky to fly in or trees to nest in or perch on. So on and so forth.**

1. **This nod to evolution in the Framework Theory sounds very similar to why many Christian theologians of the last century approved of the Gap Theory.**
2. **Many if not most that stand for exam in our denomination would say they don’t hold to evolution …this seems to simply be a concession of their part not thinking through all the implications of this position from which we have only discussed a minute amount .**
3. **James B. Jordan has similarly addressed this unnecessary dichotomy: *“The ‘framework hypothesis’ … [which] argues that the six days are not spans of time, but only a literary convention for presenting a six-fold creation. The fundamental problem with this view is that it needlessly opposes a theological interpretation to a literal one … the theological dimension of creation in six days lies precisely in its being a temporal sequence … God had no reason to make the world in six days, except as a pattern for His image, man, to follow. The framework hypothesis Platonizes the time sequence into a mere set of ideas. In its attempt to be theological, the ‘framework hypothesis’ misses the whole theological point.”-***
4. **R.C. Sproul who tended towards the Calendar Day view says this, *“The point of the framework view is that the universe did not happen by a cosmic accident but that universe was clearly created by a sovereign God. That affirmation is without ambiguity in most Reformed circles. Furthermore, it was done in stages that took place successively within a framework of 6 acts…(like a 6 act Play). The literary device for indicating those stages, according to the framework hypothesis, is the occurrence of “evening” and “morning” at the end of each day. Holding to this position does not necessarily mean abandoning the authority of Scripture.”* …**
5. **Side note: R.C. started out thinking that the Framework Hypothesis was the best way to understand the literary device of Genesis 1 and 2…**
6. **Then in the early 90’s he was asked to read Douglas Kelly’s Book Creation and Change: Genesis 1:1-2:4 in the Light of Changing Scientific Paradigms…and after reading this book he determined that the bulk of Genesis 1-2 is in fact historical-narrative as the most likely literary form,**
7. **But if a man could defend his position on the floor of presbytery without scandalizing the integrity of Scripture he never voted against a man who held a Framework position.**
8. **Words are limited in all language but there are certain forms that can communicate through time: metaphors, similes, comparisons, poetry, parallelism, typologies, narrative. These are used to clarify.**
9. **The Hebrews seem to have made a vested effort to avoid abstractions. This historical narrative is a helpful form since this was such an oral culture people would know if you didn’t get the story, song or poem right. It has an auto-correct system built in. If the story was told and details were left out people would know and point that out.”**

**Most of the Church pre-20th Century looked at this chapter and Genesis and concluded that the author…God to Moses…wrote in a historical–narrative form.**

1. **This usually focuses on a chronological order of history.**
2. **Eden is a real place as attributed to in many places in Scripture and even extra-biblical sources.**
3. **We have actual rivers mentioned that we have names for then and today….Euphrates, etc.**
4. **Adam and Eve are historical figures…real people at a real place in a real time. Historical.**
5. **Historical narrative is event driven and tends to center on individuals, a specific action and a specific intention.**
6. **In this context…this means a literal 6-day, 24 hour view of creation. The biblical evidence supports 6-24 hour days more than anything other interpretation.**

**So generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? Explaining what He is doing when it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Step by step… sequentially.**

1. **Gen 1:26-31; 2:4-25- “In the Image of God”**
	* + 1. **A Doctrine to remember: Scripture attributes all of God’s works to His speech. His Word is never simply sound nor is it merely information, but it is THE power that accomplishes His will!**
			2. **WCF 4.2- *After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.***
			3. **Just in case you begin to wonder about sequence of things occurring on this 6th day that seem to be different from Chapter 1…don’t be. The Hebrew authors were not as concerned with chronology in the way we are today. He has a purpose in mind and everything moves to that purpose.**
	1. **The 1st chapter is all about God and how He exists outside of His creation, calling it into being by the power of His Word.**
	2. **Then 2nd chapter gives us a picture of an even more personal God than the one we have seen so far…personal in His relationship with man.**
2. **We see relationship as God converses with man.**
3. **We see relationship and purpose given to man as God gives him a calling.**
4. **We see God’s covenantal name coming into play with LORD GOD in the text…Yahweh Elohim.**
5. **While God is still front and center God wants us to now focus a bit on His highest and greatest achievement. Man as an His image bearer. None of the animals get their own chapter!**
	* + 1. **What does it mean to be human? Blaise Pascal answered this way: *“For after all, what is man in nature? A nothing in relation to infinity, all in relation to nothing, a central point between nothing and all…and infinitely far from understanding either. He is equally incapable of seeing the nothingness out of which he was drawn and the infinite in which he is engulfed.”* Now that is deep.**
	1. **Does it answer the question? How would you answer the question?**
	2. **Gen. 1:26-28*-“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”-* This statement really does explain what it is to be human.**
	3. ***“…then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature (Hebrew- living being).”* Gen. 2:7 “Being” speaks to our uniqueness our dignity…a dignity that surpasses all other creation.**
	4. **Herman Bavink, a Dutch theologian from the 19th century put it best when he wrote, *“The image of God is much too rich for it to be fully realized in a single human being however richly gifted that human being may be. It can only be somewhat unfolded in its depths and riches in a humanity counting billions of members…existing across time and space both successively one after the other and contemporaneously side-by-side… Only humanity in its entirety – as one complete organism, summed up under a single head, as prophet proclaiming the truth of God, as priest dedicating itself to God, as ruler controlling the earth and the whole creation – only it is the fully finished image, the most telling and striking likeness of God.”***
6. **What would you say is the difference between the phrases *“Let there be…”* and *“Let us make…”?* What point is God making?**
	1. **The change in wording from “*let there be”….*to… *“let us make…”* speaks of man’s uniqueness from the very first words spoken by God.**
	2. **That man is unique and that his beginning is uniquely different than all of creation placing him at the apex of all creation.**
	3. **Just in case, how can we know from the text that man is God’s highest achievement? Nothing else was made in His image!**
7. **What do we see about God in verses 26-28?**
	1. **God= Elohim…a plural form of God which means more than 2…so His own names implies, at least, 3 persons which meshes with the doctrine of the Trinity.**
	2. **3 plural references to Himself… *“us, our and our”*… this plural always communicates “fullness or completeness”. He is complete in Himself. There is no loneliness in view that somehow requires God to create so He can have fellowship. He has that in Himself…Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**
	3. **God is divinely benevolent*- “And God blessed them”***
		1. **This is a statement of God’s goodness and kindness toward to apex of His creation.**
		2. **It is one of His divine attributes.**
		3. **As beneficiaries of His divine benevolence we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus…given all that we need to “be” and to “do” to bring God glory and enjoy Him forever.**
	4. **It shows us God’s divine authority- mankind is under His authority.**
	5. **It shows us God’s divine purpose- they reveal the intentions that God has for His people male and female.**
	6. **And this God is mindful of us. Mindful to such a degree that He chose mankind to shine forth His majesty and glory in a rather distinct and magnificent way—greater than flowers, trees, animals, stars, the heavens, and even angels.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**November 17, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**

**Generally speaking, what is the easiest way to look at the days of creation? Explaining what He is doing when it says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* Step by step… sequentially.**

**A Doctrine to remember: Scripture attributes all of God’s works to His speech. His Word is never simply sound nor is it merely information, but it is THE power that accomplishes His will!**

1. **Gen 1:26-31; 2:4-25- *“In the Image of God”***
	* + 1. **WCF 4.2- *“After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.”* Generally speaking, what are some of the things the Westminster Divines wanted to make clear about man at this stage?**
			2. **So what have you been told *“made in the image of God”* means? How does it stack up with the Scriptures? *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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.”* vs. 26-27**
				1. ***“This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. Male and female He created them, and He blessed them and named them Man when they were created.”-* Gen. 5:1-2**
				2. **After the flood, *“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image. And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”* –Gen. 9:6-7**
2. **Since God did it!...It was not some evolutionary process…God created man …male and female in the beginning.**
3. **To be made in the image of God means that human beings…not the rest of created order…but human beings only…are above all the rest of creation. We reflect God’s glory, His character and His rule as none of the creatures He created…not even angels.**
4. **Theologically, it is describe like this:**

**Man was made a semi-free spiritual being- a responsible moral agent with powers of choice and action…**

**Man was made to be able to commune with God and respond to God without hindrance…**

**Man was by nature “good, truthful, holy, and upright *…in a word, godly.”-* as J.I. Packer says.**

**These would be “lost” for a time at the Fall…for God’s image was defaced by sin.**

**But Gen 3:15 will tell us that there was, and has been a plan in place to repair this defacement through a Redeemer. II Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10**

* + - 1. **So let’s breakdown some of God’s Words used in the Gen. 1 text:**
				1. ***“Image”=* Hebrew word “tselem”…“likeness”- Hebrew word “demuth”**
1. **“Tselem” and “Demuth” in this context both words urge the reader in the direction of a physical likeness and a spiritual likeness…so there is no evidence to make any particular distinction between the two words used in Gen. 1:26- *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness…”***
2. **The writers of the Septuagint saw this connection and translated both words with the one word “eikon”- (“icon” is our English word.)**
3. **The use of these 2 words makes it plain man is at some level a copy of His Maker…an image…just like Seth looks sort of like his father Adam but is not the same as Adam…see Gen. 5:3.**
4. **The phrases, “…*in our image, after our likeness…”* is put this way by the Divine Author for emphasis…to emphasize mans close relationship of being closely patterned after His Maker…making man unique in all the creation.**
	* + - 1. **Though there is very little distinguishable about these two words of God this particular Hebrew word *(“Demuth- likeness”)* describes three-dimensional beings such as sculptures…or people… rather than two-dimensional things such as paintings.**
				2. **If we were two-dimensional creatures, we could know ourselves fully simply by looking in a mirror, but as three-dimensional creatures we need other people to help us see ourselves completely, for example the back of our heads.**
	1. **Thus as a relational entity man is to rule…like a son would rule for his father in a kingdom as a vice-regent….they would be of one accord.**
	2. **We immediately think of the physical aspects of “image” but God is not physical.**
		1. **What is God? He is Spirit.**
		2. **So it might be easier to understand it this way…it is not so much what man HAS as is it something that man IS! Easiest way to define this phrase:**

**God created human beings in His image so that they would glorify Him by rightly representing Him. In other words, the more we resemble, know God, the better we honor Him….the more His image becomes evident to those around us.**

**To be created in the image of God means we are designed to display God’s nature, character, and glory.**

**As a mirror is made for reflection, so God created us to be mirrors of His character, instruments for reflecting His glory to serve Him continually to His glory.**

* 1. **Being created in his image also speaks to the rule He calls us too in that as we exercise the dominion He has commanded that we would order God’s things as God would do it Himself.**
		1. **The NT calls us *“sons and daughters of God”***
		2. **As His sons and daughters we are His c0-regents having been vested with authority to rule…as He would rule.**
	2. **Being created in God’s image also speaks to the fact that we were created with a mind to reason effectively and to make judgments.**
		1. **We do not depend on instinct as animals…**
		2. **We to are reason out as God did and does…not to the same degree but of the same fashion.**
	3. **Being created in God’s image also speaks to how we are to be relational toward God and one another...starting with the rest of our spiritual family first.**
	4. **John Piper said, *“The imago Dei is not a quality possessed by man; it is a condition in which man lives, a condition of confrontation established and maintained by the Creator. The imago Dei is that in man which constitutes him as him who God loves.”***
1. **In the first chapter of Genesis we don’t read that man was created for God’s glory, but in God’s image. What’s the difference? Not much.**
	1. **As Sinclair Ferguson has noted, *“In Scripture, image and glory are interrelated ideas. As the image of God, man was created to reflect, express, and participate in the glory of God, in miniature, creaturely form.”***
	2. **The Heidelberg Catechism agrees, *“God created man good, and after His own image, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him.”***
	3. **As the early church father Irenaeus said*, “The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God.”***
2. **Another thing these passages seem to be saying, when placed together, is that we are invested with special dignity (Human life is sacred since we are made in the image of God) and entrusted with particular duties. According to these passages …what are some of the duties we have been entrusted with?**
	1. **Our distinct worth as human beings springs from being God’s image-bearers, the unique reflectors of His character on earth.**
	2. **Se we are called upon to be stewards of ALL God has created and given us to steward in His name as He would.**
		* 1. **Man alone has dominion over all creation…our actions are to reflect the image of God in His rule…we are to manage/rule as He would rule as we are made in His image.**
			2. **As God’s image-bearers, we are also to exercise dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:26, 28).**
			3. **God created human beings to serve as His vice-regents, reigning as His representatives and stewards over the created world.**
			4. **God placed the first man in the Garden of Eden *“to work it and keep it” (*Gen. 2:15).**
	3. **The rest of creation declares God’s glory, speaking of it vividly in a great variety of ways (Ps. 19:1). But we reflect it, actually making it, in small part, visible and tangible.**
	4. **The Bible’s creation account in Genesis attached far greater dignity to human beings than was common at the time.**
		* 1. **In other creation accounts in the ancient Near East, being made in the image of a deity was generally reserved only for those in royal authority.**
			2. **Genesis 1, by contrast, proclaimed that everyone, no matter how poor or powerless, is made in God’s image.**
	5. **Historian Tom Holland argues that this worldview has shaped Western civilization such that modern people intuitively find slavery unacceptable. He notes, *“That all men had been created equal, and endowed with an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, were not remotely self-evident truths…even at the time they were written . . . The truest and ultimate seedbed of the American Republic . . . was the book of Genesis.”***
	6. **God’s image means being in a filial (Father and child) relationship to Him. Additionally, “likeness” (Gen. 1: 26) denotes a being who is a relational creature.**
		* 1. **At the core of our nature as God’s image-bearers, we are relational beings. This involves a threefold relationship: *“between man and God, between man and his fellowmen, and between man and nature.”***
			2. **One of the supreme ways we reflect God’s glory is by relating to other human beings in God-honoring ways.**
			3. **We ascribe glory to God’s name by reflecting His character to others.**
			4. **As Anthony Hoekema writes in Created in God’s Image, *“We should not think of the image of God only as a noun but also as a verb: we are to image God by the way we live, and the heart of the image of God is love for God and for others.”***
			5. **We are the light of the world as we reflect God’s light…Jesus, who is the Light…to the world around us.**
	7. **Man is unique in his ability to communicate through dialogue. Man can discuss abstract ideas and concepts. He can interact with the mind of another…hence the term “living being” instead of creature in Gen. 2.**
	8. **Only man can fashion complicated tools and structures in the world… a sign of his creativity given to man by God.**
	9. **Man alone has the ability to make moral value judgments. Only man has a will of his own capable of distinguishing between good and evil. These supersede the instinct of animals.**
	10. **As God’s delegated representatives on earth, human beings are intended to reign over the world—tending and maintaining it—not in exploitation, but in wise, responsible stewardship.**
	11. **Exercising this stewardship, human beings can reflect to the world the radiance of God’s infinite worth and glory.**
	12. **Man is different from the rest of God’s creation. We have a capacity to love and to give love….to think and reason. It is not just instinct or habit.**
	13. **Man is different as well as He alone is called upon to carry out God’s justice upon law breakers.**
		* 1. **Capital Punishment as we will talk about later when we get to Chapter 9. By giving the death penalty for the life of a man this reflects the high price paid against the ultimate offender of God and His Word.**
			2. **The civil magistrates have been given authority by God to justly carry out the law against law breakers.**
			3. **Church discipline as carried out by the Church leaders as God’s representatives in helping God’s people carry out God’s word in faith and practice.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**November 24, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Turn to Psalm 136:1-9 (specifically vs 4-9). What is it instructing us as believers by using the days of creation to express for us God’s steadfast/covenantal love for us?**
4. **Our God being Good he is to be praised.**
5. **Our God being God of all gods he is to be praised.**
6. **Our God being LORD of lords, he is to be praised.**
7. **That this “Good God” Elohim, Yahweh expresseses His will in the creation…even the creating us for Himself to bring His glory.**
8. **For our God deserves all praise, honor and glory, forever and ever, Amen!**
9. **So according to this passage how important is the correct understanding of what God did on the days of creation?**
10. **So God is Spirit, we are corporeal, so how are we created in God’s image?**
11. **Genesis 1:26-27 still. *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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.”***
12. **Now let’s look at this from a different angle. Why does the text connect being created in God’s image with being created male and female?**
	* + - 1. **Differentiation of the human race into two complementary sexes (“male and female”) is the first fact mentioned in connection with being *“in the image of God.”***
				2. **Not because God Himself is both masculine and feminine—He is unequivocally masculine...hence the title Father.**
				3. **It is because God Himself is a community—a trinity of persons, existing in eternal self-giving love. *“us, our and our”*… this plural always communicates “fullness or completeness”. He is complete in Himself.**
13. **In creating man and woman together, He created a community.**
14. **God created man to image His glory, but His glory could not be adequately displayed by an individual living in isolation from others. So God Himself says in Genesis 2:18, *“It is not good that man should be alone.”***
	* + - 1. **Also in Genesis 2:24, which describes in more detail the process summarized in 1:27, we learn that God applies the example of Adam and Eve to all marriages: *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”* (Gen. 2:24)**
15. **The marriage relationship displayed here reveals the exclusive and permanent commitment of love that only man can generate.**
16. **According to God’s original design, human sexual conduct was to occur within the context of marriage between one man and one woman only.**
17. **Jesus later in the Gospels reiterates in support of this marriage covenant.**

**This “one flesh” is more than just a physical/sexual union but it is not less…**

**The physical is symbolic for the spiritual union that God establishes between one man and one woman…**

**This was established as the pattern for marriage generally, and this explains why Jesus cites Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 as the normative pattern that God expects all marriages to follow (see Matt. 19:4–6; Mark 10:6–8).**

* + - * 1. **Gender is basic to who we are.**
1. **When asked about divorce Jesus could have simply quoted Genesis 2:24*, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”* But He backed up further: *“He who created them from the beginning made them male and female”* (Matt. 19:4; cf. Gen. 1:27).**
2. **Marriage is not simply the commitment of two people, but the exclusive union of the two complementary parts of God’s image…man and woman established and designed by God to be in a covenant relationship together.**
3. **In Scripture’s first seven chapters *“male and female”* occurs six times; gender is binary by design.**
	* + - 1. **Also, the animals brought onto the ark had to *“be male and female”* (Gen. 6:19) or they would go extinct.**
				2. **Science supports this fact, pointing out the different chromosomes.**
				3. **World history supports this truth as well. Male and female for all time up till the last few decades….revealing our degeneracy as a people.**
				4. **Medical science tell us that we must medically treat men and women differently for some conditions because …wait for it…our bodies are different.**
				5. **Lastly The Bible- Our Source Material is clear 2 gender/sexes…male and female making up one human race.**
				6. **Both genders—equal in value, unique in their callings—glorify God together. One author said, *“The high point in creation of man in God’s image is not a human being, but a pair of them.”***
				7. **In our post-Christian age amid the emergence of a new self-centered generation, gender has become ground-zero in worldview battles. *“Today’s revolution in theology is not over the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but over sexual identity.”***
4. **Why is sexuality so contested today? Because maleness and femaleness, as both biological and biblical reality, tell us who we are and how we should live.**
5. **You wouldn’t think we would have to have this conversation…and we wouldn’t in a rational world. But…What is a man and what is a woman? These are questions we are asking that have been answered above.**
	* + - 1. **The first black female justice to the Supreme Court was unwilling or unable to define what a woman is. When asked she said, *“I can’t. Not in this context; I am not a biologist.”***

**She is supposed to be one of our best and brightest otherwise she wouldn’t have been nominated and confirmed to the court…or so goes the theory.**

**And besides she is a woman both intellectually and experientially. She is also a wife, and mother of two girls.**

* + - * 1. **When we refuse to answer the simple question… it is women who will suffer.**

**Think… as they are now with men in women’s sports.**

**Then there are men identifying as women taking the place of capable women in the work force simply to appear inclusive.**

* + - * 1. **USA Today crowned a man… Admiral Rachel Levine (In the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps…I didn’t know that was a branch of the military) as Woman of the Year over real women.**
				2. **A man who identifies as a woman sued an all-female networking app. site for their exclusivity in barring him from the website and the Australian court sided with the man, stating that sex is more than just biology.**

**They ruled specifically: *“Sex is not confined to being a biological concept referring to whether a person at birth had male or female physical traits, nor confined to being a binary concept, limited to the male or female sex. . . “***

**This is, of course, anti-science. This man has XY chromosomes—even if he tries to change his external appearance, every single cell of his body is male.**

**There’s a simple rule: If you have a Y, you are a guy. He always has been and forever will be a man, no matter how he disfigures and mutilates his body or what marker he has on his birth certificate.**

**Biologically speaking, yes, sex is a binary—male and female (which is exactly what we’d expect starting with God’s Word!).**

* + - * 1. **Of course, because of these chromosomal differences there are other traits that are generally exclusive to woman:**

**Women’s bones are on average less dense than a man’s.**

**Women seem to have better language skills on average than men.**

**Women are better at certain types of math than men. Leading mathematicians have been women through the years.**

**Women have distinctive heart attack symptoms and sometimes different reactions to medications. (this information comes from the American Family Physician research papers and from Healthline.com)**

* + - * 1. **Merriam-Webster Dictionary and The Oxford English Dictionary still has, of Monday, this definition for woman: *“an adult female person…a female member of a workforce…female adults in general”***
				2. **The truth from biology is very simple and has been recognized by humanity for millennia: *“Male and female He created them”* (Genesis 1:27).**
1. **We want to define ourselves. But God already has.**
	* + - 1. **God commissions Adam and Eve in the Garden to *“be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over (everything else God created)...”* (Gen. 1:28). Why?**
2. **Because they alone can fill the earth with the very image of God.**
3. **We occupy the place of honor and privilege amidst all created things.**
4. **We alone bear the prestige of being the chief mirrors in all of creation. To be as it were, walking, living, breathing, image bearers reflecting back to Him His glory. You and me! He created us for this purpose. As those bearing His image, all of our life is to be an act of worship.**
5. **Paul says to the Corinthian church, *“So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”* (1 Cor. 10:31).**
	* + - 1. **Yet, as a result of man’s fall in the Garden, when he chose to eat from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mankind’s ability to reflect this glory was disrupted.**
				2. **All mankind fell with Adam in that first sin and God’s image was marred in us.**
				3. **Now, all people are born into this life as sinners rather than God-fearing worshipers.**
				4. **Also, consider this further fulfillment from Col. 1:5-6- *“Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant.”* To this end… *“And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God…”* Col. 1:9-10) Through Christ Christians fill the earth as image bearers and representative bearing fruit for His glory**
				5. **So to wrap up: the male/ female relationship would accomplish two tremendous purposes in terms of the divine image in humanity.**
6. **First, this ever-deepening knowledge of Who God is would enrich their life together, all the better equipping them to be God’s image, as well as to do His will on earth in their own generation. And**
7. **Second, marriage would be the sacred channel for reproduction of those who would extend God’s dominion to the ends of the earth in days to come. ‘And It Was Good’ Genesis 1: 29 and 30 manifests the bounty of God in providing a wide variety of food for the sustenance and pleasure of His chosen image-bearers. They could partake of all types of vegetables and fruits, as could their charges, the animals, but they were not to eat animals.**
	1. **Interestingly Karl Barth said, *“Just as man was created with the animals on the same day, so he has been assigned to the same table spread by God.”***
		* 1. **An extra consideration, *“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and 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.”* (Gen. 1:26-27)…along with the rest of Scripture what does this mean for how we are to treat non-believers and believers?**
				1. **Since ALL men and women are created in God’s image they ALL deserve to be treated accordingly.**
				2. **Non-Believer:**
8. **Treated with dignity and respect where we can.**
9. **Love them to the degree that we can…but they are not to be inside our inner circle of counsel or care.**
10. **Understand their need for the Gospel and tell them whether rejected or not.**
11. **Using God’s standard to judge their actions not our own preferences.**
12. **Standing up and opposing actions that go against God’s expressed law.**
	1. **Believers:**
		* 1. **Love as Jesus loved us and forgave us our sins.**
			2. **To seek to be with one another as much as possible.**
			3. **To worship together.**
			4. **To hold one another accountable for their sins in love…seeking to remove the log in our eye before seeking to remove the speck in theirs.**
			5. **What is the first thing God does for man (man and woman) according to Gen. 1:28? *“And God blessed them.”***
				1. **Blesses them to do His will.**
13. **How cool is the fact that the very first words out of God’s mouth toward man are words of blessing.**
14. **Had man earned this blessing? Did he deserve this blessing? Was he entitled to this blessing?**

**NO!! But the very first experience that man had was God giving him things that he did not earn, deserve or was entitled to.**

**Blessings from God are like that even today.**

* + - * 1. **Was this God’s grace to man? Think about this a minute!**
1. **NO!!! Grace implies we have already fallen, rebelled against God. Grace is God’s favor despite that rebellion.**
2. **God blessed them …the first thing He did for them… He also is providing the beginning structure for the covenant-blessings and obligations.**
3. **They are also God’s priest-kings over the garden and as such image-bearers of Christ.**
	* + 1. **What are some of the responsibilities that God gives to man (man and woman) in Gen 1:28-30?- Gen. 1:28-30- *“And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ 29 And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”***
	1. **The first role God intends Adam and Eve to fulfill will be to *“multiply”* and *“fill the earth,”* and their goal, significantly, is to *“subdue”* the earth and bring it into submission to their God-given rule.**
	2. **Three Hebrew words with similar meanings show the intensity of the commandment: *“Be fruitful”* (perû), *“multiply”* (rebû̲), and *“fill”* (milʾû) the earth.**
		* 1. **God’s design from the very beginning was for human life and for human life in abundance!**
			2. **What is more, this did not remain a pre-fall commandment but was reiterated to Noah after the flood (Genesis 9:1, 7), which means that in a fallen world, the command to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth still holds true.**
				1. **When the people of Israel were in Egypt, they were fruitful and multiplied (Exodus 1:7), and the verbs used in this verse reflect the language used in Genesis 1:28 and 9:1. The growth of the population of Israelites in Egypt was part of the fulfillment of God’s creation mandate to mankind.**
				2. **In the book of Deuteronomy, one of the blessings for Israel’s obedience to the covenant was the *“fruit of the womb”* (Deuteronomy 28:11), and one of the curses for disobedience included a curse on the *“fruit of the womb”* (Deuteronomy 28:18).**
				3. **When the people of Israel went into exile in Babylon, they were called to multiply and not to decrease (Jeremiah 29:6; cf. 23:3), and again, the word for multiply is the same word used in Genesis 1:28.**
				4. **For Israel to continue to exist as a nation in foreign lands such as Egypt and Babylon, it was imperative that they have children, and God is reminding His people to fulfill the Creation Mandate.**
4. **Having children then is essential for man to fulfill his mandate to rule.**
5. **We are not free to choose NOT to have children as Christians!**
	1. **Why is this command so important today?**
		* + 1. **Did you know that 2.1 is the average number of children that women need to give birth to for the population to exactly replace itself for the next generation?**
				2. **When the number falls below 2.1, then the size of the population begins to fall.**
				3. **Contrast this number with some real-life data and a bleak picture starts to form. Today’s world fertility rate approx. 1.7 and falling. In 2023,**
				4. **the fertility rate of the non-immigrant UK and Europe was 1.57; immigrant population is higher but not by much 2.3 or so.**
				5. **for the US, it is 1.62..it was 1.66 in 2022; Hispanics are 2.6, Blacks 2.5**
				6. **for Canada, it was 1.47**
				7. **Taiwan is 1.11**
				8. **South Korea is .o78…marriage has declined by 35% as well.**
				9. **Niger, Somalia, Chad have the highest birth rate. 6.8 …but they are also among the world’s highest infant mortality rates.**
				10. **In fact, numbers across the board show that nearly every country has a falling fertility rate and will likely see their populations shrink by the end of the century.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**December 1, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Why is understanding God’s creation of man as binary…male and female so important? How does this effect everything else?**
4. **Getting to the heart of the issue of our sexuality: Why do we believe we have the right to define ourselves? With what the Bible says to us, why are people so easily giving in on this?**
5. **Good News: Even with this rejection of God and our image that comes from God we can be forgiven!**
6. **Gen. 1:28-30- *“And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ 29 And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”***
7. **What are some of the responsibilities that God gives to man (man and woman) in Gen 1:28-30?**
	1. **The first role God intends Adam and Eve to fulfill will be to *“multiply”* and *“fill the earth,”* and their goal, significantly, is to *“subdue”* the earth and bring it into submission to their God-given rule.**
	2. **Three Hebrew words with similar meanings show the intensity of the commandment: *“Be fruitful”* (perû), *“multiply”* (rebû̲), and *“fill”* (milʾû) the earth.**
		* 1. **God’s design from the very beginning was for human life and for human life in abundance!**
			2. **What is more, this did not remain a pre-fall commandment but was reiterated to Noah after the flood (Genesis 9:1, 7), which means that in a fallen world, the command to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth still holds true.**
				1. **When the people of Israel were in Egypt, they were fruitful and multiplied (Exodus 1:7), and the verbs used in this verse reflect the language used in Genesis 1:28 and 9:1. The growth of the population of Israelites in Egypt was part of the fulfillment of God’s creation mandate to mankind.**
				2. **In the book of Deuteronomy, one of the blessings for Israel’s obedience to the covenant was the *“fruit of the womb”* (Deuteronomy 28:11), and one of the curses for disobedience included a curse on the *“fruit of the womb”* (Deuteronomy 28:18).**
				3. **When the people of Israel went into exile in Babylon, they were called to multiply and not to decrease (Jeremiah 29:6; cf. 23:3), and again, the word for multiply is the same word used in Genesis 1:28.**
				4. **For Israel to continue to exist as a nation in foreign lands such as Egypt and Babylon, it was imperative that they have children, and God is reminding His people to fulfill the Creation Mandate.**
8. **Having children then is essential for man to fulfill his mandate to rule.**
9. **We are not free to choose NOT to have children as Christians!**
	1. **Why is this command so important today?**
		* + 1. **Did you know that 2.1 is the average number of children that women need to give birth to for the population to exactly replace itself for the next generation? When the number falls below 2.1, then the size of the population begins to fall.**
				2. **Twenty-three countries, including Spain and Japan, are predicted to see populations halved by the end of the century.**
				3. **Low birth rates are ultimately the rejection of the biblical worldview that sees children as a blessing from God.**
				4. **Our anti-Christian society is anti-children since it celebrates abortion, radical feminism, and homosexuality, personal freedom…all of which result in fewer children being born. Now we are starting to reap the fruit of this.**
				5. **As families wither, the desire for autonomy, self-actualization, and convenience rises. In this atmosphere, children are “quintessentially inconvenient” and big families become cultural outliers.**
				6. **Also, economic stresses lead to fewer children as debt continues to rise.**
				7. **We can expect the godless to buy into the secular view of the age that says children are disposable, a burden to society and a drain on resources and they take away from our personal freedoms. But as believers, we have a higher authority.**
				8. **Of course, life does not always pan out as we might hope.**
				9. **There are those who would love to marry and yet, in the providence of God, remain single.**
				10. **There are those who know the heartbreak of childlessness.**
				11. **Yet it remains true that whether or not children are a reality in our lives, we can still be in agreement with our Creator.**
	2. **But God commands this fruitfulness for yet another reason as well: Malachi 2:15- *“Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring.”***
		* 1. **Another biblical reason for bearing children is that it is believing children who will propagate the gospel in the next generation.**
			2. **Of course, we live in a fallen world, and in God’s perfect plan, not everyone will marry and not every married couple will be able to have children, but there is a general principal in the biblical text that humanity must value children and procreate.**
			3. **Godly seed will witness to a people yet unborn, and it is through our children and our children’s children that the gospel will be proclaimed.**
			4. **A normal means that God uses to bring the gospel to His children is through the witness of godly parents.**
				1. **I can have a far greater influence on my own children than I can on a neighbor’s child, and if we are diligent in teaching our little ones the gospel in season and out of season, we have a reason to hope that they will bear witness to the lost when we are no longer on earth to do it.**
				2. **To raise godly children is to leave a legacy to future generations.**
	3. **Sooo…The depopulation crisis that is occurring calls for a renewed commitment in the Church to strengthening marriages, support families, and celebrating children … all by God’s design.**
	4. **What about the point of dominion, a point that is often maligned in our day and age? Gen. 1:28-30- *“And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ 29 And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”***
		* + 1. **This is the second time in a matter of a few verses God states this dominion aspect of our work.**
				2. **God is the source of our dominion-**
				3. **Vs. 26 and vs 28 God decrees us to have dominion. So God gave man dominion over the works of his hand.**
				4. **This is not the result of an evolutionary process.**
				5. **Mankind did not win dominion because man won some contest of the survival of the fittest…God gave man dominion-**
				6. **God defined the scope of our dominion-**
				7. **Over everything that He created…vs. 26, 28.**
				8. **See Psalm 8:6-9- *“You have given him(Christ and man) dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.”***
				9. **God says stewardship is how we show our dominion-**

**Stewardship= management of something that belongs to someone else. What we possess does not belong to us…it all belongs to God.**

**Stewardship presupposes that we will manage God’s things as God commands…as He directs…we do not make this up on our own…we are His representatives…we are to act FOR Him according to His Word.**

**As stewards we are also called to be faithful- I Cor. 4:2- *“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”***

**Faithful in our worship of God…we worship the one who has given us all the blessings.**

**Faithful because we are His created beings and as such accountable to Him because He made us, gave us life…and for His elect…life eternal.**

**Faithful in that we are to live responsibly- according to His Word and revealed will.**

**Faithful in that we live in hope…no matter what is going on in this messy life.**

* + - * 1. **This is also reason why eating meat was not an option for the original couple.**

**To eat meat would have entailed killing and blood-shedding.**

**This word of God, therefore, also means a limitation in the human right of dominion.**

* + - * 1. **God calls us to be His vice-regents on earth,**

**As we said above we are to be *“having dominion”, “subduing” or “ruling/caring for”* over all the other living things on earth.**

**Adam’s dominion, though, is not complete the moment he is created. He will have to work at it.**

**Adam and Eve will not fulfill the command to subdue the earth by themselves.**

**Hence, Vise-regents who multiply themselves.**

**The fulfillment of God’s command to take dominion over the earth requires large numbers of people!**

* 1. **Man is unique in his ability to communicate through dialogue.**
		+ - 1. **Man can discuss abstract ideas and concepts.**
				2. **He can interact with the mind of another…hence the term *“living being”* instead of creature in Gen. 2.**
	2. **Only man can fashion complicated tools and structures in the world… a sign of his creativity given to man by God.**
	3. **Man alone has the ability to make moral value judgments.**
		+ - 1. **Only man has a will of his own capable of distinguishing between good and evil.**
				2. **These supersede the instinct of animals.**
	4. **As God’s delegated representatives on earth, human beings are intended to reign over the world—tending and maintaining it—not in exploitation, but in wise, responsible stewardship.**
	5. **Exercising this stewardship, human beings can reflect to the world the radiance of God’s infinite worth and glory as well as the proper sense of the balance between creation and man..**
	6. **Interesting list, to be sure:**
		+ - 1. **We must understand that this list is not the kind of list where you complete one task and then move on to the next task…**
				2. **Given all the connections with the word “and” the author is making it clear that these all go together...they are our mandate…our mission…our job description…the way we are to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.**
				3. **God’s stewards balance a lot of plates…but only those that He gives us to balance.**
1. **How would you, then, sum up vs. 27-28 in your own words?**
	1. **We are uniquely made.**
	2. **We have been given dominion by God, or vice-regency over all creation.**
	3. **Just to be clear…**
		* 1. **Man does NOT show up and take over.**
			2. **Man is under God’s dominion and he will exercise God’s dominion as His represented as He gives us authority to do so in His name**
			3. **This dominion is stewardship and ambassadorship over all… all wrapped up in one command.**

**We are to care for creation as God would.**

**Not making it up as we go, but following God’s lead as laid out in Scripture.**

**God’s perfect “government is to be reflected in man’s rule over creation.**

**Hence- Vice-regency in Christ.**

**Think about your vocation…mother, engineer, school official… How are we to “rule/care for” God’s creation in all that we do?**

* 1. **God has created us for His purpose.**
1. **Vs. 29-30 are interesting. Is this simply placed in here as a mere instruction answering the question of Adam and Eve…what’s on the menu? *“And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.”***
	1. **Yes, but it also defines our dominion even more.**
	2. **Yes! But as with all things in the creation account they point to greater doctrines.**
		* 1. **Scripture opens with a clear statement about food.**
			2. **Immediately upon the creation of mankind, the Lord blessed man and said, “*Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food”* (Genesis 1:29).**
	3. **This speaks to God’s abundant provision. God through Moses seems to like the word *“every”…*and when talking about the abundance of food it is from every tree and seed baring plant on the earth.**
		* 1. **Now the earth, for Adam and Eve, was the garden…but how big was the garden…obviously it was big enough to be able to feed every living creature along with Adam and Eve abundantly.**
			2. **God cares for all.**
			3. **But He does place restrictions for our good.**

**Before the Fall, God gave men vegetation for sustenance.**

**In His goodness, God gave mankind the right to eat of *“every tree of the garden,”* with one prominent exception.**

**They were not to *“eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”* (Genesis 2:17). Only “one” tree was forbidden. And we will get to that soon enough.**

* 1. **It look forward to God’s great provision for His creation throughout time…the rain falls on the believer and the unbeliever alike signifying that both will reap from God as He sees fit. Whether they acknowledge His provision or not.**
	2. **Scripture opens with God using an abundant garden to convey His blessing, and it concludes with food as central to the eschatological Kingdom of God. In the book of Revelation Jesus promises that the one who overcomes by faith will have table fellowship (3:20), a right to the tree of life (2:7), and hidden manna (2:17).**
	3. **While food and drink are not of the essence of the kingdom (see Romans 14:17- *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*), the church’s mission is often formed around table fellowship.**
		+ 1. **This was true of Christ and his disciples (Luke 24:30; 41-42; John 21:4-14);**
			2. **It was true of the believers in the kingdom of God in the first century (Acts 2:46);**
			3. **And so it should be true of our fellowships today.**
	4. **For believers, meals together in this life (both in worship and in our homes) are preparing us for that day when we will spiritually feast together in the presence of God. The food we consume, the table around which we sit, and the companions with whom we gather have as their end the spiritual communion that we enjoy with one another and with the triune God.**
	5. **In the garden, Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with God and each other, prior to sin, while surrounded by a bounty of food. Looking forward, we have been redeemed for the great messianic banquet that we anticipate when we eat together as a Christian community. Isaiah 25: 6- *“On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.”* The Wedding Feast of the Lamb will have abundant food of the best quality!**
1. **What are some of the implications to the statement that we read at the end of day 6 which it says, *“And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.”* Vs. 31?**
	1. **To the chagrin of some, I think one implication is that there was no death prior to the Fall.**
	2. **Another implication is that God had done what He set out to do.**
	3. **All things He created are very good:**
		* 1. **The celestial bodies…**
			2. **The earth with plants and animals**
			3. **Mankind…male and female…were given different bodies and they were good!**
	4. **Adam as the federal head…**
	5. **Eve to be the mother of all living beings.**
	6. **The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil…all were pleasant to the sight and good for food.**
	7. **All of this was good…very good!**
	8. **Matthew Henry’s commentary describes the goodness of God’s creation at the close of the sixth day (Gen. 1:31): *“It was good. Good, for it is all agreeable to the mind of the Creator, just as he would have it to be. Good, for it answers the end of its creation, and is fit for the purpose for which it was designed. Good, for it is serviceable to man, whom God had appointed lord of the visible creation. Good, for it is all for God’s glory.”* (The Matthew Henry Commentary, 5)**
	9. **Or consider Calvin’s description: *“After the workmanship of the world was complete in all its parts, and had received, if I may so speak, the last finishing touch, he pronounced it perfectly good; that we may know that there is in the symmetry of God’s works the highest perfection, to which nothing can be added.”* (Commentary on Genesis, 100)**
	10. **R.C. Sproul- *“In the Scriptures we see that God creates the universe and owns the universe. It is His possession, and He governs it by His own authority. The authority by which God governs all things is His autonomous authority. To say that God’s authority is autonomous is to say that God is a law unto Himself. This does not mean that He acts or behaves in an arbitrary manner. Rather, God’s activity is directed by God’s own character. And His character is completely righteous. All that He does flows out of His own internal righteousness… To act on one’s own authority against the authority of God is the essence of disobedience and of sin. When we grasp this authority ourselves we do what is right in our own minds.”***
	11. **WCF 4.1- *It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.***
	12. **Quite rightly a lot is said about the ex nihilo truth of Creation, but what does the Bible and the Confession seem to be communicating by highlighting creations conclusion, *“…all very good.”*?**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**January 5, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Concerning the creation account in the Bible…Is it fact or fiction? How does our answer affect our worldview and the way we look at the rest of Scripture? If this is not absolutely true then the rest of scripture is suspect!?**
4. **What is the easiest understanding biblically of the word “day” in the days of creation? Support your answer the best you can.**
5. **Biblical translation categorically uses the primary (read normal or natural) use of the word unless there is something outstanding in the context to cause you to do otherwise.**
6. **Most all primary (read normal) renderings of this word is *“Day”…* hundreds of times in the Hebrew. There are exceptions…but the exceptions are NEVER the rule.**
7. **What are the main faith issues concerning creation that connect all Bible believing Christians? That God created All that there is out of nothing, by the power of His Word.**
8. **We have only talked a little about gender, but we have talked a lot about being made in the image of God. So where do all people receive identity and why is this truth so important especially in our day and age according to Chapter 1?**
9. **In the first chapter of Genesis we don’t read that man was created for God’s glory, but in God’s image. What’s the difference? Not much.**
	1. **As Sinclair Ferguson has noted, *“In Scripture, image and glory are interrelated ideas. As the image of God, man was created to reflect, express, and participate in the glory of God, in miniature, creaturely form.”***
	2. **The Heidelberg Catechism agrees, *“God created man good, and after His own image, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him.”***
	3. **As the early church father Irenaeus said*, “The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God.”***
10. **Genesis 1:26-28. The mandate was to be, *fruitful, multiply, subdue and have dominion* over all that God has given to us. How well have we done? What other big event(s) does this sound like?**
11. **We are told twice in short order that we are to have “dominion”.**
	* 1. **Dominion then is fundamental to our understanding of being image bearers of God. Dominion is the result or blessing of our being made in God’s image.**
		2. **Fruitfulness in marriage and dominion over the earth and its creatures is a defining purpose for mankind that seeks to image its God effectively.**
12. **Not well…better with the environment worse with marriage and children.**

**We are no longer at replacement rates in the world…replacement 2.1 child per household…world average 1.7**

**We have growing number of Anti-natalists- inside and outside the Church.**

**The movement believes it is morally wrong to have children. An antinatalist feels everyone should stop having babies. They believe that because life is imposed upon babies who have no choice in their birth or life, the loving and compassionate thing to do is to not inflict life on a child.**

**Without babies the world dies, but certainly something else happens as well.**

**Without babies, the heart of compassion, love and empathy God intended for our souls would harden and become brittle.**

**Without babies we would knew fully know our own helplessness without Christ.**

**Without babies we could not learn humbleness having to place their needs before our own.**

**Jesus came purposefully. Life for the God-Man was not a fluke or accident. Nor was it an imposition. Birth was His choice. And we are given the command to be fruitful and multiply.**

**The choice is not whether we will have children…of even how many…the choice is to follow God’s command until He makes it evident what we are to do on this front…**

**But we are always to uphold the sanctity of life and impress on His people who can still have children to heed God’s command until He shows them differently as well.**

1. **Giving the Israelites the Promised Land…they were to do these things…subduing and they stopped after a awhile.**
2. **They were sent back from Exile to rebuild the Jerusalem and the Temple. Instead of doing what they had been sent to do after a while they settled in on their own homes.**
3. **Acts 1:8. We did well for a time…some would argue we still are BUT…**
4. **That is for missionaries and pastors to grow the Kingdom.**
5. **Parachurch organizations.**
6. **Genesis 1:29-30 are interesting verses. Is this simply placed in here as a mere instruction answering the question of Adam and Eve…what’s on the menu? *“And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.”***
	1. **Yes, but it also defines our dominion even more.**
	2. **Yes! But as with all things in the creation account they point to greater doctrines.**

**Scripture opens with a clear statement about food.**

**Immediately upon the creation of mankind, the Lord blessed man and said, “*Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food”* (Genesis 1:29).**

* 1. **This speaks to God’s abundant provision. God through Moses seems to like the word *“every”…*and when talking about the abundance of food it is from every tree and seed baring plant on the earth.**
		1. **Before the Fall, God gave men vegetation for sustenance.**
		2. **In His goodness, God gave mankind the right to eat of *“every tree of the garden,”* with one prominent exception.**
		3. **They were not to *“eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”* (Genesis 2:17).**

**Only “one” tree was forbidden. And we will get to that soon enough.**

**But He does place restrictions for our good.**

* 1. **While food and drink are not of the essence of the kingdom (see Romans 14:17- *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*), the church’s mission is often formed around table fellowship.**
		1. **This was true of Christ and his disciples (Luke 24:30; 41-42; John 21:4-14);**
		2. **It was true of the believers in the kingdom of God in the first century (Acts 2:46);**
		3. **And so it should be true of our fellowships today.**
	2. **For believers, meals together in this life (both in worship and in our homes) are preparing us for that day when we will spiritually feast together in the presence of God. The food we consume, the table around which we sit, and the companions with whom we gather have as their end the spiritual communion that we enjoy with one another and with the triune God.**
	3. **In the garden, Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with God and each other, prior to sin, while surrounded by a bounty of food.**
		1. **Looking forward, we have been redeemed for the great Messianic banquet that we anticipate when we eat together as a Christian community.**
		2. **Isaiah 25: 6- *“On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.”* The Wedding Feast of the Lamb will have abundant food of the best quality!**
1. **Look at Gen. 2:1-3.**
	* + 1. **How do they relate to Genesis 1:1-2? It was void and empty now it is formed and filled. What is the point?**
				1. **The climax of creation is God’s Sabbath rest on the 7th Day.**
				2. **God did not rest because He was tired…He rested from work to enjoy what He had created. In Christ this Sabbath rest is fulfilled. See Hebrews 4:9.**
				3. **Jesus offers the key to entering this rest when He invites us, *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* (Matt. 11:28)**
				4. **In creation the pattern was work then rest…in the gospel, the pattern is rest then work.**
				5. **See I Cor. 15:9-10- *“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.”***
				6. **Phil. 2:12-13- *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”***
				7. **We can’t do the work of God until we have rested in Christ.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**January 12, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Genesis 2:4-25**
	* + 1. **What is going on?**
				1. **The 2nd chapter can often seem to be a bit of an enigma at first glance. Things seem contradictory to the 1st chapter especially concerning sequencing. But sequencing is not the issue here as it was in chapter 1. The main issue here is God’s absolute sovereignty and His providence. Vs. 4 speaks of the *LORD God (Yahweh Elohim*) which denotes His complete and absolute rule AND that He has completed what He had promised to do in creation. Here God wants us to see particular Adam-events, pulled out of sequence, within that same time period, which clearly points to His sovereign actions. is sovereHis**
				2. **What are some of your general observations concerning Gen. 2:4- *“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in that day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.”***

**This section begins with an announcement of a new section of the book of Genesis.**

**Hebrew word *“Toledoth”* = *“these are the generations of”* is a sort of chapter heading.**

**Genesis lists 10 specific toledoth: Creation-Gen. 2:9; Adam-5:1; Noah - 6:9; Noah’s sons-10:1, 32; Shem-11:10; Terah- 11:27; Ishmael- 25:12-13; Isaac- 25:19; Esau- 36:1,9; and Jacob- 37:2**

**In the other instances in Genesis, toledoth identifies both the progeny of these men and the stories that ensued in their time—we might say the “era” in which they lived. The toledoth or generations don’t necessarily end when the next begin; they’re more layered, each encompassing those that come after.**

**In other places, the word is used more narrowly to mean a family line both from the direction of the patriarch down (Exodus 6:16; Numbers 1; 3:1; Ruth 4:18) and from a contemporary figure back (1 Chronicles 7:2, 4, 9; 8:28; 9:9, 34; 26:31).**

**Moses wrote the book of Genesis while the Israelites were wandering in the desert. The stories gave the Israelites a place in history—an identity—which was important for a people coming out of four hundred years of slavery in a foreign country. Knowing the toledoth they came from gave the Israelites context for what God was asking of them when they entered the Promised Land and linked later Israelites to the great men and the mighty deeds of long before. Most of all, the toledoth showed them how God had worked in the past and how He was sure to work in the present.**

***“the book of the genealogy,”* which could also be translated “the book of Genesis.”**

**The Greek explicit phrase (βίβλος γενέσεως) (same words used in Matthew 1:1) occurs in the Greek Old Testament in only two places, Genesis 2:4 and 5:1.**

**Genesis 2:4 is about the origin of heaven and earth (place).**

**Genesis 5:1 concerns the origin of Adam and Eve (people).**

**From the beginning, God was in the business of establishing His people in His place by His power. It began with Adam and Eve, and it continued by the covenant of Grace until Christ returns…only then will the Church be full.**

**Genealogies make a difference:**

**Genesis, the first book of the Tanakh (The Hebrew Bible) , is structured around ten genealogies.**

**Chronicles, the last book of the Tanakh, begins with nine.**

**The formal similarities between Genesis and Chronicles are hard to miss. Both are virtually the only books in the Hebrew Bible filled with genealogies.**

**Chronicles commences with Adam and moves rapidly through human history until arriving at David.**

**Genesis also begins with Adam, but moves quickly until Abraham comes on the scene.**

**Most of the book of Genesis follows Abraham’s descendants.**

**Matthew also follows this pattern …**

**Matthew seems to have detected the “offspring” theme not only in the specific words but also in the specific genre that bookends the Jewish canon.**

**The Jewish hopes centered on a genealogy, because they were promised a child from the family of Israel.**

 **Matthew shows us His story is no myth––this is the narrative of the historical Jesus Christ, who has a family lineage and was born in the line of David.**

**One last thought here…the text says, *“… in that day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.”* What do we see here we haven’t seen up to this point?**

 **LORD… This is the first time we see God’s personal name Yahweh.**

**We will see it 11 more times from here through vs 22.**

**This goes to the authorship of this book.**

**While Adam certainly would have been told this story from God and that story handed down through the generations it is Moses that wrote it down…using the Name God had first given to Him…**

**OR… was it the name that had to be re-given to him by God…God did say to Moses after He had “introduced” Himself to Moses, *“Say this to the people of Israel: I am has sent me to you.” God also said to Moses right after that for those who may have forgotten His name, “Say this to the people of Israel, The LORD (Yahweh= I am), the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”* Ex. 3: 14-15**

**Per the Exodus text we see…His personal name Yahweh will never change though He will be known by many names and titles this is His personal name given to His people.**

**Exodus 3:15 tells a little more…“…this is h*ow I am to be remembered…”* is one Hebrew word *(t*zakar) speaks to more than just memory…it involves active commemoration and acknowledgement of All of God’s deeds from Creation forward.**

**This command from the Exodus passage ensures that His covenant faithfulness seen in His creation, sustaining and deliverance of body and soul is passed down through the Generations shaping the identity and faith of His people.**

* 1. **General observations concerning vs- 5-6.**
1. **Just a side note here, in case you are wondering about vss. 5-6…these verses are reminiscent of the time spoken of in Gen.1:1-2 when the earth was void and formless.**
2. **This is simply putting flesh on the creation of the heavens and the earth and man and woman. Giving further explanation as to what occurred on that 6th day if you will…giving us more details.**
3. **Also, this shows us how God’s covenant with man is filled with privileges.**
4. **What are some of God’s specific actions in vs. 7 that are important to our**

 **Doctrine of God and man?**

* 1. **In vs.7 we see God going back to man. God forms man from the dust of the ground and then He breathes His very breath into man giving him life.**
		+ 1. **Note: Where were the people when they first heard Moses tell this account? In the desert.**
			2. **What did the desert represent in contrast to the garden? Sin!**
			3. **Turn to John 20:21-22. What is Jesus doing here? So God the Father creates life in man by breathing into him and Jesus re-creates life in fallen man by breathing on him…the Spirit at work at both times.**
	2. **Evolutionist say we came from apes or maybe dolphins or primordial ooze…but our own accounts says we came from even more humble beginnings…THE Dust of the ground! Nothing spectacular in what man was made of. The amazing thing is how it all came to be.**
		+ 1. **Dust in the Hebrew speaks of something of little to no worth…often an irritant.**
			2. **It also speaks to our condition before the LORD, Gen. 18:27- *“Abraham answered and said, ‘Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes.’”***
			3. **This speaks of our need to remember our humble beginnings and not ever think too highly of ourselves.**
			4. **Also, in the Bible dust is evil and it isn’t nothing; but it is next to nothing.**
	3. **Vs. 7- God breathed life into us… first privilege.**
	4. **The ESV ends vs. 7 with ... *“…and the man became a living creature.”***
		+ 1. **While the Greek name for “man” (Anthropos, bidding him to look up) encourages pride and aspiration, the Hebrew and Latin names encourage humility, bidding him to stoop/bow and look down.**
			2. **Technically the word here in the Hebrew for *“living creature”* is “*nephesh* ruah”… the Hebrew word for “being or soul” which speaks to our specific difference to the creatures God created.**
			3. **Edward Leigh- *“The soul of man is, as it were, the breath of God. God did not say of man's soul as of other creatures, ‘Let it be made’ or ‘Let there be a soul in man's body.’ No, but when He had formed the body, He breathed the soul into him. This signifies that the soul of man had a more heavenly and divine origin than any of the other creatures in this world.”***
			4. **Here is man created in God’s image…created “from” the dust of the earth…so we are created differently than the animals who were spoken into existence.**
			5. **God breathed into us… “ruah= breath or spirit”… shared His every essence with us His image bearers giving us our soul…and so man became a living being/soul or spirit…distinct from the creatures in so many ways. A living soul made in God’s image as Calvin says.**
			6. **Our society downplays the soul, and some even deny that it exists. Life is all about the body, we’re told -- the material, the stuff we can see. But the Owner’s Manual makes it clear that the soul is intrinsic to what it means to be a human being.**
			7. **Consider Psalm 103:1, *“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!”* Notice the parallel thought. What is soul? It is *all that is within me.* Think-** **the soul is what we cannot see, including the heart, mind, will, and emotions.**
			8. **Being made from the dust of the ground and having to be given breath tells us of our complete dependence upon the One who gives life. It explains our place as well…we may be the highest form of creation but we are still of the created.**
			9. **Even the heathens noticed the majesty in the human form…interesting how the pagan gods took on the bodies of man… part of our desire to be god!?!?**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**January 19, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What is some significant things about us being created from the dust of the ground? Gen. 2:7- *“…then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”***
4. **In vs.7 we see God going back to man. God forms man from the dust of the ground and then He breathes His very breath into man giving him life.**
5. **Note: Where were the people when they first heard Moses tell this account? In the desert.**
6. **Turn to John 20:21-22- *“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”***
* **What is Jesus doing here?**
* **So God the Father creates life in man by breathing into him and Jesus re-creates life in fallen man by breathing on him…the Spirit at work at both times.**
1. **Evolutionist say we came from apes or maybe dolphins or primordial ooze…but our own accounts says we came from even more humble beginnings…THE Dust of the ground! Nothing spectacular in what man was made of. The amazing thing is how it all came to be.**
2. **Dust in the Hebrew speaks of something of little to no worth…often an irritant.**
3. **It also speaks to our condition before the LORD, Gen. 18:27- “Abraham answered and said, ‘Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes.’”**
4. **This speaks of our need to remember our humble beginnings and not ever think too highly of ourselves.**
5. **Also, in the Bible dust is evil and it isn’t nothing; but it is next to nothing.**
6. **What is significant of God *“breathing into the nostrils of man the breath of life…”?***
7. **He took special care for us…another privilege that we had over all created things.**
8. **Here is man created in God’s image…created “from” the dust of the earth…so we are created differently than the animals who were spoken into existence.**
9. **Being made from the dust of the ground and having to be given breath tells us of our complete dependence upon the One who gives life. It explains our place as well…we may be the highest form of creation but we are still of the created.**
10. **Even the heathens noticed the majesty in the human form…interesting how the pagan gods took on the bodies of man… part of our desire to be god!?!?**
11. **Back to chapter 2**
	* + 1. **What are some of God’s specific actions in vs. 8-9 that are important to our Doctrine of God and man? *“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”***
12. **Then the LORD God gives us a garden in Eden.**
13. **provides food , water, trees**
14. **The term "Paradise" signifies a garden, translated from Greek into Latin, French, and English. In Hebrew, it is called "Eden," meaning "delights," referring to a garden of all manner of delights, adorned with all kinds of fruitful and beautiful trees.**
15. **What is Moses seeking to communicate to the people coming into the Promised land by using God’s personal name attached to the title of His majesty and plurality within Himself, over all…Yahweh Elohim?**
16. **Who came first and why?**
	1. **Adam- To establish the function of headship…**
	2. **This is not inferiority/superiority… as man over the rest of creation but a separation of powers that will be crucial going forward.**
17. **In the garden man is given a role/calling and he is given restrictions which would presumably be told to his wife when she comes on the scene.**
18. **The tree of life in vs. 9, was one on the trees that God said, at this time, *“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden…”* for there would be only one exception.**
	1. **It was not the fruit of the tree of life that determined Adam's well-being.**
	2. **The tree was only a symbol.**
* **The tree of life was only a visible representation of God's covenant arrangement with Adam; it was an aid to Adam's understanding of God's promise and his responsibility.**
* **As long as he obeyed God …and one of the signs of obedience was eating of ALL the trees that God gave for that purpose. Interesting don’t you think that even eating what God says is a sign of obedience and blessing!**
	1. **The tree of life was a training tool for Adam.**
* **He was to learn that he had access to that tree as long as he obeyed God, which, in turn, taught him that the essential matter in his relationship with his Creator was submission and obedience which netted blessing in the Covenant of Works…a conditional covenant.**
* **Access to the tree of life taught Adam that harmony, happiness and productivity are achieved and maintained when the creature relates rightly to his Creator.**
	1. **This tree will return with the New Heavens and the New Earth.**
		+ 1. **Gen. 2:10-14 speaks of the abundance of water and of precious metals...like gold in the land of Havilah. What’s the point? *“A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and (from)there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”***
1. **Think on this phrase a minute… *“A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden…”*  How would you explain what it is communicating?**
	* 1. **The Garden of Eden is part of the larger land mass call Eden and a river flowed out of it into the garden to water it providing us with a sign of God’s care for His creation.**
		2. **And at some point outside of the garden it seems it splits into 4 rivers…marking the abundance from which God will supply all the needs of His creation.**
		3. **This is written in a present tense to inform us that the garden remains the same but then at some point outside of the garden (*from there*) the river splits into 4 rivers. The actual Hebrew name translated *“rivers”-* here at the end of verse 10 is “headwaters”…the beginning of each.**
2. **The whole feel of this is as if it was an eyewitness report that obviously got handed down to Moses…or it was simply how God communicated things to give the people such a feel of reality.**
3. **According to Genesis 2, God put gold, fine gold, in the world before sin ever came along (vv. 11, 12- *“…the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.”***
	* 1. **The name Pishon in Hebrew signifies the idea of spreading out or dispersing… “full flowing”- abundance of water.**
* **This is the only time this river is mentioned and its exact location has been lost to the flood evidently.**
* **The imagery could be used as a metaphor for God’s care of His creation….and God’s presence…as the river winds through the land so is God ever present with His people.**
	+ 1. **And interestingly, it also says that gold was not evenly distributed all around but was located in one place, the land of Havilah.**
* **Havilah is thought to be a region known for its wealth and natural resources .**
* **This reference here and throughout the Bible seems to suggest the abundance and prosperity God intents for His people in the original creation.**
* **It might serve as a reminder of the potential blessing when we live in accordance with God’s word.**
	+ 1. **So God created a world in which some people would have more financial opportunity than others.**
* **Why? So they could share with others and become more like God Himself, the ultimate Sharer.**
* **This theme of considering the welfare of others started even before the Fall and before there was any more people.**
	+ 1. **But another reason may be as we survey the uses for gold (*zahav* in Hebrew)that God talks about in the scriptures is so that He can speak of and emphasize the beauty of Hs world…**
* **Beauty and glory are basically the same word in the Hebrew because beauty …true beauty glorifies Him.**
* **Beauty is an ongoing theme from the beginning all the way through to the end.**
* **The presence of gold in Eden reflects the divine intention for God to have His children live in a state of blessing and communion with God and our family**
	+ 1. **But then there is the theme of the city of God where the gold should have been used t0 build God’s city but because the Fall wasn’t so instead of becoming something with which God’s people glorify His name with…think Temple…it instead becomes something that men die for trying to acquire for their own glory.**
1. **Then there is vs. 13-14- *“The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”***
	* 1. **Gihon means *“the river that bursts forth”* …which suggests a river flowing with great force and vitality…think Mississippi River.**
* **Interesting Pishon meant “full flowing”. Both speak to an abundance of water…of life giving and life sustaining for God’s creation.**
* **This river, too, is a topic of discussion…some suggesting that the is the river Nile…but again where this is is less important than what it represents.**
* **Being placed here with the region of Cush may indicate that God’s provision went out beyond Eden and His grace watered the lands of for the use of pre-flood peoples.**
* **A previous indication of God’s common grace?**
	+ 1. **While the Tigris and Euphrates still exist the other may have been altered by the flood…since the fall God’s provision while still promised is now only promised to His people.**
* **Tigris means the river of the darting…like a sharp and swift arrow…referring to its rapidity of flow.**
* **The river Pishon seems to have only encircled Eden and with Eden gone so is the river.**
* **The river Gihon seems to have been locked as well…though powerful…after the Flood things would have changed.**
* **These last 2 rivers are the great rivers of Mesopotamia and they still exist…**

**Reminding us that Eden was a historical place pre-flood.**

**By describing these two rivers the way Moses does he underscores the historical reality of the biblical account in a real worl context.**

* + - 1. **Let’s stop here a minute and look at specifically vs. 8 and 15. *“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. …The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”* According to the Genesis 2:8,15 what would you say is the man’s(Adam and all males after him) basic purpose before God? To glorify God! How?**
1. **To do His will… in this case to work and keep the garden. Doing God’s will brings Him glory.**
2. **God “put” him here and God “puts” us wherever He wants us to be to have the greatest effect.**
3. **Genesis 2:15, He puts Adam in the garden *“to work it and keep it.”***
4. **At first glance, those look like pretty straightforward commands, but there is actually something more going on.**
5. **The most important thing to notice, however, is that these two words—avad (“work”) and shamar (“keep”)—are the precise job description not only of Adam, but also of the priests in Israel’s temple/tabernacle.**
6. **Special note: there is important textual emphasis on the words *“put”* and *“work”* and *“keep”* in Genesis 2:8 and 15.**
	* 1. **Now we are going to talk about this little word *“put”.* You know how I like to point out the small words and how they are really huge.**
		2. **This word “put” speaks to God’s intentional hospitality in His**

 **creative acts—and His world as “home.”**

* **So to that end, the first time the word is used in verse 8 it signifies the most common use of *“put”.* Much like we put our shoes in the closet (or should put our shoes in the closet), God put Adam in the garden…and the garden was to be “home.”**
* **In verse 15, however, the Hebrew word has more significant meaning.**
* **As commentators note, it is a word that can represent God’s *“rest” or “safety.”* As examples of other uses, God *“put”* Lot outside the city to keep him safe, before He rained sulfur and fire on Sodom (Gen 19: 16); God “put” the Israelites in the Promised Land as a gift of “rest” (Deut. 3: 20; 12: 10; 25: 19).**
* **There are at least 13 uses in this way, the word signals the sheltering love of God and His paternal impulse to protect and provide for His children. God *“put”* Adam and Eve in the garden much like a mother swaddles her newborn baby and *“puts”* the child in the cradle or next to her chest for a feeding. *“You’re safe, she says quietly."***
* **Rest, but also dedication to God.**
* **As examples, the manna was *“put”* in the ark of the covenant (Ex 16: 33-34); the high priest *“put”* on his linen garments when approaching the Most Holy Place (Lev 16: 23); the chieftain staffs were *“put”* in the tent of meeting as a test of divinely invested authority (Num. 17: 4).**
* **Some commentators argue that the author of Genesis intends both meanings in Genesis 2: 15: *“The man was ‘put’ into the Garden where he could ‘rest’ and be ‘safe,’ and the man was ‘put’ into the Garden ‘in God’s presence’ where he could have fellowship with God.”***
* **Home is always more than physical shelter from the rain; it must also necessarily be a place for humanity to keep company with God. Home is for relationship.**
* **Just as man was *“put”* in a garden in the beginning, we will one day be “put” in a city—the City of God…and welcomed back. The biblical narrative begins and ends at home. From the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem we are hardwired for place and for permanence, for rest and refuge, for presence and protection.**
	+ 1. **Yet, also there is the word for *“work”:* In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word *“avodah”= work*… shares the sense of *“housekeeping”* and it is translated in a variety of ways: work, service, labor, duties, ceremony, ministry.**
* ***Avodah=work*… is the word used to describe Jacob’s fourteen years of laboring for Laban’s daughter Rachel, as well as Israel’s forced labor under repressive Egyptian taskmasters.**
* **It is also the word that signifies the priestly work of the tabernacle and temple.**
* ***Avodah= work…* reminds us that worship—and its attendant calls to vocation—can share the banality and ordinariness of everyday work."**
* ***“avad”(*root word of *avodah*)= work…**
* **In that we are expected *“to make fruitful”* what we have been called to do…**
* **We are “to cause to flourish”.**
* **Adam is *“to provide”* what the garden, which will include humans, needs to flourish…not just physically but spiritually…(which he will fail at all together.**
* **This is a core concept of masculinity in that we are to invest our greatest assets: time, effort and energy so all parts of the garden/society/civilization/family flourish….developing their fullest potential.**
* **Bringing this into a NT mindset, God, the Father’s goal is for us to be more and more like Jesus. In other words they are concerned for our beauty …our inward growth in Christ , our sanctification, equates to our inward beauty or glory in Christ.**
* **This is seen in how we care for the environment that God has placed us in…work, worship, family and recreation.**
* **This is seen in how we love our wives…sacrificially, as God commands through Paul, *“Husbands, (you must) love your wives as Jesus loved the Church and laid His life down for Her…”***
* **This is seen in how we treat our children. See. Gen. 18:19; Deut. 6:4-9. Training and disciplining our children properly develops them and enables them to flourish.**
* **Wives and children need men who will “man up” and lead as God directs. However we must also remember as Pastor Scotty Smith says, *“The gospel calls us to “man down” more so than to “man up.” There is no masculinity without a core of humility.”***
* **This is also seen in our self-sacrificial service toward our family in Christ and then others.**
	+ 1. **Then there is the word *“keep it”-* which signifies in the Hebrew that we must *“keep it”…*the garden…**
* **“shamar”= *“to keep”...*in that we are to take great care (of God’s things) and it is usually found with another great word in the Hebrew “nasar”= to protect. “Shamarnasar”**
* **All that God puts us in charge of we are to *“keep”* in the same way that He would…we are made after His own image and so we are to work and keep His “things” in the way and in the condition that He would have us to... Gen.1:28-30.**
* **Adam wasn’t just a gardener…but he was most assuredly the guardian of the garden….responsible for the garden to fully do as it was supposed to do to bring God glory.**
* **It means that Adam is to “guard” it and “protect” it, making sure that nothing evil or unclean ever enters it, and if anything does, to make sure that evil is judged and cast out.**
* **Adam soon fails to protect his wife and the garden and he is judged and cast out of the garden to forever struggle in the relationship of family.**
	+ 1. **Just as with the priest keeping the tabernacle and later the Temple…Adam was called to keep the garden as God directed him. (See Numbers 3:8- *“They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle…”)* Like the priests who will work and keep the tabernacle and the temple, so Adam is to work and keep the temple of the garden of Eden. He is to be not only king but also priest in God’s world.**
		2. **So we see the doctrine of work on display here in verse 15.**
* **Many want to say that work is a product of the Fall…because it is so hard…and lacks pleasure in most cases.**
* **I actually love what I do…challenges? Yes…**
* **But I know that I have been call as Adam was to a specific thing and it gives me great comfort today and as I think about eternity.**
* **The whole being hard is still part of the creation mandate…but it became toilsome, lacking pleasure because of the Fall.**
* **There is nothing wrong with hard work.**
* **In fact, often the most rewarding work is the “hard” work.**
* **But most, all too often, have fear in their work because they identity too closely with JUST that work.**
* **Men fall into this all the time.**
* **Ask a man about himself and he hears… *“Tell me about what you do.”***
* **We are constantly vacillating between whether we are adequate and whether we are on the edge of being let go.**
* **The work we do, however, is never done in order to earn favor from God.**
* **We have been called to work…creation mandate… before the Fall.**
* **We have been given “dominion” over His creation.**
* **And we have been called to care for God’s creation (every place He places us) as He would…stewards and shepherd= ambassadors/representatives who work on behalf of the KING.**
* **We have been called to give ourselves to the work of God’s kingdom and to daily obey the commands of our King…in the home, at work, at church or in our recreation.**
* **Everywhere we are we are to WORK at honoring our Lord and Savior! Glorifying Him in all we do.**
* **We work because He worked in us through faith so that one of our rewards is the desire to do His work wherever He places us…from the nursery to the boardroom to the pulpit.**
* **Work is only fulfilling and pleasurable …sometimes in this life…because we live in a fallen world…but when we find our pleasure in Him then those moments of pleasure and fulfillment can be more certain. For we are NOW defining ourselves in Christ…not our work!**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**January 26, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
	* + 1. **Gen. 2:10-14 speaks of the abundance of water and of precious metals...like gold in the land of Havilah. *“A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and (from)there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”***
3. **Remember:**
4. **Eden was a region in which the Lord God planted a garden in the eastern portion of this region.(vs.8)**
5. **The Garden of Eden (vs.15) was the first residence of man, called in the Septuagint “Paradise.”**
6. **Paradise is a word of Persian origin that describes an extensive tract of pleasurable land to be used as a walled park or enclosed garden.**
	* + 1. **What did we say was the point of this information before we move into the last 2 rivers?**
7. **Continuing in Chapter 2**
	* + 1. **Then there is vs. 13-14- *“The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”***
				1. **Gihon means *“the river that bursts forth”* …which suggests a river flowing with great force and vitality…think Mississippi River.**
8. **Interesting Pishon meant “full flowing”. Both speak to an abundance of water…of life giving and life sustaining for God’s creation.**
9. **This river, too, is a topic of discussion…some suggesting that the is the river Nile…but again where this is is less important than what it represents.**
10. **Being placed here with the region of Cush may indicate that God’s provision went out beyond Eden and His grace watered the lands of for the use of pre-flood peoples.**
11. **A previous indication of God’s common grace?**
12. **While the Tigris and Euphrates still exist the other may have been altered by the flood…since the fall God’s provision while still promised is now only promised to His people.**
	* 1. **Tigris means the river of the darting…like a sharp and swift arrow…referring to its rapidity of flow.**
		2. **The river Pishon seems to have only encircled Havilah and with Havilah apparently gone so is the river.**
		3. **The river Gihon seems to have been locked as well…though powerful…after the Flood things would have changed.**
		4. **These last 2 rivers are the great rivers of Mesopotamia and they still exist…**
* **Reminding us that Eden was a historical place pre-flood.**
* **By describing these two rivers the way Moses does he underscores the historical reality of the biblical account in a real worl context.**
1. **Now let’s look at vs. 8 and 15. *“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. …The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”* According to the Genesis 2:8,15 what would you say is the man’s(Adam and all males after him) basic purpose before God? To glorify God! How?**
2. **To do His will… in this case to work and keep the garden. Doing God’s will brings Him glory.**
3. **Adam’s role was to cultivate it (dominate) and keep it (rule-care for). (Creation Ordinance of Work)**
4. **God *“put”* him here and God “puts” us wherever He wants us to be to have the greatest effect.**
5. **Genesis 2:15, He puts Adam in the garden *“to work it and keep it.”***
6. **At first glance, those look like pretty straightforward commands, but there is actually something more going on.**
7. **The most important thing to notice, however, is that these two words—avad (“work”) and shamar (“keep”)—are the precise job description not only of Adam, but also of the priests in Israel’s temple/tabernacle.**
8. **Special note: there is important textual emphasis on the words *“put”* and *“work”* and *“keep”* in Genesis 2:8 and 15.**
9. **Now we are going to talk about this little word *“put”.* You know how I like to point out the small words and how they are really huge.**
10. **This word *“put”* speaks to God’s intentional hospitality in His**

 **creative acts—as in He put us in our “home.”**

* **So to that end, the first time the word is used in verse 8 it signifies the most common use of *“put”.* Much like we put our shoes in the closet (or should put our shoes in the closet), God put Adam in the garden…and the garden was to be “home.”**
* **In verse 15, however, the Hebrew word has more significant meaning.**
* **As commentators note, it is a word that can represent God’s *“rest” or “safety.”* As examples of other uses, God *“put”* Lot outside the city to keep him safe, before He rained sulfur and fire on Sodom (Gen 19: 16); God “put” the Israelites in the Promised Land as a gift of “rest” (Deut. 3: 20; 12: 10; 25: 19).**
* **There are at least 13 uses in this way, the word signals the sheltering love of God and His paternal impulse to protect and provide for His children. God *“put”* Adam and Eve in the garden much like a mother swaddles her newborn baby and *“puts”* the child in the cradle or next to her chest for a feeding. *“You’re safe, she says quietly."***
* **Rest, but also dedication to God.**
* **As examples, the manna was *“put”* in the ark of the covenant (Ex 16: 33-34); the high priest *“put”* on his linen garments when approaching the Most Holy Place (Lev 16: 23); the chieftain staffs were *“put”* in the tent of meeting as a test of divinely invested authority (Num. 17: 4).**
* **Some commentators argue that the author of Genesis intends both meanings in Genesis 2: 15: *“The man was ‘put’ into the Garden where he could ‘rest’ and be ‘safe,’ and the man was ‘put’ into the Garden ‘in God’s presence’ where he could have fellowship with God.”***
* **Home is always more than physical shelter from the rain; it must also necessarily be a place for humanity to keep company with God. Home is for relationship.**
* **Just as man was *“put”* in a garden in the beginning, we will one day be “put” in a city—the City of God…and welcomed back. The biblical narrative begins and ends at home. From the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem we are hardwired for place and for permanence, for rest and refuge, for presence and protection.**
1. **Yet, also there is the word for *“work”:* in the Hebrew Scriptures, the word *“avodah”= work*… shares the sense of *“housekeeping”* andIt is translated in a variety of ways: work, service, labor, duties, ceremony, ministry.**
* ***Avodah=work*… is the word used to describe Jacob’s fourteen years of laboring for Laban’s daughter Rachel, as well as Israel’s forced labor under repressive Egyptian taskmasters.**
* **t is also the word that signifies the priestly work of the tabernacle and temple.**
* ***Avodah= work…* reminds us that worship—and its attendant calls to vocation—can share the banality and ordinariness of everyday work."**
* ***“avad”(*root word of *avodah*)= work…**
* **In that we are expected *“to make fruitful”* what we have been called to do…**
* **We are “to cause to flourish”.**
* **Adam is *“to provide”* what the garden, which will include humans, needs to flourish…not just physically but spiritually…(which he will fail at all together.**
* **This is a core concept of masculinity in that we are to invest our greatest assets: time, effort and energy so all parts of the garden/society/civilization/family flourish….developing their fullest potential.**
* **Bringing this into a NT mindset, God, the Father’s goal is for us to be more and more like Jesus. In other words they are concerned for our beauty …our inward growth in Christ , our sanctification, equates to our inward beauty or glory in Christ.**
* **This is seen in how we care for the environment that God has placed us in…work, worship, family and recreation.**
* **This is seen in how we love our wives…sacrificially, as God commands through Paul, *“Husbands, (you must) love your wives as Jesus loved the Church and laid His life down for Her…”***
* **This is seen in how we treat our children. See. Gen. 18:19; Deut. 6:4-9. Training and disciplining our children properly develops them and enables them to flourish.**
* **Wives and children need men who will “man up” and lead as God directs. However we must also remember as Pastor Scotty Smith says, *“The gospel calls us to “man down” more so than to “man up.” There is no masculinity without a core of humility.”***
* **This is also seen in our self-sacrificial service toward our family in Christ and then others.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**February 2, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review and Continuing:**
	* + 1. **Gen. 2:10-14 -*“A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and (from)there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”* What did we say was the point of this information concerning 4 rivers?**
			2. **Gen. 2:8 and 15- *“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. …The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”***
3. **Special note: there is important textual emphasis on the words *“put”* and *“work”* and *“keep”* in Genesis 2:8 and 15.**
4. **Now we are going to talk about this little word *“put”.* You know how I like to point out the small words and how they are really huge.**
5. **This word *“put”* speaks to God’s intentional hospitality in His**

 **creative acts—as in He put us in our “home.”**

* **So to that end, the first time the word is used in verse 8 it signifies the most common use of *“put”.* Much like we put our shoes in the closet (or should put our shoes in the closet), God put Adam in the garden…and the garden was to be “home.”**
* **In verse 15, however, the Hebrew word has more significant meaning.**
* **As commentators note, it is a word that can represent God’s *“rest” or “safety.”* As examples of other uses, God *“put”* Lot outside the city to keep him safe, before He rained sulfur and fire on Sodom (Gen 19: 16); God “put” the Israelites in the Promised Land as a gift of “rest” (Deut. 3: 20; 12: 10; 25: 19).**
* **There are at least 13 uses in this way, the word signals the sheltering love of God and His paternal impulse to protect and provide for His children. God *“put”* Adam and Eve in the garden much like a mother swaddles her newborn baby and *“puts”* the child in the cradle or next to her chest for a feeding. *“You’re safe, she says quietly."***
1. **Also there is the word for *“work”:* in the Hebrew Scriptures, the word *“avodah”= work*… shares the sense of *“housekeeping”* andIt is translated in a variety of ways: work, service, labor, duties, ceremony, ministry.**
	1. ***Avodah=work*… is the word used to describe Jacob’s fourteen years of laboring for Laban’s daughter Rachel, as well as Israel’s forced labor under repressive Egyptian taskmasters.**
	2. **It is also the word that signifies the priestly work of the tabernacle and temple.**
		* 1. ***Avodah= work…* reminds us that worship—and its attendant calls to vocation—can share the banality and ordinariness of everyday work."**
			2. ***“avad”(*root word of *avodah*)= work…**
* **In that we are expected *“to make fruitful”* what we have been called to do…**
* **We are “to cause to flourish”.**
* **Adam is *“to provide”* what the garden, which will include humans, needs to flourish…not just physically but spiritually…(which he will fail at all together.**
* **This is a core concept of masculinity in that we are to invest our greatest assets: time, effort and energy so all parts of the garden/society/civilization/family flourish….developing their fullest potential.**
	1. **Many want to say that work is a product of the Fall…because it is so hard…and lacks pleasure in most cases.**
		+ 1. **I actually love what I do…challenges? Yes…**
			2. **But I know that I have been call as Adam was to a specific thing and it gives me great comfort today and as I think about eternity.**
	2. **The whole being hard is still part of the creation mandate…but it became toilsome, lacking pleasure because of the Fall.**
		+ 1. **There is nothing wrong with hard work.**
			2. **In fact, often the most rewarding work is the “hard” work.**
	3. **But most, all too often, have fear in their work because they identity too closely with JUST that work.**
		+ 1. **Men fall into this all the time.**
			2. **Ask a man about himself and he hears… *“Tell me about what you do.”***
			3. **We are constantly vacillating between whether we are adequate and whether we are on the edge of being let go.**
	4. **The work we do, however, is never done in order to earn favor from God.**
		+ 1. **We have been called to work…creation mandate… before the Fall.**
			2. **We have been given “dominion” over His creation which requires work.**
			3. **And we have been called to care for God’s creation (every place He places us) as He would…stewards and shepherd= ambassadors/representatives who work on behalf of the KING.**
			4. **We have been called to give ourselves to the work of God’s kingdom and to daily obey the commands of our King…in the home, at work, at church or in our recreation.**
			5. **Everywhere we are we are to WORK at honoring our Lord and Savior! Glorifying Him in all we do.**
			6. **We work because He worked in us through faith so that one of our rewards is the desire to do His work wherever He places us…from the nursery to the boardroom to the pulpit.**
	5. **Work is only fulfilling and pleasurable …sometimes in this life…because we live in a fallen world…**
		+ 1. **But when we find our pleasure in Him then those moments of pleasure and fulfillment can be more certain...**
			2. **Of course, they really are not based in satisfaction from our work but satisfaction in Christ.**
			3. **For we are NOW defining ourselves in Christ…not our work!**
1. **Then there is the word *“keep it”-* which signifies in the Hebrew that we must *“keep it”…*the garden…**
	1. **“shamar”= *“to keep”...*in that we are to take great care (of God’s things) and it is usually found with another great word in the Hebrew “nasar”= to protect. “Shamarnasar”**
	2. **All that God puts us in charge of we are to *“keep”* in the same way that He would…we are made after His own image and so we are to work and keep His “things” in the way and in the condition that He would have us to... Gen.1:28-30.**
	3. **Adam wasn’t just a gardener…but he was most assuredly the guardian of the garden….responsible for the garden to fully do as it was supposed to do to bring God glory.**
		* 1. **It means that Adam is to “guard” it and “protect” it, making sure that nothing evil or unclean ever enters it, and if anything does, to make sure that evil is judged and cast out.**
			2. **Adam soon fails to protect his wife and the garden and he is judged and cast out of the garden to forever struggle in the relationship of family.**
* **Just as with the priest keeping the tabernacle and later the Temple…Adam was called to keep the garden as God directed him.**
* **(See Numbers 3:8- *“They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle…”)***
* **Like the priests who will work and keep the tabernacle and the temple, so Adam is to work and keep the temple of the garden of Eden. He is to be not only king but also priest in God’s world.**
* **So we see the doctrine of work on display here in verse 15.**
1. **In Summary:**
	1. **When God created Adam and Eve, He didn’t just set them free on the earth and let them run wild.**
	2. **He created them for a purpose: to build his earthly kingdom.**
	3. **He gifted them with the abilities and the help they needed to accomplish the task.**
	4. **He set rules requiring them to be loyal and to work diligently.**
	5. **He explained the blessings they’d receive if they obeyed Him, and the punishments they’d endure if they didn’t.**
	6. **In theological terms, we can say that God established a covenant relationship between himself and humanity.**
	7. **This covenant is often referred to as the Covenant of Works.**
2. **WCF chapter 19, sections 1 and 2: *God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience … This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in Ten Commandments.***
	1. **Before the Fall the law had been a way of life for Adam and Eve…do this and live!**
	2. **After the Fall , it became a way to death…since Adam did not keep the Law.**
	3. **The Covenant of Works is connected to the moral law delivered on Sinai, therefore aspects of it continue past Adam’s sin…only being fully satisfied through Christ’s work on the cross.**
	4. **All men are still obligated to obey the law of God.**
	5. **Man has an inherent sense of right and wrong because the law is written on everyone’s heart.**
	6. **But the law cannot do anything on its own except lead us to death since we can’t keep such a perfect standard in our fallen condition.**
	7. **However, for us in Christ it brings life as we live as God will for His glory.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**February 9, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What was some of the things that were talked about concerning the significance of these three words in vs 8 and 15-*“put”* and *“work”* and *“keep”* in Genesis 2:8 and 15? *“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put the man whom He had formed. …The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.”***
4. **We will be talking more about this in the next section but what did you learn from WCF chapter 19, sections 1 and 2? *God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience … This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in Ten Commandments.***
	1. **Before the Fall the law had been a way of life for Adam and Eve…do this and live!**
	2. **After the Fall , it became a way to death…since Adam did not keep the Law.**
	3. **The Covenant of Works is connected to the moral law delivered on Sinai, therefore aspects of it continue past Adam’s sin…only being fully satisfied through Christ’s work on the cross.**
	4. **All men are still obligated to obey the law of God.**
	5. **Man has an inherent sense of right and wrong because the law is written on everyone’s heart.**
	6. **But the law cannot do anything on its own except lead us to death since we can’t keep such a perfect standard in our fallen condition.**
	7. **However, for us in Christ it brings life as we live as God wills it for His glory.**
5. **Moving on to Gen. 2:16-17-*“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”***
6. **Why does God give restrictions when there has been no sin, yet?**
	1. **The prohibition of this tree was to show God’s absolute authority…that there are boundaries and acceptable practices and behaviors even pre-fall.**
	2. **The tree existed as a requirement to absolute obedience to the Word of God. The Covenant of works is established.**
7. ***“Do this and live…”*in complete fellowship with God receiving eternal life.**
8. ***“Do this and die…”* die spiritually to God and die eternally in hell if you are not of His elect from the foundations of the earth.**
9. **On the other hand, the Covenant of Grace, of which we get a glimpse in Gen. 3:15, (but maybe even a pre-cursor in 3:8-9…but we will look at that later) that was made with Christ and the Spirit before time says, *“Live in Christ and do this” …and… “Christ delivered us from condemnation, so do this.”* As a product of our faith we can and will and do keep the law.**
10. **The moral law of God does not change in its content of what it commands and forbids, we relate to the Law in very different way depending upon whether it comes to us in Adam or in Christ.**
11. **The tree existed, as well, to show our limitations and need for God’s authority and to establish this pattern of authority over all of life.**
12. **When we read about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9), we might think that there must have been something essentially evil, even foreboding, about this tree.**
13. **God had put this tree in the garden to give Adam and Eve the opportunity to live out genuine faith and obedience.**
14. **God planted these two special trees in the middle of the garden. I find it significant that God should choose to plant these trees in 'the heart’ of the garden.**
15. **What makes this tree different according to verses 16-17?**
	* + - 1. **Easy answer: is only what God will say about this tree!**
				2. **However, one fruit was indeed forbidden them by God—the *“tree of the knowledge of good and evil”* (Genesis 2:17).**
				3. **Yet, far from diminishing the status of humanity, that prohibition was essential to establish the unique dignity of humans as moral beings.**
				4. **In order for morality to be real, humans must have a certain degree of freedom. For in order to be moral beings, there must exist a real moral choice between right and wrong. There must be a moral boundary. So, one fruit was forbidden.**
16. **They were free to eat from any tree in the garden—except one. God told them that in the day they ate it, they would surely die.**
17. **What an easy choice…one tree gives life …the other threatens death…something that was obviously in opposition to God’s will.**
18. **God intended for Adam and Eve to trust and obey Him regarding this tree … the correct stewardship of all that God had given to them.**
19. **It was not forbidden because it (the tree) was evil, it was forbidden because to disobey was evil.**
	* + - **To eat of the tree would not just enable them to comprehend good and evil…that is a good thing, when you think about it.**
			- **But to eat of it was to assume to themselves the right to decide for themselves what is good and evil rather than to depend upon God to define these 2. Not a good thing.**
20. **This was a call to faith in God alone.**
21. **God is King, and Adam needed to remember his place as one created…even one created in God’s own image.**
	* 1. **Therefore, the LORD set one created object off limits.**
		2. **In this way, God was teaching Adam the great distance between the Creator and the creature.**
22. **Thomas Boston, in his work “Human Natures in its Fourfold State,” captured it so well: *“Now this fair Tree, of which he was forbidden to eat, taught him…that his happiness lay not in enjoyment of the creatures, for there was a want even in Paradise: so that the forbidden tree was in effect the hand of all the creatures, pointing man away from themselves to God for happiness: It was a sign of emptiness hung before the door of the creation, with that inscription, “This is not your rest”.***
23. **Though the Bible opens with a picture of blessing in this newly created world, things radically changed at the Fall…which we will see soon.**
	1. **Instead of delighting in God, our first parents rebelled against him.**
	2. **The first sin of humanity involved food.**
24. **They are different so Adam and Eve would know the trees location, but also so that the significance of the trees and their effects are at the very heart of the relationship between God and man, that is, life and obedience.**
25. **Both of these trees show us God’s divine authority established over all of life and He will continue to issues commands and call all to account for their obedience or disobedience throughout all of time.**
26. **Thus establishing from the beginning that He has the right to command His creation and to expect His creation to want to do what He says to do.**
27. **Adam is reckoned as the head and representative of the couple.**
28. **Adam is given the initial command regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2: 16–17).**
29. **And even though Eve, tempted by the serpent, commits the initial crime, Adam is addressed first (3: 9). *The LORD GOD called to the man and asked, “Where are you?”* for Adam was the designated leader and representative. (Remember the serpent went to Eve first…role reversal to question Adams headship as well.)**
30. **Romans 5 makes this indisputably clear: “*Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned”* (5: 12).**
31. **In other words, Adam, not Eve, was the federal head.**
32. **Privileges and obligations define a relationship…establishing structure…also points to the structure of the covenant.**
33. **We all know the negative view of the command given to Adam here in verse 16-17. So, what would you say would be the positive reaction to such a negative command?**
34. **They were to show their love for Him by refusing to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.**
35. **And they would choose to refuse of only this one tree on the basis that their loving Father said so…and whatever He commanded must be by necessity good.**
36. **The Westminster on the covenant of works and the covenant of Grace.**
	1. **WSC #12, 16, and 20**
		1. **WSC#12- Q.-“What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?” *“When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of perfect obedience; forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.”***
		2. **WSC# 16: Did all mankind fall in Adam's first transgression? *The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity; all mankind, descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.***
		3. **WSC# 20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery? *God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.***
	2. **I bring this up here so that we can consider, in light of the trees, the covenants.**
		* + 1. **By virtue of how these are written the catechism certainly places the covenant of works and the covenant of grace within the arena of God’s special creation providences…thus making then both real and needing to be dealt with.**
				2. **The catechism reveals that the covenant of works/life was entered into by God at the moment of Adams creation…**
				- **Adam’s very life was a sign of the covenant.**
				- **Adam owed God complete loyalty by virtue of what God had done even before something was verbally pointed out.**
	3. **God’s plan from before the beginning was in the covenant of grace/redemption to save His elect people whom the Godhead had determined and predestined before the foundation of the world.**
	4. **This is no way negates the need of the Covenant of Works/life… since perfection is still required to be able to go to heaven.**
	5. **The actual word covenant is not used in the Genesis account. However the essential parts of the covenant are there:**
		* + 1. **A clear definition of the parties involved…**
				- **A legally binding set of provisions that stipulates the conditions of the relationship**
				- **The promise of blessing for obedience and the condition of obtaining blessing**
				- **The consequence for disobedience.**
				- **All of this was in place at the creation of man.**
				1. **The reality here is that just like the rest of creation the moment Adam and Eve were created, they stood in a moral relationship/covenant with God their Creator.**
				- **They possessed a duty of obedience to Him without any inherent claim to reward or blessing for such obedience.**
				- **Why were they created? To glorify God! And immediately there was place on them a legal obligation to do as they were created to do.**
	6. **John Frame has said just so we are clear, “*All things; plants, animals, and persons are appointed to be covenant servants, to obey God’s law, and to be instruments of His gracious purpose.”***
		* + 1. **Sooo… All parts of God’s creation have their covenantal task. All things and people stand before God either as a covenant breaker or a covenant keeper.**
				2. **The fact that God initiated the covenant with Adam illustrates the principle implication of the covenant, which is: God speaks, man hears and obeys.**
	7. **The covenant of works was the ratification of what was already true by virtue of the fact that Adam was a creation of God.**
	8. **The covenant of works “formalized” the nature of God's relationship with man, we might say.**
37. **Since Adam broke this covenant and yet this covenant is still in force…how is it dealt with for us who are God’s? That is what WSC#20 is all about.**
	1. **WSC# 20. Did God leave all mankind to perish in the estate of sin and misery? *God having, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, did enter into a covenant of grace, to deliver them out of the estate of sin and misery, and to bring them into an estate of salvation by a Redeemer.***
		1. **Jesus, the second Adam did it! See how easy this theology is?!?**
		2. **His work as the new Adam or 2nd Adam fulfilled all the terms of our original covenant of works with God.**
		3. **JESUS, as the 2nd Adam, “got to heaven” so to speak by His good works as defined in the covenant of works…not how we define it… So we get to heaven by His good works…His righteousness.**
		4. **His good works become our good works when we receive Christ by faith when we are justified by His grace alone through faith alone by Christ’s work alone to the glory of God alone!**
		5. **When this happen God credits the good works of Christ…His righteousness… to our account.**
	2. **The covenant of grace which we will be looking at next fulfills the covenant of works because God graciously applies the merit of Christ to us.**
		* 1. **Thus by God’s grace through the blood of Jesus Christ and the terms established and sovereignly administered by God we meet the terms set forth in the covenant of works.**
			2. **R.C. Sproul said this, *“The covenant of works is the basis of our need of redemption (because we all violated it in Adam) and our hope of redemption (because Christ has fulfilled its terms for us).”***
	3. **Then God gives woman.**
38. **In Gen. 2:18-25, *“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ 19 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, ‘This at last is 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 his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”***
	* + 1. **How does God provide help for Adam to fulfill his calling before God? Why is this still important for us “guys” today?**
				1. **Adam may have “lost” a rib but he gained a far richer reward.**
				2. **Calvin put it this way in his commentary on Genesis- *“Since he obtained a faithful associate of life; for he now saw himself, who had been before imperfect (not finished), rendered compete in his wife.”***
				3. **A *“helper fit for him”…*suitable for him.**
39. **To complete the man God has chosen for her.**
40. **To compliment him… *“a helper suitable for him…”* what he lacks she supplies.**
	* + - 1. **The word *“helper”* is a good word…**
41. **It actually highlights his inadequacies without her…**
42. **But not inferiority as some have tried to say…especially since its primary use in the OT Scriptures is as an attribute of God.**
	* + 1. **As we look at how the two mutually complete one another, why do you suppose that it wasn’t good for Adam to be alone?**
				1. **He was created incomplete…that is God wasn’t finished with Adam yet…for Adam needed to be finished.**
43. **God’s plan was for woman to complete him...a helper suitable/complementary to him… so together they could do what God had created them to do… something they could not do individually as effectively as God designed.**
44. **God himself declared that Adam’s situation was not good (Gen. 2: 18). Every other aspect of creation had its counterpart.**
45. **The day had its sun, the night its moon, the waters its fish, the sky its birds, and the ground its animals, but the man did not have his helpmate.**
46. **After all, God made blue jays and beavers and salamanders before he made man.**
	1. **The order/sequence matters because it indicates Adam’s position in the creation narrative as priest and protector and Eve’s position as coming under the man’s protection, made from his side and for his support.**
	2. **This was very good.**
47. **According to Genesis 2:18, what would you say is the woman’s basic purpose before God? *“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”***
	1. **Helper fit for him…suitable for him. To complete her man. To compliment him…what he lacks she supplies.**
	2. **The word “helper” is a good word…it actually highlights his inadequacies without her… not inferiority as some have tried to say…especially since its primary use in the OT Scriptures is as an attribute of God.**
48. **Why weren’t the animals good enough to deal with Adam’s aloneness?**
	1. **They did not bear the same image so they were not like him…**
	2. **They were not created to complete Adam but for Adam to care for and oversee.**
	3. **Adam is aware of the differences and knows none of them are like him…while each of them have one that corresponds to it.**
	4. **They could reproduce and populate either ..humans that is.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**February 16, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What were some of the reasons we discussed for why God prohibits the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?**
4. **Right after this prohibition what does God give to Adam? Why? Gen. 2:18- *“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”***
5. **What did God mean that then, *“…it was not good that the men should be alone”*? And now?**
6. **God saw the aloneness of man and it was not good.**
7. **A reminder that God never intended for man to be alone so in due time He determines to complete man with woman.**
8. **God created woman to be a perfectly suitable completer for man…not a substitute and not inferior.**
9. **In some ways there is no higher calling than that of a helper. God holds high servanthood in His economy.**
10. **And she is equal before God…and one with her husband.**
11. **Just because: In verses 19-20 we see Adam naming the animals. *“Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.”***
12. ***“Now out of the ground the LORD God…”* OR… Gen. 1:24- *“And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.’ And it was so.”***
13. ***“Had formed”* is the operative phrase here. As I have said before there isn’t necessarily a past tense in the Hebrew. The distinction of time is set by the context…immediate and full context. God had already formed the animals.**
14. ***“God brought all the animals to the man…”* The animals obey God’s commands…just like they will for Noah.**
15. **Mark Twain once joked, *“Adam came home to Eve after naming all the animals. Eve looked at an elephant and asked, ‘What did you name that big animal?’ Adam replied, ‘I called it an elephant.’ Eve asked, ‘Why did you call it an elephant?’ Adam answered, ‘Because it looked like an elephant.’***
16. **Now the Bible doesn’t tell us what names Adam actually gave to the animals…but given the names we have had throughout time for certain animals why do you suppose Adam didn’t try to name the animals “man” or human” or George”? He recognized that none of them are made in the image of God.**
17. **How might this address our propensity to personify our animals?**
18. **Gen. 2:18-25 continued**
19. **What did God do to address Adam’s need for a mate in verse 21-22? *“So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man”* .**
	1. **He causes Adam to sleep such a sleep that He could literally do some kind of supernatural surgery on Him to remove the initial “building block” for the person of Eve.**
		1. **Adam slept soundly while God worked …no stress…no anticipation…**
		2. **Simply the sleep of complete trust in His God for he had no reason to doubt God at all.**
	2. **He made woman from man…**
		1. **He fashioned or built her from man.**
		2. **He started with the “rib” and fashioned her by His will into what Adam needed to complete him.**
		3. **She was from Adam but she was not Adam.**
		4. **God seems to have done this to remind the man of the oneness we share we our wives...but also to remind us that they are different.**
		5. **The genders are set… male and female by God’s design. DNA- XX or XY…**
	3. **God brought the woman to him…**
		1. **God provided, just like He has from the beginning.**
		2. **This is where we get the father giving the bride away to the husband…the father having consented, he gives his daughter to the man of God’s choice.**
		3. **She was created to be perfectly suited to him.**
		4. **Thus the submissive role of wives to husband is found BEFORE the curse. So it is a good thing in how it it used to complete the man.**
	4. **Matthew Henry said it so well, *“Eve was not made out of his head to rule him, nor from his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved by him.”***

1. **Is there a principle there for us today?**
	1. **We don’t need to knock ourselves out looking for a mate… not that we shouldn’t be looking…**
	2. **BUT …know God will provide for marriage is His intended plan for mankind.**
		1. **This is not what should consume us as believers…**
		2. **What is to consume us is the “work” that God has given us to do at this moment…and if you are single and a person of the opposite sex wonders into your work space doing similar things for the Lord maybe you stop and ask him or her if they would like to get a coffee!**
	3. **In the mean time when we are single we are to be resolved to pursue God in all that we do…in church to God’s glory…our career to God Glory…all that we are given by God to do to His glory…as a single person you are that way right now according to Paul to give you better and more opportunities to serve God.**
	4. **But what is the state of the Church right now when it comes to marriage and singleness?**
		1. **We’ve talked a bit about this when we talked about God’s command to be fruitful and multiply…the church seems to be stuck.**
		2. **A phenomenon especially in our urban churches is this:** **A lot of churches have many single men and many single women who wish to be married, but are not marrying one another. There are lots of single Christians but not a lot of weddings.**
		3. **With that in mind, here are some potential factors that may make marriage especially challenging today.**
			* + **Pornography has made men and women fear one another and fear the possibility of either marrying a porn addict or having to deal with a recovering one.**
				+ **Many women, especially in urban settings, have attained greater educational or vocational success than the men around them and it is a general rule (though certainly not a universal one) that when this happens men can consider women above them and women can consider men beneath them.**
				+ **Many women are well-established in the workforce and do not need a husband to provide for them in ways that may have been true in years past.**
				+ **Christians can fall into the “soulmate myth” that there is just one person out there for them to marry and that a marriage can only be successful when they are certain they have found that one individual.**
				+ **Fertility technologies allow women to delay childbearing, and therefore delay marriage, into their thirties or even forties. While Christians may not advocate the use of such technologies, the ethos of delaying marriage and family has seeped deeply into society and from there into the church.**
				+ **Christians have heard messages about marriage being difficult and they may not see how the potential benefits and pleasures of marriage outweigh the drawbacks and difficulties.**
				+ **Churches can make dating weird by attaching too much weight to the earliest stages of a relationship, thus causing people to shy away from relationships at all instead of risking a breakup that will become a source of gossip.**
	5. **Also, I believe the church does not do a great job of teaching …**
		1. **Whether marriage is to be desired more than singleness or singleness is to be desired more than marriage.**
		2. **The church is not teaching sufficiently about being countercultural .**
		3. **As people grow up immersed in modern Western culture—as they learn in its schools, swipe through its socials, and watch its media—they gain cultural assumptions and expectations, many of which counter what Christians have long taken for granted. An older generation considers marriage normal and singleness odd; a new generation considers singleness normal and marriage odd.**
		4. **Simply put, the church needs to teach that it is still true that *“it is not good for the man to be alone”* and that mankind is to *“be fruitful and multiply.”***
		5. **And that celibacy, not singleness, is a special calling before God.**
	6. **Tim Challies has stated: *I am convinced that few young Christians today could confidently answer questions like these:***
		1. **Does God still mean for humanity to be fruitful and multiply?**
		2. **Is it God’s general will for most people most of the time that they pursue marriage?**
		3. **Is singleness superior to marriage? Is marriage superior to singleness?**
		4. **Is a life of chosen and deliberate singleness—not the kind that involves being utterly sold out to a life of mission and service, but the kind that involves living a more standard workaday Western life—pleasing to God to the same degree as being married?**
		5. **Is marriage a kind of consolation plan for those who are emotionally unable to handle being single or sexually unable to handle being chaste?**
		6. **And perhaps even a question as simple as this: What is marriage and why does it matter?**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**February 23, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Describe again what God did to address Adam’s need for a mate in verse 21-22? What is the sequence of events He wants us to be cognizant of and why? *“So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man”* .**
	1. **He causes Adam to sleep such a sleep that He could literally do some kind of supernatural surgery on Him to remove the initial “building block” for the person of Eve.**
		1. **Adam slept soundly while God worked …no stress…no anticipation…**
		2. **Simply the sleep of complete trust in His God for he had no reason to doubt God at all.**
	2. **He made woman from man…**
		1. **He fashioned or built her from man.**
		2. **He started with the “rib” and fashioned her by His will into what Adam needed to complete him.**
		3. **She was from Adam but she was not Adam.**
		4. **God seems to have done this to remind the man of the oneness we share we our wives...but also to remind us that they are different.**
		5. **The genders are set… male and female by God’s design. DNA- XX or XY…**
	3. **God brought the woman to him…**
		1. **God provided, just like He has from the beginning.**
		2. **This is where we get the father giving the bride away to the husband…the father having consented, he gives his daughter to the man of God’s choice.**
		3. **She was created to be perfectly suited to him.**
		4. **Thus the submissive role of wives to husband is found BEFORE the curse. So it is a good thing in how it it used to complete the man.**
	4. **Matthew Henry said it so well, *“Eve was not made out of his head to rule him, nor from his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved by him.”***
4. **What encouragement can this give to singles in the Church?**
5. **Chapter 2 continued:**

**How would you best describe Adams statement in verse 23? *“Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”***

* 1. **The statement in verse 23 draws attention to how important Adam saw his wife to be…his completer…one made especially for him…and as such he must care for her as a gift from God as well which would bring God glory.**
	2. **Von Rodd says: *"God Himself, like a Father of a bride, leads the woman to man."* We must always remember who it is who provides this woman for us!**
	3. **But Adam seems to get it at the time…**
		1. **Adams response to the gift of Eve is the first recorded human words... *“At last...”!* Or for Mt. Spock lovers “Indeed!”**
		2. **This is not said as if he had been in need. This was before the FALL…man would not have known this kind of longing before the FALL. But it is said because:**
			+ - **He recognizes the enormity of the gift given from God to him…by giving him a mate.**
				- **Also, he recognizes God finishing His work. God had said that it was not good for man to be alone so Adam may have wondered what that meant …He may have known what that meant …so when Eve came he saw the completion that he needed that the others of creation had.**
				- **God did not create a duplicate but a fitting compliment to/ for Adam.**
				- **Adam speaks and he is so excited when God presents Eve to him and he says*, “At last, this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.”***

**You see, Adam was obviously wondering what God was going to give him when God said it is not good for man to be alone.**

**It was obvious that God knew the task that was given to Adam was from the beginning too BIG for one man... Adam obviously needed a helper suitable/fit corresponding/complimenting for/to him.**

* + - * + **The woman makes it possible in God’s economy to carry out God’s mandate ... something he couldn’t do completely without her. Making the aim of marriage to serve the purposes of God in His world… *“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”***
				+ **God will connect this occurrence to us and to the marriages we would have when it is said, *“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast go his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (vs. 24)***
1. **So let’s settle a question that people have been struggling with for the last 4 years at least. According to chapter 1 through 2:23, What is woman? *“…she shall be called Woman…”.***
2. **Over all, what does Gen. 2: 24-25 tell us of the type of relationship the man and his wife had before the Fall? *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”***
	1. **Wonderful, complete, not lacking in trust, no fear or shame…recognition of each other’s dependence on the other to be able to fulfill God’s design…one that could only be fulfilled in this type of relationship… marriage.**
	2. **Also, a full recognition of being made in God’s image...but not being God. Humbly recognizing they were part of His creation though unique and above all the rest of creation.**
	3. **They could be safe with one another …naked and unashamed and willingly doing the things God had given them to do just as God had said for them to do them!**
	4. **No wonder they weren’t ashamed they hadn’t done anything wrong yet!**
	5. ***“…and they shall become one flesh.”***
		* 1. **This is more than an alternate command to multiply….but it is not less**
			2. **This is a blessing of God for married believers for it speaks to the sanctity of marriage and the vows we take to one another and to God. Vows that must not be broken.**
			3. **This also speaks to a necessity of gender difference. Can not become one if they are the same gender…can not form a perfect union.**
	6. **Quite simply that since He has done everything else… creating men and women, bringing the woman to the man…He now makes it clear He is the one who has ordained and performs a uniting called “one flesh”.**
	7. **Man does not do this. God does. I, as a presiding minister, simply publically declare what God has done. That is what is meant in Mark 10:8-9 when Jesus says, *“What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”* God joins a husband and a wife into one flesh and there is no shame.**
3. **But look closer, at vs 24 a minute. What is being highlighted when God tells us through Moses that, *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast/cleave to his wife and they shall become one flesh.”?***
	1. **God is speaking to the man because the man will have the hardest time leaving and cleaving…for the woman was created to be the man’s helper which means it was created into her to desire to leave and cleave to her husband…this is what godly parents should do with their daughters...teach them that this is their purpose.**
	2. **Parents should also make it easy for the man to leave and cleave to his wife… the woman of God’s choosing.**
	3. **This is God’s method of multiplying families which are the foundation of society.**
	4. **This is God’s method of growing His kingdom as these 2 become one in Him as they cleave to one another by His grace and for His glory.**
	5. **This is God’s way of showing the importance the man is to place of the role of his wife in his life…first among all other people.**
	6. **This is God’s method of displaying His covenant in picture form…Christ leaving His Father and taking the church as His bride, at the cost of His life, and holding fast to her in a one-flesh/Spirit union forever...never to be torn asunder.**
	7. **Some have suggested that this word *“cleave/hold fast”* may represent the idea of man pursuing his bride…and that is only true in the sense of his taking the initiative…**
		1. **But to say that that is all this means certainly lessens the effect of this word *“Hold fast/Cleave”.***
		2. **The Hebrew word *“dabaq”-* means to cling, adhere/stick without coming apart…and treating that which is clung to, as in the case of your wife, with the dignity that God commands. Not a suggestion…but a command…like, *“Husbands, (you must) love your wives…”* no option here but to love as Christ loved. How far we all fall from this command.**
		3. **So, the picture is of being glued or nailed together becoming one… the practical idea is of *“staying very close to someone forever”***
	8. **The women the Bible presents as the most desirable are those respected by their husbands. Think Abigail. Sarah**
		1. **And the wives the Bible presents as most faithful are those who respect their husbands.**
		2. **Still, our corrupted world can tempt each woman’s heart with a desire to control more than to respect her husband. That’s not new.**
	9. **Human joy and spiritual oneness in a marriage will not come by efforts of self-serving control, but by selfless efforts of Christlike support – which is what is best for all.**
4. **What does this say about the man’s role?**
	1. **The word *“leave”* speaks of the *“man”* giving up childhood, and dependence upon his parents…from being a responder… to becoming the initiator, the head of a family.**
	2. **This is something he does because he realizes there is a greater good to be achieved in his leaving…and the greater good is to be united with the woman God has provided for him and to form and grow the family God has given to him.**
	3. **And how does a correct understanding of this role enable the woman to want to become *“one flesh”* with this man?**
		* 1. **When the man willingly makes this break from his parents it says he is able to follow the Lord’s leading/will…**
			2. **He doesn’t need her permission or anyone else’s to follow God which in turns helps the woman to trust her husband because she knows he will follow God first hence a new oneness is established that will enable her to willingly submit and follow this man.**
	4. **In other words, when the man is performing His function as the covenant head of the home as God prescribes then harmony exists and oneness flourishes.**
5. **What is significant in this very last verse? *“The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”***
	1. **What a strange way, we might think, to end this account of Creation: *“The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame”* Yet the verse is strategically placed. It links the account of the creation of woman and the establishment of marriage (Gen 2:18-24) with the account of the Fall (Gen. 3).**
		* 1. **On the one hand, the Bible tells us that woman was taken from man, made by God to be *“a helper suitable for him”* (2:18), yet doubly one with him: she is bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh (2:24), the paradigm of marriages to come, of new homes and new families.**
			2. **On the other hand, in the next chapter we read of the Fall, the wretched rebellion that introduces death and the curse. Far from being unashamed, their instinct is to hide.**
	2. **This was not how it was supposed to be.**
		* 1. **In the beginning, *“the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.”* The sexual arena stands to the fore, of course; yet there is a symbol-laden depth to the pronouncement. It is a way of saying that there was no guilt; there was nothing to be ashamed of.**
			2. **This happy innocence meant openness, utter candor. There was nothing to hide, whether from God or from each other.**
	3. **How much more dire are the same effects worked into the psyche of a fallen race, worked into individuals like you and me with so much to hide.**
		* 1. **Would you want your spouse or your best friend to know the full dimensions of each of your thoughts?**
			2. **Would you want your motives placarded for public display?**
			3. **Have we not done things of which we are so ashamed that we want as few people as possible to know about them?**
			4. **Even the person whose conscience is said to be “seared” and who therefore boasts of his sin does so only in some arenas, but not in others.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**March 2, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Gen 2:24-25*-“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”***

**Just so we are clear, who designed and defines and commands marriage? And how can we prove our position?**

**God spoke the design and definition for marriage into being…the way He spoke creation into being.**

**Jesus affirmed it.**

* + - 1. **Moreover, there are multiple passages in the New Testament where Jesus quotes from the early chapters of Genesis in a straightforward, historical manner.**
			2. **Matthew 19:4–6 is especially significant as Jesus quotes from both Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24.**
			3. **Jesus’ use of the OT Scripture here is authoritative in settling a dispute over the question of divorce, as it is grounded in the creation of the first marriage and the purpose thereof (Malachi 2:14–15).**
			4. **The passage is also striking in understanding Jesus’ use of Scripture as He attributes the words spoken as coming from the Creator (Matthew 19:4).**
			5. **More importantly, there is no indication in the passage that he understood it figuratively or as an allegory.**
			6. **If Christ were mistaken about the account of creation and its importance to marriage, then why should He be trusted when it comes to other aspects of his teaching?**
* **Quoting Genesis 2:24, Jesus first affirms God’s original intent in marriage in answer to the Pharisees: *“Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”* (Matt 19:4–6).**
* **Jesus affirms that *“What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”* In other words, Jesus believes marriage is a permanent union, one that God makes.**
* **The Pharisees are not satisfied with this answer, and so they press Jesus by asking about Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1. They ask, *“Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce and to send her away?”* (Matt 19:7).**
* **In reply, Jesus points out that they are in fact wrong about what Moses did in Deuteronomy 24:1: *“Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”* (Matt 19:8–9).**
* **Jesus points to the hardness of the human heart as the reason why Moses allowed divorce, and he points again to Genesis by saying *“from the beginning it was not so”* in verse 8.**
* **Moses did not encourage or require anyone to divorce. But when he saw people divorcing, he legislated the process of divorce only because of their sin. We might say he accommodated the law to the hardness of human hearts.**
* **This tells us something important about the Law of Moses by the way. While many aspects represent God’s eternal moral law, some legislative portions accommodate to our hard hearts. That is why Jesus renews our hearts so that we can be granted the gift of being able to receive His teaching.**
* **Then Jesus concludes: *“whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”* As noted, the exception clause matters but it is beside the point of the passage.**
* **Here, Jesus emphasizes the original intent of marriage as a permanent bond that God makes according to Genesis 2:24, Jesus interprets that passage to mean: *“What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate”* (Matt 19:6).**
* **Furthermore, in a parallel passage in Mark 10:6, Jesus said, “*But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’”***
1. **With all that said, Christians should prioritize the teaching of Jesus…the Word. He points to God’s original intent in Genesis 2 to say that marriage is a permanent bond and that divorcing another makes one an adulterer. The only exception that Jesus explicitly mentions involves one spouse committing a sexually immoral act.**
2. **Ultimately, what is the purpose for our marriages? Why did God create marriage?**
	1. **To glorify Himself! The marriage is to display God to the world.**
	2. **Marriage is the pattern for Christ’s covenantal relationship with His people (see Eph. 5:31-32).**
	3. **And therefore, the highest meaning/purpose of marriage is to glorify God by displaying Christ’s covenantal relationship. *“Staying married then, is not about staying in love. It is about keeping covenant.”(*John Piper)**
	4. **Terms like *“hold fast”* and *“one flesh”* then speak as much to permanency as they do to covenantal fidelity. That is why divorce is so horrific in God’s eyes because it is not just breaking covenant with the spouse of your youth but maybe more importantly we are misrepresenting Christ and His covenant.**
	5. **Marriage is meant by God to display His gospel reality to the world.**
3. **How should this passage about such “perfection” speak to us today?**
	1. **Obviously these verses are meant to speak down through the ages or Jesus and Paul wouldn’t bring them up again as examples for marriage….as a reminder of the covenant commitment we enter into at marriage.**
	2. **Based on verse 24’s emphasis of cleaving in a one-flesh union this tells us that when we strive for this in our current marriages resting in the grace of God to do this this sets the stage for a shame-free marriage even today.**
	3. **Behold, an okay marriage is not what God had in mind but one that flourishes.**
		1. **This type of oneness promotes complete acceptance…unconditionally…so there is no fear of disapproval by the one that matters most.**
		2. **This type of oneness reflects the unity and oneness we are to have in Christ as believers….the Oneness that the Godhead has…so if we are out of sorts with our spouse it is a direct sign that we are out of sorts in some way with God!**
4. **What about the question of same-sex unions? Why isn’t homosexuality and same-sex unions part of God’s plan according to these chapters? Other than the reasons I have given above when talking about “image of God”**
	* 1. **Paul, as a good disciple of Jesus, likewise strongly echoes Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in his two primary texts on homosexual practice, Romans 1:23–27 and 1Corinthians 6:9 and I Tim. 1:8-11.**
		2. **Jesus and Paul both assume the logic of sexual intercourse implied in Genesis: a sexual bond requires two (and only two) different sexual halves (“a man” and “his wife”) being**

**brought together into a sexual whole (“one flesh”)**

* + 1. **The importance of this male-female sexual bond is further emphasized in the way the author of Genesis reasons from the story of the creation of Eve from Adam’s side to the sexual union within marriage: *“And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is 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 his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”* (Gen. 2:22–24)**
		2. **The word *“therefore”* connects the making of Eve from a part of Adam’s body with the *“one flesh”* sexual union between a man and a woman in marriage: it is the reunion of the two constituent parts of a sexual whole. It is not another man who is the missing part or sexual complement of a man, but rather a woman.**
		3. **And just so we are clear:**
			1. **Later passages in the Bible uphold the pattern for marriage established in Genesis 1–2 and prohibit any other kind of sexual intercourse outside of the marriage relationship between one man and one woman.**
			2. **For example, having sex with an opposite-sex person other than your husband or wife is forbidden by the command *“You shall not commit adultery”* (Ex. 20:14; reaffirmed by Jesus in Matt. 19:18; cf. Rom. 13:9; James 2:11).**
			3. **Sex between two unmarried people (what was called *“fornication”* in older Bible translations) is prohibited in passages such as Exodus 22:16–17; Deuteronomy 22:13–21, 28–29; 1Corinthians 6:18; 2Corinthians 11:2; 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1Thessalonians 4:3-10**
			4. **Other specific kinds of sexual intercourse outside of marriage are also prohibited, such as prostitution (1Cor. 6:15–18), incest (Lev. 20:11–21; 1Cor. 5:1–2), and bestiality (Lev. 18:23; 20:15–16).**
			5. **In addition, several other passages of Scripture prohibit homosexual intercourse. (Gen. 19; Leviticus 18:22, 20:13;Rom. 1:23-27; I Cor. 6:9; I Tim. 1:8-11 and Jude 7…to name the best known….the Greek makes it clear in I Cor. 6 And in I Tim. 1: 8-11 that the Apostle is talking about homosexuality…the Greek word used needs to be translated *“men who practice homosexuality…”* And the owed in Jude 7 translates easiest as*, “went after other flesh…”.***
		4. **Matthew Henry again, *“It is the glory of man to be a man, and it is the glory of a woman to be a woman in the ways God intended. Who, then, is superior? A man is absolutely superior to a woman…at being a man, and a woman is absolutely superior to a man …at being a woman.”*  There is absolutely no inequality between man and woman before the face of God…but they do have different functions so that together as one they can fully glorify God and enjoy Him.**
1. **For fun: (if time) But is it Adam and Eve or Adam and Lilith?**
	1. **A prominent idea within extreme left feminist movement is that the Bible has been edited and portions of text were taken out. One such example cited by feminists is the character of Lilith.**
		1. **According to the story, Lilith was the first wife of Adam and was made from the dust of the earth like him.**
		2. **She claimed equal status with him and refused marital relations because of it.**
		3. **Lilith fled the Garden of Eden to gain her independence and refused to come back when three angels tried to persuade her to do so.**
		4. **She was then cursed to be the mother of demons and would seek to kill Adam’s sons. According to Jewish tradition the ‘sons of Adam” are at risk until after 8 days when they are circumcised.**
		5. **Adam, now having no wife, was given the more submissive Eve who would listen to and obey him.**
	2. **Some will claim that this story was taken out of the Genesis account in order to uphold male prominence and subjugate women to the desires of man. However, when we look at ancient sources, we find that Lilith does not have biblical origins but pagan ones. She was not written out of the Genesis account because this story never took place.**
		* 1. **Lilith’s first literary appearance is in the Epic of Gilgamesh in a brief comment. She is one of the creatures Gilgamesh must flush out from the Huluppu Tree. No detailed description is given of her, and the tablet this story is found on is likely a later Babylonian edition to the tradition of Gilgamesh.**
			2. **The next ancient text Lilith is found in is in the Bible. Isaiah 34 and 35 are prophecies of the destruction of Edom.**
	3. **When Lilith is mentioned in Isaiah 34:14 (AMP, CEB, LEB, etc.), she is one of many creatures in a list, all of whom represent death, destruction, and evil.**
	4. **Most modern translations do not say “Lilith” but opt for general phrases like “night birds” or “screech owl.”**
	5. **There are many textual issues with reading “lilith” as a proper noun though.**
		* 1. **First, all the creatures that are named before and after are plural, and it does not make stylistic sense to have a singular word in the midst of those plurals.**
			2. **Second, the tone of the text is hyperbolic in nature when describing the judgement of Edom.**
			3. **The original audience of the text would most likely have read “lilith” as representative of demonic creatures.**
			4. **Translations that use birds instead of Lilith are correctly communicating these ideas of desolation and ruin.**
			5. **But even if this verse is to be taken as a reference to Lilith, it does not explain why there is a myth of her as Adam’s first wife.**
	6. **This myth seems to originate in a Jewish work called The Alphabet of Ben Sira that was written sometime between the eighth and tenth century.**
		* 1. **The myth present in popular culture is derived from here; however, the nature of this work is rarely considered when people recount this story.**
			2. **The Alphabet of Ben Sira is a satirical work whose purpose is to critique the rabbinical Judaism of the medieval age. The work is very vulgar and was not meant to be taken seriously. In fact, some of the contents have been deemed heretical, and various Jewish scholars have rejected it for these reasons.**
			3. **The myth of Lilith is just one of a set of stories that are used to answer questions Nebuchadnezzar asks seven-year-old Ben Sira. These stories are told as a “rewritten Bible.”**
			4. **The insertion of Lilith has precedence in the Babylonian Talmud as she is described as a seductress, but it is difficult to determine what satirical purpose this narrative serves, especially since her focus is on the death of infants.**
			5. **One theory is that it may be critiquing the idea of a two-fold creation that was promoted by some rabbinical circles at the time.**
			6. **The more likely focus of the satire is not Lilith herself but Adam.**
			7. **Rabbinical Judaism at the time put the blame of the fall solely on Eve with Adam having no culpability. However, in The Alphabet of Ben Sira, the men in the story are portrayed as weak and unable to exercise any greater authority over the woman.6 Adam blames God for giving him Lilith who will not listen to him, but later, he cannot stop Eve from eating the fruit and eating it himself. While The Alphabet of Ben Sira is the source of this myth of Lilith being Adam’s first wife, no credence was given to this story until the modern era.**
	7. **As the history of documents is traced, it becomes more apparent that this idea of Lilith being Adam’s first wife has no biblical basis.**
		* 1. **In order to find a creation of a woman other than Eve, one must read Genesis 1 and 2 as separate events rather than as being two parts of the same account.**
			2. **It is important that we analyze the sources from where we get our information.**
	8. **Many will say that Lilith was edited out of the Bible without knowing that her story comes from a medieval satire.**
	9. **But we can have confidence as we analyze these contentions against Scripture, that the Word of God will remain true and withstand whatever charge may come against it.**
2. **Let’s consider Eden a moment. I came across this great article which is part of a larger work by Nancy Guthrie (if you haven’t read anything by her you should remedy that.) This short article in entitled, *10 Things You Should Know About Eden .***
3. **Eden was good, but not yet fully glorious.**
4. **Eden was bright and beautiful, and we tend to think of it in terms of perfection. But rather than thinking of Eden in terms of perfection, we should think of it in terms of potential.**
	* + 1. **Certainly, Eden was pure and pristine, ordered and filled, but the Eden we read about in Genesis 1 and 2 wasn’t yet everything God intended for His creation.**
			2. **It was unsullied but incomplete...but it was not the “final Eden” which would be represented in the City of God.**
5. **From the very beginning, Eden was not meant to be static; it was headed somewhere. We could say there was an eschatology of Eden. God’s intentions for His creation have always been headed toward consummation, toward glory.**
6. **Eden was abundant, but it wasn’t yet expansive.**
	1. **Genesis 2:8 tells us that on the earth God created, *“the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east.”***
	2. **He instructed Adam and Eve to, *“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth”* (Gen 1:28).**
	3. **Clearly there was an expansion project in the works. As Adam and Eve worked and kept the garden, and as they were fruitful and multiplied, Eden would grow beyond its current boundaries, and the glory of Adam and Eve’s royal rule would increase.**
7. **Eden was completely good, but it wasn’t completely secure.**
	1. **As good as the original Eden was, it was vulnerable to evil, deception, and even death.**
	2. **This becomes obvious when we consider that Satan inhabited the body of an ordinary serpent and brought death into the pristine garden.**
	3. **In Revelation 21, John takes care to assure us that this will not happen in the greater garden to come. It will be utterly secure. *“Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life,”* (Rev. 21:27).**
8. **Eden had a rhythm of work and then rest, but not yet unending rest.**
	1. **God did his work of creation, and then he rested. In his rest, God was setting before Adam something to look forward to when he accomplished his work of subduing the earth, exercising dominion over it, and filling it with image bearers.**
	2. **Had Adam faithfully finished the work, he and Eve and their offspring would have entered into a permanent Sabbath rest.**
9. **Adam and Eve were made in the image of God, but not yet as glorious as God intended.**
	1. **Clearly Adam and Eve, having been made in God’s image had a measure of His glory.**
	2. **Had they obeyed, they would have been transformed from one degree of glory to another. “Transformed from one degree of glory to another” has always been and still remains God’s plan for those made in his image.**
	3. **Even now, as the Holy Spirit works in us, we are being changed from one degree of glory to another. But it is the fullest resurrection glory we anticipate the most. *“We await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body”* (Phil 3:20–21).**
10. **Adam and Eve enjoyed one-flesh intimacy, but their bond was vulnerable to brokenness.**
	* + - 1. **The love story in Eden began with Adam and Eve enjoying bone-of-my-bones, flesh-of-my-flesh intimacy. But the same two people who were naked and unashamed are, only a few verses later, trying to cover up their shame.**
				2. **The same husband who held out his hand to his wife to welcome her, exclaiming, *“At last!”* only a few verses later points the finger of blame in her direction, saying, *“The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate”* (Gen. 3:12).**
				3. **This partnership that was intended to bless the world brought a curse upon the world.**
11. **Adam and Eve enjoyed God’s presence, but they were vulnerable to his presence in judgment.**
	1. **Adam and Eve experienced the joy of God’s presence with them in the garden before they sinned.**
	2. **But one aspect of His presence with them was the warning He gave them regarding the forbidden tree, *“In the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’”* (Gen. 2:17).**
	3. **When we read in Genesis 3:8 that Adam and Eve *“heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,”* it was not as though God was taking His regular leisurely afternoon stroll in the garden. It speaks of two things:**
		* 1. **Regularness of the stroll for there is always purpose in what God does.**
			2. **But in this case the grammar seems to indicate He was looking for them because of their sin.**
	4. **This was judgment day, which for Adam and Eve meant that it was also eviction day. No longer could they live in the holy sanctuary of Eden in the presence of a holy God, because they had become unholy people.**
	5. **But God’s intention to dwell with a holy people in a holy land could not be thwarted by human sin. Instead, God’s plan is to save His children, making them clean and holy through salvation through Christ…the offspring of the woman…so that we may one day live in his presence. The day is coming when, *“He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God”* (Rev. 21:3).**
12. **Adam and Eve could have gained the knowledge of good and evil without eating from the forbidden tree.**
	1. **When we read about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9), we might think that there must have been something essentially evil, even foreboding, about this tree.**
	2. **It was not forbidden because it (the tree) was evil, it was forbidden because to disobey was evil. God had put this tree in the garden to give Adam and Eve the opportunity to live out genuine faith and obedience.**
	3. **Adam and Eve could have used the wisdom God gave them through His word to judge the Serpent’s lies and rebellion against God as evil, while clinging to God’s goodness.**
	4. **Adam should have crushed the head of the evil serpent then and there.**
		* 1. **He should have squashed this rebellion rather than taking part in it.**
			2. **Had he done so, Adam and Eve would have been able to eat their fill of the tree of life, and enter into a heavenly life, without ever having to experience death.**
13. **Adam and Eve were naked, not yet robed in royal splendor.**
14. **When we read in Genesis 2 that Adam and Eve were naked in Eden, it may initially seem to us to be a good or neutral thing. But Moses’ original readers would have recognized that something was lacking.**
15. **These were royal representatives of the great king. And royal representatives in Scripture are always dressed in royal robes (think of Joseph’s coat of many colors, Jonathan’s robe given to David, the robe and ring given to the prodigal son).**
16. **The report of their nakedness indicated a need for royal clothing which would have been given to them had they faithfully exercised dominion.**
	* + 1. **But instead of being further clothed, Adam and Eve lost the original glory that covered them.**
			2. **This is what made their nakedness before God so unbearable that they sought to cover themselves up with fig leaves.**
17. **Eden had the tree of life.**
18. **We’re not told specifically that Adam and Eve could not or did not eat of the tree of Life that was in the midst of the garden. It would appear that they hadn’t eaten of it yet, because:**
	* 1. **Revelation 2:7 speaks of eating of the tree of life being granted to *“…those who overcome” or “conquer.”***
			1. **Clearly, Adam and Eve did not overcome temptation.**
			2. **They were meant to rule over creation but they couldn’t rule over their own appetites.**
			3. **Because of their disobedience they were barred from eating of the tree.**
	1. **Revelation 22 reveals that the opportunity for God’s people to eat of the tree of life is not gone forever.**
		* 1. **Instead, the tree of life is gloriously planted in the center of the greater garden to come.**
			2. **The New Earth…the City of God.**
	2. **In Eden, the trees bore fruit in their season, which means once a year.**
		* 1. **But in the new Earth, the tree of life yields a new crop of fruit every month.**
			2. **In Eden, the tree of life grew in the midst of the garden.**
	3. **But in the new Earth, the tree of life grows on either side of the river. It seems to have multiplied and expanded, implying that everyone will have access to it; all will be welcome to eat their fill.**
19. **Sometimes we hear the story of the Bible told as Creation-Fall-Redemption-Restoration. But as good as Eden was, we’re not merely headed back to Eden as it once was. The story of the Bible is Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation. We’re looking forward to a home that will be even better than Eden.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**March 9, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Ultimately, what is the purpose for our marriages? Why did God create marriage?**
	1. **To glorify Himself! The marriage is to display God to the world.**
	2. **Marriage is the pattern for Christ’s covenantal relationship with His people (see Eph. 5:31-32).**
	3. **And therefore, the highest meaning/purpose of marriage is to glorify God by displaying Christ’s covenantal relationship. *“Marriage is a covenant—a sacred vow and a lifetime commitment between one man and one woman with God Almighty. Malachi 2:14-15 declares, “she is your companion and your wife by covenant. Did He not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? So guard yourselves in your spirit and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. Marriage is patterned after Christ’s covenant relationship with His redeemed people, the church and therefore, the highest meaning and ultimate purpose for marriage is to put the covenant relationship of Christ and His church on display for all the world to see. This is why marriage exists: to reflect God’s glory to the world. Staying married, therefore, is not mainly about staying in love…it’s about keeping covenant…keeping your solemn word. ‘Till death do us part’ or ‘For as long as we both shall live’ is a sacred covenantal promise…the same kind Jesus made with His bride when He died for her.”(*John Piper)**
	4. **Terms like *“hold fast”* and *“one flesh”* then speak as much to permanency as they do to covenantal fidelity. That is why divorce is so horrific in God’s eyes because it is not just breaking covenant with the spouse of your youth but maybe more importantly we are misrepresenting Christ and His covenant.**
	5. **Marriage is meant by God to display His gospel reality to the world.**
4. **What about the question of same-sex unions? Why isn’t homosexuality and same-sex unions part of God’s plan according to these chapters?**
5. **Matthew Henry again, “*It is the glory of man to be a man, and it is the glory of a woman to be a woman in the ways God intended. Who, then, is superior? A man is absolutely superior to a woman…at being a man, and a woman is absolutely superior to a man …at being a woman.”***
	* 1. **There is absolutely no inequality between man and woman before the face of God…**
		2. **They do have different functions so that together as one they can fully glorify God and enjoy Him.**
6. **The Christian Reformed Church (2nd largest of the Reformed Churches) has once again decreed that the church supports One man One woman design of God and they have called on all their churches to fall in line. Many are leaving. This discussion and synod decisions have been recommended since 2022…and was reaffirmed this last Synod. Don’t often see a church reverse course.**
7. **Chapter 3- Let’s look first at verse 1-6- *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?’ 2 And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’4 But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise,2she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”***
	* + 1. **Before we look at the text let’s consider- WCF #6- Of the Fall of Man of Sin, and the Punishment Thereof**
8. **I. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptations of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased (or it pleased God), according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.**
9. **II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.**
10. **III. They being the root of mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by original generation.**
11. **IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.**
12. **V. This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated; and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.**
13. **VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, does, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.**
14. **6.1 discusses:**
	* + - * **The first sin committed by Adam and Eve. Think of it this way…on your honeymoon one of you sneaked off to be with someone else!.**
				* **And that it was all part of God’s plan for the redemption of His elect.**
				* **Everything else in the Bible …all of life…relates to this one event.**
		1. **6.2 speaks to the consequences of the fall.**
			+ - **Adam and Eve became moral…they were going to die.**
				- **Adam and Eve were immediately cut off from fellowship with God.**
				- **Loss of original righteousness, leaving humans with original sin.**
		2. **6.3 speaks to the consequences of their posterity.**
			+ - **Since Adam was created to be the Federal Head of all mankind his sin falls on us.**
				- **Adam’s sin would be imputed to all his posterity.**
		3. **6.4 speaks of the extent of the effect of the fall…and sin…total depravity.**
			+ - **We don’t always do sinful things, but there is not one area of our life that is not affected by sin.**
				- **Our nature since the fall, before conversion is against the Lord…. *“wholly inclined to all evil”***
		4. **6.5 speaks the absolute perfection expected by God.**
			+ - **This depravity extends through all of life and remains even in believers.**
				- **Even though we are pardoned…all our impulses to sin truly are sinful.**
		5. **6.6 speaks the fact that we are all subject to death and misery, save for the saving work of Christ in our lives.**
			+ - **Death is the sentence of the Fall to all mankind. For those regenerated we will die from this life but we will live with the Lord forever.**
				- **Miseries:**

**Spiritual occur when we are alienated from God because of hardness of heart or being led astray by our sin.**

**Temporal means we may receive temporal discipline for our sins…blindness of our mind, temporary hardness of heart**

**Eternal are suffered by the non-elect for eternal punishment, away from the presence of the Lord…weeping an d gnashing of teeth because of the torment in hell!**

* + - 1. **If Adam and Eve were created holy, how could they sin?**
	1. **The Bible seems to indicate that this was a probationary state of some type since they could enjoy what God had created…but they could still sin.**
	2. **They sinned for 2 reasons:**
		+ 1. **The fruit was attractive and**
			2. **they wanted to increase in knowledge and positon= pride and autonomy. This sin was an attempt by them to gain truth without having to submit to God and His Word.**
	3. **But over all, it was God’s will to have decreed their sin to His own glory.**
		+ 1. **According to WCF 6, how complete and persistent is the corruption of this original sin?**
		1. **Complete and absolute!**
		2. **Even if we had only this one sin imputed to us…we would still deserve death and God’s wrath.**
			1. **Just for fun question: How long after the creation did Adam and Eve Fall?**
1. **The obvious answer is sometimes between the 7th day which God had sanctified and the birth of their first child. No one knows for sure.**
2. **God had commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and if they had waited too long they would have been sinning against God, in this by not being fruitful.**
3. **Archbishop Ussher suggested that Adam sinned on the 10th day of the first month in Ussher’s chronology, which is the Day of Atonement.**
4. **The Day of Atonement presumably in his time line, represents the first sacrifice, which God made by killing animals to cover Adam and Eve’s sin.**
5. **His reasons may make some sense but we can’t be sure of the exact date of the fall.**
6. **Jewish scholars say that it was the 17th day of the 2nd month of the 8th year after Adam’s creation.**
7. **The Fall of Genesis 3 resulted in their being kicked out of the garden and according to scripture, this happened prior to conceiving their first child.**
8. **Gen. 5:3 says that Adam and Eve had Seth 130 at age 130 and Gen. 4:25 indicates this took place after Cain killed Abel.**
9. **It seems that Adam and Eve had at least 3 children before Seth…but probably more…Cain- Gen 4:1, Abel- Gen 4:2 and Cain’s wife (sister or a niece which would indicate more than 3 had been born) 4:17.**
10. **Since Cain and Abel were old enough to work with crops and herds, respectively, the maximum time before the Fall would have to be much less than 130 years.**

**Lessons from GENESIS**

**March 16, 2025**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
	* + 1. **Do you remember…According to WCF 6, how complete and persistent is the corruption of original sin?**
3. **Complete and absolute!**
4. **Even if we had only this one sin imputed to us…we would still deserve death and God’s wrath.**
5. **If this is true, and biblically it is…then why do we persist in talking about how it is up to us to choose our salvation?**
6. **Chapter 3- Now let’s looks first at verse 1-7- *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?’ 2 And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’4 But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.”***
	* + 1. **Here we encounter the serpent for the first time in vs. 1. Who does the serpent represent? The Church has almost unanimously and categorically stated that the serpent represents Satan in this case.**
			2. **Now let’s consider Satan for a couple of minutes.**
	1. **Despite multiple warnings in Scripture on the craftiness of Satan (Gen 3:1) and his witty designs (2 Cor. 2:10-11-*“Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, 11 so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.”* and schemes (Eph. 6:11) in which he disguises himself (2 Cor. 11:14) and deceives the church (1 Tim 4:1), there’s not a lot of emphasis on the topic of resisting him in the church today.**
	2. **First, we must recognize that all temptation attacks us at the level of identity. Satan wants to cause confusion about who you really are.**
		* + 1. **You can see this clearly both in the garden with Adam and Eve and in the wilderness with Jesus.**
				- **In the garden, God created Adam and Eve in His own image (Gen 1:27).**

**Yet the serpent promised them that eating the fruit from the forbidden tree would make them like God (Gen 3:5).**

**Although they were already like God in all the ways God intended—and in all the ways that would benefit them—Satan tempts them to want more.**

**He stirs up discontentment around the question of identity.**

**It’s not enough to be created in His image.**

**He suggests we need more.**

**We need to rise above our creaturely limitations.**

**We need to be gods.**

**Our happiness depends on it.**

**We know best about ourselves.**

* + - * + **Consider Jesus’s temptation in relationship to His baptism.**

**At His baptism, God the Father announced, *“You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased”* (Luke 3:22).**

**Yet Satan tempts Jesus to prove His identity as God’s Son, in the next Chapter of Matthew, by using His power for His own purposes (Matt. 4; Luke 4:3, 9).**

**To fall for Satan’s scheme, Jesus would have to deny God’s previous declaration.**

**We must remember…Jesus is not God’s Son because He can perform miracles. He is God’s Son eternally, but in His humanity His identity has been confirmed based on God’s declaration….just like our, by the way.**

* + - * 1. **Satan still does that today.**
				+ **This is still the root cause of all the identity dysphoria/confusion we have today.**
				+ **He can make us think we’re exceptional.**

**The rules don’t apply to me because I’m above it all.**

**I can do whatever I want because I decide if there is a god.**

* + - * + **Or, he tempts us to loathe ourselves.**

**There’s no way I can be faithful, we tell ourselves.**

**My situation is impossible.**

**My circumstances are too bad.**

**The rules don’t apply to me, not because I’m a god, but because I’m an animal. I’m destined to sin. I can’t help it.**

* + - * + **Either way, the strategy is the same.**

**He wants us to mistake our desires for our identity.**

**He wants us to replace *“I am who God says I am”* with *“I am what I want to be.”***

**When we believe his deceit, we adopt a mindset that says, *“I am only true to myself to the degree that I get what I want. I can’t be happy unless my desires are filled.”***

* 1. **The identity-attacking nature of temptation is why isolation is so dangerous.**
		+ - 1. **Never try to fight temptation by wanting less…believing we are always unworthy and do not have the right to seek higher for God’s glory…not ours.**
				* **I often return to C.S. Lewis’s quote about the kid content to make mud pies in the nasty slum because he’s never imagined a vacation at the fancy beach resort.**
				* **Satan works by dressing sin up and making it look appealing, alluring, and irresistible.**

**He plays on the universal human Fear of Missing Out to make us content with mud pies in the slum.**

**Or…the somewhat universal opposite of believing we are unworthy of anything good.**

* + - 1. **We will never fend off temptation if you believe Satan’s lies.**
				* **God is not asking you to want less; He’s calling us to want more of what He has given and gives.**
				* **He never asks you to surrender happiness; (Think Psalm 119) He call us to seek satisfaction in the only place it’s available—in communion with His Son.**
				* **When you resist temptation, you’re not missing out. You’re choosing the greater. To sin is to settle for less.**
				* **John Owen puts this truth in the form of a strategy: *“Fill your affections with the cross of Christ, that there may be no room for sin.”* That’s sound advice.**
			2. **Godly community plays an enormous role in confirming identity and reminding us of who we really are.**
				* **God the Father and God the Holy Spirit confirmed God the Son’s identity at His baptism.**
				* **When I’m isolated, I’m susceptible to the lies. But when I go home, I face my wife and children as a Christian husband and father.**
				* **When I worship on Sunday, I face the church as a brother in Christ and a Christian pastor. The expectations of the community prove pivotal in cementing my sense of who I really am.**
			3. **How many in here actually believe in a personal/real devil?**

* + - 1. **How many in here believe in the personal/real God? (If there is any that don’t believe in a real devil, why would you believe in the real God and not a real devil?)**

**The reality is that most do not believe in a real devil. Why do you suppose that is?**

1. **We replace the devil with elves, goblins and werewolves and zombies so as to make him a mythical ridiculous creature.**
	* + - * **We dress him up in a silly suit and make a joke of him.**
				* **This is crude and ineffective because now we only see a cartoon character or a character in horror films. We don’t see him as a serious threat.**
2. **And he is a serious threat or God would not warn us so often of his power to even lead believers astray for a time.**

**Now the basis for this began in the Middle-Ages on All Hollows Eve…what we call Halloween…**

1. **But with one difference the people then actually believed in a real devil.**
2. **Halloween began as a way to show our distain for the real creature who tricks and tempts but cannot win against the power of Christ.**

**The text says, *“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.”* …the most deceptive of all creatures.**

1. **Interesting- Satan is a creature in whatever form he resides he is still a creature.**
	* + - * **He is a creature he is not a being as we are made in God’s image …**
				* **BUT…he is creature distinct in its craftiness. A craftiness that surpasses all the other mere animals.**
				* **But… in a sense as we are one with Christ, we are over him in the “food chain” even though he is more powerful than we are in doing only evil all the time.**
2. **The titles which in Scripture are given to the devil do evidently imply his great craft.**
	* + - * **He is termed a Dragon, and a Serpent, which of all other beasts are counted the craftiest and wisest…which also represented chaos and danger.**
				* **To show that he has had a long time of experience to make him more subtle and crafty; he is called an old Serpent, a great red Dragon.**
				* **There are names in Greek which we ordinarily translate devil that yet further signify his great subtlety, for they note his great knowledge and experienced skill.**
				* **As his names are, so is his practice,**

***diabolos-* He is full of much craft involving lying, deceit and confusion of all stripes, slanderous/gossiper.**

***Cacodaemon-* evil spirits, linked with the devil and his work. *Daimonion=* demon.**

***porneros-* “evil one”**

***satanas-* adversary, opponent**

***drakon-* dragon emphasizing his fierce and dangerous qualities especially to those unaware.**

***Beelzebub-* -master of demons. It comes from the Hebrew Ba’al Zebub= Lord of the flies or Flyer.**

***Apollyon-* destruction/ or destroyer.**

**We are told that he fans the flames of lust, pride, greed, and other vices within us, presenting tempting evils suited to our nature, inflaming persecutors, blinding idolaters, leading heretics astray.**

**Jesus seems to teach with all the words He uses that demons, devil, Satan…move through the mind and ideas rather than actually living in the physical world…hence flies/flyers with the name Beelzebub.**

* 1. **When the Serpent tempted Eve, it was actually the devil she contended with, hence why the Devil is labeled a murderer from the beginning. Jesus also spoke of the devil as being a murderer Think John 8: 43-44. *“Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”* Why is Jesus so harsh with the Pharisees here?**
1. **Because these “men of God” shared the theology of the Serpent.**
2. **The Pharisees were men who believed in the holiness of God, and in His law, in supernatural reality and in predestination and election.**
3. **“Grace” was a big idea to them. They didn’t really know what to do with it.**
4. **Because they also believed in conditional grace…having to do the right thing to receive favor from God…they were in affect practicing Arminians.**
	1. **God's restraint on Satan is evident through several biblical instances:**
5. **Right here in our text… *“…that the LORD God had made.”* This emphasizes God’s divine sovereignty over creation.**
6. **This is also seen in God limiting the Serpent's damage to only bruising the heel of Jesus rather than crushing the head,**
7. **He is not equal to God in anyway…in fact, the rest of Scripture makes it clear that he can only do what God has said, ordained, directed him to do …the same way God directs the rest of His creatures.**
8. **Two specific examples where Satan's influence is clearly checked or permitted by God, such as in the cases of Saul, Ahab, and notably, Job, where Satan's actions are expressly limited to what God allows.**
	* + - * **Some argue that Satan is now "loosed" and enjoys greater freedom to enact his will. But this perceived loosening is relative, akin to extending a chained dog's leash rather than an absolute freedom.**
				* **God's limitations on Satan serve to distinguish His infiniteness over all things.**
	1. **In many respects, the Devil may be accounted most monstrously wicked because he was the first author of wickedness.**
	2. **He is a counterfeit for the light and that is why it is hard for us even, to tell the difference, sometimes.**
9. **He appears to say and do all the right things.**
10. **He appears to be the genuine article.**
11. **Only those who are prepared by staying in the means of grace and in the Spirit can and will know the difference.**
	* + - * **Means of Grace are God’s appointed means/instruments by which the Holy Spirit enables believers to receive Christ and the benefits of redemption.**
				* **The foremost means are:**

**The Word –Scripture and preaching Rev. 1:3- *“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.”***

**His sacraments given to the Church by Christ. I Cor. 10:16-17- *“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”* Christ saving grace is spiritually communicated to believers when we partake of the supper by faith.**

**Prayer- individually and corporately. Acts 2:21- *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”***

* 1. **Paul tells us to put on the “whole” armor of God …for it is with the whole armor that we are top war against the evil one. Without the whole armor we “might” fall…not lose our salvation but we might stray for a time and have to endure all the consequence that comes with that.**
1. **So as His church we should never knowingly forsake the means of grace, unless providentially hindered, as God has commanded and offered to all of us in His church.**
2. **Without a regular and continual diet it is clear we can NOT stand against the devils ways!**
	* + 1. **Now there doesn’t appear to have been any hesitancy concerning Eve and the serpent. Would Eve have had any reason to distrust a snake up to that point? Thegreater questions is perhaps…would she have had any reason to “trust” the snake in the first place?**
			2. **Just for fun: What should have been the first red-flags?**
3. **The only other creature that talked was Adam.**
4. **That the creature addressed the woman first.**
5. **That the creature has question what God had said.**
	* + 1. **How are we tempted today by similar methods? A “GOOD ARGUMENT”**
	1. **Sex was created by God; therefore it is good…so why wait until marriage to experience it?**
	2. **Alcohol is made of good things God created so how can it ever be evil to drink as much as you want!**
	3. **He created love so why can’t I choose to love who I want no matter what their gender is?**
	4. **If we can’t see a problem with whatever God has forbidden we then can so easily justify doing what we want to do and reach out for what we think we must have.**