

The Gospel in Creation  
Genesis 1-2

Introduction
--------------

1. Here at Renew Bible Church we believe that the events recorded in the book of Genesis, including the first 11 chapters, are real, literal, chronological and historical events:
  - a. We believe God created the heavens and the earth and all that exists in six literal 24 hour days
  - b. We believe in a literal Adam and Eve and that they were a special creation of God
  - c. We believe in a literal Fall, the universal Flood, Noah, the Ark, and the Tower of Babel
  - d. We take all of this to be real, literal, and chronological historical events
2. One of the reasons we believe this is because we believe in the inerrancy, infallibility, and authority of God's Word; we trust what it says
3. However, another reason we believe this is because the events of Genesis are critical to the Gospel and nearly every other Bible doctrine; if they were not literal events and real people, then there is no basis for the Gospel or the doctrines of the Bible:
  - a. There are over 100 references or allusions to the events recorded in Genesis in the New Testament, and in every instance they are treated as historical events and people
  - b. Over half of these references (60) are from just the first 11 chapters
  - c. Jesus, along with every New Testament author except James, referenced events from Genesis 1-11
  - d. In one of his most important sermons with one of his largest audiences (before the Areopagus in Athens; Acts 17), Paul began with the creation of man from Genesis 1
  - e. There are only 7 New Testament books (out of 27) that do NOT contain a reference or allusion to events in Genesis 1-11
  - f. To say that the first 11 chapters of Genesis are critical to the Gospel and other doctrines doesn't seem strong enough
4. With this in mind, over the next seven weeks we are going to examine the events we see in the first 11 chapters of Genesis and discover their connection to the Gospel:
  - a. Some events provide the basis for the Gospel, like the Genesis 1-2 (today)
  - b. Other events like the Fall will reveal the need for the Gospel
  - c. Some, like the conflict between Cain and Abel, the Flood, and Tower of Babel will explain different aspects of the Gospel like judgment, grace, forgiveness, salvation, etc.
  - d. Some will even foreshadow or serve as a type (example) of the Gospel

A. Genesis 1-2 establishes the basis for the Gospel
---

1. I am defining basis here as the justification for or reasoning behind something:
  - a. Let me pose a question: Why would God go to such drastic measures to redeem us?
  - b. Think about it: the Creator God of the universe left the heavenly realm to come to earth, took on human flesh, subjected Himself to the limits of His creation, allowed Himself to be challenged, ridiculed, mocked, tortured and even killed...all for something He created that rebelled against Him
  - c. What could possibly motivate God to do that, or for that matter, justify it?

- d. John 3:16-17 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."
  - e. But, why? Why did God so love us?
2. I believe the answer is found in something Jesus said (READ Matthew 6:26-30):
  - a. Mankind is worth more to God than any other living thing He created
  - b. God Himself views mankind as the most important, the most significant, the most valuable of all of His creation
  - c. David recognized this when he penned Psalm 8 (READ 8:4-9)
3. This is precisely what we see in Genesis 1-2 and it forms the basis—the reason and justification—for God’s redemptive plan (READ Genesis 1):
  - a. The climax of the creation narrative is the creation of mankind in Genesis 1:26ff:
    - 1) Change from “let there be/let the” to “Let us make...”
    - 2) Change from “God” to the second person plural “Us” (reference to Trinity not angelic beings)
    - 3) Mention of the sexes
    - 4) Made in God’s image
    - 5) Change from “it was good” to “it was very good”
  - b. God created the earth specifically to be inhabited by man (1:2) **“formless and void”**:
    - 1) Hebrew hendiadys (hen-DYE-a-dis) which refers to two independent words joined by “and” and used to communicate a single concept or idea (e.g. nice and warm)
    - 2) Rather than meaning the earth didn’t have physical form and was empty, it should be understood as “a barren wasteland” or “worthless emptiness”
    - 3) Jeremiah 4:23-26 used the exact same phrase to refer to the land of Israel after it had been devastated by enemies
    - 4) Isaiah uses similar language to state that God did not create the Earth to be in this state but to be inhabited by man, and specifically by mankind (Isaiah 45:18)
    - 5) Essentially, here in Genesis 1:2 it indicates that the Earth had been created but was incomplete
    - 6) It also serves as a literary device presenting a conflict that is resolved in the rest of the chapter (first four days describe preparing the earth to sustain life, while the last two days describe its filling with life)
  - c. God created the earth to be ruled over by mankind (READ Genesis 1:26-28)
  - d. God restrained growth on days 4-5 until He created mankind and placed him in the Garden (READ Genesis 2:4-5)
4. While the primary purpose of the Bible is to reveal God and make Him known, I would argue that the main purpose of Genesis is to reveal the origin and history of our relationship to God and why He loves us so much to send Jesus to die for us; the whole book is a series of historical narratives:
  - a. Gen 1-2 is the history of our origin and our original relationship to God in its perfect state
  - b. Gen 3-5 (Fall and Cain and Abel) begins the history of our broken relationship with God, how He responds to us in our sinful state, and His promise to rescue and redeem us

- c. Gen 6-10 (Flood) is the history of the catastrophic Creation-wide consequences of our sin progression of sin, God's judgment of sin in the Flood, and His provision for salvation through Noah
- d. Gen 11 is the history of our further rebellion against God and His provision to protect us from returning to total corruption and judgment by scattering us over the face of the earth
- e. Gen 12-50 is the history of God's plan to rescue and redeem the world through Israel and His redemptive plan

B. Now, here's the really cool thing: God's plan for the Gospel was already in place before He created anything

1. The Gospel wasn't an afterthought or a reaction by God; His redemptive plan was already in His mind before Genesis 1:1
2. READ 1 Corinthians 2:1-9:
  - a. ESP v. 7: "**wisdom which has been hidden, which God predestine (e.g. ordained, predetermined) before the ages to our glory...**"
  - b. V. 9: "**...all that God has prepared for those who love Him**": when Did He prepared them? Before the ages; before Creation
3. What this means is that in order to view Genesis 1-2 properly, we need to view it not just as an historical account of Creation, but understand its connection to the Gospel
  - a. God does everything with a purpose, and this included creating us even though He knew we would sin and fall
  - b. Proponents of Openness Theology claim God didn't know we would sin and that the Gospel was a reaction to our sin
  - c. But, as we just learned in 1 Corinthians 2, the Gospel is God's wisdom PREDETERMINED and PREPARED before the ages
4. I don't claim to fully understand this and have trouble getting my mind around it, but God knew we would sin, still created us anyway, and already had in place a plan to fix it!

C. If that isn't cool enough, how about this: you and I—those who have placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, were even chosen by God before He created anything!

1. The Bible says that we were chosen before the foundations of the world (READ Ephesians 1:3-5)
2. God prepared His good works through which He saved us before the world ever existed (READ Ephesians 2:8-10):
  - a. The phrase "**created in Christ Jesus for good works**" is better translated as "**created in Christ Jesus on behalf of good works**"
  - b. The good works is a reference to all of God's good works just listed in chapter 1-2
  - c. God prepared these good works "**beforehand**" so that He might save us through them and that we might "**walk in them**" (e.g. salvation)
3. This what the Bible calls predestination (READ Romans 8:29-30)
4. Now, we can debate predestination/election and free-will until we're blue in the face, or whether we're 3, 4, or 5 point Calvinists or somewhere in between, but the reality is that

somehow both are true: God chose us before the foundations of the world but we also chose Him of our own free-will

Conclusion
------------

1. The Bible reveals that we are the most significant, most important, most loved of all of God's creation
2. Genesis 1-2 explains not only the history of Creation, but reveals the basis for the Gospel:
  - a. We are unique among all of God's creation: we are made in His image, created to care for His creation, and to be in a relationship with Him (He even walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve)
  - b. He created us in spite of knowing we would fall into sin, and predetermined the means and the measures to which He would go to save us
  - c. He even chose us before the foundations of the world
  - d. The Gospel was NOT an after thought or a reaction to our sin—it was part of God's plan before He created anything!
  - e. And, the drastic measures He took—sending His Son to Earth, to take on human flesh, to be ridiculed, mocked, beaten, and crucified—was worth it to God because of His great love for us
3. This reveals that God's plan was MORE than a perfect sinless life in the Garden of Eden; His plan for us was to unite us with Himself by having us become partakers of His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4): **"For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."**