

Creation speaks of God's Glory

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 January 2019

Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 00] I want us to look for a while this morning at what we read of in the opening verses in Psalm 19. The heavens declare the glory of God.

The sky above proclaims his handiwork day to day, pours out speech night to night, reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words whose voice is not heard.

Their voice goes out through all the earth, their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun which comes out like a bridegroom, leaving his chamber and like a strong man runs his course with joy and so on.

I want us to look this morning for a while at the subject of creation. The importance of recognizing the biblical truth of creation is something recognized in the early chapters of our church's confession of faith.

For example, that document begins with the foundational importance of Holy Scripture. Then it looks at how Scripture reveals each of the three persons of God and the Holy Trinity.

[1 : 07] And then it examines the subject of God's eternal decree and the deep things of predestination that are from all eternity. In other words, before the beginning of time.

But then it has a very short but vitally important chapter on the beginning of time itself and of God's work of creation.

I suspect the very shortness of the chapter in our confession was indicative of the times and the circumstances under which it was written. In other words, it was written at a time when the biblical account of creation was just an accepted fact.

And nobody thought anything more about it. And indeed, what more was there to say other than that God had made all things, including man in his own image, male and female.

He'd made all things in the space of six days and all very good. Nowadays, of course, of all the biblical doctrines, this of creation is the one most violently attacked by the unbelieving world.

[2 : 11] And if this chapter of the confession of faith was being written today, it would probably be a lot larger and would no doubt encompass many of the arguments against so-called evolutionists.

Who for their part illustrate perfectly the verse that Paul writes in Romans 1 at verse 22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

So not the fool who is said in his heart, there is no God. Certainly society as a whole knows less about eternal realities than it did even a century ago.

Let alone going back to the time and say the confession of faith was written or when the Bible was written down. We know less about eternal realities now than we did then.

And when looking at the subject of creation, as I would like us to do for a wee while this morning, I would suggest to you that there are two things which cannot be often stressed enough and which it is necessary to stress.

[3 : 15] Precisely because Christians in general and Christian young people in particular are continuously assaulted via television and the wider media and even the school curriculum with the theory of evolution, so-called, presented as though it were scientific fact, which it is literally not.

The first thing it is necessary to reiterate is that the theory of so-called evolution flies in the face of observable scientific fact.

It is an observable scientific fact that the natural process of matter is downwards. from organization to disorganization, from integration to disintegration, into decay, for example, basically.

DNA, for example, can mutate as information in the strand is lost. And this mutation is what gives us such a wide variety of, for example, horses and dogs and cats and cattle and sheep and you name it.

There are so many varieties within species but only within the particular species. What we don't have and never could have because DNA simply does not allow it is the idea that a cow somehow transmogrifies into a horse or a fish into a bird or for that matter an ape into a man.

[4 : 57] It cannot happen because you cannot add new information to the DNA strain. You can only take it out. Hence, mutations, varieties within species.

Within species, evolution, properly speaking, as that word ought to be used, ought to mean the evolving within a species of particular varieties.

It must and it does take place. That's an observable scientific fact. There are mutations, there are changes, there are varieties within species. And that nobody can deny, at least of all the Bible would want to deny it.

If you think about it, you know, when you think of all that Noah took into the ark, as the Bible records, he took male and female, one of each, each kind. Of the clean beasts, he took seven, of course, of each kind.

But we don't know how many of those clean creatures he used in terms of the sacrifice that he made to the Lord, burning them on the altar afterwards. So we know that at least one male and female survived of each species when they came out the ark.

[6 : 06] But, you know, now we've got such a wide, huge variety of every kind of animal and bird and creature under the sun. So they must have evolved in the proper sense from their original parenting couple way back then.

We have so many different breeds of horses and dogs and cats and apes and cattle and so on. But, of course, that's not what most people mean when they use the term evolution.

They mean that if you give it long enough, then somehow nature might be able to reverse its own laws often enough. To do it even once would be amazing, would be completely the opposite of what nature's laws require.

But to do it so many times and so often and so positively to be able to create new species superior to the ones that came before, it is scientifically, it is mathematically impossible to do that.

There is no genuine scientific evidence for any of that whatsoever. There is much hot air and lots of theories masquerading as facts, but they are not observable empirical facts.

[7 : 27] The facts and laws of nature point consistently across the board to a breaking down of order into disorder, of complexity into greater simplicity.

Yes, of species adapting to their environment in order to survive, but not ever, not ever, of changing into a different species.

This is the first thing it is necessary to reiterate and which must always be borne in mind. The theory of so-called evolution is quite simply not sustained by the observable scientific facts.

The second thing it is essential we remember is that despite the scorn poured upon the idea of everything in this universe being created in six days, the real targets of this opposition is not the time or the number of days involved, but rather the mere fact of the universe being created at all. Because obviously if it has been created, then it must have been created by someone. And whoever that someone was must, logically, be greater and more powerful and able to control everything that they have made.

[9 : 01] You must have greater knowledge than the thing that you have made. You must have greater power than the thing that you have made. Now, given the vastness of the universe, not to mention the intricacy and detail and perfection of everything in Earth's creation, anything and any body that is greater and more powerful than all the energy and strength and power afforded by all the galaxies and star systems and supernovas of the universe must be, to all intents and purposes, infinitely powerful.

In real terms, there is no limit. In real terms, there is no limit. There is infinite. No limit to their powers or abilities as we understand limits in any meaningful sense.

It follows that such a being, if there was such a creator, it follows that such a being must be capable of doing pretty much whatever they want.

If they really do have such vast strength and size and power and creative ability, then let's face it, they could just as easily have done it all in six days or even six hours as they could in 6,000 billion trillion years.

The real target is not the time scale. The real target is the creator. Evolution, as that term is commonly used, is an ideology of atheism.

[10 : 36] The necessary absence of any god whatsoever is its fundamental prerequisite. So-called evolution is not a scientific position.

It is an ideological one. The next time you are up against a smug atheist who sneers at the biblical doctrine of a six-day creation and claims some kind of supposed scientific superiority, and this is what you must focus on.

Firstly, you focus on what you have in common. You might think, well, what do we possibly have in common? Well, you have in common the fact that neither you nor he believe that all this universe could possibly have just mosezed itself into existence into such a vast complexity of existence in the space of six days.

It couldn't just have sort of ambled along and kind of happened all by itself in six days. You agree that? You agree that it is quite impossible for evolution to produce these kind of results inside a mere week.

He'd agree about that too. And the evidence supports you both in that conclusion. Then you focus on the fact that the evidence of this universe, from the infinity of stars and planets and galaxies, to the intricacy and detail and sophistication, and every plant and flower and creature of this earth, with its atmosphere, with its perfectly balanced position from the sun, its uniqueness in space, that everything, everything, points to a deliberate, intelligent, sophisticated design.

[12 : 25] Or it would if he would allow the facts and evidence to speak for themselves. You even offer to surrender your timescale and allow, if only for the sake of argument, that perhaps, let's say, perhaps it did take 6,000 billion, trillion years to do it.

If only your friend will concede the evidence of design, perfection, deliberative, creative input, and how even the single-celled amoeba, from which some atheists claim we have supposedly evolved, is itself an infinitely complex organism.

A single-celled amoeba is an infinitely complex organism. If you conceded the timescale, would he concede the mathematical impossibility of it all just happening by itself?

Well, I can tell you now, he will not do it. He cannot do it. For if he allows deliberative design, he must allow a designer, must acknowledge that someone or something, if they did this, must have had access to a depth of intricate sophistication and complexity of information, to knowledge and ability, which is frightening, literally frightening, in its immensity.

Such a thing or person would truly be a supreme being without rival or competitor anywhere in the universe.

[14 : 11] In other words, if such an individual power exists at all, then it has to be, to all intents and purposes, God.

And of course, if creation is true, who is to say that every other claim about God is not likewise true, about his work of redemption, about the fallenness of man, about our need for a savior, about the only way of salvation.

You see, your atheist friend must deny it, must oppose himself to the very scientific evidence with which only a few moments earlier he was supposedly so confident, because ultimately his position is based not on evidence, but on ignorance, not on science, but on prejudice.

You can see why the unbelieving world must attack the very idea of creation. If they do not do so, then this huge, vast, full-color advertisement for God will just be way too obvious for men and women everywhere to be able to resist.

This too is part of God's design and intention. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork, day to day pours out speech, night to night reveals knowledge, and so on.

[15 : 52] He intends to make himself known. He intends to reveal himself to fallen mankind.

In Romans chapter 1, we read at verse 20, for his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made.

so they are without excuse. God, who has designed man in his own image, intends not only that man should have fellowship with God, but he has endued man, male and female, with the ability and instinct to be, if we can say it reverently, partners with him, in creation, not least through procreation.

Now, I have no desire to be indelicate or to get unduly anatomical, but, you know, as Hebrews tells us, marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled.

The sheer intricacy of design, not only in the complementarity of male and female, but the infinitesimal detail and microscopic complexity of how the fusion of male and female seed combines to bring a new life into being, an immortal soul, an immortal soul that did not exist before, but then does exist.

[17 : 44] this is a miracle of life. This is of God. And yet, of course, it is not the parents who make it happen.

All that they can ever do is to create the conditions in which it might happen. Childless couples, for example, go through exactly the same conditions.

conditions. They create exactly the same conditions and the life doesn't happen for them. So, mankind, male and female, are made partners with him in creation, yes, but life itself, and the decision of whether or not an immortal soul will come into being, is the gift of God.

In the world itself, God has endued mankind with huge creative ability, intellectual powers, technological brilliance, a rich and inventive imagination, and mankind has made huge strides, but there are many things man cannot do.

When the Lord is taking to task the hapless job in chapter 38 of that book, God questions not whether job is guilty or innocent, but rather whether he has any clue as to the vastness and might and power, the sheer greatness of the God with whom he is presuming to argue.

[19 : 25] Read in Job 38 verses 31 to 33, Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion, these star constellations?

Can you lead forth the Maseroth in their season, or can you guide the bear with its children? That's again the bear constellation, sometimes referred to as Arcturus.

Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth? Previously in chapter 9 at verse 9 of Job it says who made the bear and Orion the Pleiades and the chambers of the earth?

Again in Amos chapter 5 at verse 8 we've got the same sort of reference here. It says he who made the Pleiades and Orion and turns deep darkness into the morning and darkens the day into night who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them on the surface of the earth the Lord is his name. Now as we mentioned what they've translated here the bear is translated in other places or other versions as Arcturus Arcturus is a particular star and the seven star constellation of Pleiades which is referred to there twice in Job and also in Amos is over 440 light years away.

[20 : 44] Now one light year is approximately 5.9 trillion miles. Now if you wonder what's a trillion a trillion is a million times a million times a million.

Nowadays when people talk about a billion they usually tend to mean a thousand million but that's actually not accurate it's not mathematically accurate that's an Americanism that's kind of crept in a bit a thousand million is a thousand million it's not properly a billion a billion properly speaking is a bi-illion a million million so in other words six nothings times six nothings twelve nothings after the figure and then a trillion is a million times a million times a million so in other words three sixes eighteen zeros after whatever the figure may be so that's your trillion miles that it's away that's 5.9 trillion miles Pleiades then is about 2,600 trillion miles away the many stars of the Orion constellation are between 640 and 900 light years away 5,300 trillion miles

Archerus which we've got translated in front of us here as the bear is the star at the opposite end from the handle of the big dipper or the plough which is probably the only constellation most of us certainly I can recognize in the sky at night easily if you want an idea of how far away Archerus is then think of yourself let's say you're having your dinner having your mints and tatties or your meat and potatoes or whatever it is and outside maybe your grandson or son or whatever is playing with a basketball and shooting away or maybe a football or whatever and you've got your mints and tatties and peas and so on and your salt there on the table and maybe you're putting a spoonful of sugar in your tea or something and in he comes when he's bouncing away as great with basketball and he plunks it down on the table beside your plate of mints and tatties and maybe the fact that plonking it down makes a little pea jump off your plate and roll over beside the basketball and maybe when you are putting your salt on or your sugar in your tea a little granule fell onto the table well if you think of these things on the table then

Archerus would be the basketball the green pea beside it would be perhaps the sun our sun in our solar system and a little grain of either salt or sugar or like a little grain of sand would be Jupiter the biggest planet in our solar system earth just wouldn't be visible at all on that scale so the sun would be the equivalent of the green pea Archerus would be the basketball in comparison and yet to us it's

just a little tiny twinkling little star at the bottom of the that's how far away it is that's how vast this universe is that's only the bits we can see of it you know that's the size that's how big Archerus that's how far away it must be it's only a fraction of how big this universe that God has created is the number of such stars is beyond our ability to count we just don't have big enough numbers in our vocabulary but the

Lord says that he has them all in his hand and under his power to control to loose and to bind that's what he said to Job can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion can you lead forth the Maserat in their season can you guide the bear Archerus with its children do you know the ordinances of the heavens can you establish their rule on the earth one American pastor has put it this way that if we think of our tiny earth as the only inhabited spot in the universe as indeed it seems to be no matter how far our telescopes reach or our space probes travel everything else just seems to be freezing empty or stars that are raging fires and continually exploding gases nowhere else has an atmosphere that can sustain life and the most that anyone else can say is oh yeah but we don't know that there might be other ones out there no but we've never found any and there's never any evidence to suggest that there is oh look there's a little crack on the surface of mars maybe that means there was once a channel there maybe there was once a sort of little little canal there maybe that means there was water there once if there was water maybe it could sustain life all they found is a crack on the surface there isn't water on mars there isn't life on mars there isn't other planets that are inhabited with our kind of atmosphere or sustaining life but if that is so the universe does seem awfully oversized and big and empty if it is all about us because we look out we think oh it can't possibly be that we're the only ones here

[26 : 19] I mean it can't be just little us with all of this that doesn't make any sense it doesn't make sense if it's all about us because we are so tiny we're so nondescript in terms of the vastness of the universe we're so insignificant you're right it doesn't make any sense at all if it was all about us but if we consider instead that such vastness such raging ferocious fires and exploding gases at such astronomical distances are made for us to be the twinkling little pinpricks of light arranged in shapes and constellations of picturesque form and detail and that the huge vast immensity of this whole universe is designed ultimately to show forth and declare the glory of God the creator who is bigger and greater in all these things if this is actually about him and not about us then yeah it's just about right this is the beauty this is the wonder the glory the purpose and the testimony of creation let us pray why the the p