

Creation and Separation

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Preacher: Rev. James Maciver

[0 : 0 0] Let's turn this evening to Genesis chapter 1. Genesis chapter 1, we're going to look at verses 3 to 5. But we'll just read from the beginning. We looked at the first two verses last time.

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. The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water. 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 it a light day, and the darkness he called night. And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day.

When we looked at the first two verses last time, we noticed especially, and emphasized, that the account we have in the scriptures of the creation is really in a sense the curtain raiser to the greater work of God and his redemption.

It's just like opening up something that is going to be a drama lived out in front of us, and the curtain raiser is the account of the creation.

[1 : 1 7] Because immediately after that, we actually have God revealing to us the issues of our redemption, beginning with our fall in sin, and the promise of deliverance.

And we noticed last time creation and formation, as these two issues come together in these two verses. The creation, where God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth.

That is to say, God brought into being the heavens and the earth, the whole of the universe indeed, when he created it in the first place. And then we noticed how formation follows from that, where God took the creation that he had made, and gave it shape and order.

And that's what the rest of the chapter then sets out for us. The way in which God gave a certain order and pattern, a formation, if you like, to the creation that he had made.

And that works towards the pinnacle of his creation in the creation of man, the creation of human beings. And that is left till the very final act of creation, where God sets man above the rest of the creation.

[2 : 3 4] So the order that God has revealed in his formation of the creation, in bringing it to a special order, according to his own will and purpose, that order reaches its great climax and its summit in the creation of us human beings.

Now as the chapter goes on, we'll see tonight that there's also the element of separation. The whole issue of creation and formation continues into the following verses, but there is also an emphasis, as we'll see tonight, on separation.

It's something mentioned a number of times in the chapter, but especially tonight we'll see it in relation to light and darkness, where God not only creates light, but he separated the light from the darkness.

And if you go through the chapter, you can see that there are other issues that God specifies as separating one from the other. The gathering together of the heavens in one place and the dry land appears, the waters under the heavens rather in one place, so that the dry land appears.

And you've also got the separation of the waters from the waters in verse 6. But there's that element of separation mentioned a number of times. And then as the chapter develops, you find the fourth emphasis on procreation or multiplication, where the creatures that God has created, the animals, the birds, the creeping things, and of course human beings as well, are given an order by God and an ability by God to be fruitful and to multiply.

[4 : 17] And that is something that he built into the order of the creation as well. Now Genesis 1 is not a scientific report.

And we mustn't be disturbed by people who oppose the teaching of Genesis, and indeed oppose it in a way that really wants to set it aside as not at all reliable.

Remember that the Bible is not a book of science. And Genesis 1 is not a scientific account of the creation. We leave the science to the scientists.

This is God's account of the creation, how all things came into being, why they came into being, how they were ordered, and the way that God ordered them.

It's not projected at us from a scientific point of view. It is God telling us about things, and indeed he's using the perspective of what we see.

[5 : 18] In other words, God's revelation of himself. Remember this is really ultimately spiritual teaching. It's not there to teach us science. We're not saying that science and the Bible are incompatible unless scientists choose to reject the Bible.

What we're saying is that when science finds out things that you find also in the Bible, when there appears to be a difficulty in fitting them together, then you have to say, but the Bible isn't a book on science.

It's not there to actually delve into the scientific reasons as to why things are as they are. It's there because God is leading us on to his great work of redemption, salvation in Jesus Christ.

And creation fits into that, and therefore the account of creation fits alongside of that, and contributes to that explanation to us of what salvation is, and why it is necessary, and who is it from.

So God's revelation, and this is through not just of Genesis 1, but God's revelation, which the Bible is, his revelation of himself, of ourselves, of our need, his revelation actually uses how we see things.

[6 : 37] If God were to leave out the way that we actually see things around us, and explain to us things from a totally different perspective, entirely from the way he sees things, we couldn't understand it.

There's a sense in which God comes down in his speaking to us, to our level, if you like. Because God, of course, uses human language, human thoughts, the things that human beings see around him in the creation.

As John Calvin, the famous Geneva reformer, put it, God lisps to us as a nurse to her child. He takes account of our limitations, and he adapts his revelation.

Not in any way saying, therefore, that is untrue or incomplete, but he adapts it to our capacities. And as he adapts it to our capacity, you don't expect to find a book on science.

A book on scientific explanations. So here is creation and formation, but looking at it, creation and separation, as God brings us now to talk about the creation of light.

[7 : 54] Light and darkness. And God said, let there be light. Now you're immediately aware of the fact that here God speaks.

There are two verses gone by, and God hasn't yet spoken. We're just given an account of how he created the heavens and the earth. But when it comes now to the ordering of it, and the formation that God was setting out, God said.

And as soon as God said, out from his mind came this speech, this speech in the form of a command, and as soon as God gave the command, the thing was done.

There is no gap between God saying, let there be light, and light coming into existence. Now we talk about the speed of light, and the way that life travels at such enormous speed.

But, this is much faster. As soon as God says, let there be light, there's light. There was light. Instant creation from his spoken word of command.

[9 : 12] There's an immediacy about it. And you know, you can take that with you, as a principle of the way that God instantly brings into being, what he commands to come into being.

You can take that with you, into the supreme revelation of God, in Jesus Christ. And as you've seen in Christ's ministry, as we've gone through it recently, in the book of Luke, for example, in the gospel of Luke, every time you come across, Jesus giving a command to somebody, to be healed, instantly that person is healed.

It's not a partial healing. It's not the beginning of a healing. It is instant healing. And every time Christ, gave a command for somebody, who was dead, to rise from the dead, that person rises from the dead.

Whether it's Lazarus in the grave, or the daughter of Janus, but as soon as the word goes forth, from Jesus Christ, then the effect is immediate.

And it's complete. There's no need to add to it. There's no need to supplement it. There's no need to tidy it up somewhat. There's no need to make up for something which is missing.

[10 : 22] It's all there from the moment God speaks. From the moment Christ, the Son of God speaks. It's there. And that means, that from the moment that he spoke into your life, in order to give you life, spiritually from the dead, that life exists.

Yes, there's certainly things, that we know from our experience, will need yet to be, done by God, through his spirit, to finally make us complete, in order to enter heaven.

And there is even such a thing as, the resurrection of our body, from the dead, on the other side of death. But the fact of it is, the life that God has created, is there from its very inception, it is there as life.

Life in its certainty, life in its completeness, in the sense that, it doesn't have to be, changed, or adapted, or modified.

Modified, it is there. As Paul says, to the Corinthians, using the words of, well, nearly the words of Genesis, and the concept of, God speaking of the light.

[11 : 40] The God, who commanded the light, to shine, out of darkness, has shined, in our hearts, to give the light, of the knowledge, of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

And while it's true, that we grow, in knowledge, that we increase in knowledge, the explosion, of the light, of life, is as certain, in your heart, as it will ever be, from the moment, that God's created.

Now that gives you comfort. It gives you comfort, that God, doesn't ask you, and I, to do something, to add to the life, that you've got. Yes, you've got to, use your faith, you've got to, do certain things, that God requires of us, in using the Bible, in prayer, in fellowship, in hearing the gospel, for our faith to increase, for us to grow, as Christians.

But he never asks you, supplement the life, that I've given you. Make up for something, deficient in it. I didn't quite, manage to do the job, completely.

Remember, what you saw, recently, at the discipleship, explored. He, who began, a good work, in you. That beginning, is certain, that work, is certain, that creation, of life, is absolutely, sure, from God's perspective, nothing, can interfere, with it.

[13 : 06] Nothing, can take it away, again. Nothing, can dampen it down, to the point, it disappears. It's there. And of course, that rules out, when it says here, God said, let there be light, and it was light, for those of you, at school, you're probably, coming across, ideas, that, the creation, of the universe, wasn't really, a creation, at all.

That the creation, one idea, is the creation, must have existed, all the time, from eternity, must just have been there. All the stuff, you find, in the universe, because, not all scientists, but some scientists, unbelieving, atheistic scientists, and, not just scientists, but others as well, are, desperately, trying, to really, cut God, out of the whole, explanation, of the universe, and how it placed in it, and how it came to be, and why we exist in it.

That's why God's, word here, gives us, this, certain, account, of, God's own, work of creation. God said, let there be light, and there was light.

Stuff, did not exist, till God brought it, into being. It had a specific, beginning. I don't know about you, but I have a huge problem, it's not easy, of course, to, conceive of the idea, of God, being eternal.

How can we possibly, begin to understand, someone, who did not, have a beginning, a life, that did not, have a beginning, a life, that was complete, and eternal, and divine, from all eternity, a life, that gives life, to every other form, of life, but without, a beginning, and without, an end, and without, a change.

[15 : 00] That's God. We cannot, get that, into our minds. We can only just, touch the little, fringes of it. But it's not, a difficulty, in the sense, of believing it.

It is, however, a difficulty, in believing, that matter, did not have a beginning. I can believe, that God, did not have a beginning, because he is, the eternal creator.

The one, with whom, the Bible opens, in the beginning, God, created the heavens, and the earth. I would have a huge problem, if that said, in the beginning, the earth, existed, and then God, took the earth, as it existed, and he gave it, formation, where then, did it come from?

It's not a difficulty, saying, that God, did not have an origin, because he's God. But it's a huge difficulty, and a great leap of faith, on the part of the atheist, to say, that matter, did not have a beginning, that this universe, did not, begin, with something.

Yes, and people say, yes, we had it, we know it had a beginning, there was such a thing, as the big bang, this explosion, of energy, through which, the universe, as we know it, came into being, and it's still expanding, and all the rest of it, well, fair enough, but where did, not saying that that's true, in the way that, such people, try and explain it, but, even supposing, you were to give it, a certain amount, of credibility, where did the energy, come from?

[16 : 32] the energy, that you use, in your home, electricity, the energy, that moves things, any type of energy, it needs to have a source, it needs to have an origin, and energy, itself, just as it's said here, of light, energy, has to have its source, and God, is its source, in the creation, God said, let there, be light, now, here's something, that's not easy, to, to really, explain, or to even appreciate, or understand, and I'm not saying, I understand it, fully, any more than you do, but, you notice previously, as we remember, from the last time, that darkness, was over the face, of the deep, there was no light, until God said, let there be light, until God, brought light, into being, and we're not told, specifically, that darkness, was something, that God created, he created, the heavens, and the earth, the earth, was without form, and void, and darkness, was over the face, of the deep, in other words, you can argue, that darkness, is not so much, something that God, created, but something, that was, just, necessarily, there, it's what you have, in the absence, of light, until light, is created, then darkness, is over the face, of the deep, and it's only, when God says, let there be light, that the darkness, comes to be overcome, that the darkness, comes to be substituted, with the light, so darkness, really, in a sense, is what you have, when there is no light,

God creates light, in order to, change that situation, of darkness, into its opposite, into light, come back to that, in the spiritual sense, in a minute, but it's significant, therefore, that the first, element, that God created, in the forming, of the order, of the universe, was light, the darkness, over the face, of the deep, is what you left with, at verse 2, and then immediately, God said, let there be, light, to change, what is darkness, what is the absence, of light, he creates, light, and, that light, you notice, is mentioned, before there is, any mention, of the sun, and of the moon, that give light, to the earth, that means, that when God, created light, he created, light, light, is much greater, than, what you find, from the sun, to our earth, or from the sun's, reflection, through the moon, onto our earth, light exists, in other parts, of the universe, light, light is emitted, by the stars, by our planets, there are, thousands, if not millions, of other suns, in other galaxies, throughout the whole, of the universe, light, is something, that God created, as a concept, in itself, as something, which exists, in itself, which has its own, properties, and light, does not depend, on the sun, in order, for it to exist, as far as, our earth, is concerned, we receive, light, immediately, from the sun, but light, is something, that God, created, and brought, into being, so that it would be, something, that was, emanating, from, the sun, when he created, the sun, and the moon, to lighten, the earth, so here, we are, with light, as the first thing, that is mentioned, here, as God's, creation, to bring, order, to the universe, and the next thing, is God saw, that the light, was good, it's interesting, that all the verses, down to, the sixth day, of the creation, have a similar pattern, because what you have, is,

God saying something, God commanding, something, and then God, evaluating, what he has created, he said, that it was good, and, then you have, following on from that, you have a, a, a, a, time reference, to the evening, and the morning, being the first, second, third day, and so on, and that pattern, follows all the way, through the chapter, but what you notice here, is that God, is evaluating, what he has done, and he's doing that, all the way through, the various parts, of the creation, of these things, that he creates, in the order of the universe, he said, God saw, the light, that it was good, and when he says good, it means, inherently good, it means, good, in terms, of its quality, he didn't say, that the darkness, was good, or it was good, to have darkness, but what he is saying, is that God, that he saw, that the light, was good, and the light, was good, because the light, had dealt, with the darkness, the light, had overcome, the darkness, the light, had brought, this order, of light, of day, where there, was but darkness, before that, and when it says, that he saw, the light, that it was good, it means, the quality, of that light, the quality, of what God, had created, was approved, of by God, himself, now of course, when you go, to the New Testament, and you realize, that Jesus, is spoken of, as the light, of the world, and that he said, himself,

I am, the light, of the world, and that God, the Father, said about him, the Son, this is my beloved Son, in whom, I am well pleased, well that's really, precisely, what you've got here, in Genesis, God created light, Jesus came, as the light, God said about the light, he created in Genesis, that it was very good, God said about his Son, as the light, of the world, I fully approve, of him, it is all, very good in him, his quality, as a person, is good, there is nothing, bad in him, there is nothing, bad in the light, there is nothing, corrupt in the light, and that's why, Jesus, questions, the man, who came with a question, to him, good master, what must I do, to inherit eternal life, remember, first thing, Jesus threw back at him, why do you call me, good, there is none, good, but God, he wasn't, suggesting to the man, that actually, he shouldn't have used, the word good, about Jesus, he wasn't suggesting, that after all, he wasn't good, or that he wasn't God, he was simply, questioning, the man's, motive, in, calling him, good, and it's more or less, the same, as Jesus saying, you've called me, something, that I am, but do you understand it, do you really realize, who I am, that I am, good, in the sense, in which,

God is good, God saw the light, that it was good, and you know, there's a version, in John chapter 1, the passage we read there, which talks about, Jesus as the word, interesting isn't it, when we read here, that God said, let there be light, and as Jesus is called, the word, the eternal word, the way that God, spoke to us, through the coming, of Jesus himself, God, speaks to us, in a way that, surpasses, every other revelation, even, his written word, because this is himself, this is his person, in our nature, well, he, was, that light, John the Baptist, was not the light, he came to bear witness, of the light, and then it says, in verse 5, the light, is shining, in the darkness, and the darkness, does not, comprehend it, is the way, the AV puts it, the ESV puts, overcome, it has the two, meanings to it, the two shades, of meaning, the idea of, that we cannot, comprehend, we cannot fully, embrace, in our understanding, this light, because, this light, that God himself, is, in the person, of Jesus, is nothing less, than God, being light, and there is, the emphasis too, that, the darkness, did not, overcome it, because as we will see now, the separation, of light, from darkness, as revelation, goes on, reveals to us, an antagonism, in the spiritual sense, between light, and darkness, so he saw the light, that it was good,

[26 : 10] God said, let there be light, in other words, God's word creates, God's command, brings instantly, into being, what's in his mind, then God evaluates, he saw, that the light, was good, that it reflected, his own goodness, that it is inherently good, that there is nothing, bad in it, and you take that, with you, into the person, of Jesus, but notice what he says, next, God separated, the light, from the darkness, God called the light, day in the darkness, he called, night, now there is, this emphasis, on separation, right there, at the beginning, of revelation, the revelation, of God's creation, there is an emphasis, on separation, you could make, too much of it there, but there you have, the seeds, of what, the later part, of the Bible, and the revelation, that God has given us there, brings us, an emphasis, in our redemption, separation, is essential, to our whole understanding, of redemption, or salvation, because, as the Bible, proceeds, to give us, more information, that darkness, takes on, a spiritual meaning, as God reveals to us, after the fall of man, how darkness, takes on, the meaning of, what is sinister, and what is sinful, and what is evil, and what conflicts with, and fights against, the darkness, the light rather, so that you've got, again that, verse from John, the light shines, in the darkness, the light that Jesus is, but the darkness, does not overcome it, it tries to overcome it, but it's, it's not able to do so, now you notice that, you know yourselves, that, spiritually, the Bible talks about, light opposing darkness, and, they are, constantly in conflict, for example, let me just pick up, a few verses, going through it, quickly,

Exodus chapter 10, verse 23, where God, commanded Moses, to lift up his rod, in order to bring about, the plague of darkness, the remarkable thing is, that, Israel lived in that portion, of Egypt, called Goshen, which is the Hebrew word, for light, and in that context, in Exodus chapter 10, it tells us specifically, that the darkness, that fell upon Egypt, was so thick, you couldn't see your hand, in front of your face, but, the people of Israel, had light, in their dwellings, the Egyptians, couldn't see anything, it was just, thick darkness, a total absence, of light, but the, people of Israel, had light, in their dwellings, separation, light is separated, redemptively, from darkness, in God's scheme, of salvation, God's people, have light, all around them, there is darkness, and go to,

Isaiah chapter 9, verse 2, which is a prophecy, of the incarnation, of the son of God, taking out human nature, Matthew picks it up, in his account, of the incarnation, what does it say, the people, who dwelt, in darkness, and in the land, of the shadow of death, have seen, a great, light, it's the coming, of the light, that Jesus is, into the darkness, John 3, verse 19, this is the condemnation, that the light, has come, into the world, and people, men chose, darkness, rather than light, why, because their deeds, were evil, darkness, evil, sin, opposes, repels, rejects light, Ephesians chapter 5, verse 8, you were, once, darkness, but now, you are light, in the Lord, walk, as the children, of light then, what does he say, you were, once darkness, you were just, as the creation, before,

Genesis 1, verse 3, you were, darkness, there was no light, in you, he's saying, but now, you are, light, in the Lord, God has, made you, into, the opposite, of what you were, you are light, in him, and therefore, he says, you have to walk, you have to live, your conduct, has to be, correspondingly, as the children, of light, it's more again, 1st Peter chapter 2, verse 9, where he describes, God's people, as being a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should, show forth, the praises, or the virtues, of the one, who called you, out of darkness, into his, marvelous, light, same thing again, separation, as it begins, there in the creation, there are the seeds, sown, as the curtain, is raised, you find an emphasis, here on separation, as revelation, goes on, that becomes, clearer, as something, that's built into, the redemption, that God, has for his people, in Christ, where they are separated, where they are, brought out of darkness, into his, marvelous light, where they become, the children of light, and then, and God called, the light day, and the darkness, he called night, and there was evening, and morning, the first day, now this is interesting, because it wasn't, human beings, that decided to call, the light day, and the darkness, night,

God did it, God gave it, its name, God defined them, God set them apart, and then God gave them names, the light, he called day, the darkness, he called night, what is that teaching us, well it teaches us, that, when God, appoints, when God rules, when God names, what you really have there, emphasized is that, it is God, who gives, meaning, to everything, that exists, and everything, that exists, in God's way, of dealing with things, in God's plan, everything, that exists, has meaning, even the darkness, it serves, his purpose, and when God, names them, what it is really telling us, they take their meaning, from what God, has made them to be, that is true, of everything, in the creation, it takes its meaning, from God, even the tiniest, particles, of what exists, things that you can't see, with your naked eye, but God knew about them, because God created them, all of these atoms, and the parts of atoms, and what scientists, physicists, bamboozle us with, whatever it was recently,

[33 : 25] Higgs boson, and all of that sort of stuff, that took all of these years, to try and discover, I'm not sure if they've still, discovered it or not, it just leaves you all confused, but it's all here, God, named it, God knew all its particles, God saw every single element of it, small and great, and it takes its meaning, its life, its purpose, its movement, from God's purpose, God, named it, and, it includes what science, has not yet discovered, there are things, which scientists tell us, they believe, exist, but they still haven't, found it out, at least not to the way, in which, they themselves, would want to, and, that really again, takes us, to the person of Jesus Christ, because the passage, we read in Colossians, and we'll finish with that, talks about, first of all, in verses 13 and 14, what God has done, he has delivered us, notice how he puts it, he has delivered us, from the domain, or the power, of darkness, and transferred, or translated us, to the kingdom, of his beloved son, that of course, implies, that the kingdom, of his beloved son, is the kingdom, of light, the kingdom, marked by light, and that is really, something that's mentioned, earlier, where he has, given us, the benefit, the privilege, of sharing, the inheritance, of the saints, in light, God's kingdom, God's salvation, is characterized, by light, and he says here, that this, father, that we give thanks to, has translated us, to the kingdom, of his dear son, his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, and then he goes on, to speak in verses 15 to 17, of who Christ is, what God has done, he's done in him, but who is he?

Well he tells us, who he is, firstly, in relation to God, and then in relation, to the creation, he is, first of all, the image, of the invisible God, he is the one, who has revealed, the invisible God, so that when you look, at Christ, you're seeing God, you're seeing the attributes, of God, revealed to us, in his physical, form, but it's the form, that, it's the, the person, of the son, of God, in our nature, therefore, as John says, he has indeed, revealed him to us, no one has seen God, at any time, the only begotten son, who's in the bosom, of the father, has revealed him to us, he's opened up for us, the inner heart, of the father, which you couldn't see, as you now see it, in Christ, without him, that's who he is, in relation to God, he is the image, of the invisible God, and that means, he's the exact image, there's no flaw in it, you don't need to touch it up, you don't need any airbrushing, you don't need to try and improve it, you don't need to try and mask, any of its, of its definitions, in Jesus Christ, you have the exact, imprinted image, of God, accurately, revealing God to us, and then he says, in relation to the creation, he is the firstborn, of all creation, now you have JW's, coming to your door,

Jehovah's Witnesses, and when you try to argue with him, that Jesus Christ is God, here's one of the texts, that they will immediately, take you to, and they will say, ah but look, even Paul said, he's the firstborn, of the creation, in other words, he was the first, thing to be created, the first one, to be created, before God created, any other human beings, he created, Jesus Christ, and they'll tell you, that's what it means, that he's the firstborn, of all creation, well it can't be that, because for one thing, it goes on to say, for by him, all things were created, and you can't say, that by him, all things were created, and then say, but he was created himself, what Paul, is demonstrating, is the deity, of Christ, the Godhood, of Christ, and this word, firstborn, is one, which was used, by a very famous, but sadly forgotten, theologian, called Athanasius,

Athanasius, lived, in the early 300s, long, long time ago, but he faced, a group of heretics, called Arians, Arians, not aliens, Arians, and Arians, insisted, they had a phrase, which they peddled, about everywhere, there was, when he was not, and what he meant, by that was, there was, a beginning, to the person, of Christ, he's not God, he's human, he's superhuman, but he's not God, there was, when he was not, this was one, of the verses, that they tried, to use, to prove, their insistence, that Christ, was not God, and Athanasius, took them on, and Athanasius, stood up to them, and Athanasius, is one of the heroes, of the church, because this is what he said, that doesn't mean, that he was the first one, created, what that means, is that, he is the creator, of the creatures, he's the first born, the first cause, of all, the creatures, the one who brought, all creatures, into being, he is before, all things, and in him, all things, hold together, so then, you go back, to John 1, by him, were all things, created, without him, nothing was made, but was made, and then, you go back, to Genesis 1, and you say,

[40 : 11] Lord, Jesus, my Savior, I now find you, in God's account, of the creation, because when God said, let there be light, you said it, you are there, you created it, let's pray, gracious God, we give thanks, that we know you, as our creator, who gave us being, who sustains us, who upholds us, from day to day, in the life, we live, we give thanks, we give thanks, oh Lord, tonight, for the revelation, that your word, gives to us, of the account, it gives, of these things, we thank you, above all things, that you are, our redeemer, who took to yourself, a created, human, human life, and a human nature, and we bless you, that in, the creation, of that human nature, you came, to take out place, so that we might live,

Lord, we marvel, at your great work, of creation, as the prelude, to the work, of redemption, and we marvel, all the more, at redemption, and how you came, to accomplish it, we give thanks, Lord, this night, that you have done, so, so perfectly, hear us, we pray, and accept our thanks, for Jesus' sake, Amen.