

Introductions

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[0 : 0 0] for us now. Genesis chapter 1 to chapter 2 verse 3. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, let there be light and there was light. God saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the darkness day, sorry he called the light day and the darkness he called night. And there was evening and there was morning the first day. And God said, let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water. So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it.

And it was so. God called the vault sky and there was evening and there was morning the second day. And God said, let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear. And it was so. God called the dry ground land and the gathered waters he called seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, let the land produce vegetation, seed bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it according to their various kinds. And it was so.

The land produced vegetation, plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning the third day. And God said, let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night. And let them serve as signs to mark sacred times and days and years. And let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth. And it was so. God made two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning the fourth day. And God said, let the waters team with living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky. And so God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the waters team. And that moves about in it according to their kinds and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas and let the birds increase on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning the fifth day. And God said, let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds, the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground and the wild animals each according to its kind. And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created mankind in his own image.

[4 : 1 4] In the image of God, he created them. Male and female, he created them. God blessed them and said to them, be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, and over every living creature that moves on the ground. Then God said, I give you every seed bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground, everything that has the breath of life in it, I give every green plant for food. And it was so.

God saw all that he made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing. So on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day, made it holy. Because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Lord, we thank you for your amazing word. And as we look at it now together, Lord, we look to you for your help and your encouragement as we dig into it. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Well, introductions are part of life, aren't they? I think it's fair to say that every single one of us, at one time or another, in some sort of a way, have been involved in introductions.

Whether it be ourselves introducing ourselves to someone, or whether it be someone else introducing us to someone else, no matter what way it is, at one time or another, I think we all at some point have been involved in introductions. Now, sometimes introductions go very smooth, don't they? Sometimes they go according to plan. And sometimes wires get crossed, and introductions don't really go the way we expect them to go. I remember once when I was a bit younger, I was off out with dad for the day, and we were cleaning out a house. And while we were there, someone else was also there helping us.

[7 : 00] Well, at one point, that person asked me who I was. Well, in response, I probably mumbled back to them a little bit, but in response, I said to them that I am Sam's son. I guess I thought that that would explain to them who I was. Sam is my dad. I am his son. And they knew my dad, so I thought that that would explain very well who I was. The problem was, though, they thought that I was saying to them that my name was Sam's son. So for the rest of the day, they called me Samson. And I can remember it bits and pieces of it, but I can vaguely kind of remember thinking, what is wrong with them? You know, why are they calling me that? They're very strange. Why are they calling me Samson? And it was only kind of in my slowness that

I realized later fully that they were calling me Samson because I said to them that I was Sam's son. By the way, I now try to avoid telling anyone that I am Sam's son. They have to figure that bit out for themselves. But with that introduction, wires got crossed and it wasn't very clear. It wasn't very helpful. You see, with any good introduction, typically something is said or stated in a very clear way to help explain something about the person who was being introduced.

Well, as many people have noted, in Genesis chapter 1, with the very first words of the Bible, we are introduced to God. We are introduced to God. And we are introduced to God in a very, very clear and powerful way. With these verses, with this introduction, there is no miscommunication. There is no wires crossed. There is no mumbling. In Genesis chapter 1, we are introduced to God in a very, very clear and powerful way. And this introduction is so clear and so powerful because in these verses, it is actually God who introduces himself to us. So there are no mistakes.

There is no mumbling. There is no miscommunication. In Genesis chapter 1, God, through his word, God introduces himself to us in a very, very clear and powerful way.

[9 : 58] And because he introduces himself to us in such a clear and powerful way, we see so many clear, if you like, incredible, fundamental truths in these verses that God clearly wants us to know about himself through his introduction to us, that with his help, we can take so much encouragement from this morning. So we're going to look at some of the truths that we can see in these verses that God wants us to know about himself through his introduction to us. So first in these verses, we see that God introduces himself to us as none other than the creator of the universe. I mean, what a start.

What an introduction. We're told in verse 1, the very first words of the Bible, In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. In the Hebrew language, this little phrase here that is used for the heavens and the earth literally means the entire earth and everything that is not the earth. So the phrase basically stands for the entire universe and everything in it.

So with these incredible words, the first words in scripture, God introduces himself to us as none other than the creator of the universe and everything in it. With his first words to us in scripture, God introduces himself to us as the one who, out of nothing, created everything.

When we think of introductions, it simply cannot and does not get any bigger or greater than this.

And I guess if we think of it, in the world today, some people can say some pretty impressive things when they introduce themselves to other people. You know, some people can say, hello, I'm the president. It's nice to meet you. Some people can say, hello, I'm the world champion.

[12 : 22] It's nice to meet you. Some people can say, I invented this or I invented that. But nothing could possibly come close to this introduction, to God introducing himself to us as the creator of the universe. And God clearly wants us to know this about himself.

It's the very first words that he gives us in scripture. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Well, not only does God introduce himself to us in these verses as the one who was there before his creation.

Looking again at verse 1, In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Well, in order for God to create the heavens and the earth, God simply had to be there before what he created in order to create it.

Well, the reality is, not only was God there just before what he created, the reality is, God has always been there full stop.

Meaning that there has never ever been a time or a moment or an age where God has not been there.

[13:59] Now, to try to wrap our heads around that, I think, is mind-blowing. You know, the phrase mind-blowing is used for several different things.

I was talking to someone recently and they were talking about a soccer match and they said, you know, that goal was just mind-blowing. But is there a better use of the phrase mind-blowing than considering the reality that our triune God, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have never not been there.

There is never a time in which they have not existed. The first four words here are, in the beginning, God, pointing to the reality that in the beginning, God was there because he has always been there. This is who our God is. This is what he wants us to know about himself. He is the creator of the universe and he has always, always been there.

in Psalm 90, verse 2, Moses said, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the world or the earth, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

[15:28] In Isaiah 40, 28, the prophet Isaiah said, the Lord is the eternal God, the creator of the ends of the earth.

God is everlasting, he is eternal, he has always existed. Again, we have to say in terms of introductions, it does not get any better than this.

The creator of the universe, the one who was there before all that he has made, well, to add to that again, in these verses, God also introduces himself to us as the one who is in control of all of his creation.

God is the creator and the controller of all that he has made. Now, in these verses, we see that our God is totally in control of all that he has made, through the amazing way in which he just put in place and put in order all that he made according to his great design and purpose.

In these verses, we see this incredible forming and filling process in relation to all that God made.

[16:56] looking at verses 3-13 in days 1-3, God was, if you like, forming. And then looking at verses 14-31 in days 3-6, God filled what he formed.

And when we lay the days out like this, we see really in an incredible way how the forming and filling match each other. On day 1, God formed light day and night, and then on day 4, God filled that with the sun, moon, and stars.

On day 2, God formed the sky and the waters below, and on day 5, God filled the sky and the waters below with fish and with birds.

And then on day 3, God formed the land seen vegetation, and on day 6, God filled that with animals and mankind. This level of design, this level of order points to just how much our God is in control of all that he made.

He simply spoke and the fish went into the sea, the stars went into the sky, and it all happened according to his great design and his great purpose.

[18:27] Again, he is the creator and the controller of the universe. Well, finally, just one more thing, although we could really point out many things, but one more thing for now.

God, in these verses, also introduces himself to us as the one who is pleased with his creation. And again, this is clearly, I think, what he wants us to see about himself in these verses. He introduces himself to us in these verses as the creator of the universe, as the one who was there before his creation, the one who was in control of his creation, and finally, he is the one who is pleased with his creation.

Throughout chapter 1, we see in verse 4, verse 10, verse 12, verse 18, verse 21, and 25, that after each thing that God created, he said that it was good.

And I think with this, there is a real sense that God took great pleasure and was pleased with all that he made.

[19:49] It's almost like after each thing that God created, it's almost like he looked at it and he said, yes, this is good, I am pleased with this, I take pleasure in this.

I think to add to that, looking at verses 1 to 3 of chapter 2, there's also a sense that God was pleased with what he made, with him resting after all that he made. With him resting after all that he made, there's a sense that he was satisfied, that he was pleased with all that he made. But there was, it seems, one thing that God made. There was, it seems, one thing that he made that he was especially pleased with. There was one thing, it seems, that God took special pleasure in making. Out of all that he made, there was one thing, really the pinnacle of all of his creation, that on the day of creating it, he did not say that it was good, good, on the day of creating it, he said that it was very good.

[21 : 13] And that one thing is us. That one thing is man and woman, that one thing is male and female, that one thing is mankind.

In chapter one, verse 31, one, when God made man and woman on the sixth day, we see that he looked at all that he made and he said that it was very good.

Well, with this, with mankind being the last thing that God created before he said that it was very good, good, and with mankind being the last thing that God created before he rested, there is a real sense that God took special pleasure in making male and female, in making man and woman. And to add to that, we see in these verses that in many ways God gave his creation to mankind. In verses 28 and 29, God told mankind to rule over every living thing that he had made for them. So just looking at these verses, there is a sense that God took special pleasure in making man and woman.

[22 : 39] As I said, it was the last thing that God made before he said it was very good. It was the last thing he made before he rested. and he told male and female to rule over all that he had made for them.

He took special pleasure in making the pinnacle of his creation mankind, male and female, us, essentially.

And the question is why? Why did the Lord take so much pleasure in making male and female, in making mankind?

Why is mankind the pinnacle of his creation? Well, I think really an incredible verse answers the question.

Verse 27, God created mankind in his own image. In the image of God, he created them.

[23 : 51] Male and female, he created them. God took so much pleasure in making male and female, in making mankind, in making us, because he made us in his image.

God is made in God's image, not in the sense that God has a body like us, because he doesn't. He is spirit. We read in John chapter 4, verse 24, that God is spirit. Rather, we are made in God's image, more in the sense that he has made us with eternal souls.

He has made us with eternal souls that can experience and display relationship, emotion, and fellowship with God and with each other.

In that sense, he has made us in his image. What an introduction. In Genesis chapter 1, in a powerful and clear way, with no mumbling and no mistakes, God, through his word, introduces himself to us.

[25 : 16] And clearly, these are some of the things that he wants us to know about himself through that introduction. He wants us to know that he's the creator of the universe, who was there before his creation, who's in control of his creation, who is pleased with his creation.

And he wants us to know that out of all that he has made, he places ultimate value and delight in us, for we are made in his image.

I think in a nutshell, looking at these verses, I think on one hand, these verses do give us a glimpse of just how great our God is. He's the creator of the universe, the one who's always existed, he's in control of all things.

This is our mighty God, this is who he is, and I think that that should encourage us to have total confidence in him. We can trust him, we can look to him, this is who he is.

There is no one greater than our God, no one can compare to the greatness of our God. But then on the other hand, these verses show us the great value and the light that he places on us, because he made us in his image.

[26 : 44] And that should give us so much value, so much worth, and so much purpose. God, through these verses, I think, is basically saying to us, I'm the creator of the universe, the one who

has always existed, the one who's in control of all things.

And by the way, out of all that I have made, I absolutely delight in you, I absolutely place ultimate value in you, for you are made in my image.

Isn't that something? When we look at how great our God is, when we look at the reality that he created the universe, as I said, he's always been there, he's in control of all things, and out of all that he made, he places ultimate value and delight in you and me, for we are made in his image. And that value is proved at the cross. cross. Because of sin, we have all become broken image bearers.

Because of sin, we are all born broken image bearers. And so our value to God as his image bearers is proved at the cross when mighty God himself, God the Son, who created the universe, who's always existed, who's in control of all things, when he himself went to the cross and died for us.

[28 : 37] So that when we believe and trust in him and accept what he has done for us, we can be restored, forgiven of sin, and be made whole to be his forever, so that he can delight in us and we in him forever and ever.

However, the cross proves our value to God as his image bearers. When he himself, when mighty God himself gave up his life for us to fix what was broken because of sin.

So this morning as we start our journey in Genesis, let us be so encouraged by how great our God is.

Because it's mind-blowing how great he is. And we can see that even in our journey, you know, worrying about where our next venue is going to be, worrying about this and that.

Our God is the creator of the universe who has always been there, who's in control of all things. And whatever situation you might be facing in your life, a fresh reminder of just how great and mighty our God is, how your God is, is such an encouragement to us.

[30 : 01] But let us also be so encouraged by the great value that he places on us as his image bearers. Value, as I said, that is proved at the cross when mighty God himself gave up his life for us.

Let's pray together and then we'll close with one final song. Lord, we thank you for these verses.

Thank you for how they give us a glimpse of just how great you are.

You are the creator of the universe, the one who has always been there. You're the one who's in control of all things. I pray you'd help us just to get a glimpse, a fresh glimpse of just how great and mighty you are.

And I pray that that would help us to trust you, to look to you, to have total confidence in you. There is nothing you cannot do. Lord, help us to see you even bigger than we already do, to see you even greater than we already do.

And Lord, on the other hand, help us to be encouraged with how these verses show us the great delight and value that you place in us as your image bearers.

[31 : 14] And we thank you that that value is proved at the cross when you yourself gave your life for us so that we could be restored and so that you could fix what is broken when we believe and trust in you.

So, Lord, I pray that you would help us to delight in you more and more and help us to know just how much in Christ you delight in us.

And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.