

God Spoke, And It Was

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[0 : 0 0] Father, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us. Father, you know how sometimes we are afraid of your word, that we're embarrassed by your word, that we wince at your word.

And Father, you know that about us. And Father, we thank you that you still speak, that you still love us, that you speak the truth. Father, help us to trust you and to trust your word. And may your word come into our lives and bear much fruit for your great glory.

And all this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, a couple of weeks ago, one of the people that I talk to in the coffee shop all the time, and we often have lots of disagreements, he was puzzling over a complicated quote that he'd found from Aristotle.

and he asked me over and he said to me, he said, George, you're a wise and learned man. Can you help me to understand this?

And I just sort of, I thought about that and I said to him, well, I appreciate the compliment, but I'm actually a fool in recovery, not a wise and learned man.

[1 : 2 0] I was thinking of what the book of Proverbs warns you about, thinking of being wise. I was thinking of 1 Corinthians, how God makes foolish the wisdom of the world, and I was thinking of Romans 1, and how in our foolishness, we want to exchange the glory of God for idols.

And so I said, I'm a fool in recovery. Anyway, I appreciated the comment. I mention that because today we're going to look at this story in Genesis chapter 1. It's the easiest story to find in the Bible.

You just go to the beginning. It's Genesis 1. And, you know, you look at this story and a lot of Christians nowadays, we really wince with this. We're very, very uncomfortable with it.

And not only are we uncomfortable with it, we are uncomfortable because we know a little bit about biology. We've probably all been through biology in high school. And, well, I mean, you know, in our back of our mind, we think to ourselves, how can there be light when the sun and the stars haven't been created?

How come light's created before the sun and the stars? And how come there's day and night before there's sun and even really a planet? So how can there be days before there's even a planet?

[2 : 3 4] And how come vegetation is created on the third day and the sun is created on the fourth day? And it doesn't make any biological, agricultural sense.

And so we're just very uncomfortable with it. Some of us will maybe read very, very, very, very, very clever Christians who try to show how this is just a way to describe almost scientifically how things came to be.

But in our heart of hearts, we might say, gosh, that's awfully clever. However, but it doesn't really work apart from all your cleverness. And so if we're honest, as I said in my prayer, we feel a little bit uncomfortable when it comes to a text like this.

It wouldn't be a text that we'd want to share with our coworkers and do a Bible study around. If we're honest, we'd be very, very, very uncomfortable about it. And so it's hard.

So that's one of the reasons I mentioned that I'm a recovering fool because it's almost, I'm going to talk a little bit about what we talked about last week to try to deal with some of this foolishness, but it's like we forget it.

[3 : 52] So here's the first thing as we start to look at this text. A couple of years ago, I had a conversation, once again, in a coffee shop. I actually don't talk to anybody if they're not in a coffee shop. I don't know if you know that about me.

So if you want to talk to me, go to a coffee shop. I'll talk to you. No. It's the easiest way for me to have conversations with non-Christians, I guess, just because of my personality.

And anyway, so I had a conversation, which is, I don't know how it came up. I mentioned something about trees being a renewable resource. I think it's because I was using a cardboard cup.

True confessions, when I go to coffee shops, I like the cardboard cups. I never get the, you know, the more eco-friendly ones, but that's a whole other. I hope I haven't now made you all really mad at me by sharing that.

But, so I think I made some comment about, you know, trees are a renewable resource. And the barista, he said, no, they're not. And I said, well, I mean, I know it's a slow resource, but you know, you plant a tree and it grows.

[4 : 53] And so it's always renewable. There's lots of land to grow trees and you just keep growing trees. And even if you cut them down, you can just keep planting trees. And she said, no, it's not a renewable resource and they don't plant trees in Canada.

I didn't make a face. I have a tiny, tiny, tiny bit of people skills which occasionally peak out. But I said to him, I said, my oldest son, for eight years, he was a tree planter.

Like, that's how he graduated from university with no debts. Like, he went in northern Ontario and northern BC and he planted trees. And he said, no, nobody does that. So at that point in time, there's no point talking any further with them, right?

Like, the person's an idiot. Sorry. Now, here's the question. Is Moses an idiot? It's a good question. I'm just going to take it for now that Moses is the primary author of the book of Genesis.

I'm not going to get into authorship. It's actually technically, it doesn't say that Moses wrote it. There are other reasons why it might or might not be Moses. But let's just say, I'm going to just say for the sake of argument that Moses wrote it, whether he adapted an older story or not doesn't really matter.

[6 : 02] But the question is, is Moses an idiot? You see, the reason that's a very, very good question to ask is, my guess is this. My guess is that Moses knows vastly less than anybody here about biology.

Okay? But, you know, he probably knows way more than just about anybody here about how things grow. And one of the things he would have known is that if you go into a dark cave, you don't see vegetation.

Like, we might have people who don't understand that trees grow. You know, because we're in post-modern, you know, Canada. We might have people who have problems with that because we're sort of distant from nature.

But Moses would have known that. Like, it would have dawned on him that if you don't have a light, like you go into a cave, you go into a dark room, you can't grow a tree or grass in a dark room.

He would have known that. So why do you write it? Isn't that a good question to ask? You see, because the subtle way that we approach the scripture is we're very influenced by the skepticism of much of our culture.

[7 : 14] And so we sort of assume that Moses, just because he lived at a time before there were flush toilets or Instagram, doesn't mean he was stupid. Right?

Or any person who's an older writer. Doesn't mean they're stupid. So, we just take that as a bit of a clue that maybe there's something else going on in this text. Maybe there's something else going on in this text.

In fact, I talked about that a little bit last week and I'm going to talk about it a little bit more. What I would say is actually science with one important qualification, the more we learn about science, the more we learn about astronomy, the more we learn about biology, the more we learn about geology, the more we learn about these things, the easier it is and the more truthfully we can read God's word.

I mean, just a very, very simple example, like, I don't know, 2,000, 2,500 years ago, whenever it talks about the sun rising, I don't know, they probably, I don't know, maybe they did think literally the sun rose, that the earth was sort of static and the sun rose and then went and, I don't know, underneath it and then came back up the next day.

But they didn't actually you know, it's interesting, in the Bible, they don't have any theories about how things like that work. They just say the sun rises or the sun moves across the sky and nothing in science disproves the fact that from our point of view the sun rises, does it?

[8 : 36] Like, nothing that's been discovered scientifically disproves that the sun or the stars or the moon move from our perception, if you think about it. So, when science discovers more and more things, when humans understand more and more things, all it means is we can understand a little bit more about the Bible, but it doesn't change the fundamental insight, does it, that from our point of view the sun rises?

That if somebody was to, if you were to say the sun rose this morning and somebody was to beat you up scientifically about it, you'd just think they were a jerk, right? Because it's just the way we human beings talk.

So, it's, with a qualification, you know, nothing in the, that, you know, most of the language in the Bible, science doesn't disprove any of it, it just helps us to understand it.

And so, what I'm also going to suggest is not only if we think for a second that Moses probably wasn't an idiot and that he probably knew a few things about the need for sunlight for things to grow, then the other thing is that as we know more and more about science, it helps us to actually try to figure out some of the other puzzles or riddles about this text.

Because, you know, maybe Moses wouldn't have understood about things like the sun and the stars and the sky because he didn't know certain science, but now that we know more science, it just helps us to understand what's more, like to help to read the text more accurately.

[9 : 58] So, Andrew, if you could put the first point up, this is a really important point for us to get. If we don't get this, we won't understand Genesis 1 to, verse 1 to 2, 3. God does not need a process or a timeline to create.

He speaks and what he wills is created with all of its heights and depths, fine-tuned intricacy and backstory. This is really important, okay?

I mean, you know, God can do whatever he wants. He's God. You know, if he wants to create the universe, he wants to take, you know, 1,623,000 steps, that's fine. He can do it. He's a big boy.

He makes up his own mind. He decides. And we should just go, wow. Right? But he doesn't have to do that.

He doesn't have to use any steps. And he doesn't have to rest. And he doesn't have to work with certain materials to get one thing done before he gets another thing done. Like, none of those things apply to God if we understand that God can create, just as we're going to see in a moment, that it says six different times, more than six different times that God speaks it is.

[11 : 08] God speaks it is. God speaks it is. God speaks it is. God speaks it is. It's all the way through the text. God speaks. It is. So God does not need a process or a timeline to create like we do.

We need processes and timelines. But God doesn't need that. He doesn't use it. He just speaks and what he wills, there it is. And there it is with all of its heights and depths and fine-tuned intricacy and backstory.

So, some of you are wondering, George, are you trying to just sort of make it look like we don't have to try to think that there's some conflict between evolution and between this story? I'm not trying to do that at all. Some of you, or if you were here last week, you remember me telling you the story of Keith Booth.

This is really, really an important thing. I know I'm going to tell it to you twice, two weeks in a row. I might even tell it to you three weeks in a row because next week we're going to look at the second creation story in Genesis 2.

And our problem is we say, oh yeah, yeah, yeah, that's a really good idea. And then when it's, then the next week comes and we look at the story and we forget all about the story. We forget all about the point that I was trying to make.

[12 : 13] So here's the point for those of you who weren't here and those of you maybe don't remember. So in 1998, the spring of 1998, it's the NBA playoffs. It's the sixth game. The Bulls have the greatest basketball player who's ever played basketball in the history of the game.

His name is Michael Jordan. He's coming up to his mid-30s. He is unbelievable in shape, unbelievable in determination and athletic ability. He's lost none of his skills.

He's at the peak of his game. He is the greatest player of all time playing at an unbelievable level. And we're going into the game six in Utah against a highly ranked team, team that many, many people thought that Utah would win the basketball championship that week.

Chicago's up three to two. They want to put it away. And so the coach, Phil Jackson, he gathers his 15 players before the game. I don't know what he said, okay? But what we know is when he gathered the 15 players, he probably said, like coaches are always supposed to do, it's going to be a team effort.

Everybody has to take their role. Everybody has to play their part. Everybody has a part to win this game. But we all know whose big shoulders the whole game depends upon.

[13 : 22] And we need to make sure we give that ball to the guy with the really broad shoulders, Keith Booth. Keith Booth's a real guy. He actually was on the bench for that game.

During the regular season, he only played in six games. And in the six games, he only managed to get, not per game, but total, five baskets.

Okay? So we all know, the coach didn't say that. What did he say? Give the ball to Michael. That's what he said, right? And so last week, what I said is, when we want to have this big conflict with how science is understood today and how to understand human origins, if we want to have a big, if I'm going to have an argument like that, I don't want to give the ball to Moses.

I want to give the ball to Jesus. I want to give the ball to Jesus. And so last week, we talked about, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Sorry, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were made through him, and without him, nothing was made that was made.

[14 : 34] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And we tried to unpack the doctrine of creation, and we showed that from that, we can see that the very, very first verse in Genesis, we understand it from the perspective of Jesus.

It's just teaching this very, very basic thing that God creates everything. He creates everything. He creates everything visible and invisible.

He creates them out of nothing. He creates them by just saying, I want this to exist, and it exists. And creation is not like a stage set. He made it real with height and depth and backstory.

And I shared the story last week about how I was watching a Star Trek episode, and I realized that what Q did helped me to understand the Christian doctrine of creation.

In fact, I made a bit of a joke using Timothy Keller language. The Bible tells you of a true and greater Q. A true and greater Q. And to illustrate it, and I'll just switch the image up a little bit.

[15 : 39] Imagine for a second that we were really, really unbelievably faithful in prayer, and there was a need for God to do this. But we owned this land, let's say, but it's just an empty lot.

And so, one Saturday, one of you have a prophetic word from God that if we just pray, you know how the Bible says mountains will move? And so we say, if we just pray, God will put a building on this spot like that.

So we actually would convince, I have to confess, I do not have the gift of faith. I would not be at that prayer meeting on a Saturday across from the lot. In fact, I'd probably say, let's pray on the property, and people with the gift of faith would say, no, we can't pray on the property.

God's going to put a building right here. So we do it across the street. We all close our eyes, we pray, we open our eyes, and the Ottawa little theater is here.

God does a work of creation out of nothing. And we all come in, and it looks just like this. And we know that he made it out of nothing. But we come into the building, and we look at the seats, and, you know, some of you who are, you know, some technologically inclined, we could say, you know, those look like about 30-year-old seats.

[16 : 55] And you'd look at the carpet, and you'd go, you know, that looks like a 20- or 30-year-old carpet. And then you'd look at the curtains, and you'd know that some of the curtains are brand new, and some of the curtains are old, and you'd be able to figure out how to put the chairs together and everything like that.

And so that's how God created all things. I used the example last week, that if God created everything just like that, it doesn't matter how long ago it is, if you just created it like that, and God sent you back in a time machine five seconds after he'd created all like that, would there be stars in the sky?

Yes, there would be stars in the sky, even though the closest star is 4.2 light years away. And if you took a chainsaw and cut a tree, would it have rings? Yes, it would have a ring. It would have rings.

God made everything with a back story. He made it so that we could take it apart, that we could understand it, that we could reverse engineer it. He made it because as we understand something maybe about how things are connected at a, you know, in this back story level, that it helps us to understand how light works.

It helps us to understand how plants develop. It helps us to understand things that we can do to make things work in this world better, to develop better farming techniques and better vaccines.

[18 : 06] And that's what the doctrine of creation out of nothing means. And if you want to know more about it, you can listen to last week's sermon. But here's the thing. So we sort of get into our mind, okay, you know what, that actually makes sense.

And in a sense, what I'm saying is that if somebody tells me, and somebody sent me a very helpful email this week about how old the Atlantic Ocean is and how many millions of years it is. And on one level, I want to say, see, what we have to understand is the doctrine of creation, if we really grasp it, it means that there's a real backstory and we can't really, it's sort of irrelevant whether God did it like sped up a long time or out of nothing.

Like you can't actually tell from this doctrine. It just means you are free to study everything without fear. Study paleontology, study astronomy, study biology.

You are free to do it without any fear. Go ahead and study. Because the doctrine of creation, when it says a backstory, it's not an illusion, it's not a lie, it's the way God made everything.

And whether or not the ocean is that old or just looks that old or the backstory makes it look like it's that old, like that's an unimportant distinction. It has this backstory that we should be free to completely and utterly study.

[19 : 31] And so, you see, we think that, we sort of believe that, but then as soon as we get to studying this text, we want to forget that God does it like that and we want to try to figure out what the process is.

But God doesn't, what is it? God does not need a process or a timeline to create. He speaks and what he wills is created with all of its heights and depths, fine-tuned intricacy and backstory. And this text is going to drive it home.

God said and it was, God said and it was, God said and it was, God said and it was, God said and it was. If you missed it the first time, I'll say it again, God said and it was. And he doesn't say, okay, it's so good that there's all this matter and energy around, so out of this, I'm going to create light.

No. We'll get to it in a moment. He sort of ignores verse 2 and just says and God said and it was. That's what wants to be emphasized.

You see, it's not like making something, putting together something from Ikea. My wife is conservative estimate a hundred times more handy than I am.

[20 : 40] That's a conservative estimate. It's probably way north of a hundred times more handy than I am. You would all be surprised at how unhandy I am. But occasionally I can put together things from Ikea.

It's very interesting when my wife and I, we don't usually do it together, but if we put things together from Ikea, my wife, because she's handy, she doesn't really look at the directions until she gets stuck. She just starts putting things together, right?

If you came into the house to see me put together something from Ikea, I open all of the packaging, I spread it all out in the room, I group things together, I open the little plastic bags, and I make sure that if it says there's going to be 16 of something, that there's 16, and I group all the things in the little plastic bags together, and then where it's well lit, I get the distractions out, and I start at one, and then two, and then three, and I follow the directions.

Okay? God, is it, when God made everything, he didn't, it's not like Ikea. He doesn't have to have a process. Okay? And so when we remember last week, okay, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, we want to give the ball to Jesus, not Moses.

We want to give the ball to Michael Jordan, not Keith Booth. So all we have to do is just remember that now when we start to read this. The big, broad shoulders of understanding how things are and what creation is, that's carried by Jesus, so maybe Genesis 1 is talking about some other types of things and bringing certain other types of truths home.

[22 : 16] Maybe that's what's going on with the text. So let's look. Get out your Bibles. It's been a long introduction. Genesis 1, verse 1. Genesis 1, verse 1.

And it begins like this. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Now this is a very sort of curious text, and if you read commentaries like I had to this week, they're all over the map trying to figure this out. I, you know, I don't know what it is. Maybe it's because I'm Northern Irish, and so I often don't entirely go along with what all the experts say.

You know that book, you know, what's that saying? God invented whiskey so the Irish wouldn't take over the world or something like that. I don't know. But I'm Northern Irish stock, Irish stock, and so I often don't go along with what all the experts say.

But, you know, you just look at, look at verse 2 here. It's very, very interesting. Actually, if you could put up the next point. Mere matter and energy will never create life for a home.

[23 : 32] That's one of the things that right off the bat God just wants to say. He says, you have matter, you know, this picture of earth and the deep, and it's just sort of like, it's a poetic way of talking about chaos.

It's just, there's matter, there's stuff, there's energy, there's depths. But you know what? All of the matter and all of the energy, it's just, it's formless.

You know, it's like, it's like if there's a huge tsunami, like when you saw all of those pictures, you know, of a tsunami or some big thing that destroyed, you know, parts of the Pacific or that destroyed parts of Japan and when the wave is gone, all you have is chaos.

You have stuff scattered all over. There's nowhere to live. Nothing got improved. It's just, it's just helter-skelter. The laws of physics, they all were followed. But even though you have all the laws of physics and all of the laws of chemistry working, it's just all chaos.

It's devoid of life. It's empty. And that's what it says right here in verse 2, that the earth was without form and void and darkness was over the face of the deep. There's no life.

[24 : 39] There's no form. There's no home. And God is different than chaos. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

You see, if you remember to give the ball to Michael Jordan or if you remember to give the ball to Jesus, Jesus, then you can start to read this text without having to think that it's having to deal, that it's somehow a pre-scientific way of describing evolutionary theory.

Like, it's not trying to do that. Just remember, if you could put up the next point, here's the big choice that faces us all of the time. It's the thing that secular culture does not want to articulate because when it's articulated, we realize that there's really only one choice.

The choice, this is in a sense the atheistic dream. The atheistic dream that somehow or another has clothed itself with science. That matter, pure chance, and cause and effect accounts for life and the intricate, fine-tuned universe.

Or, what's the other choice? that God designed and created life and the intricate, fine-tuned universe. And I shared last week about an atheist philosopher who's still an atheist but has said that evolution, as it's understood right now, cannot possibly be true.

[26 : 08] And in fact, he urges scientists to stop even going down that way because it's playing into the hands of people who believe the second choice is the one that makes the most sense. And we all do.

You know, Jeremiah, I hope you know, who read the text, if you just go ahead and ask him, he's doing his PhD in biochemistry, and ask him about genetic sequencing and whether that could possibly happen by chance.

I mean, you know, here's the thing, you know that I love murder mysteries, I love books where there's someone who gets murdered and I know that sounds really bad, but I love books like that. And if there was a guy who came and he wanted to try to make the accident, make it look like, you know, it was a bit of an accident, he wanted to have the person suffer a bit first and he comes up to a deserted island and he jabs the guy with a needle and says, you're going to die in 15 minutes and it's on an island where I'm sure predators are going to eat most of your mortal remains, they won't know that I've just injected you with something that's going to kill you in 15 minutes, I'm going to sink your boat, they'll think it's an accident, you don't have a cell phone, you don't have nothing and then off he goes.

And in that 15 minutes the person goes and as they're getting weaker they take some driftwood just beyond the high tide line and they use the driftwood to spell George killed me and then they die and then eventually they find the body, they come and they arrest me and if my lawyer said, listen, there's no way, we all know that George killed me spelled by driftwood, that was just a rogue wave that came up and as the wave came back, the wood just happened there by chance, nobody would believe that and the universe is vastly more complicated than that so why do we believe that?

So keep this choice before you as you read and understand that it's in Genesis 1-1 and in the New Testament that the basic doctrine of creation is taught and what this text of Genesis 1 is doing is it's helping us to understand even more deeply that God creates out of nothing and who God is let's continue reading at verse 3 and God said let there be light and there was light and God saw that the light was good and God separated the light from the darkness God called the light day and the darkness he called night and there was evening and there was morning the first day now just sort of pause about this you know one of the things which is really cool about this go and look at the very back of your Bibles to Revelation chapter 22 Revelation chapter 22 and what is the last word describing the future before the little ending bit in the book of Revelation and telling you how important it is to keep all the words the last word the last verse is verse 5 of chapter 22 and what does it say so here we have almost the third word in the Bible the third verse in the Bible and what's the last verse that talks about the end of chapter 22 verse 5 and what does it say and night will be no more they will need no light or lamp or sun for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign forever and ever and it's emphasized if you go back and read the last that little bit of a unit begins at the end of chapter 21 right up to there twice it says that there's no need for light because God is the light isn't sort of just a bit of a cool thing and it's interesting because for many Christians we read that part and we just we just think in awe of what it will be like to be where God is in the new heaven and the new earth and whatever this image means that there's no need for a sun or the stars because God is our light and that final word is the first word

[30 : 08] God creates light pretty cool eh how the Bible fits together let's skip down to verse to verse to verse 6 keep reading actually before we read this here I want to get you if we run out of time this is the really big point I want to try to communicate if we understand that the burden of understanding creation that's carried on Jesus' broad shoulders read John 1 in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God he was with God in the beginning all things were created through him without him nothing was made that was made and him was life and the life was the light of man should you go put up the next point this is what Genesis 1 this is what the Bible one of the two big things that this text is trying to communicate to you image bearer that's a human being image bearer know your creator the one transcendent omnipotent and good God who made the cosmos for your home image bearer that's how we're to understand what a human being is doesn't matter if you're down syndrome doesn't matter if you're Usain Bolt doesn't matter if you're as brilliant as Einstein doesn't matter if you have a low IQ image bearer image bearer know your creator the one transcendent omnipotent and good God who made the cosmos for your home and you know if you're at all like me your personality

I love abstract statements like that I love abstract statements like that I really do I love it you know but for a lot of people as soon as I started to read that you started thinking about your laundry list okay like that's just not how your minds work right you know might not even be aware of it that abstract language comes you think what am I going to watch on Netflix tonight but for other people this language of the text communicates it how do you know that God is not light and God said let there be light that's in a sense a way to understand transcendence how do you know that he's omnipotent which means all powerful and God said let there be light and there was light how do you know that he's good and everything that I make it's good and this story this text uses this very very very powerful series of language and images which are all very very simple and are basically using everyday perception talk so that even a three year old as they're told this story will understand at a deep level even though they don't understand later on in life when they try to talk about transcendence the seeds of understanding transcendence are planted in this story because of the way their minds work let's look at verse 6 this is sort of the hardest of all the texts and God said let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters and God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse and it was so and God called the expanse heaven and there was evening and there was morning and the second day here's the main thing to remember about this text you know from a Jewish point of view or from the biblical point of view this is Monday and this second day is the only one of the seven days where it doesn't six days where it doesn't say it was good even God doesn't like Mondays that's not the main point of the text sorry that even God doesn't like Mondays probably the reason it doesn't have and it was good is that the number seven is really important and there's seven goods and you want to emphasize the creation of human beings by a double good and so they have to take one away it's not because

Mondays suck but here's the thing it's a bit complicated language and there's no real good words in English what this is really bringing about is that here's a big big big word all of this text uses phenomenological language in other words the language of appearance and you know what if we wanted to try to make a creation story that was scientific and we did it two thousand years ago we would read it now it would be so lame if we even tried to write it the way they wrote science two hundred years ago we would read it now and we would say it was so lame and if we wrote it now the way scientists would like to write it and if Jesus doesn't come back in two hundred years this is very humbling our ancestors two hundred years from now would say this is so lame Stephen Hawking's description this is so lame what never gets tired what is timeless phenomenological language what do they see it's from the perception that all of a sudden there's space and there's water above like clouds rain clouds and water underneath it's phenomenological language continue on verse six verse nine and God said let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear and it was so

God called the dry land earth or better actually better translation would be land and the waters that were gathered together that he called seas and God saw that it was good God saw that it was good now here's another thing which shows you that this text is not at all concerned with oh sorry I stopped reading too early didn't I verse 11 and God said let the earth sprout vegetation plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed each according to its kind on the earth and it was so the earth brought forth vegetation plants yielding seed according to their own kinds and trees bearing fruit in which is seed each according to its kind and God saw that it was good I'm sort of messing up my reading I apologize and there was evening there was morning the third day so here's the thing another thing about it shows that Moses and all isn't an idiot right remember that was one of my earlier points just assume for a second he's not an idiot I'm not going to go but if you go back later on with your Bibles you look at day 1 and day 4 day 2 and day 5 day 3 and day 6 there's a pattern and the pattern is

God makes a series of separations or places places in days 1 2 and 3 and in days 4 5 and 6 he makes inhabitants for the places so day 4 day 1 describes a certain type of separation day 4 describes inhabitants and all the way through it's a very very obvious pattern if you look at it you see because once again remember one of my earlier points God doesn't have to do a process he just creates so what's he doing right now he's trying to say image bearer know your creator the one transcendent omnipotent and good God who made the cosmos for your home that's why it uses the language of days that's why it uses the language of 7 days because it's all from the perspective of human beings God is making us a home we are not an accident we are not a tragedy it is not as Hindu mythology talks about some ancient tragedy amongst the one God that there's different emanations and now there's us human beings as a tragedy and we have to get back to the one we are not an accident it is not like ancient mythology where God is creating the gods create human beings to serve them to feed them to wash them and to care for them no we are not made as slaves we are made as image bearers it is not that we are sent here as a punishment this is our home and the language is phenomenological language it's the language of human beings looking and seeing because God made us to live in this place as our home with him if you could put up the next point

[38 : 41] Andrew please see here's the other big thing that the text wants to tell us every claimant to be a rival to God is unmasked as a fraud every claimant to be a rival to God is unmasked as a fraud this is really seen very clearly in the very next word the very next day which begins on verses 14 and 14 and God said let there be lights this is the fourth day let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth and it was so see this thing about God being all powerful let it was so let it was so speak it is so he's and you know what it's not that it's coming out of it it's not like a mythology where God gives birth to us and we are the same stuff of God the myth of pantheism and panentheism no God is separate from his created order he speaks and it is and he's all powerfully speaks and it is and he's good because what he makes is good verse 16 and God made the two great lights the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night and the stars and God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness and God saw that it was good and there was evening and there was morning the fourth day now did Moses not know to call one thing the sun and the other thing the moon see what's the other thing that's going on if the first thing that's going on in this text is that know your God know your creator there's only one creator not a million creators we're not a result of blind chance we're not a divine accident of tragedy there is a creator there's only one creator he is all powerful he is transcendent he is good and he made us as human beings to bear his image in this cosmos and this cosmos is our home we were made to live here and there are no other claimants that can claim to be like God in the ancient world in virtually every ancient pagan religion the sun is a god and the moon is a god and so the writer of Genesis intentionally does not say the word for sun and moon in case ancient pagans mistakenly understood that God created the sun god and the moon god so the name of the sun and the moon is not spoken and all of the way through this text the ancient world well there's a god or goddess of fertility there's a god or goddess of earth there's a god or goddess of the sky there's a god or goddess and the stars chaos is a god or a goddess and throughout all of the ancient world there's the sea monsters are types of gods or goddesses in every one of these cases what does this text say?

and God said and God said and God said and God said and God said and God said he creates them the text destroys any notion of there being multiple gods just as Genesis 1 and 2 Genesis chapter 1 verses 1 and 2 and the whole doctrine of creation says that the atheistic dream of accounting for all things that exist without God existing is revealed to be a fraud you see friends this is why it's so important that we read Genesis 1 without fear and that when we read Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 we don't slip back into the mindset of the world I'm going to give the ball to Keith Booth no give the ball to Michael Jordan give the ball to Jesus okay Jesus has the ball he's won in the game so let's look at these other things what other things is this text telling us there is one God he is the creator he is transcendent he is all powerful he is good all claimants to any of these roles are a fraud do not believe them it is a lie no God

I have to wrap this up because of the time just want to say a couple of things let's just you get the basic story with all of this can you just look down here to verse 27 we are going to say more about this what I am going to be doing with these sermons is that next week we are going to look at the second creation story and then after that we are going to loop back and spend a whole sermon just on these these three a couple of these verses at the end of chapter 1 and then after that I am going to loop back and look at something in more detail in chapter 2 but look at this here verse 25 and 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 every creeping thing that creeps on the earth and here this threefold thing a poem a song for emphasis so God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them human beings are unique on one hand we are creatures on another hand we are unique and different than anything else in all of creation only human beings a fertilized egg attached to the womb of its mother right up to

Usain Bolt and Albert Einstein and George Clooney and Justin Trudeau we only bear God's image which why it is is why it is if a house is on fire and a firefighter she runs into the house and she only has a chance she only has a choice of either rescuing the German shepherd or the baby in the crib if she came out with the German shepherd we would all know at the most fundamental level that she's created she's done a great evil if she said well there's no difference between a dog and a baby in fact you know they probably spent \$1500 on that dog the baby was free like how would that go in the news we all know at a very distinct level that the firefighter who would go in to rescue the dog and let the baby human baby die has done a great evil only the wisdom of the Bible makes that fundamental insight clear within a clear framework so I'm sorry

I've gone a little bit long so you know what what's all this telling us friends if you feel at all inclined to study astronomy study astronomy study biology study biochemistry study geology study paleontology don't be afraid of it it's just unpacking God's great design in the back story and just a couple of other things about why this is so important in the gospel Andrew if you could put up the next point please what this text is showing is that only God can create it's not going to be for a couple of weeks that we get to the great tragedy as to why we need a savior but what this text emphasizes time and time and time and time again and God said and God said and God said and God said is that only God can create and if only God can create only he can recreate only he can do that and all we can do is accept how he does it by faith next point if you go back later on and you read the seventh day of creation you'll see it's very very interesting on the seventh day of creation it said that

[46 : 44] God's work was finished and by the way it's very interesting if you'll notice you read the seventh day of creation there's no and there was evening and there was morning a seventh day the rhythm is broken the Sabbath rest God's intention to create a home for us that he would dwell with us that's described in that seventh day and in that text it says God's finished from his work and on the cross God the son of God said it is finished this is the gospel you see that only God can create so only he can recreate and that just as God after he had finished creating it was finished and Jesus as he's dying upon the cross as our savior the same one who is in a sense the source of all light at the end of the days the beginning of the new and final story as he dies on the cross he says it is finished that's why this creation text it helps us to understand the greatness and the depth of what

Jesus does for us on the cross that it's not something we can add our works to our liturgies to our rituals to or anything like that it is only something that God can do and that we can only receive it by faith I invite you to stand if you're here and you're not sure if you've ever given your life to Jesus there's no better time than today to just say in fact actually I'm just going to say a simple prayer I don't want you to pray it out loud but if you're here in this room and it's you've come to that point where you just recognize that you need a savior and that Jesus he's the one who can recreate you he's the one who completed the work needed to recreate you then if you just just silently not out loud but just silently I'll try to leave a pause just pray a prayer like this just this is it comes from your will or your desire

I'm just trying to help you put language to it God I know that you exist I know that Jesus is the savior Jesus be my savior come into my life and never leave save me completely make your holy spirit to come and live within me amen father for all of us pour out your holy spirit upon us help us to be trusting in your word and confident in your word help us father to study your word and make us disciples of Jesus gripped by the gospel living for your glory and this we ask in Jesus name amen