A Perfect Beginning

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[0:00] Hope everyone's doing well. How is everyone? You guys good? Have a good summer? I'm doing well. Thank you. Thank you. Hopefully you had a good summer. We spent some of it together at camp and mission trips and things like that.

So welcome back to Elevate. I'm glad to be back here on a weekly basis, back in routine. I'm so sorry that summer is over, though. I don't know how you used your summer. I got to stay in bed for a long, long time because I tore my Achilles.
But I redeemed the time and learned Spanish. That's a lie. I did not. Sorry to disappoint you, Anna. She had so much hope for me in my life. Welcome to the sixth graders. If you're a sixth grader in here, raise your hand.
Nice. Welcome, sixth graders. Welcome, sixth graders. All right. If you have a sixth graders, if you have an older sibling in the room, continue to raise your hand.
Sixth graders and older sibling. Nice. Okay. If you're an older student, so seventh through twelfth grade, and you've got a younger sibling, stand up. I just want to see it. If you've got a younger sibling in sixth grade.
[1:02] Nice. Nice. All right. Thank you. You can sit down. Well, it's good to have all of you new faces with us, as well as old faces. You know, I like to see old faces, too.

I just want to encourage you at the outset of this school year that when we're in here, we want to worship the Lord. We're going to have fun. We're going to play nine square. We're going to play games. But when it's time to worship the Lord through song and through studying His Word, we want to make sure we take that seriously.
We don't ask as a requirement that you are a Christian to be here. We want you to bring unsaved friends. It's okay if you disagree with what I say. We do just ask that you not be a distraction. So being in here is treated as a privilege, not something you're just owed because you're in sixth through twelfth grade.
So we hope it doesn't become an issue that you're distracting people because there are eternal consequences for distracting someone from listening to the Word of God and to the Gospel. So you guys do a great job.
And as Mary mentioned earlier, we want to use that five minutes to go out and take care of business then and use going out now only for emergency situations if you have a nosebleed or need to blow your nose or something like that.
[2:11] So thank you guys for complying with that. This semester we're going to be going through the book of Genesis, the first part of it at least, in Genesis 1 through 11. So you can open with me to Genesis chapter 1.

Our title is going to be In the Beginning. And we've got a slide up here. Oh no, that's the wrong one. That was for something else.
Okay, there we go. In the beginning. We'll be going through Genesis 1 through 11. And I want you to consider the importance of an origin story.
In movies and in books, an origin story is some kind of background information that explains how the main character either became the protagonist, the good guy, or the antagonist, the bad guy.
So you think of all kinds of movies with origin stories. One of them is Captain America. You can't go wrong with Captain America. But he's sickly. He's kind of skinny. So he grows up being small.
[3:13] But he's got this heart of gold. He's been picked on, but he's willing to serve his country. And so they select him for the scientific project, steroids, and beef him up.

And they know his heart is just to serve his country. And so if they can make him a super soldier, he'll be great. So that's an explanation of who he is, how he got there, what he's going to do with

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these, you know, not superhuman powers, steroids.
And so that's his origin story. And when we think about us in real life, what is our origin story? And not just who your parents are, who your siblings are.
Who is God? Who are you? What are you? How are you supposed to live your life? How did we get to where we are?
And what we see is that Genesis answers these questions for us with remarkable simplicity. It's very direct and plain language that Genesis speaks in.
[4:18] And yet it's incredibly relevant even to this day. And if we study Genesis 1 through 11 well, it'll give us powerful answers to things going on all around us in the world, in our country, and even in so-called churches today.

Questions about gender, marriage, abortion, racism, and so many other topics. And this just comes out of the first few chapters of our Bible.
The Lord has equipped us so well with his word for every season of life that we will go through. So who is God? Who are we? How should we live?
How did we get here? We need to be able to answer these questions. You need to be able to answer these questions. Whether you're a Christian or not, you need to have a belief system that can deal with these questions.
And if you are a believer, you need to know the answer to these questions. Because the world around us, and the culture around us, and even people that will call themselves Christians around us will try to manipulate us with ungodly ideas and ungodly beliefs, not just about the Bible, not just about the nature of God, but about us as human beings, about who we are as people.
[5:35] And so not only do we need to know where we came from, like how we got to earth, but we need to know who we came from. And one scholar has said that there's really only one main doctrine in the entire Old Testament.

And it's the doctrine of creation. The doctrine of creation is so powerful because if God truly created you, if God truly created everything, there are so many implications out of that.
He has every right to give you commands. He has every right to tell us how we are to live in this universe that He has made. And so if we fail to be good students of the Bible in Genesis, we will rob God of glory that He is owed.
We will not be good worshipers of Him because He has told us what happened in the beginning.
And for everyone in this world and definitely in this room, the only way you can properly understand yourself is if you have some understanding of who God is.
The only way you can know who you are is if you have some knowledge of who God is. We must begin with God and His Word.
[6:52] And what we find is that we were created with purpose. But we have meaning and value as human beings. You are not just a clump of cells. You are not just biology.

You are a creature made in the image of an infinitely holy and righteous God. And that will change everything about how you view yourself, how you view those around you, and how you interact with God and His Word.
So before we jump in officially to Genesis, we need to understand something about it. Moses is the one who wrote this book. And Moses is the one who wrote the first five books of the Bible. And so Moses is the one writing.
So we need to ask ourselves, how did Moses know these things? Moses wasn't there. Adam wasn't even there for most of this. How does Moses know?
Well, one, he's inspired by the Holy Spirit, so God is telling him, teaching him the truth, guiding him into the truth. But also, it's kind of foolish to think that Adam would have been God's first creature, and he would just have no knowledge of what took place and how he got there.
[8:00] And so this story was passed down through the generations to Moses, and so he would have received this story being handed down to him and in written documents, as well as being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Something else we need to know is that Moses is also writing in a world that has other origin stories. Moses is writing in a world where there are other religions who have origin stories that are false, obviously, but Moses is writing against those things.
And so he is telling us the truth in Genesis 1 through 11, obviously. But some of the things he chooses to highlight, some of the things he chooses to tell us are shaming these other false gods

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that the peoples worshiped.
And so I'll try to point that out as we go. But there were all kinds of different origin stories in the world at that time that we know of. In Babylon, which is a bad place, but in Babylon, they had an origin story.
There were multiple gods that existed, and there was one god. I can't remember the name exactly. It's probably better that I don't say it. But this god got cut in half. So this other god was angry, cut her in half.
[9:04] Half of her he put in the sky. That became the sky, of course. The other half of her he made the earth. But that's not satisfactory. Where did these gods come from?

How did this creation take place? In Greece, kind of a place of strong philosophy and allegedly smart people, they believed there was a father heaven and a mother earth.
That one might sound familiar to you. A mother earth and a father heaven. And they basically had a bunch of babies and filled the earth. But again, where did these gods come from? These stories don't go back far enough.
And maybe one you're most familiar with. There was just a sample size of cells. And they collided with each other.
And they began to grow so quickly, you could almost call it an explosion. They just exploded everything into existence. It's another origin myth. And again, where did those molecules come from?
[10:10] Where did those cells come from? These stories don't go back far enough. And so what will you believe? Will we believe the Bible?

Will we believe the truth of the Bible? Or will we believe Satan's myths? And what we're about to read in Genesis 1-11 is not a science textbook, so it won't have all the answers for us.
This is the Bible. And it's more concerned with telling us about God than it is with telling us exactly how these things were created and exactly how these things came into existence other than God's power and God's word.
And when you compare it with other origin myths, other origin stories, this one emphasizes the power of God, his sovereignty over everything. There's no violence.
There's no bloodshed. There's no animosity or envy. It is the Lord establishing his rule over everything that he makes by the power of his word.
[11:06] And what we're about to read is history. It's not poetry. It's just a gloriously simple account of what took place in history. And so what we're going to do throughout this semester is we're going to take some big chunks, but we'll also kind of circle back and take a smaller focused look at certain things that are critically important in our day and age.

So tonight we're going to try to get through Genesis 1-1 all the way through chapter 2, verse 3. We're going to try to cover that tonight, and then next week we're going to come back and zero in on what it means to be created in the image of God.
But I want to read to you Genesis 1 through chapter 2, verse 3. Just so the text is before us, we're about to read the beginning of everything we know.
In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
And God said, Let there be light. And there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day and the darkness He called night.
[12:21] And there was evening and there was morning the first day. And God said, Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters. And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse.

And it was so. And God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place and let dry land appear.
And it was so. God called the dry land earth. And the waters that were gathered together He called seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind on the earth.

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And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.
And there was evening and there was morning the third day. And 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.
[13:29] And let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth. And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night and the stars.

And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light to the earth, to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning the fourth day.
And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens. So God created the earth, the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves with which the waters swarm according to their kinds and every winged bird according to its kind.
And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters and the seas and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning the fifth day.
And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds, livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds. And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind.
[14:38] And God saw that it was good. Then God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image and the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.
And God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth and every tree with seed and its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.
And it was so. And God saw that everything that he had made, he saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.
And on the seventh day, God finished his work that he had done and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it, God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.
[16:01] Amen. Well, we're going to cover this text tonight in three points. Number one is the universe is framed. The universe is framed.

And Josie, you can go ahead and put that picture up. But as we go through this, there's going to be a very clear kind of structure to this. And so we'll see the framing of the universe and the filling of the universe.
So if you look at the left column of that table, on day one, God creates light and darkness as we just read. On day four, he gives light. He creates actual lights that will give light.
Day two, he creates the expanse. He separates the waters from the waters and makes the sky. On day five, he fills the sky and the sea with creatures. Day three, he creates the dry land.
And then on day six, he fills that land with animals and then ultimately with people. All right, thank you, Josie, for showing that. That'll help us as we work through get a sense of the structure.
[17:01] So the Bible begins in just this magnificent way in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth. And if you were to write the first line of the Bible, what would you say?

What would you make it say? I think we try to give some defense for who God is, some defense for the existence of God, but God in his wisdom just says simply, in the beginning, God created.

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Now when was this beginning? What existed before the beginning? Well, I take what's called a young earth view, so I think this is relatively recent, so measured in thousands of years, not millions or billions.
But what existed before the beginning? Before this moment, nothing existed. And I want you to try to picture nothing.
If I tell you to envision nothing in your mind, what comes to your mind? What are you picturing? Picturing just like a dark, empty space? Anyone doing that? That's what I think of when I think of nothing.
[18:12] But the universe wasn't even a place. So visualizing something empty isn't nothing. And what we find very quickly, we can't really think of nothing because the moment we think we're thinking of nothing, that's actually something.

That's not nothing. And so there was not even nothing in the beginning. Nothing existed. There was just God. He is. He exists. There was only Him forever before He created.
And so what we say is that God created from nothing. And so everything around us, this world, wasn't made out of stuff. There was absolutely nothing.
No atoms, no molecules, no cells. There was nothing. And God spoke the universe into existence.
How do we believe this?
How can we possibly believe that? By faith. No one was there to see it. No one can repeat this.
Hebrews 11.3 says, By faith we understand that God created the universe through His Word.
[19:20] And so it's by faith that we receive this. And what we learn is that everything had a beginning except for God. God. He exists. He needs nothing.

He only needs Himself. He is self-existent. And so when people outside of Christianity look at this, we shouldn't be surprised when they reject the Bible's teaching or they try to embrace something that makes more sense to them or something that maybe appears to be more scientific or more realistic or more rational.
But the problem is none of their stories go back far enough. Only this sentence explains how all of this exists from nothing.
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. We don't have answers to every question but the only safe place, the only right place is to hold on to the Bible's clear teaching that God has created the universe by the Word of His power.
And the only way anyone could know this, the only way anyone could know what happened is if they were there. And how many people were there to witness what we just read? Only God.
[20:34] And so if your science teacher or your friends are mocking the Bible's stance on creation, they can mock God for a while. One day they'll stand before Him.

And I think He'll probably give them the rebuke that He gave to Job. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Let me know if you have understanding.
Only God was there and this is His account of what took place and so we need to trust it. One last thing on verse 1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. This is the first miracle of Jesus recorded in the Bible.
If you read the New Testament, Colossians 1, 16 says He created everything. In John 1 it says everything that was made was made through the Word which is the Son.
He created all things and so we can look back on the Old Testament and see His activity even here.
And if you believe this verse, nothing else in the Bible is impossible.
[21:37] All the other miracles, all the other crazy things that take place in the Bible are possible because this verse is true. God created everything. everything. In verses 2 and 3, 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 waters. And so at this point God's created the heavens and the earth but it's just kind of a watery blob at this point. There's not any definition there but the Spirit of God is also active.
And so we see Father and Son busy in creation. We also see the Holy Spirit busy there too kind of brooding over or caring for this new found earth.
Now we get into the days of creation where we start to see this pattern. And God said. God creates by His word. The world exists, you exist because of God's word.
The world exists because of God's word. And we'll see as we work through this that the phrase and God said appears ten times. God is speaking in a complete number to bring creation into existence

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and He simply says let there be light and there was light.
[22:51] Now this isn't like you going into your room and flipping on your light switch. You're not creating light. You're just opening a flow of electricity. Light did not exist. And God simply speaks light into existence.

God simply says let there be light and there was light. And so another pattern we'll see is that when God speaks things happen. Reality aligns perfectly with God's word.
What God says is reality. What God speaks is real. Reality is in alignment with the word of God.
And so if you want to know what's real, if you want to know what's true, you need to know God's word.
And this is important today because there are people like Elon Musk. I kind of like Elon Musk. He's smart, wealthy, inventive. But he thinks we're living in a simulation.
So he's like, who's to say this isn't just a big video game someone's playing and we're the characters. Or they say, who's, or you see movies like Inception, kind of an old movie, maybe you haven't seen it, but it's just all this dream world.
[23:58] You can't really tell if you're dreaming or awake. There's kind of spinning tops to see if you're awake or not. And do you know what about those two things?

They could be right if we're the only reference point. If there is no God, if there's no one on the outside to tell us what's true, if there's no one on the outside to tell us what's real, who's to say what's right or wrong?
Who's to say what reality is? But when God speaks, reality aligns with His Word. And so when He says, let there be light, there is light. And so we need to hold on to God's Word.
We need to be aligned with God's Word if we want to know what's real and true in this world. Now, super smart science people will say, there was light without the sun?
Yes, there was. God does not need the sun to give light. God is sufficient in Himself. And so He creates the sun later in creation. Here, light exists without the sun because God does not need the sun in order to create light.
[25:06] And again, in these false religions, so many of them worship the sun as the giver of life, the sustainer of life, the thing they need to stay alive.

And God is showing here, He does not need the sun. The sun had a beginning point. The sun is not eternal. And it says, and there's another phrase, and it was so, we see here, and there was light. This occurs seven times. In verse 4, God saw that the light was good. God saw that the light was good.
So as we go, we get these statements of God evaluating His creation. He is examining His creation. And it's not as though He didn't think about it before He was doing this.
Like, oh, that worked out pretty well. He's just saying, Moses is showing us that this was very well thought through and that God is approving as He's creating, saying, this is good.
[26:07] But how do we know what good is? These are the first sentences of the Bible. There's no cross-references. How do we know what good is? If we just start in Genesis 1, what does good mean?

In order to know what good is, we need to know who God is. If we can't define what good is, we can't define what evil is, and we can't define either unless we know who God is.
So what we learn as we read through this account, there's no disease, there's no defects, there's no death, it was beautiful and perfect and delightful.
When God created in the beginning, everything was perfect. Verse 5, there was evening and there was morning the first day. And so Moses is communicating to us here, this is a 24-hour day.
This is just a regular day. The earth is spinning on its axis already. There's a period of light and darkness. darkness. And some people will read this and say, oh, a day, that's not a real day.
[27:15] It's just, it's symbolic for thousands or millions of years. But if Moses wanted to tell us that this was a 24-hour day, he could not have said this more clearly. There's a period of darkness and a period of light the first day.

Then we get to day 2 in verses 6-8 where God creates the sky. And he says, and God said, let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters.
So there's waters above and waters below this expanse. We would call this the sky and space as well. And so the waters below would be the seas and lakes and ponds we have here on earth.

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What are the waters above? What does this mean? Is it the clouds? That would maybe make sense, but if you look at verse 14, the sun and moon are actually in the expanse.
And so these waters above the expanse have to be on the other side of the sun and moon even. So it's even further than the atmosphere. So I think the best way to read this is that at the edge of our universe, at the edge of outer space and deep space, there's water.
[28:26] And actually, Psalm 148 addresses this. Let me turn there and read it for you. Psalm 148, verses 3-4. It says, Praise Him, sun and moon.

Praise Him, all you shining stars. Praise Him, you highest heavens and you waters above the heavens. And so, we may not ever be able to verify that, but this is how God has created the universe.
He separated these waters and put the sky in place. Starting in verse 9, we get to day 3 where He creates land. Land. It says, And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear.
God called the dry land earth and the waters that were gathered together He called seas. And God saw that it was good. So the picture we have here is that all the water was in one place and all the land was in another place and many scientists today will affirm that all of our continents and stuff, you kind of look at a map and it looks like they would just go, you know, fit back together.
They call it Pangea or different names. So the Bible, I think, kind of affirms there's one land mass here and that's where Eden was. And plants are created in verse 11.
[29:46] God said, Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed. So plants are created to germinate and reproduce. And God actually gives us the definition of fruit here.

that the seed is in the fruit. And that's the definition of what fruit is. And so by that definition for being consistent, tomatoes are fruit.
It's settled. Which means pizza is healthy. Pizza is healthy. And another thing, fruit does belong on pizza. So put pineapples on it if you want.
No, don't do that. No, no, no, never mind. Never mind, never mind. Don't do that. Too far. But pizza is healthy because tomatoes are fruit. But it says each one is according to its kind.
And we'll address this more later when we get to animals. But, you know, grapes always produce grapes and bananas, bananas, and so on and so forth. And then we see, secondly, the universe is filled.
[30:42] So the universe is framed in verses 1 through 13. And then in 14 through the end of chapter 1, the universe is filled. The universe is filled.

So in days 1 through 3, God created light and land. He set limits for everything. And in days 4 through 6, we could summarize it as Him creating life.
He gives life to this earth. And He starts with lights. These are really described as creatures almost. Verse 14, And God said, Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night.
Let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years. And let them be of light upon the earth. At the end of verse 15. So He gives the sun and the moon and the stars, places them in this expanse or in this sky.
And they're for signs. They're to help us mark time. And they still do this today. Many calendars are lunar calendars. They're based on moon cycles. for seasons. That's based on the sun in relation to the earth.
[31:48] And what does it mean by signs here? Well, one of the most important signs the Bible records is the birth of Jesus that was declared in the stars. The wise men following the star from the east.

So a year is marked by the earth rotating around the sun once. A month is marked by the earth in relation to the moon. A day is the earth rotating on its axis.
What important time stamp is not mentioned here though? A week. How long is a week? Someone tell me. Ooh, some smart ones. Seven days, baby.
So a week is seven days. Where is a week mentioned here? It's not. So why do we have a seven day week? Interestingly, there is zero scientific reason for having a seven day week.
For the length of a month we can determine. Length of a day, that's obvious. A year we can count. The only reason to have a seven day week is because of what the Bible says. And every culture

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has a seven day week.
[32:49] And so, there's no scientific reason for that. There's no astronomical reason for that. That's just how God built the universe. In verse 16, it says, God made the two great lights.

What are the two greatest lights on earth? Sun and the moon. And now someone's really smart and paid attention and is like, what about Saturn? Saturn's bigger than the sun. It is.
But Moses is writing from the earth's perspective. Moses is writing as our eyes see. He's not seeking to explain the heavens to us in full. He's trying to tell us how we got here.
And so, from our perspective, the sun and the moon are the two great lights. One of them rules the day. One of them rules the night. I'll let you figure out which one if you're smart enough. And again, people will nitpick Moses for his lack of specificity and they'll say, well, the moon doesn't give its own light.
It reflects the sun. Okay, Bill Nye. Yes. But, Moses' point is that the moon does give light to the earth. It's not its own light but it does still give light.
[33:55] And in day five, we see he creates fish and flyers. That's what I call birds. And it says, God said, let the water swarm with swarms of living creatures and it's like he's creating these things out of the water.

And let the birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens. In verse 21, so God created the great sea creatures. The kraken, Leviathan, the monsters of the deep, sharks, whales, giant squid, everything we're scared of.
He created these great sea monsters. He just created them. The great sea creatures and every living creature that moves. And in the ancient world, the ocean was viewed as a source of evil and all these beasts in the earth that were so mysterious and hard to catch were viewed as a source of evil and here, God is saying, I made that.
I created all of that. He is sovereign over even the most scary and beastly figures in the depths of the ocean that we haven't even discovered yet. He is the ruler of them all because he created them. And so if you fear God, you have nothing else to fear. If you fear the Lord, he's the one who has all power and created everything and you have nothing else to fear in this world.
[35:15] Now, don't go jump off a pier and be like, sharks ain't got nothing on me. You'll get eaten, shark bait. Or taken to Davy Jones' locker. I don't know what's down there.

But as we think about God creating everything and God creating all these sea creatures and all these land animals as we'll see shortly, think of all the creativity that God showed in creation.
Even just thinking about the sea creatures and the birds. All these beautiful arrays of colors and shades that he created just in the ocean and the birds of the air.
Our God created things that weren't necessary for survival but were just beautiful. You think of a peacock. I don't know why it needs that big fan to survive but it's beautiful. Dolphins, why are they so playful?
Like he could have made them mean but he didn't. And so he made things that were just beautiful and just enjoyable. He could have made things ugly which would have been awful. He could have made things kind of utilitarian.
[36:16] So that just means like just get the job done. Doesn't need to look good, just needs to get the job done. So you think about like a coffee shop. You're like, ah, peaceful, homework, friends, or a prison cell.

It's like concrete, there's your toilet right next to your bed and wash your hands in the toilet. It's like, it gets the job done but it's not beautiful in any way.
But God has created things beautifully and with amazing creativity. And we get a new element here in verse 22. God blessed them. God blessed them.
Saying, be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters. Let the birds multiply on the earth. God doesn't bless like we do. We ask for someone to be blessed.
We pray that they would be blessed. God's blessing is his word. God speaks and through his word he blesses. In day six, we see that God creates beauties and beasts.
[37:17] He creates mankind kind and he creates the beasts of the earth. And again, verse 24, he's speaking as if he's making these things out of the earth. Verse 24, and God said, let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds.

According to their kinds. So why is it important that the Bible says according to their kinds? This shows us that God did not use evolution to create the world. Everything stayed in its lane after he

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created it.
There's no dogs becoming birds, there's no fish becoming dinosaurs and then turning back into chickens or whatever. God creates kinds of animals and there's remarkable consistency.
And so if you pay attention in science class and the taxonomy, I never did, I had to Google it, but this is what we'd call the family level of taxonomy. So you think of the dog family. There's different kinds of dogs.
They're all dogs. They'll never become chickens, Lord willing. But God created these things according to their kinds. And he creates all land-dwelling, air-breathing animals here.
[38:24] He says livestock, that's like cattle and oxen kind of animals, creeping things, that's not your weird uncle, that's the, those would be, you know, little critters, little insects and stuff.

And then they're according to their kinds as well and then, yeah, everything that creeps on the ground, I missed something. Oh, beasts of the earth. So this would be, you know, think of dinosaurs, lions, hippos, all the big stuff.
Verse 26, then God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness. And there's, again, a deviation in the pattern there. Previously, God has just said, let there be light.
Let the waters produce, let the waters swarm with. Here he says, let us make man in our image. This is a meeting, this is a conversation of some type.
Who is God speaking to here? He's speaking to himself. He's speaking among himself as father, son, and spirit saying, let us create man as a living picture of who I am.
[39:35] In our image, after our likeness, we'll hopefully unpack this more next week, but let them have dominion. God created man to rule, but notice, he's talking about creating man and then he says, them.

Let them have dominion. Who is he speaking to here? We see in verse 27, God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them.
God created man with a plurality that reflects his nature as a triune God. mankind exists of males and females.
And this unity and diversity reflects something very dimly of who God is. And the word man, you might have a footnote in your Bible, the word man in Hebrew is literally just Adam.
God created Adam and that's mankind. And it comes from the word ground, very similar Hebrew word. So he created man out of the earth. We'll see that in chapter two.
[40:41] But why did God make man in his image? We are living pictures of God. And again, in the ancient world, kings would set up these massive images of themselves in territory that they had conquered, in territory that they rule.

And so you think of the story of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar sets up this giant 90 foot tall image of himself. Seems kind of prideful. But he sets up this image of himself saying, I rule here. You will worship me.
And this is what God is doing with the universe. He's saying, I rule this. Here is my image I'm setting up to have dominion and to subdue this creation.
God's name is God's name. And so are we dignified creatures because we're in God's image? Or have we evolved from something less dignified?
What will we believe? God's truth or Satan's myths? We are glorious creatures made in the image of God. God, everyone you're sitting by from this moment will exist for eternity either in heaven or in hell.
[41:49] No one is an unglorious creation of God. No one has evolved from something that lacks glory or honor. We are made in the image of God.

And that affects how you treat people. That affects how we should conduct our society. that has implications for how our church looks. And how did God create them?
Male and female. God made two genders. You're either a boy or a girl in case you didn't know. We don't need science to establish that. We have the Bible.
The Bible teaches us that. Science backs that up. Science proves that to be true. But the Bible tells us that. That's why it's true. God created us this way. That's why it's true.
In verse 28, again, God blessed them. And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. And have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

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[42:54] And so this isn't just the germination that plants would have, but this is generation. They'll create new human beings. And so God wants them to just have a thousand babies and fill the earth with new human beings to subdue the earth and to bring glory and worship to him.

God delights in humanity in the beginning. He wants humanity to fill the earth. He wants more humans to be there to worship him in the garden.
Verse 29, God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit.
You shall have them for food. God has given them everything. He's given them everything they need, everything they could want in this garden to prosper and to worship and to obey him.
And so Adam and Eve would have had a vegetarian diet in the beginning. And so I'm glad I wasn't Adam because I don't like vegetables, but I probably would have before the fall. Anyway. And so they would have a vegetarian diet.
[43:59] There's no death whatsoever. No animal death, no human death, and so all they eat are plants. And some people might say, What about the plants?

Plant lives matter too. Well, let's look. There's an important distinction that the Bible gives us. They rule over everything and God's given plants and trees to everything.
Look at the end of verse 30 that has the breath of life. There's a distinction in creation between plant life and animal life, between plant life and human life, even between animals and humans. Humans are made in the image of God, animals are not, but they do have the breath of life. And so at this time, anything that breathed and had this breath of life would not die.
Verse 31, God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good. There was evening and there was morning the sixth day. So God's evaluating his entire creation now at this point, not just the individual parts, but how it all functions together and he calls it very good.
[45:08] There's no death or bloodshed. You might say, what purpose did mosquitoes have before the fall? I don't know, but they would have had some non-blood-sucking purpose. Sharks, you know, they still eat kelp today, so they would have just been vegetarians, but there are some questions we don't know after the fall as to what exactly that world looked like.

But number three, we see the universe is finished. So we've seen it framed, filled. On day seven, we see it finished. Chapter two, verses one through three. It says, thus the heavens and earth were finished and all the host of them.
So the farthest limits of creation and everything in it and it says, on the seventh day, God finished his work that he had done and he rested. Why did he rest?
He rested because he was finished and not because he was tired. He didn't need a break, he was just done. He had finished, he had completed the creation.
And I want you to notice something important. It says God, verse three, blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. And verse four moves on.
[46:20] Something's missing from verse three, it seems, from this pattern. There was evening and there was morning the seventh day. And it's actually incredibly important that Moses doesn't mention that because God's rest does not have an end point.

And the Bible picks this up and explains that to us in places like Hebrews. God is done creating new things. Now he is still working because he is sustaining everything. He's giving you breath in your lungs right now and keeping the earth spinning on its axis right now.
So in that sense he has never stopped working but he is done creating new kinds of things as he did in days one through six. God's rested from his creative work.
And it was so, so good in the beginning. And if we step back and look at everything he's created in just a span of seven days, creation proclaims his glory.
Creation tells us what he is like. We cannot see God, he is invisible, but he has revealed himself through what he has made. But we so often fail to worship him for it.
[47:35] These things we're reading about, we've seen them with our eyes, we've walked on them with our feet, we've smelled them with our noses, we've heard birds singing. And so often we fail to reflect on what that teaches us about who our God is.

If we were willing to listen, if we did not have sin in our hearts, these things would tell us about God so clearly. Have you considered him?

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Or have you simply enjoyed his benefits without thinking of the God who made them? God's word says that creation speaks so clearly to who he is that all of us will be without excuse on judgment day.
Whether you believe the gospel or not, whether you've heard the gospel or not, you'll be held accountable to God on judgment day because you've seen his power in the things that he has made.
And we are so sinful that we see this theater that God has created to display his glory and our tendency is to worship those things that he has made.
[48:45] And so a question I get a lot is if someone living in the Amazon never heard the gospel, would he be saved? You know, let's say he sees the sunset and thinks, man, there must be a God out there.

But he never hears the gospel. But we are so sinful that that guy out in the Amazon or this guy in Yukon, about the same, so sinful, I live in Yukon, so sinful that we see the sun and say, I want to worship the sun.
We get money and say, I want to worship money. Our hearts never make the connection between what God has created and who he is. We can see the things, we can enjoy the things he's created, but in our sinfulness, in our lostness, we glorify and exalt those things that he has made rather than looking to the one who made them.
And we're so sinful that this knowledge of God doesn't save us, it just condemns us. If creation itself could save us, then we wouldn't need the Bible. If creation itself could save us, we wouldn't even need the book of Genesis to describe it to us.
We would know it. But God, just as God created through his word, so we must be saved through his word. Everyone must be saved through his word.
[50:18] And I'll read 2 Corinthians 4 to you, you don't have to turn there. But in 2 Corinthians 4, Paul is talking about his ministry and he says, I preach the gospel and if someone doesn't believe the gospel, it's because their eyes are veiled.

They can't see the glory of the gospel. They're perishing. The God of this world, Satan, has blinded their minds to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.
So you've got light and darkness. These unbelievers are in darkness. They can't see the truth of the gospel in the light of the glory of Christ. Paul says in verse 6, for God, who said, let light shine out of the darkness, has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
The same God who spoke creation into existence is the same God who saves today, saying, let there be light in sinful hearts. God is the one who created.
He is the only one who existed. He brought everything into existence and he works in salvation in the same way by speaking to people's hearts and opening them to see the light of the glory of his Son.
[51:34] And it says, Jesus is the image of God. Jesus is the true image of God. Adam and Eve were both created in God's image.

Jesus is the true image. He's the one who reveals the Father to us. He's the one who created and who sustains creation. And as he's created, these trees in the Garden of Eden, he knows one day a descendant of these trees is what he'll die on to pay for sin.
And our God has loved us so much he did not just provide for Adam and Eve in the Garden. He's also provided refuge for us as sinners. You've rebelled against this God who made you.
And the only way to be made right with him is to cry out for forgiveness. And he didn't just create us and leave us here. He has sent his Son after us to shed his blood to pay for our sins.
And if you'd receive that, you'll be able to worship this God who made you. You'll be able to rightly understand his word and give him praise for the creation that we see all around us.
[52:44] If you believe that message, you'll enter into his Sabbath rest that began on day seven of creation. You'll be set free from your labors to try to earn a spot with him and be able to rest through faith in his Son.

Our Father, we praise you for sustaining us through the summer and sustaining us through this night. You are the maker and giver of life. I pray that every student here would consider their sin and turn to your Son, Jesus Christ, for salvation.

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salvation. I pray that everything we do would be to his glory and honor. We'd make much of Jesus this week as we go out to school and spend time with our families.
In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

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