

A God Who Created or Matter and Pure Chance?

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 0 0] Father, make us good soil, that your word might come into our lives, that we will listen with an honest and true heart, and that as your word comes into our lives, we will bear much fruit in our daily lives for your glory.

Father, this is our prayer, and we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Please be seated. So, you can see from the screen up there that I'm beginning a sermon series on Genesis 1-11.

And if you're not that familiar with the Bible, Genesis 1-11 has two different creation stories. It has the story of Adam and Eve.

It has the story of Cain and Abel. It has the story of Noah and his ark and the flood. It has the story of the Tower of Babel. So, there's nothing controversial at all in the 11 chapters, first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis.

There's nothing in there that would cause a biologist or a physicist or just a TV presenter to squirm. So, it's a very, very challenging series.

[1 : 2 1] It's a really, really foundational series. A few weeks ago, I was, I think maybe it was even last week, I mentioned a movie that I saw on Netflix called Calvary. It's a very, very thought-provoking film.

And I think I told you that if you watch the film, make sure you don't miss the first minute. Because if you miss the first minute, then nothing in the movie is going to make sense.

And I think that we can actually say the same thing about the first 11 chapters of Genesis, especially the first four. That if you miss it, you're not going to understand anything else in the story that's in the Bible.

Well, yet because of the controversy surrounding, well, the creation of the world. Because of the controversies, a lot of us are very uncomfortable reading it, very uncomfortable thinking about it.

And so, we're going to look at it. We're going to look at it this week and for quite a few weeks in the future. But we're going to begin, well, I'm going to tell you about something. And this will help you to understand a little bit of the controversy.

[2 : 2 2] Some of you already feel it in your bones. I think it was last May, one of the other hats that I wear, apart from being the rector of this church, is I'm the chair of a yearly apologetics conference.

And a year ago, or in this past May, we had an opportunity to bring in Os Guinness, who's written many popular Christian books. And so, we, the apologetics group, we teamed up with the main atheist organization in Ottawa to have a conversation, a dialogue around the meaning of life.

And so, they, the atheist organization, they brought up their champion. They brought up a philosophy professor from the University of Toronto. And we had Os Guinness, and they sat right there on the stage, and they had a conversation.

And if you go to the Dig and Delve website, you can see it if you're interested. One of the things about it being here in the Ottawa Little Theatre is, because I was, I'm both the rector of this church and the head of this committee, when we approached the Ottawa Little Theatre, they gave us a better rate to be able to use this facility.

The downside for me was that I had to be one of the last people to leave. So, it was quite late on Sunday night that I finally left this place. But I was standing up there in the corner of the lobby, and about 30 of the keenest atheists were all at that end of the lobby.

[3 : 36] And they were just, they were blowing off steam and venting. I don't think their guy did a very good, I mean, he did a very, very, very good job on one hand, but I don't know how convincing it would have been.

But one of the things that they kept going on and on about, because I couldn't help listening to it, they went on and on and on and on about how evolution is scientifically proven, and it proves atheism.

How you cannot believe in evolution and not be an atheist. And they went on and on and on about it. And I just, you know, I just started listening to them and letting them blow off steam. So, I could just picture that if we had advertised that I was going to talk about this today, starting into Genesis chapter 111, they would just be rubbing their hands with glee that they could come here and try to see how I'm going to bend myself in knots to try to explain how plants were created on the third day, but the sun was created on the fourth day.

And how am I going to twist myself into a pretzel to try to explain how day and night begins with the first day, but the sun isn't created until the fourth day.

And they would be sitting here with glee, waiting for me to try to explain these things, which makes me think about basketball. And I'm not changing the topic.

[4 : 53] No? What about those raptors? Let's talk about something safe. No, it makes me think about basketball. And here's how I think about it. In 1998, I know that was a long, long, long, long, long time ago.

And as soon as I say basketball, some of you sort of go, okay, but just think about this for a second. Try to keep your attention on this. In 1998, there was the championship game. It was the sixth game, the championship game.

The Chicago Bulls were up three to two. They had been underdogs throughout the entire series, but they're up three games to two. They have a chance to win the championship in Utah, which is where they were playing the opposition.

And on the 1998, 97-98 Chicago Bulls, who was the main player on that team? The great Michael Jordan, the greatest basketball player in the history of the sport.

And I think he was only 34 years old. He was at the pinnacle of his fitness, his competitive edge, his ability. Okay? That Michael Jordan's on the team. So when, I don't know what they said in the room, but you can just imagine Phil Jackson, he gets the 15 guys together who are on the Chicago Bulls.

[5 : 57] They're all in there. They're going to go out into the stadium. All the Utah fans are all ready to go, boo. And they have, you know, and the coach brings the 15 guys around. And here's the question. When the coach is talking to the team, does he have the basketball?

And he says, okay, guys, I mean, we all have to play really hard. We all, it's going to be a team effort to win, but we all know who needs to step up and whose broad shoulders needs to carry us in this game.

Who we need to give the game ball to? Keith Booth. And you go, who the heck is Keith Booth? I had to look him up. I had to look him up because every team has somebody at the very, very, very, very, very end of the bench.

Like no team would say, you know, we have Michael Jordan. We have these other six guys. We won't bother having anybody else on the bench. No, no. They have a chance to have 15 guys. They always put 15 guys.

Who's Keith Booth? Keith Booth, that season, played in only six games. And every time he played, he played less than three minutes. And guess how many points he got in the entire season?

[7 : 04] Ten points. So here's the question. Would the coach say, I'm going to give the ball to Keith Booth because Keith Booth, he has to win this game for us.

No way. He'd take the ball. He'd say, Michael, this is your team. Michael Jordan, this is your team. Do what you got to do. And those of you who know basketball, highest watched basketball game in the history of the NBA was that game.

And it's considered to be one of the greatest games of all time. Michael Jordan was on fire. And with 5.8 seconds left in the game, he sunk a basket that won it. It wasn't Keith Booth.

I don't even know if Keith Booth played. So here's the question. We have this huge controversy around science and evolution and the Bible.

And we have many, many, many, many people in our culture who would just say that if you, they just understand that because of evolution, Christianity cannot possibly be true.

[8 : 03] It's a laughable option. So why, if this is such a big controversy, would when it comes to trying to figure this out, would we want to say, you know what?

Let's give the ball to Moses. I want to give the ball to Jesus. Like, doesn't that just make more sense?

Like, if the whole Christian faith is going to crumble and fall on how science and how the existence of God and all of that, how that ties in, like, why would we want to give it to Genesis 1 or Genesis 2?

Why would we want to say, we want your broad shoulders to carry this battle? No! I want to give the ball to Jesus. I want his broad shoulders to carry this.

So we are going to look at Genesis, we're going to look at one verse in Genesis today, but before we do that, we're going to listen to Jesus, or at least one whom Jesus taught. So it would be a great help to me if you got out your Bibles and we're going to look at John chapter 1, verses 1 to 4.

[9 : 09] Because you know what? If we want to try to figure out the relationship of science and the Christian faith, if we want to figure out whether origin matters and how things got created and came to be and the Christian faith, we want to look to Jesus.

I want to look to Jesus on this matter. I want his broad shoulders to carry this. I don't want to... You know, our Jewish friends can say it's all on Moses' shoulders, but I'm a follower of Jesus.

I want to go to Jesus. So let's look at John chapter 1, verses 1 to 4. And some of you might say, well, George, the words that you're about to read here, I know the Bible, it's not words from Jesus. And you're right, it's not words from Jesus.

But, you know, this... Why does anybody read John's gospel? Because of Jesus. Who was John? He was the beloved disciple.

He was the one who sat closest to Jesus' heart. Jesus had 12 disciples. And out of 12 disciples, he had three that were even the closest disciples.

[10 : 10] And out of those three, he had one who was closest of all. And who was that who was closest of all? It was the guy who wrote these words. And I just suggest to you, friends, that if you want to hear Jesus' thinking and teaching on this subject, that what you're hearing when you read the gospel of John is not only when you see the red letters, if you have a red letter Bible, or are you hearing Jesus, you're hearing Jesus all the way through it.

Jesus is the one who taught John. And here's what it says. John chapter 1, verses 1 to 4. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men and women.

Very, very simple, very, very profound. And it's just very, very, very clearly stated. I mean, the word here, it's translating a Greek word, and it's doing something which both ties in what we call the Old Testament and the pagan thought of the ancient world that they all, in their own different ways, they had this basic sense that God was a God who spoke, that there was a type of order and a structure.

And for the pagans, it was abstract. And for the Old Testament, it was this idea that God's Word would just cause things to be. And it was just a very simple, sort of a mystical and profound way of John gently introducing that Jesus was God.

[11 : 49] And so it says, in the beginning was the Word. And we're going to see if you keep reading that it's Jesus that he's referring to. In other words, that it's not just some type of abstract principle that brings order to the universe, and it's not just a sort of a God just merely speaking.

All the way through the Old Testament, there's these hints in the Old Testament that there's only one God, yet God somehow is something like Trinity. It's all the way through the Old Testament, constant hints.

And John, after knowing Jesus, and John, who also did not believe that Jesus was actually going to die, and John, who did not believe that Jesus would rise from the dead, but John, who was a witness for over 40 days beyond any shadow of a doubt that the grave was empty, John knew that the disciples did not steal the body.

John knew that Jesus had defeated death, and that which caused death, and had risen from the dead. And John is completely and utterly transformed by this. He comes to understand this, and now he looks, as he's reading the Scriptures, he reads the Old Testament, he sees all these plurals referred to a singular God.

And he now makes, in this very, very powerful way that would speak to his pagan audience in the beginning. Not that matter is in the beginning, not that energy is in the beginning, not that there's many gods in the beginning, not that there's chaos in the beginning, but in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[13 : 26] It means that in the beginning, God. He was in the beginning with God. And then it says it two ways in one very powerful verse. All things were made through him.

And then just to make sure we get the point, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life. And the life was the light of men.

Let me tell you, if some of you are thinking, okay, George is just going to try to dodge this bullet, Jesus is very clear. The teaching of the New Testament is very clear. If you could put up the first point, Andrew, the uncreated God created all things, visible and invisible, out of nothing.

That's the biblical teaching. The uncreated God created all things, visible and invisible, out of nothing.

You want to know something really surprising? Two things. When I was at the Anglican Church of Canada, I think most pastors, not all, but most pastors would just casually understand that evolution is completely and utterly true, as it's taught at the University of Ottawa in high school textbooks, understood by CTV news anchors and interviewers.

[14 : 39] That's completely and utterly true, and they think it was completely and utterly irrelevant to the Christian faith. In other words, they would probably be very uncomfortable with the atheist club, saying that the teaching that you get in high school and university means that atheism must be true.

Here's the surprising thing. Jesus agrees with the atheist club. Not that God doesn't exist, but if you think that some other process, just by matter and cause and effect and chance, that that's created human life, if you believe that, then atheism is true.

Jesus actually believes that part of what the atheist club was saying. Isn't that a bit surprising? Isn't that a bit surprising? Jesus and the atheist club would team up to make the Anglican Church of Canada pastors very uncomfortable, and maybe many of us.

It's a very surprising thing. Now, some of you are going to say, George, you've actually made things worse for me. Like, it was all right, George, if I could just say, okay, I believe in Jesus, and I believe in evolution, and I understand, by the way, that how it's normally talked about that you just hold those two things together and just trust that somehow they work together, and I really understand that, and I don't really want to make you uncomfortable just for the sake of making you uncomfortable, but I want to share with you something I learned from watching Star Trek.

You heard me right. Something I learned from watching Star Trek. I don't know if Andrew was going to do this or not. It's actually, I learned it from watching Q. Q. You weren't going to put up, oh, yeah. This guy helped me understand the Bible better.

[16 : 24] Q is in three of the Star Trek series, if I remember correctly, and I'm not going to try to tell you very much about Q because I know there's people here who know an awful lot, I would maybe even say too much about Star Trek, and I won't say very much before you all say, no, no, that's not how it works, you know, and then you all get into an argument, no, no, no, but in the Voyager, he does that, so we're not even going to go there, okay?

But here's the thing about Q. I remember this is a long, long time ago. I was watching an episode, and afterwards, I don't know, you know, I'm out on a run, and my mind is sort of just in neutral, and all of a sudden, it sort of struck me because one of the things that happens when you watch Q in a Star Trek episode is that he can create things out of nothing, and it just was part of a seamless thing in the show, and so he could do something like create an entire starship enterprise or a planet out of nothing, and so these guys, data, you know, the whatever he was, the machine that's the science guy, you don't have, I should have said you put up a picture of data, but there you go.

Anyway, he got Q, and they would go, and they'd try to say, you know, is it real? Is it just an imagination? Is it an hallucination? Is it just in my mind? But it's real, and I don't know if the chair is made out of leather, or I don't know, I don't know, probably some animal and some odd star that's the skin from it, but I mean, they would try to do all of their scientific tests to see if it's real, and it's real, and even though Q had just made it a moment before, well, I mean, I guess in theory, data could have said, well, the leather in this chair came from a, it's from a cow, it's probably from a cow that was raised in Montana and was cured here and cured that, and it has a whole backstory and a whole history, and yet the viewer knows that Q just made it out of nothing, and I was out on a run, and one day it hit me, I mean, nine months, it was definitely not the case that they were trying to do anything about Q and the Bible, but channeling my inner Tim Keller,

I want to tell you about the true and greater Q, the true and greater Q, and, you know, you listen to this again, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, he was in the beginning with God, all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made, in him was life, and the life was the light of men, Andrew, could you put up the next point, please?

God did not make creation a stage set, he made creation with real height and depth and a vast backstory, that's what the doctrine of creation teaches us, the doctrine of creation just by, and by observation, we understand that God did not make something like a stage set, a couple of weeks ago I had one of my granddaughters here, she's six years old, children by the way are not allowed on the stage after the service, okay, but I knew that she was a bit fascinated, it was a different set, but she was a bit fascinated by it, and I said, you want to come up on the stage and see, like, did they make a house over there, like, is there a room through those doors, and she was curious, I mean, I think she knew what was there, so we went up the stairs, we walked around, and she came and looked behind things, and in case you hadn't thought of it, that isn't actually a room, behind it, there's nothing, and God could have made a world like that, couldn't he have?

[20 : 06] But here's the thing, if let's say, now, I don't know if you knew this, but Orthodox Jewish people, sometime this year, it's the year 5777, because our Orthodox Jewish friends have tried to go through a certain reading of the Old Testament to figure out when God created the earth, and they date the year from how many years creation's been going, but, you know, whatever it is, and so whether God, however it is, let's say God is like a two and greater cue that he creates everything out of nothing, and he can create it all just like this in the blink of an eye, he can take a day if he wants, he can do it in the blink of an eye, but he creates all things completely out of nothing, and let's say, why am I losing my mic here?

Is my battery dying? Okay, there we go. Sorry about that. So just imagine for a second that you were able, that God allowed it, that we could take the best astronomers, the best astrophysicists, the best geologists, the best biologists, and the best geologists, I don't know if I mentioned that, and go back in time, and God allowed them to stand in the Garden of Eden five minutes after he had created the earth, and these people, these men and women, with all of their, the best, the stuff that they have, the best stuff that they have now to test things, and they come, and they stand there with Adam and Eve five minutes after God has created everything.

So here's the first thing. If you stood there with Adam and Eve five minutes after he's created them out of nothing, if they looked up at night, would they see a star?

Yes, they would see a star. But what do we know? I think it's 4.2 light years is the closest star. It would really mean that you should be waiting 4.2 years to see the first star, but there'd be stars in the heaven.

There'd be stars in the sky, and if they could bring a chainsaw and cut down a tree, there'd be rings in the tree. But even though the tree is only five minutes old, there'd be rings in the tree.

[22 : 12] Why? Because if there wasn't, it wouldn't be a tree. And the geologists would be able to go and say, you know, that mountain's brand new. That mountain's only, you know, whatever, so many million years old, and that's a really old mountain.

And they would be able to go to another place and say, that's a brand new river. And they'd look at another river, maybe in somewhere like England, where it goes like this, and they'd say, that's a really old river. And it would only be five minutes old. Why?

Because the doctrine of creation, God could have created a universe that was like a stage set with nothing behind it. It was all just surface. But he didn't create anything like that.

He created, he created, he created a creation with real heights and real depths and a vast backstory. And that's what he created out of nothing.

And I would actually say, ultimately, he created it out of nothing in an instant. Or at least in the book of John, it doesn't tell you how long it took, but it's very clear that why, I mean, why does he need time to do it?

[23 : 13] I mean, did he go up and say to Jesus, whoa, gosh, this mountain's going to take me a week to work at. No. He just creates it. And so, if you could put up the next thing, the biblical doctrine of creation means that we cannot know when God created.

We can only begin to map creation's heights and depths and explore its backstory. We can know that a designer made things out of nothing.

We can know that. Not only because, as I'm going to show you in a moment, it's actually reasonable, but we know it because that's what Jesus tells us. And we know it that it's the wisest alternative out of any other idea to account for all of reality is that a creator, designer, God, made all things out of nothing.

That he has no rivals. And you know what? You know, in a couple of weeks we're going to get to it. We're going to talk about how, you know, in one of the stories how human beings are told to be fruitful, to be multiply, to care for the earth and tend the earth.

And you know what? It's because scientists and physicists can look at the planets and look at light and look at light and how it relates to gravity and how it relates to this and that, that they can come up with that's all part of the knowledge that helps them to figure out how they can use light to send it down a cable to send information.

[24 : 44] And it's because they can look at how biology works and how chemistry works and they can reverse engineer different things that they can figure out new drugs and they can figure out better fertilizers and they can, they can, they can figure out how to care, they can figure out how to, they can look at formations and rock formations and how the backstory works and they can figure out where they can find gold or where they can find oil.

It's all part, the backstory and the heights and depths of creation which we can look at with our minds and try to understand the heights and understand the depths and map how things work and that helps us to be, well, to make vaccines and provide food and medicine and to cause things to flourish.

So, you see, if we, if we grab this story and the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God, He was in the beginning with God, all things were made through Him and without Him was not anything made that was made and Him was life and the life was the light of men.

This is an invitation to study. It's an invitation to love people. No human being you meet is a cosmic accident and if you have a love for engineering or for biology or for chemistry or for physics or for geology or for any of the scientists, the sciences, you can look because you know that behind it there's a design that you can understand.

There's something there in creation that you can understand that God wants you to understand and He wants you to articulate it and so the doctrine of creation rather than undermining science or making us afraid of it, it invites us to launch into it if that's the way your mind works and your heart works, whether you're a man or a woman, if that's to explore it and not be afraid because why?

[26 : 42] In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of men.

Now, some of you might say, George, I don't know, that's, what about evolution? What about science? You know, back, I don't know when it was, sometime in the summer and I can't remember what it was for, I go for a run along the, either along the Ottawa River along the canal and sometime back it was a warm day and I was out there for a run and I got stopped by CTV.

I wish I could tell you I got stopped by a cop for running too fast but it definitely wasn't. it wasn't that, you know. You know, I was talking to a guy for a couple of times on the phone he'd never seen me and I was telling him, you know, I don't know if you want me for this because I'm not hip and I sort of, because I think his organization is a bit of a hip organization I said, I'm not hip.

When people look at me they think hip replacement not hip. But anyway, so anyway, I went for a slog, a run and the CTV stops me and he said, do you have a moment sir?

And I said, sure. And he said, have you heard, I can't remember if it's cancer or Alzheimer's but anyway, there's some study that people who run a lot for a long time they're less susceptible, I can't remember which one it was.

[28 : 02] Have you read the study? Or heard the study? I said, no, I haven't heard that. He said, well, what do you think about it? And I, without even thinking, just being me, I said, well, you know, God created us and, you know, he created us to run.

It's a natural thing so it sort of makes sense that if God created us to do a natural thing that it would be naturally healthy. Well, I wish I'd had a cameraman there to film the interviewer from CTV.

He literally went like this and we talked for another three or four minutes because, and I'm sure I wasn't on TV, he definitely didn't want anybody to say on TV that God created us.

He said, well, I guess you can look at it evolutionary and I guess there's some evolution and I think God created us. Well, I think there's some, you know, it was like, why, does this guy have three heads?

Like, is he an alien? Like, did he crawl out from a rock? Anyway, I mean, that's the world we live in, right? So here's where atheist helps us again. If you could put it up.

[29 : 05] And there's a, he really is a famous atheist. He's not one of those atheists who gets all the press like hot, you know, like Dawkins and all that, but he's been a professor at New York University since 1980.

He's an emeritus professor. He's written all sorts of important books and articles. A well-known atheist. Wouldn't agree with me on probably just about anything at all. And he wrote this book in 2012, which got published by the Oxford University Press, which some of you might know as sort of a significant publishing press, highly academic and intellectual.

The book was called Mind and Cosmos, Why the Materialist, Neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false. Here's two quotes. First one.

I don't know if you can see it, small print. Whatever one may think about the possibility of a designer, remember, he's a committed atheist, complete, in fact, he has a very, very famous quote that Tim Keller likes to quote all the time about how it's not just that I believe intellectually that God does not exist.

I don't want God to exist. I'll do whatever I can to come up with an argument to make sure that I'm right that God doesn't exist. Okay? This is the same guy.

[30 : 20] Keller uses his quote all the time, but he also said this in this book. Whatever one may think about the possibility of a designer, the prevailing doctrine, that is what CTV news anchors and interviewers and all would say, that the appearance of life from dead matter and its evolution through accidental mutation and natural selection to its present forms has involved nothing but the operation of physical law.

That's what basically you get taught in your chemistry, your biology books. Here's what he says. Cannot be regarded as unassailable. Here's the big thing. It is an assumption governing the scientific project rather than a well-confirmed scientific hypothesis.

This is from an emeritus professor of philosophy at New York University who's had a 40-some-odd year career as a serious scholar and a serious atheist.

Here's another quote. But for a long time, I have found the materialist account of how we and our fellow organisms came to exist hard to believe, including the standard version of how the evolutionary process works.

Here's this really big thing he says. The more details we learn about the chemical basis of life and the intricacy of the genetic code, the more unbelievable the standard historical account becomes.

[31 : 52] If you could put up the point, the choice that we face is not between science and faith. The choice is between two beliefs.

The choice is not between science and faith. The choice is between two beliefs.

You know, why is it that an atheist, you know, and in fact, one of the things that Nagel said in interviews around this book, which caused a lot of, in fact, he had to turn his phone off, he turned off his answer machine, stopped looking at email because of all the hate mail he got, because people said he was playing into the hand of theists and his response was the current understanding of how evolution works cannot possibly be true and the longer we keep holding to this, the more that the intelligent design and theist crowds are going to gain followers.

So if we want to win the world for atheism, let's stop flogging a dead horse and find the right scientific explanation. Why does he do this?

He understands several things. He understands that this materialist understanding of how things came to be cannot account for how the human mind works. It cannot account for human freedom.

[33 : 11] It cannot account for creativity. It cannot account for human dignity. It cannot account for morals. It cannot account for love. And as he also makes a point here as he shows in this book, it can't even account for the growing knowledge of science about all of the basic intricacy of things that cannot possibly be accounted for by natural selection.

You see, he understands that if the choices between these two ideas, and if this is, which I'm going to show you, Andrew, could you put it up? If this is the choice, if the choices between two ideas, then at some point in time, as it's made clearer and clearer to people, people will realize that one idea cannot possibly be true.

And this is what the choice is that we face. Matter, pure chance, and cause and effect account for life and the intricate, fine-tuned universe.

universe. Or, God designed and created life and the intricate, fine-tuned universe. I'm going to read it again in a moment.

Let me just tell you, you know, as science has developed in the last 159 years since the origin of the species was written by Charles Darwin, as science has progressed in the last 159 years, as you understand increasingly, the intricacies of everything, I mean, every time they look at something, it becomes more and more intricate.

[34 : 40] When you look at DNA and the genetic code, to think that these things could happen completely and utterly by chance, the more that science grows, the more impossible it is to believe that it can happen by chance.

Because the thing is, this first statement that matter, pure chance, and cause and effect account for life in the intricate, fine-tuned universe, that's what it has to do. You know, it's not just a matter that maybe, you know, something like natural selection can account for, you know, how a bat, you know, or a moth changes its colors or certain types of changes in terms of the size of horses and stuff.

But this project, this idea, it has to account for how big the sun is and how fast the sun is hurtling through space and how fast that the planets around the sun are spinning and how far the earth is from the sun.

compared to the size of it and the angle of the earth and how fast the earth spins and how fast the earth is moving and the distance of the earth to the moon and countless other things. And that all has to be accounted for completely and utterly by chance.

And that doesn't even count on trying to understand how the chemical makeup of something like DNA could purely happen by chance. Because here's the thing, if we were out and let's say we had a chance to go somewhere, I don't know, off of the Atlantic or in the Gulf Coast or off of an island in the Caribbean and we had a, just because we're an ordinary guy, but we haven't had, we're an ordinary middle class guy who just happens to know a billionaire who can get flown by a helicopter to a private island.

[36 : 23] Sorry, a little bit of a jab. And we go to this place and then we go to an island that's just a little bit of a thing in the middle of nowhere and we're wandering around and we're looking and we're marveling at the driftwood and we're marveling at how, you know, the waves have drawn things up and maybe if some of you are photographers you're just taking some of the pictures of some of the beautiful things that you can see when just things get thrown together higgledy-piggledy.

You know, many of us maybe have pieces of driftwood that just look really beautiful after they've just been banged up but if we were walking around the island and we found stones that said, I love Joe, nobody would say that that came by chance.

In fact, if you had somebody in your party who said, whoa, I love Joe, that must have been a rogue wave that came up with big stones from the bottom and when the wave came back it spelled, I love Joe.

You'd think he was an idiot. And everybody would think he was an idiot. Right? Like if it was in a movie, who's that? actor, the Greek Isaac.

Yeah, that would be the guy in the movie, probably stoned or drunk in the movie who would say, whoa, it came from a wave. You know, he's just being a goof.

[37 : 39] The genetic code of DNA is exponentially billions times more complicated and that's just one tiny little thing in an intricately fine-tuned universe than having stones be washed up from a wave that said, I love Joe.

And that's what Thomas Nagel understands. That the evolutionary project has to from purely from matter, pure chance and cause and effect count for not just life but for everything.

And as science grows it becomes more and more completely and utterly impossible to believe that matter and chance and cause and effect could cause that. That's the direction of knowledge.

The more science grows the more it shows that in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made.

And now is a good time to turn to Genesis chapter 1. And if you look at Genesis chapter 1 verse 1 you'll see that this isn't just something that the New Testament teaches.

[38 : 50] You look at the very very very first verse and you see that God opens the book and the story by nailing it to the mast. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

In the beginning one word it means there's nothing before God created the heavens and the earth.

You want to know something which is really cool? In Hebrew the word for God is plural and the word that they choose is the sort of in a sense what we would just say God.

It's not like our Heavenly Father or the Lord Jesus Christ it's just the word for God the way our culture just generically wants to refer to God but in the Hebrew it's plural and there's a singular verb which is why it's translated not as God's created but God created because the verb is singular.

Isn't that cool? In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God he was in the beginning with God all things were made through him and without him nothing was made that was made. In him was life and the life was the light of men.

[39 : 59] And Genesis 1:1 says in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth which is called in grammar a merism it means how you describe a totality by using its two extremes I had to look that up I didn't know what it was before it was in one of the commentaries I had to look it up in the dictionary what on earth is a merism I don't even know I'm pronouncing it correctly I never heard the word spoken in speech before but it means in the beginning God created without him nothing was made all things were made through him and without him nothing was made that was made.

Okay we have just a few more minutes I have a couple of things you know there's a you know the story of the emperor in his new clothes it's a really cool story eh and you know in the original version of the story well the original story was written by Hans Christian Andersen I think 18 first part of the 1800s and if you remember the story a couple of tailors wanted to rip off the emperor and so they said oh emperor we found this new type of fabric and they went like this new type of fabric and you know what's so unique about this you need this fabric emperor because only people who are unfit for their position or unbelievably stupid can't see it the emperor doesn't want to admit that he's unfit for his position or that he's unbelievably stupid so he says whoa I would love you to make something for me out of that they said oh yeah you know you can walk around with this and you'll find out who's unfit for their position or unbelievably stupid so they pretend to sew clothes on the emperor and he goes out for a walk in his new clothes and nobody wants to say to the emperor you don't have anything on because it's an invisible fabric and to not see it shows that you are what unbelievably stupid or unfit for your position and so people don't want to say in our culture that maybe that if you go and you see

I love Joe and you know that it wasn't by a rock but somehow or another the genetic code and DNA could happen by chance maybe the emperor has no clothes just a couple of things in closing this is how the whole story begins and what I'm going to show over the next couple of weeks is this is what carries we've given the ball to Jesus it's on his broad shoulders and now we understand that in the very very first words in the beginning God created the heaven and earth that's how God is introduced it's how the story begins and what's going to be described in the two next things of chaos and days and garden of Eden they're all going to be true we're going to talk about that and I'm not going to deny that there's problems with understanding it but the seven days of creation don't have to carry the big weight we can understand that God has made his big point in his first verse and he's going to communicate other types of true truths in Genesis 1 and

Genesis 2 and we'll talk about that in the weeks to come it's how the story begins so what I want to say is if you're in science stay in science if you're in physics stay in physics if you're in biology stay in biology like study there is truth to be found things can be reverse engineered they were designed like study them and don't be afraid it's not in conflict with science God made the created order with a back story and with heights and depths you're just discovering in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and for all of us all the way through life you know here's this very fundamental thing you know Christians have a very different direction than secular people I don't mean to offend you if you're here as a secular person but secular people don't want to keep going back to this fundamental idea that everything exists as a result of chance and only matter because once you start to do that let me tell you if you start to try to do that not just me but atheist philosophers like Thomas

Nagel they'll tie you up in knots you can't account for how minds work one of the things which was so interesting if you go back and watch that dialogue between Osginis and the atheist philosopher he had a hard time affirming that human beings could know things or had freedom in fact he actually says he's not sure if human beings have any freedom at all and I just want to have you you know hear that so the whole force of secularism is to have us not think about these fundamental ideas but what is it that we do every week here at Church of the Messiah most churches do think on these things be gripped by them remember the gospel remember that God exists remember that in the real world God exists and that's why in the real world you pray that's not a flight from reality it's entering the real world it's living in the real world so read Genesis begin the story remember that you're not a result of chance that God created you think about these things study science think about the fundamentals and here's the other thing you know it's also really matters to the gospel

[45 : 50] Andrew if you could put it up here's why it matters to the gospel if this story is true and I believe it is and if it's going to show that God created all things some people wonder how is it that one man could die upon the cross and that that one man dying upon the cross that somehow or another his death could be in my place in your place in your place in your place in your place and the people we're still going to meet and how could that possibly be that one person's death could stand somehow for all but what if the creator and sustainer of all things could could he be a substitute for each I couldn't nothing personal but you couldn't but if this is true and if as we see that human beings are made in his image and that couldn't the creator come and rescue his creation couldn't he in some way stand for every person and here's another thing if you could put it up in the gospel salvation is also a restoration a being brought back to our true home it's going to be a couple weeks it's going to be six weeks in fact before we get to the fall we're going to spend five weeks four more weeks on creation before we get to the fall and why it is that the world is the way it is and why we need a savior but what we can see right here from the beginning is that when Jesus dies for us on the cross and when God through the cross and the message of the cross a power comes to us that we only receive that makes us right with him and when we put our faith and trust we are being reunited we are being restored to the creator who has made our created order it's not just salvation he brings me to my true home to live in the words of the old hymn this is my father's world this is my father's world and this message of the cross is for everyone who is here come back to your creator only the creator can stand for you and save you as a substitute come home by putting your faith and trust

God the son of God in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God he was in the beginning with God all things were made through him and without him was not anything made who were made he came to his own people and his own people did not receive him but to all who did receive him who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory glory as of the only son from the father full of grace and truth come to Jesus remember that in the beginning God created heaven and the earth come home please stand if there's any here and you feel a bit of a pressure within you to come to Jesus all I can tell you is just don't fight it but just say

Jesus you're knocking at the door of my heart Jesus please come into my life and be my savior and my lord and thank you that you bring me home just open the door to your heart and let Jesus come in there's no better time than today for those of us who have been far from him who are struggling with issues Jesus is already in the door of your heart if you've let him in before even if you've been sort of ignoring him but just there's no better time than right now just to turn to Jesus and say Jesus forgive me from pretending that you're not there that you don't matter forgive me for running from you even though you're right beside me Jesus I want to be yours I want you to have me as I want you to be the savior lord there's no better time than today just to do that business with Jesus this is bow our heads in prayer father thank you that you created all things in heaven and earth thank you that there is nothing made that you did not make thank you father that you made a world with this unbelievable heights that our minds haven't begun to even hit the top of and unbelievable depths that have not begun to reach the bottom of and that you have made a created order with an unbelievably thick and marvelous and powerful backstory and father help us to search these things out help us father to trust that you are the creator and to know that we are in your world that you have made us to live in this as your world as your people to care for this world to care for the people of this world to bring you glory to bear witness to

Jesus father make us such a people gripped by the gospel living for your glory confident that you are the creator and sustainer of all things and are still sovereign in this we pray in Jesus name amen