

The Creation of the Heavens and Earth

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[0 : 00] Heavenly Father, we ask you now to speak to us, Lord, through this word. Lord, this is the divinely inspired word of God, is the breathed out word of the Almighty.

And so we come to this text, Lord, with humility. We come to this text with reverence. Lord, help us to treat it as what it is, your eternal, inerrant word.

Lord, God, speak to us. Speak to our hearts, Lord, not just our minds. Speak to our hearts from Genesis 1. Would we leave here changed, having beheld you in your beauty and your majesty? We ask you now to do that among us right now. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, good morning, church. Again, I just want to welcome you to Shoreline, and thank you for braving the weird mixture of wintry stuff out there.

My name is Mike. I'm one of the pastors here at Shoreline. And yeah, it's just so good to be together. And to you all on the live stream, thanks for tuning in and listening here. Have you ever been watching a movie and then a friend maybe joins like halfway through and hadn't seen the movie before?

[1 : 12] Maybe you were that friend. Somebody else is watching a movie and you go there and the movie's already been going on. Now, this becomes especially problematic in an actual movie theater.

I don't know if people still go to those or not. But, you know, just envision a scene for a second because Lord of the Rings is like the best movie. Envision, we're watching Lord of the Rings. And so your friend comes into the movie halfway through.

You're already fully engaged. And the friend's like, who's that guy with the shaggy brown hair? And you're like, it's Frodo. Shh. And then a few seconds, you know, a few minutes pass by.

And why does he keep doing that creepy eye roll thing? And you're like, dude, it's the power of the ring. Just keep it down. And they say, powerful ring.

Is that a Super Bowl championship ring? And at this point, the whole movie theater is giving them a glare. You know, hopefully nothing like that has actually happened to you. But the point is, when you miss the beginning of a story, you've lost vital context.

[2 : 11] Right. The details in the movie, in the story, if it's a book, whatever it is, the details don't make sense anymore. The plot line sort of lacks tension. It lacks meaning and significance. We are right now caught in the middle of an epic story.

This story, it's far bigger than you or I. It's far bigger than our church. It's far bigger than our nation and than our generation. It is the story of the ages. It is the story of redemption.

And it's a story that God has revealed to us in the pages of this book, of the Bible. But the thing is, if we only know the second half of the story, you know, disconnected from everything that came before it, then the tension of the story is gone.

The significance of the story is lessened. To be more specific, if we read only the New Testament, but we lack the context of the Old Testament, then we're left with a whole bunch of questions, right?

So we know that Jesus came to earth to save sinners, but why was that even necessary? Why did he have to come? And why are we considered sinners? You know, we know that Christ from the New Testament, we know he's coming again to finally restore this world.

[3 : 24] But what's broken about it, right? We can deduce from the world itself, but what's been corrupted? What was the state of the world in the first place to which God is restoring things in the end?

Now, we could go on and on, but you get my point. The book of Genesis, the very first book of the Bible, it provides us with the beginning of the story.

And so we're embarking on a journey through this entire 50-chapter book of the Bible that's going to take us, you know, through this year and well into next year, I'm sure.

I haven't fully laid this out yet. And I just want to say, I have been very excited to get to Genesis. We were actually, we were talking and praying about studying Genesis at the beginning of 2025, but the Lord had us down a different path.

We thought it's better for the church to go into 1 Corinthians to talk about what it means to be a healthy church. And then I was going to start it after that, but we thought, you know, it would probably be good for the church to lay out our vision. And then I thought it was going to start the first of the year.

[4 : 22] And we thought, well, it would probably be good for the church to preach on baptism in the Lord's Supper. And so the Lord has kept, he's shifted us here and there. But finally today, we're getting into the book of Genesis.

And so before we dive in to Genesis 1, a brief introduction would be helpful. So as many of you know, Genesis is the first book, not only of the Bible, but of specifically the Pentateuch, which is the first five books of the law of the Bible.

It is the law. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Now, these books were most likely written by Moses. And really that was uncontested until the 1900s. It was written by Moses during Israel's wilderness wanderings.

And collectively, those five books are known as the Hebrew Torah, the law. They provide instruction for Israel. And so Genesis then, it's the foundation of, and it's an introduction to not only the whole Bible, but specifically of the law.

Genesis would have oriented the Israelites to understanding who God is and who mankind is and what God's creation purposes were for mankind and how that was destroyed through sin.

[5 : 36] And it then would have shown them how God, in inexplicable grace, had begun to act to redeem mankind and to do so through one man, Abraham, and then make these promises to him that he would become this nation, this chosen nation of Israel.

And so today, it similarly orients us. And in doing so, because it speaks to all those same things, but it also speaks poignantly to some of the most pressing issues of our time.

What is the origin of the universe? How did all of this come to be? Why are we here, right? Why does mankind exist? What is our purpose in this world?

How do you explain human rationality and morality? Is there absolute truth? How do we think about the body versus the soul?

Am I free to identify as whatever gender or whatever I want? What even is freedom? The book of Genesis, written over 3,000 years ago by the leader of a nomadic people in the ancient Near East, that book, this book, provides answers to these pressing questions of today.

[6 : 52] And friends, that's because this book was not just written by Moses. It was written by Almighty God. Now remember, this is his story. This is God's story.

It's his message to us. And so we want to hear what he has to say to us. Now this raises two important and related questions that I want to head off just from the start here.

And as I'm probably going to say a few times today, I'm not going to say all that there could be said. And that's true any sermon ever. But there's some big things that, big questions that arise from the book of Genesis.

And so these questions here. Is Genesis history? That's question one. Second, how does Genesis relate to science? Okay, these are two really important questions.

Is Genesis history? How does Genesis relate to science? Now, many modern scholars would argue today that Genesis is allegory. It's not history. That Adam and Eve were not real people.

[7 : 50] They only represented humanity. And then similarly, they would argue that this being the case, Genesis has no bearing on science, right? Science is fact. Science is authoritative.

We ought to then continually reinterpret Genesis in the light of new scientific discoveries. Now, friends, I'm here to proclaim to you unashamedly that what Genesis 1 proclaims, and that is that the one and only true God, the God of creation, the God of history, the God who came to earth in the form of a man and conquered death by dying and rising again, that God holds supreme authority over the entire cosmos.

And he has given to us in this book special revelation through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The book of Genesis is so clearly portrayed as actual human history within its own pages, not to

mention that Jesus himself and the Apostle Paul both refer to Genesis as real events in space-time history.

Genesis being true history and being provided to us by the one true God, therefore also speaks to science and is not in any way opposed to science per se.

In fact, just think about this for a second. Science itself, as a field of study, has no basis apart from the God of the Bible who brought forth by the power of his word a universe of ordered complexity, a universe that's governed by physical natural laws that we can actually discover and describe.

[9 : 29] Science cannot explain the existence of science. It falls apart. You need something else. God is the something else. Now, we need to recognize, going into this book, that scientists are fallible.

Surprise, surprise. Okay? That science can only take us so far. In fact, as Oxford mathematician, John Lennox is a brilliant guy.

I like to listen to him sometimes. He's an Oxford mathematician and philosopher. He's a Christian apologist. And he asserts that one of the great lies of our age is that science can explain the universe.

He says that's one of the great lies of our age, that science can explain the universe. Science, he says, cannot explain the universe. It can only describe it. And this is a vital distinction.

It's one thing to describe the law of gravity with equations. It's one thing to, through observation, to prove that on Earth, gravity is 9.8 meters per second squared.

[10 : 30] It is another thing entirely to explain the existence of gravity. Science cannot do that. It can't explain it. Lennox tells the story of interacting with a really brilliant physicist who was baffled that Lennox, another brilliant thinker, could believe in the virgin birth and the resurrection of Christ, since Lennox could not explain it scientifically.

So Lennox asked the physicist if he could explain consciousness. The physicist said, no, I can't. Then he asked the physicist, I'll give you an easier question.

Can you explain energy? And the physicist said, no, I can't. Lennox asked him, do you believe in consciousness and energy? And the physicist said, of course I believe in consciousness and energy.

Lennox says, can you explain why? And he really couldn't explain why. And so John Lennox helped him. He said, you believe these things because there was good reason to believe them.

And similarly, I have very good reason to believe in the virgin birth and in the resurrection of Christ. Science isn't nearly as authoritative as our culture likes to believe.

[11 : 38] Now, the other thing, to turn back to the word here, we need to keep in mind the purpose of the Bible. The Bible is not a historical textbook.

The Bible is not a science textbook. As Francis Schaeffer writes in his book, *Genesis in Space and Time*, a book that I would commend to you guys. Francis Schaeffer says, the Bible gives us true knowledge, although not exhaustive knowledge.

And its purpose, he says, is this. It is God's message to fallen men. God's message to fallen men. He says the Old Testament gave men what they needed from the fall to the first coming of Christ. The Old and New Testaments together give all that men need from the fall until the second coming of Christ. Now, more succinctly, he says that the Bible helps us understand who we are as man. Lost man looking for meaning and saved man looking toward the second coming of Christ. And that's what the Bible gives us. Now, perhaps the key takeaway here from everything that I've just said is simply this, that the Bible is not exhaustive, but it is true.

[12 : 49] It's not exhaustive, but it is true. We don't go to the Bible to learn our multiplication tables, right? There's a lot of things that God's enabled us to discover in the real world, but everything that the Bible says is true.

Friends, it is the breathed out word of God. It is the word of God that is able to, Paul says to Timothy, make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Again, there's a lot more that could be said.

And if you have questions about those topics, feel free to come talk to me. Now, the book of Genesis is essentially divided into two parts. They're not equal in length. The first is Genesis 1 through 11, which is really the story of origins.

It's a story of beginnings. It covers creation, fall, and then the beginnings of redemption. You see the early generations of mankind and the global flood and the Tower of Babel.

And then the second part is sort of a zoom lens. And we're going to see this throughout Genesis. It starts big and then it zooms in and then it pans out and then it zooms in. Genesis 12 through 50 is the story of God choosing one man, Abraham, and making these grand promises of redemption to come through his line.

[14:00] And then God faithfully beginning to bring about the fulfillment of those promises in spite of his people's continual failure. And all of that begins today right here in Genesis chapter 1.

God's, oh, sorry there. God's very good creation. And so let's finally get into the text beginning in verse 1. So look there in your Bibles, the first page of your Bibles.

In the beginning, God, full stop. In the beginning, God. Now listen, before we go any further, I want us to take in the gravity of these words.

In the beginning, God. Not nothingness, not some ball of mass energy, which no one knows how it got there.

In the beginning, God. What we see from these four words is this all-important theological principle that God pre-exists all things.

[15:01] God pre-exists all things. Now we're about to see in verses 26 and 27 a veiled reference to God as having multiple persons. It's really the beginnings of a doctrine of the Trinity.

Father, Son, Spirit, three in one, the triune God. That God was there in the beginning, which means he was there before the beginning. As Moses would later write in Psalm 90, well, maybe not later, I guess.

As Moses would write in Psalm 90, before the mountains were brought forth, wherever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

God is outside of time. He is outside of space. He is eternally I am. It is this pre-existent eternal God that Jesus Christ was claiming to be in John 8 when he said, Before Abraham was, I am.

And so John opens his gospel account, declaring, In the beginning was the Word. Divine Logos. It's Christ. And the Word was with God.

[16:12] And the Word was God. Our triune God, Father, Son, Spirit, existed in eternity past, before the beginning, before the foundation of the world.

That little phrase is repeated over and over in the New Testament, before the foundation of the world. You know, the greatest secular minds in science are feverishly working to concoct an explanation for the universe, presupposing that it can't possibly be the result of an intelligent being. They have no real explanation, and they never will. They never will, because you can't get something out of nothing apart from the divine. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Now this leads to the second point. God created all things from nothing. The Latin phrase, ex nihilo, meaning out of nothing, that began to be used in the second century A.D.

to defend this Christian doctrine, that God Almighty, the sole creator God, brought into existence all things from nothing, out of nothing.

[17:19] If the everlasting God, being outside of time and space, if he was there before anything existed, then that means his creative work is unlike the creative work of any other.

We're going to talk about man being made in the image of God. We also, this is cool, we create things like God, as a reflection of God. We can conceive things in the mind, and then bring them to fruition through the materials around us.

But we're, it's just, we're using materials that already exist. God had no materials with which to work with. Right? God had only, and I put quotes around only, God had only his infinite mind and his infinite power.

Again, Francis Schaeffer, he elaborates on this principle. After he describes the similarities between an artist's creation and God's, that he then writes, and yet, the differences between the artist and God are overwhelming, because we, being finite, can only create in the external world out of that which is already there.

The artist reaches over and he uses his brush and his pigments. The engineer uses steel and pre-stressed concrete for his bridge. Or the flower arranger uses the flowers, the moss, and the rocks, and the pebbles that were already there.

[18:40] God is quite different because he is infinite. He created originally out of nothing, ex nihilo. There was no mass, no energy particles, before he created.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now here's the third point, still from verse one. God alone created all things.

God alone. Moses is writing these words to a monotheistic nation.

They believed in one God, right? But that was in the midst of a polytheistic culture, a culture that believed in many gods, right? The surrounding pagan nations believed in all kinds of gods.

Well, Israel's declaration was, no, there is one God. His name is Yahweh, the Lord. Now we know today of other creation narratives that emerged out of the ancient Near East.

[19 : 40] And they typically involve a combination of gods and goddesses who together bring forth the universe. But the booming declaration of Israel is there is one and only one God, right?

There is no other. There's no other God before him. There's no other God besides him. He is the sole creator of the heavens and the earth. And our God needed no help.

Not that there was any help to be given him. He needed no help. He is the one and only creator God. You know, later when God's people Israel would go astray, worshiping and serving other gods, he would remind them, Isaiah 43, 6, I am the first and I am the last.

Besides me, there is no God. And then Jeremiah chapter 10, I love this. We find this comedic comparison. Isaiah does the same thing between the Lord and other gods.

And here's what the Lord says to Israel. They, referring to the idols, they are both stupid and foolish. The instruction of idols is but wood. They are the work of the craftsmen and the hands of the goldsmith.

[20 : 45] Their clothing is violet and purple. They are all the work of skilled men. But the Lord is the true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King.

Now, in our day, in our culture, it might not be polytheism that Genesis 1, 1 confronts. Maybe more fitting is that it confronts the false religion of atheism.

All right. Now, atheists, of course, object to that kind of a label. Religion, what are you talking about? Right. They would declare with Karl Marx that that religion is the opiate of the masses.

Right. It dulls our senses.

But oh, how zealous their quest for understanding apart from God. And that zealous quest leads them to dulled senses.

Right. Even the most brilliant of human minds are dulled by this pursuit of explaining things without there being a God. And what lengths they go to explain away what God has so plainly revealed in creation and in his word.

[21 : 48] For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them.

This is from Romans 1. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made so they are without excuse.

Speaking specifically of Darwinism and its theory of molecules to man evolution through natural selection, a Yale professor, David Gerlander, states this.

He says, Darwinism is no longer just a scientific theory but the basis of a worldview and an emergency replacement religion for the many troubled souls who need one.

Creation declares and the Bible declares even more clearly that there is one true religion based on the one true God who alone created all things.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now this has vast implications for us today. What it means for us today, friends, is that God and God alone stands in supreme authority.

[22 : 56] He's the creator. We are the creatures. He is the king. We are the subjects. Our role then underneath his good authority, we're going to talk about the goodness soon, our role underneath his authority, his good authority is to glorify him.

It is to worship him. It is to serve him. It's to obey him. It's to walk in his ways and in his statutes. It is to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your soul and with all your strength.

It is to respond with our entire lives in gratitude to what he has given to us. Here's another implication that I'm sure we'll talk about more in the days ahead.

Since God is the creator and we are not, we need to humbly recognize that as creator, he knows how his creation, including our bodies, are supposed to function.

He designed them. He spoke them into existence. He knows what is best and he's after our joy and our flourishing. We're going to talk about that more too. He's after our flourishing as humanity.

[24 : 05] He knows how we are supposed to operate. Okay, let's move on to verse 2. And don't worry, the pace is going to quicken. Here is the fourth point.

God turns disorder into order. Moses continues, 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. The hovering of the spirit evokes this just great sense of anticipation. Something is about to happen. But something's about to happen to what? I want you to picture yourself and close your eyes if you want standing either at Fort Trumbull here in New London or at Fort Griswold in Groton. Now, hopefully, you've been to one of those two places. If not, just pick another location somewhere high up, somewhere with a view. Now, then imagine that all the buildings that you can see, all the roadways that you see begin to implode.

Okay? And the trees and the hills, they start to erode away, including the ground beneath your feet. It all topples into the sea and the clouds and the sky and the sun disappear and light itself flees.

[25 : 20] And there you are, can you picture it? Treading water in the midst of utter darkness, right? Absolute formlessness and disorder. The earth was without form and void and darkness was over the face of the deep.

That is the what to which something amazing is about to happen. Now, into this state of complete disorder, the Lord God summons the ordered complexity of the universe as we know it.

And you know, the Holy Spirit, with all of his power, hovering over this, you know, primordial state of the universe, he will later hover over something else.

He will hover over the womb of the Virgin Mary and what happens? The incarnation of Christ, right? And Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the new creation, is brought forth in human flesh.

He will later hover over the disciples who were hiding, waiting for the Spirit to come. He will come and hover them as tongues of fire and he will fill them and he will begin the new age of gospel expansion to the nations.

[26 : 34] And it's the hovering over and the breathing of life by the power of the Spirit to the human heart that raises it from death to newness of life in Christ. May the Spirit of power continue that life-breathing work even among us.

We know that he is. We know that he is. This is what God does. He turns disorder into order. He brings life from death by the power of his Spirit.

I feel like we're scratching the surface here. I encourage you to meditate on these things throughout this coming week. Here's the fifth thing. Finally here, we're going to get into the rest of the verses of Genesis 1.

Into this disordered and chaotic state, the Spirit hovering over the waters, ready to act. God then speaks. And God said, let there be light and there was light.

Here's the next point. God created all things by the power of his word. By the power of his word.

Now like a drumbeat throughout the rest of the creation account, we read, and God said, and there was, and God said, and it was so, and God said, and it was so.

[27 : 56] It's Moses' way of clicking, you know, bold, underline, italicize on the message he's trying to communicate. And what is that message? It's this, that God created all things by the power of his word.

By the power of his word. You know, it's helpful again to compare it to the other ancient Near Eastern accounts of creation. Several of them, like Genesis 1-2, they speak of this primordial state as one of disorder represented by, by watery depths.

But in these other accounts, the gods and the goddesses must engage in violence and in bloodshed to overcome that chaos and bring order. One example is the Babylonian creation myth, Enuma Elish, the god Marduk.

He kills the sea goddess Tiamat and all of her allies and it's from their corpses that mankind is formed. Now, by contrast, notice how low-key the true creation account is.

Yes, there's disorder, but God, divinely composed, in total peace, total control, simply speaks. And it is so.

[29 : 06] Here is power beyond all that we can imagine in the human finite realm, Schaeffer writes. He was able to create and to shape merely by his spoken word.

As God will later say to 90-year-old Sarah, who is barren, who laughs when she's told that she's going to give birth to his son, he will say, is anything too hard for the Lord?

And centuries later, as Jeremiah is grappling with God's promises to an exiled people that they will indeed return to the land, Jeremiah prays, Ah, Lord God, it is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm.

Nothing is too hard for you. Friends, for the God who summoned the whole cosmos out of nothing into existence by the power of his word from the distant galaxies to the subatomic quarks, both of which we're barely beginning to explore with all of our technological innovation.

For that God, nothing is too hard. Nothing is too hard. And you can bet your life on the fact that what he says will indeed come to pass exactly as he wills.

[30 : 27] Now, church, this is an invaluable comfort to the saints. For God has given believers in Christ lavish and divine promises. I'll just mention a few of them.

You can think of far more. God promises that for those who are in Christ, there is therefore now no condemnation. That is a promise of God. He promises that all of our sins, right, not in part, but the whole, they've been nailed to the cross.

We bear them no more. They have been forgiven once and for all. That is a promise of God. God promises never, never to leave us or forsake us.

God promises to work all things, all things for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

God promises that he will complete the good work that he started in us. He will sustain us to the end, faithful on the day of Christ Jesus.

[31 : 36] God's word is 100% effective. Saints, God's word comes to pass. He fulfills his promises and that will be a major theme throughout the rest of the book of Genesis.

What a comfort it is to know that our God is for us and his word is sure. Now this is also, friends, not only a comfort to the saints, it is a grave warning for the unbeliever.

For the God who has promised great things for those who believe in his son, Jesus Christ, has at the same time promised terrible things for those who reject him. God promises that we will all have to appear before his throne and he promises that on that day we will all have to give an account according to our deeds.

The saints will point to Christ and say, look, I have his merit. What will the unbeliever point to in that day? God promises that for those who reject Christ, entrance to heaven will be barred and hell will be their everlasting resting place.

You can bet your life on the fact that what God says will indeed come to pass exactly as he wills.

Creation declares this truth. The gospel of Christ declares this truth.

[32 : 54] Don't let another day pass. If you're in this room and have not put your faith in Jesus Christ, don't let another day pass. Today, today, as long as it is called today, if you hear his voice, respond to him by faith.

God created all things by the power of his word. Number six, God's creation was good. Very good. Six times the narrative says, and God saw that it was good.

And then the seventh, then God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good.

God doesn't make junk. God doesn't make junk.

And God doesn't make just okay. Right? God makes good. His product is not the cheap knockoff brand. His product is very good.

The universe that God made, it was perfect. It was beautiful. It was ordered and functional and complex and it was stunning and it was diverse. Glorifying to his name.

[33 : 58] Right? His creation is a living, breathing sermon declaring his unmatched power and his creativity. Psalm 19, one and two, the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge. I'm going to quote Schaeffer. I think this is the last time. Thus we find a doxology of all creation.

Everything glorifying God on its own level. The machine as machine praising and glorifying God. He's just talking about inanimate objects. The man as a man and everything in between doing likewise.

Even though many of these beings are not at all conscious of what they are doing, they are speaking for God in all his wonder and glorifying him in fulfilling the purpose for which they were made.

Now tragically, a few chapters later, we will read about how sin entered the world and death through sin corrupting God's good creation.

[35 : 01] But even though it has been corrupted, its goodness is still so readily apparent. And you can think of all kinds of examples of seeing the goodness of the Lord, the power and the beauty of the Lord.

Right? As we peer into the skies and see the stars, though we can't see that many from here. If you go out to Maine or to Utah, the glory of space. And we're beginning with technology to see awesome images.

I don't know if you've seen those. What the Hubble telescope can see, it is amazing. It's revealing the glory and goodness of God. Right? The sunrise over Long Island Sound.

Right? With all of its many hues and shimmering water. Mountains. Go up to the White Mountains and see the colossal majesty that's before you. It's declaring God and His goodness and His glory. A waterfall. Go to Niagara Falls and just stand there and see the sheer power and water continually falling over. It's glorious.

[36 : 04] It's God's good creation. My favorite animal is a tiger. For some reason I've been obsessed with tigers for a long time. I think they're really cool. And they declare the goodness and the glory of God.

It's power and it's beauty. Now think about humanity. We're going to spend more time next week thinking about humanity. But humanity with our ability to think, to create, to collaborate, to build, to advance technology.

The beauty of human relationships. When there's love and mutual respect and on and on we could go even though it's been corrupted. Creation continues to proclaim by its existence the matchless goodness of our creator God.

Creation itself is a demonstration of the overflowing goodness of God to under no obligation whatsoever bring forth all that there is and especially mankind who shares and reflects in His goodness.

Who shares and reflects His goodness to the world. But saints, we have something better today, don't we? We have something better that shouts of the goodness of the Lord.

[37 : 12] But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us not because of works done by us in righteousness but according to His own mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Titus 3, 4 through 7 The gospel of Jesus Christ it puts the bold underlined italicized exclamation point on the goodness of God that we see in the Old Testament.

over and over again Israel declares for He is good for His steadfast love endures forever. The gospel again it puts the exclamation point on that sentence.

The goodness of the Lord has been shown to us in Christ coming down taking on human flesh going to the cross dying in our place there for our sins so that we could once again know God and be loved by Him for all of eternity.

The goodness of God. Now we still live until Christ returns in this corrupted state though don't we? We do see the goodness of God but we also everywhere see and experience pain and disorder suffering and evil we can't pretend like Genesis 3 isn't there.

[38 : 37] Because of this we're often tempted to question the goodness of God. Yet over and over again from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22 we see the consistent theme that God is good.

And friends He's not just good generally He's good to us. He's good to us. David says I say to the Lord you are my Lord I have no good apart from you.

In Psalm 16 and then Asaph in Psalm 73 says but for me it is good to be near God. The sons of Korah write in Psalm 84 for the Lord God is a sun and shield.

The Lord bestows favor and honor no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts blessed is the one who trusts in you.

Friends I know that we are all of us walking through different trials of various kinds some of them are low level trials like a cold or the flu and some of them are far deeper still and in that state the glory of God the goodness of God can be eclipsed.

[39 : 52] All that we see in front of us is the trial is the suffering is the pain is whatever it is and we have examples all throughout scripture of the saints even taking their feelings of pain and of rejection whatever it is and bringing it honestly to the Lord and wrestling with that in prayer to the Lord and they come to a place where they can reassert no Lord you are good you are good the goodness of the Lord is a fact of nature and reality He is good and when we doubt that look back at the cross of Christ look back at the cross of Christ the goodness of the Lord is most profoundly displayed in the cross of Jesus Christ we are out of boundless love He came down for us to save us God is good no matter what you are walking through He is good and we will praise Him forever for His goodness here is the seventh and final point for today

God's creation climaxed with humanity it climaxed with humanity now I wanted to talk about this in this sermon because I wanted us to see the sweep of the whole chapter here we are going to zoom into verses 29 26 to 29 next week and really dive into this idea here but in many ways the whole creation account in Genesis 1 it is a description of how God turns an unsuitable environment into habitable land for the sake of humanity now even from the start the perspective I had you close your eyes and imagine being at Fort Trumbull because I wanted you to picture yourself on earth in that perspective because that's the perspective that we're given the spirit is hovering over the face of the waters we're on earth and then in days 1 through 3 the master worker he goes about his work of forming the world he created in day 1 he speaks light into existence in day 2 he speaks sky and sea and then in day 3 he makes land and plants and so at the end of day 3 earth is now prepared for its filling and that's what happens in days 4 through 6 we go from forming to filling in day 4 God fills the heavens with the sun the moon and the stars in day 5 God fills the sky with birds and the sea with the sea creatures and then day 6 God finally fills the land first with animals and then climatically with humans now not only does the flow of the narrative put the exclamation on this but the language the word create it's used only three times in Genesis 1 well in three instances the first is in verse 1 in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth now it's not used again until verse 21 we go from the inanimate to the animate and it says that God creates you know he creates the sea creatures and the birds and then the third time is in verse 27 and the word is repeated three times so God created man in his own image in the image of God he created him male and female he created them the creation of mankind is the clear climax based on the narrative flow based on the usage of the word create and what's more mankind and mankind alone does God declare to make in his image after his likeness the significance of this is so important especially in our day which is why we're going to take a whole week next week to look at those verses but I at least want us to see this vital point this week and begin to reflect on it what the Bible reveals is that humanity is not the product of time and chance but of the intentional brilliant design of an all intelligent all powerful being the Lord God who by the power of his spoken word brought humanity into existence as the climax of his creation it's only after mankind we see this you know

God said it was good it was good it was good and then he brings mankind and God says behold it is very good only after God brings mankind into the world friends let us this morning see our great worth to the creator God we are the pinnacle of his creation we're given dominion here over the earth as his vice regents we're imbued with value and with dignity surpassing the other created things because we have been made in the very image and likeness of God we have untold worth to the creator you each one of you has untold worth to the creator God you are precious in God's eyes and again if you ever question this look at the cross of Christ see him bearing the weight of the sin of mankind on his shoulders see him having the nails driven into his hands and feet gasping for air for you for you you know

Jesus didn't come in the form of fish he didn't come in the form of a monkey he came in the form of mankind to redeem mankind see the great worth and value of humanity to Christ and to the Lord and like I said we're gonna we're gonna zoom in on these verses next week but I'm gonna leave it there for now if I had to summarize all of these points into one sentence because I like to do things like that here it is there is one God who alone created this good and ordered universe from nothing by the power of his word with mankind as the crown of his creation I just want to read that one more time there is one God who alone created this good and ordered universe from nothing by the power of his word with mankind as the crown of his creation friends let's worship him now through prayer and through song heavenly father you are an awesome

[46 : 34] God you're an awesome God you're a good God you're a faithful God you're a powerful God we worship you in the splendor of your beauty and your majesty this morning father you and

you alone spoke this world into existence by the power of your word is anything too hard for you lord is anything too hard no nothing is too hard for you God help us to see you in your glory in your power in your majesty this morning God into the trials that we face into the uncertainties that we face help us to know that you are powerful and that you are good and God help us to see both your power over sin and death and your goodness to redeem mankind when we look again at the gospel of Jesus Christ and to see how those truths proclaimed from Genesis 1 are reaffirmed and reasserted and radically emphasized through

Christ you are a good and faithful God and we worship you now in Jesus name amen amen