



## The Doctrine of Creation:

### Blessing & Benediction

#### Genesis 1:3-25

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#### Initial Insights

Darkness is often a metaphor for spiritual blindness, sin, eternal death, the enemy or Satan. The thing we often forget about darkness is that it existed before creation, and terror and torment did not reside there. God was there before evil claimed the shadows as its own!

God was in the darkness, chaos, and formlessness.

**So**, what if God created these things to establish a desperation for light, order and meaning?

p. 106

[Flash Theology](#),

\*Many have called creation, “**The First Word!**” Since Jesus, the Word of God, spoke the universe into existence!

#### [Genesis 1:3–25](#) (NASB95)

Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. <sup>6</sup> Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.”

<sup>7</sup> God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. <sup>8</sup>

God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. <sup>9</sup> Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so.

<sup>10</sup> God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.

<sup>13</sup> There was evening and there was morning, a third day. <sup>14</sup> Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; <sup>15</sup> and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so.

<sup>16</sup> God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; *He made* the stars also. <sup>17</sup> God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.

<sup>19</sup> There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day. <sup>20</sup> Then God said, “Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.” <sup>21</sup> God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

<sup>22</sup> God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day. <sup>24</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so.

<sup>25</sup> God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

**What Does the Bible Teach About the Doctrine of Creation?**

1. [Understanding It](#)
2. [Practicing It](#)
3. [Experiencing It](#)

### 1. [Understanding It](#)

As western 21st century Christians, we immediately start asking questions of the text about evolution and whether or not these were 24 hour days. But every interpreter knows that we have to start with the question, “What was the author intending to say when the author originally wrote?”

The author wasn’t concerned with evolution! It wasn’t even a theory at this time! Yes, I believe in survival-of-the-fittest, and that creatures have adapted to the environment, resulting in various differences among species.

But I believe that God created humans. We didn’t evolve from animals (or something else)

24 hour days

Carbon-14 dating process by measuring radiocarbon - a radioactive isotope of carbon.

The flood

Creation made with the appearance of age

[2 Peter 3:3–8](#) (NLT)

I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. <sup>4</sup> They will say, “What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created.” <sup>5</sup> They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water and surrounded it with water. <sup>6</sup> Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. <sup>7</sup> And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed. <sup>8</sup> But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day.

A pastor's guide to choosing a new church: Ask the pastor if they believe the opening chapters of Genesis are literal. If not, why would you expect them to believe the rest of the Bible is literal?

Would we say this about Song of Solomon, a parable? There's poetry within Genesis!

Friends, we have to have grace! And, we have to agree on the big picture: God made the world. How & how long it took Him - is challenging to say.

Not everyone agrees on the interpretation of prophecy, but we agree that it's true.

So, the point of all this is - extend grace to others. As a church, let's be gracious! **Let's be unified on the essentials:** The deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the inerrancy & authority of Scripture, salvation by grace... And, **let's have grace for the non-essentials:** prophetic interpretations, spiritual gifts, forms of baptism, different views concerning communion, freewill & determinism...

### **There are four primary things we learn about creation in our passage...**

a. Only the Bible speaks of the material goodness of creation. No other ancient religion saw the material world as good. Yet, Scripture speaks of God resurrecting our physical bodies, and one day recreating the physical world! The "goodness" of creation comes from all of the benedictions ("good words!") in our passage. God said that it was good, good, good! This means that we can acknowledge the good of creation.

b. The finite nature of creation. Nature and everything that is created is finite, rather than deified. Scripture stands in contrast to all other ANE literature in that there's only one deity, one God, one source of power, one creator vs. multiple deities and sources of power! In ANE literature the sun, moon and stars are worshipped and deified!

As we saw in last week's sermon, God preceded everything else. He is preeminent! He stands superior to the created order, since He is uncreated and eternal - and everything receives its origin in Him!

c. The unity of creation. ANE religions and the Greek philosophy of the day were dualistic. The body and the material world were seen as bad; but, the soul and spirit and mind were perceived as good. Because of this view, the ancients often pitted the material world against the spirit and

spiritual world. But, what we have in the biblical creation account is that everything is good, because God created it good!

d. The importance of creation. [John 3:16](#) - God so loved the world, the cosmos, that He sent Jesus to die for it and redeem it! God is in the process of redeeming and restoring and perfecting all of creation - [Romans 8](#). The Bible consistently speaks of God's unwavering commitment and passion for His creation.

**So, what does it mean and look like to practice these truths?**

## 2. **Practicing It**

a. We can learn from everyone, because everyone has gifts and abilities given to them from God. Everyone is created in God's image, whether they realize it or acknowledge it. God uses ALL of His creation. He is not limited!

Sadly, all too often non-Christians are overlooked as having nothing to offer Christians because of their views or lifestyle. But everyone has something to offer. And, honestly this is what it means to view people and the world redemptively, as God does!

b. Christianity is the balance between the extremes of **aestheticism** and **hedonism**. On one extreme, aestheticism says that the material world is bad - do without! Deny yourself. And, on the other hand, hedonism says it's everything - that it's all we have! Glorify it! Make it your end in life! Live for sex, for power, for money, for pleasure!

Holding the goodness of creation and the finite nature of creation in balance means that we can enjoy it, but that we can also walk away from it and not be devastated! Our world doesn't collapse!

c. Christianity reconciles that dualism that divides other religions and belief systems. The material world does not have to be at odds with the spiritual.

A great example of this is that Tim Keller explains the challenge that **because everyone is made in the image of God, yet sinful at the same time, this means that even those who don't believe in God aren't as bad as their wrong beliefs would ultimately make them; and, those who believe in God aren't as good as their correct beliefs would otherwise make them!** (chew on that!!)

We can expect wisdom and beauty and art and fascinating insights from everyone, because all people are made in God's image and have been given gifts from Him.

We don't have to be self-righteous people who condemn everyone who doesn't believe exactly what we do!

**d.** We should give our all to fight against things like injustice, hunger, poverty and disease! If God sent His Son to die for this world, as God's agents and representatives we can surely serve and sacrifice for the needs of others!

As God's people, consider that many judge their worth to God by their worth to us! How would a supreme divine being love them, if His earthly representatives don't?

### 3. Experiencing It

The beauty of nature can either cause us to worship the God (Creator) who made it all and designed all of its multidimensional splendor, or it can tempt us to worship creation itself.

But, as [Romans 1:20-25](#) clearly teaches...

Since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. <sup>21</sup> Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. <sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. <sup>23</sup> And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles... <sup>25</sup> They traded the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

Remember last week, if God is first, if existence precedes essence, then EVERYTHING else finds its origin in God!

There's a beautiful passage in [Job 38](#) that speaks of nature singing its praises to us about God! Singing to God, but informing us! Creation reflects the goodness of God, His majesty and beauty and power!

“Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if you know so much... <sup>7</sup> as the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?” [Job](#)

[38:4–7](#) (NLT)

God creates things through His Word and then He also blesses creation through His Word! In doing this, God is enjoying and delighting in His creation!

As we experience the beauty of creation, we join in God’s delight! We join with creation in praising our Creator for His handiwork!

You and I are NOT the result of some random, chaotic chemical collision. We are crafted with thought, dignity, and purpose! Most importantly, we were created for Him!

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. [Ephesians 2:10](#) (NASB95)

For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

[Ephesians 2:10](#) (NLT)

The very One who created us invites us, as image-bearing believers, to join Him in His creative work - all for His glory and the good of others!

Christians should be the innovators, problem solvers, teachers, coaches, scientists, fashion designers, entertainers, and creators infused with the creative DNA of our Maker. You were created to create! No matter what profession, hobby, or calling we have - creativity is part of who we are as God’s image bearers!

[Flash Theology](#), p. 109

## Closing Comments

Ever since the Fall, humans have been seeking a benediction (a Good Word) that ONLY God can give! And, we’ve been seeking this benediction from the world, and all of the wrong places!

We long to hear the pronouncement of a blessing and benediction that validates that we are Good! From Someone who really matters!

And the truth is that our spouse, our boss, our kids, our friends, society... can't satiate this need, this yearning! Only our Creator can!

How liberating to free others of the burden of providing something that isn't within their power to provide!

Tim Keller makes this masterful insight:

Jesus' baptism is the first time that a human being received God's benediction since the Garden of Eden! Jesus' baptism is the first time a human being actually earned it!

In the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross - Jesus was getting the malediction of God that we deserved!!

### **Salvation & Grace**

When we receive the Truth of the Gospel (the recreated Word, made flesh!), the Truth of God's Word, **we finally get the benediction that we're looking for!** In Jesus Christ, we are made good and pronounced GOOD!

**"You are My beloved son, my beloved daughter, in whom I am well pleased!"** And, this frees us from continuing to look for this in the world!

Many of you here today have already accepted Jesus as your Savior & Lord!

My question for all of us as I close is,

**"Have you accepted & acknowledged Him as your Creator and Maker as well?"**