

Genesis 1

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Date: 27 September 2020

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service this morning, those who are listening in on the telephone, those who are watching online once more. It's good for us to come together and to worship God. Intimation is just to say that the evening service will be online just before six. The evening service tonight will be bilingual in some measure. We'll have a Gaelic psalm and a Gaelic prayer and then Donald McSween will share testimony in English and we'll have reading and reflection on God's word. So that's online just before six o'clock this evening and I would encourage you to tune in to that. The YF will meet on Zoom as usual at half past seven and the prayer meeting on Zoom again at Wednesday at half past seven. So be encouraged to come also to these services. These I think are all the intimations so we'll sing now to God's praise. We'll sing

Psalm 148, the second version of the psalm. We'll sing the whole of the psalm. The Lord of heaven confess on high his glory raise. Let him all angels bless, him all his armies praise, and glorify son of moon and stars, ye higher spheres and cloudy sky. The whole of this psalm we'll sing to God's praise. And after we've sung, Cammie Morrison will lead us in a short word of prayer.

The Lord of heaven confess on high his glory raise. Him let all angels bless, him all his armies praise. Him glorify sun, moon and stars, ye higher spheres and cloudy skies.

From God your beings are, him therefore famous make. You all created were when he the word but spake. And from that place, where fixed you be by his decree, you cannot pass. Praise God from earth below, ye dragons and ye deeps. Fire, hail, clouds, wind and snow, whom in come and ye keep. Praise ye his name. Hills great and small, trees low and tall, beast wild and tame.

All things that creep or fly, ye kings, ye vulgar throng. All princes mean or high boar, both men and virgins. Both men and virgins young, even young and old. Exalt his name for much his fame should be extolled.

[3 : 4 1] O let God's name be praised above both earth and sky. For he his saints has raised and set their horn on high.

In those that be of Israel's grace, the Lord praise ye. Let us pray.

Our heavenly Father, we give thanks and praise that we have this opportunity to come before you this morning, to join you, to be with you, to come into holy ground, to be with you, our Father, our creator of the heavens and the earth, of the birds of the sky and the beasts of the sea and the land and all around us. And we thank you and we praise you that we have our Father in heaven.

We have a saviour in Jesus Christ, your Son. And we thank you that we have your Holy Spirit that moulds us and shapes our very lives. We thank you, Lord, for that psalm that we sung there, that we can just praise you for all that you have done.

We can praise you for the creation that you have made for us to enjoy. We thank you for the creation all around us. We thank you, Lord, for the greatest blessing that ever has happened, and that is that you sent your one and only Son, Jesus Christ, as our atonement for sin, as our rescuer, as our redeemer.

[5 : 25] And we thank you this morning that we have a saviour in Jesus Christ, that he died on the cross, bled for us on the cross, who lay in a tomb for three days and gloriously rose again from the dead, ascended to heaven and where he is this day, Lord, this morning with you, by your right hand, interceding for us.

We thank you for your Holy Spirit this day, who is with us, who leads us and guides us in everything that we do. We thank you for your Holy Inspired Word, and we pray, Lord, as David opens up your Word, you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what you have to say to us through David, your servant.

We pray for all who meet in your name this day. We pray for all the servants who expound your Word across this community and across this nation, across this world.

In particular, we pray for Stuart, who preaches in Scarlet this day. Lead him, strengthen him, encourage him in every way, Lord, to bring forth the Gospel, to bring forth your Word into this community.

Be with us now as we go into your Word. Be with us the remainder of this day and the week that lies ahead. Strengthen us, uphold us, teach us, remind us that you are our Father in heaven, Jesus is our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is with us.

[6 : 45] Go before us now and forgive us for our many, many sins. In Jesus' most precious name, Amen. Boys and girls, good morning. I hope you're doing well and you've had a good week.

You can see that I'm not down at the church right now. I thought I would record this message at home because I've got something and I've got someone I want to introduce you to today.

And her name is Alexa. You know what Alexa is. You've seen Alexa before. That's Alexa. So I put Alexa just there. And I've been told that Alexa is able to help me with lots of different things.

So I'm going to put that to the test. I've been told she might be able to help me to know what the weather is for tomorrow. So let's try that first. Alexa, can you tell me what's the weather in Harris tomorrow, please?

Tomorrow in Harris Highland, it looks like there will be clouds with a chance of showers, with a high of nine degrees Celsius and a low of seven degrees.

[7 : 48] Wow. That's quite impressive, isn't it? Clouds and showers in Harris. Sounds like she might have the weather forecast right as well. Let's try another one.

See what else she knows. Alexa, can you... Can you play a song for me, please? Here's a station you might like. Top Hop on Amazon Music.

Alexa, stop! That wasn't so helpful. Didn't like that song very much. What about homework, I wonder?

Because sometimes the girls get homework, especially maths homework, and it's very difficult to figure out. So let's see if Alexa knows anything about maths homework. Alexa, what's three times six?

Three times six is 18. Impressive. I wonder if she knows 12 times tables. Alexa, what's 12 times nine? 12 times nine is 108.

[8 : 55] Impressive. Alexa, what is 74 times 306?

74 times 306 is 22,644. Oh, she seems to have all the answers. Alexa, what's 4 million divided by 73.69?

4 million divided by 73.69 is 54,281.4493. She's very clever.

And she seems to be able to do a lot, which is good news for me, I think. Now, what else can I ask her to help me with? I've got dishes to do in the kitchen. That's part of my job for today.

Alexa, could you wash the dishes for me, please? Better not. I don't mix well with water. Hmm. That's not quite so helpful.

[10 : 03] Alexa, I'm feeling a bit hungry. Can you bake me a cake? Sorry, I'm not sure. That's not very much use. I'll try it again.

Alexa, can you bake me a cake? She's not even answering me now. Maybe she's not quite as powerful as I thought.

Alexa, can you make tomorrow a sunny day, please? Not a cloudy day. Tomorrow in Talbot. You can expect clouds with a chance of showers, with a high of 10 degrees Celsius and a low of 8 degrees.

Sounds like she can tell us the forecast, but she can't do very much about the weather. Um, Alexa, I've got a little bit of a sore head.

Can you make my sore head feel better? Alexa? Sorry, I don't know that one. Hmm. Alexa, can you make me feel brave when I am feeling worried?

[11 : 10] Hmm. I don't know that. Hmm. This is not going quite as well. Now, boys and girls, you know that Alexa can do bits and pieces of things, but she's not really all that powerful.

In fact, you know that Alexa is not really real. She's just a device. She's not living. But boys and girls, the great thing that we know is that the God that we worship, he is real.

And he is living. And he is powerful. He is able to do so much. In fact, God is so powerful. We're going to be talking about this with the older ones.

He's so powerful that if you look out your window, everything that you see, the hills and the sea and the beautiful scenes that are outside in Harris, everything that we see, in fact, everything that we are even, God made.

And he made it. He made us from nothing with a word. He's so powerful. He did that. Sometimes you sing in Sunday school.

[12 : 22] My God is so big, so strong and so mighty. There's nothing my God cannot do. Now, we listened to Alexa and there was a couple of times when Alexa said, I'm sorry, I don't know about that.

Or I can't do that. But our God, there is nothing that he cannot do. There's nothing that he ever has to say.

He never has to say to us, I'm sorry, but I can't help you with that. He never has to say to us, I'm sorry, but I don't understand what it is that you're saying. He never has to say to us, I can't help.

But he is able to help and he is willing to help with everything. The huge things in our lives and the little details of our lives, the things in our hearts, the sin that we cannot get rid of ourselves.

God is able to help us with that. He went to the cross. Jesus went to the cross to take our sins, to wash them away. No one else could do that. Sometimes you sing that hymn. There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.

[13 : 31] He, Jesus, only was the one who could open heaven's gates and let us in. The things in our hearts, God is able to help us with.

The things in our heads when we get worried and we get anxious and we can't sleep. We pray to God, he's able to help us with. It says in Psalm 4 verse 8, I will lie down and sleep in peace for you, O Lord, are with me.

There's nothing in this world, there's nothing anywhere, at any time, that God cannot help us with.

It says in Ephesians 3 and at verse 20, that our God, he is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. Our God is powerful, boys and girls.

And I want you to know that and I want you and I want us all to be people who are trusting him. We can trust him. He loves us.

[14 : 34] He is powerful. He hears us when we pray. And he is the God that we are able to trust. So let's pray and let's ask him to help us as we do so now.

Lord God, we thank you that you love us. We thank you that you are powerful, that there's nothing and there's no one that's bigger and stronger than you. That there's no problem, nothing that worries us, that you are not able to handle.

We thank you that we sometimes are able to sing, what a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. And we thank you that there's nothing that's too heavy for you to carry.

And so we ask, Lord, that the things that are worrying us, the things that bother us, the things that we know are too big for us to handle.

We pray that you would help us every day to be praying to you and asking you, the powerful God, to help us. Because we know, Lord, that's what you want us to do.

[15 : 35] Not to be anxious about anything, but to pray about everything. So be with the boys and girls, help them to keep on trusting you and help them to know that you are God, that you are with them and that you love them.

And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's turn now to God's word and we'll read from the first book of the Bible, Genesis and chapter 1.

And we'll read from verse 1 of chapter 1 through to the opening section of chapter 2. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, Let there be light.

And there was light. God saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day and the darkness he called night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

[16 : 38] And God said, Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water. So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it.

And it was so. God called the expanse sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. And God said, Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear.

And God, and it was so. God called the dry ground land and he gathered the gathered waters he called seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, Let the land produce vegetation, seed bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.

And it was so. The land produced vegetation, plants, plant bearing seeds, according to their kinds. And trees bearing fruit with seed in it, according to their kinds.

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 sky to separate the day from the night.

[17 : 55] And let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years. And let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth. And it was so.

God made two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth to govern the day and night and to separate light from darkness.

And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning. The fourth day. And God said, Let the water teem with living creatures and let birds fly above the earth, across the expanse of the sky.

So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems according to their kinds. And every winged bird according to its kind.

And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and increase in number. And fill the water in the seas and let the birds increase on the earth.

[19 : 04] And there was evening and there was morning. The fifth day. And God said, Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds. Livestock, creatures that move along the ground, the wild animals each according to its kind.

And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds. And all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds.

And God saw that it was good. Then God said, Let us make man in our image, in our likeness. And let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air.

Over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him, male and female.

He created them. God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.

[20 : 10] Then God said, I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground, everything that has the breath of life in it, I give you every green plant for food.

And it was so. God saw that all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing. So on the seventh day, he rested from all his work.

And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creation that he had done. Amen, and may God bless that reading of his word to us.

Let's unite our hearts in prayer. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for your word, which we have sung, as we are directed to bring praise to you, and as we are led by the psalmist, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to sing praises to our God.

[21 : 31] And we thank you that, as we have turned to Genesis, we see and we hear, and we are guided in the fact that you are the God who is our creator.

You are the one who made everything that we see and everything that we know. You are the God who made us, who formed us. You are our creator. You are our sustainer.

And you, Lord, are our saviour. And we thank you for who you are. And we thank you that we are able to know you, that you have revealed yourself to us. And we thank you that you have made it possible for we, who are sinners, to come in faith to you, knowing that we will not be driven away, but that we will be received because of Jesus, the name in whom we pray, and because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

We thank you that he is our saviour, that he is our redeemer. He is the one who became the sacrifice, the substitute for us, taking our sin upon his shoulders, becoming sin for us so that we could know and become righteous even in him.

So help us, Lord, we pray, to never forget these awesome truths and help us to live our lives and not just to sing a praise on a Sunday for an hour, but help us to live all of our lives in response and praise to you.

[23 : 01] For you alone are the God who is worthy. We ask for your help, Lord, in the passage that we've read, that you would help us to understand, that you would give us faith, perhaps the faith of a little child even.

We remember the words of Jesus, who said, unless you become like little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. And sometimes we're conscious, we have many questions, we can have doubts, we can create our own obstacles, and yet we know that we are called simply to trust you and to recognise who you are as you have revealed yourself to us in Scripture.

So give us faith that we may see you clearly and that we may come as we are called to you. We pray, Lord, not just for ourselves here as we open your word, we pray once more for Stuart as he prepares to preach in Scalpe, that you would bless him, that you would equip him as you've called him, and that you would speak through him this morning.

And for every other preacher, for every other place, the congregations around us in Tarbert, the Church of Scotland, and the Free Presbyterian Church, as your word is opened, we ask, Lord, that you would speak through your servants and that you would bless your people.

We pray, Father, for those who are in authority over us at this time, as we feel once more these restrictions over us tightening somewhat.

[24 : 35] Lord, we pray for wisdom for those that you have allowed to be over us in these matters of politics. And we ask, Lord, that you would give to them the wisdom that we know that they do not look to you for, but that we pray you would give them nonetheless.

We pray for our nation. We wondered at one point, as the pandemic began to bite, if there would be a huge turning towards you.

And yet, Lord, we see the reality of the fact that life continued and still there was not a turning to you. And now as we begin to see something of a second wave, we pray once more for our nation that you would give to us that gift of repentance, that we would turn back to the Lord, that we would turn back to the book that we were once known for being so devoted to.

Help us, we pray, as a nation, to know your revival and your awakening amongst us. We ask, Lord, that you would be with those in particular need in our congregation.

We pray for those who are sick. We pray for those who are grieving. We pray for those who struggle with addiction, with depression, with anxiety, with worries about the present, with worries about the future.

[26 : 00] Some who are not able to find release from the past. We thank you that you're the God who is able to meet each one at the point of our need. And whatever it is, Lord, we struggle with, we ask that you would meet with us, Lord, and that you would help us and that you would bring us along, that we would follow you more closely.

So hear our prayers and help us, Lord, as we open your word now to be directed by your spirit. Take away our sin, we pray, as we confess them.

Wash us in the blood of Christ and enable us to know your presence with us at this time. And we ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen. If you've got Genesis 1 open in front of you, that would be helpful.

You see the title, or if your Bible is the same as mine, you'll see the title given to Genesis 1. It's the beginning. And everything that we see and everything that we feel, everything that we know in this world, has a beginning.

Even if we look around this here, this church building that I'm standing in, it has a beginning. Many of us can think back to the building works, the mess, the rubble of the strip out, the work of renovation.

[27 : 29] We can think of the first time that we met here for that prayer meeting in this room. Wednesday 28th, March 2018. We could say, in one sense, that's the date that went in our calendar as the beginning.

Or we can think back further. I can visualize a day sitting with Dan Marig and Angus Alec and a wee table over there with beer mats sticking to our elbows as we prayed before any works began.

We could say, maybe that was the beginning. And others, I know, can look back further than that to when the building was first built in the 70s, I think it was.

You know, and we can look around at the building and we can say, well, it has history and it has a beginning. Or we can pick up any device, whether it's a watch or whether it's the microphone or a phone, and we can see a serial number, we can see a place of manufacture, we can trace back the device to its beginning.

And we ourselves, we have a birth certificate that tells us the day on which we were born. And in that sense, it takes us back to the beginning of our lives here.

[28 : 50] And this world, it is a beginning. Science tells us that and the Bible tells us that. But God, he has no beginning.

And that's our first point. God is eternal. And that's our focus today. It should always be our first focus on the person of God.

And as we even scan through Genesis chapter 1, we see the name of God over and over and over and over again. He's introducing himself to us.

He is bringing himself into focus. He is revealing himself to us. And the first thing that we see of God is that he is eternal. It says, in the beginning, God.

And so we learn even in these opening few words that in the beginning, in fact, before the beginning, as we know it, was God. God is the one who caused the beginning.

[29 : 57] And I know some people even at this point may be tempted to ask the question, well, if God caused the beginning to be, who caused God to be? But the answer to that question is that there can be no one and nothing that caused God.

One of the commentators wrote, God is the great uncaused first cause of creation. And as hard as it is for us to process that, that's the reality.

If there was a greater being that caused God, then God would no longer be God. There would be something greater than him that we would then look to as God.

But the reality is, that's been revealed to us here, is that God, he was, and he is, and he ever shall be. That's what's revealed in Genesis 1.

It's the same truth that's, re-emphasized in Revelation 22. God is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

[31 : 05] God is eternal. And already our minds have been stretched beyond their limits.

already we are having to look for faith to help us process this. Sometimes with our computers, you know, if you ask your computer to do too many tasks at the one time, it starts to huff and puff and wheeze if it's anything like my computer.

It struggles, the processing unit struggles to cope with all the information. And we in our minds and our brains, we struggle to process this first opening truth about God that he is eternal.

But just because we don't have minds that are able to grasp this easily, just because we are not able to take hold of this properly with our reason, doesn't mean that it's not true.

and if we are people who do not think too highly of ourselves as we're taught not to in Romans 12 and verse 3, it shouldn't surprise us that we are struggling to process these truths that are revealed in Genesis 1 because God is infinite and we are finite.

[32 : 30] finite. We cannot understand fully who he is. We cannot understand fully what he does but just because we don't have full understanding that doesn't make any of this untrue.

I don't fully understand gravity. In fact, I don't really understand the tip of the iceberg of gravity. If I was to start looking at the mathematical calculations of Isaac Newton who developed the law, who discovered the law of gravity, I would become lost and confused very quickly but even though I don't understand it as a theory, even though I cannot grasp and process the calculations that made it apparent and revealed, I know it's true because when I trip over my shoelaces, I fall down and not up.

Now, do I understand the full measure of the eternal nature of God? No, I don't. But I believe it to be true. God is eternal.

That's the truth about him. And it's also a truth that he has put within us. Ecclesiastes chapter 3 and verse 11 says, he has also set eternity in the human heart.

Now, there's something in us that just knows that there is more than simply the realities of what we can see and feel and touch.

[34 : 15] We know, something in us knows that there is more than just this life. And God is the one who has put that something in us.

He has set eternity in the human heart. Is it possible to suppress that truth and deny that truth? Well, yes, it is.

Paul wrote about that in Romans chapter 1 that we were in not so many weeks back. He writes in verse 18 and 19 in Romans 1 about the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness since what may be known about God is plain to them because God has made it plain to them.

For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Now, in Rome in AD 57, people were trying to suppress, to bury the truth about God. People were trying to suffocate this sense of eternity that God has put within us and that's still happening today.

[35 : 37] We don't have to go far to meet people who will say there is no God and there is no eternity we're just a string of DNA. We live for a while and then we die and then there is nothing.

Many people will say that, that's what I believe they say and I'm happy in that belief. But you can be happy believing something, even something as bleak as that, but just because you believe it doesn't make it true.

it doesn't count as an excuse on the day when you and I will go from time into eternity and stand before this eternal God.

God is eternal. We find our origin in him. We will find our destiny in him.

God is there. There was not nothing before the beginning. There was the eternal God. And there is not nothing when we die.

[36 : 51] There is something when we die. There is either eternity with God in heaven or there is eternity apart from God in hell.

God. So that's the first thing we see here in this opening line and these opening words of Genesis. We learn that profound truth that God is eternal.

the second thing we see here as the chapter goes on is that God is Trinity or he is triune. In the beginning God.

These are the opening words. And immediately with this introduction we ask that reasonable question. Well who is this God that is introducing himself in this way to us?

And often we'll hear people making speculative statements about who God may be. People say things like well you know I like to think of God as a force of good in the world.

[37 : 56] Or I like to think of God as positive energy. Or I like to think of God as a kindly old grandfather in the sky. Or I like to think of God as the sun and the moon and the sea and the mountains and the hills.

To say things like that and we hear them said often to say things like that is to design our own God. And that God may live in our imagination but that God is not real.

See the real God he doesn't ask us to design and build him in our minds and imaginations. He reveals himself to us.

And it begins here in Genesis 1 where we see that God is eternal and we see that God is Trinity.

And you might ask the question at this point well where do you see that? Where do you see that God is Trinity? Well I think we're given a couple of hints right from the beginning.

[39 : 04] John Calvin notes in his commentary that Moses uses the word Elohim for God a plural noun when he's speaking of God in verse 1.

And that may be the first hint that the plurality of God is pointing us towards the Trinity. And then we are given another further hint as the chapter goes on verse 26 where we're led into this conversation.

We're allowed to overhear this conversation in verse 26 where it says then God said let us make man in our image. And so we ask the question who is God speaking to?

And the answer to that question is God is speaking to God. We are listening in to a conversation between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and so we see right from Genesis chapter 1 that God is Trinity.

We see God the Father. It's not difficult for us to see the presence of God the Father in creation as the author of creation. We assume that as we read this chapter but God the Father is not acting alone in this work of creation.

[40 : 23] So in verse 2 we're pointed to God the Holy Spirit. It says in verse 2 now the earth was formless and empty. Darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

So we see God the Father and we see here God the Holy Spirit. Sometimes we can be guilty I think of overlooking God the Holy Spirit.

I think it was Francis Chan that wrote a book 10 years or so ago entitled Forgotten God where he points us to the Holy Spirit. And so right here at the beginning we see that he God the Holy Spirit is named he is active he is involved he is there in the work of creation.

The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Eveson the commentator says here in Genesis the Spirit of God was present to protect and control and was ready to act in this work of creation.

Job chapter 33 in verse 4 says the Spirit of God has made me and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

[41 : 50] So we see in the work of creation that God the Father he is active we see that God the Spirit he is active and we see God the Son active in this work of creation and again you may ask the question where do we see God the Son where do we see the pre-incarnate Jesus in Genesis chapter 1 and to respond to that I would say well we don't see him we see what he does but we hear him and from verse 3 onwards there's this emphasis on the word of God God speaks God said and creation happens verse 3 and God said let there be light and there was light verse 6 and God said let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water and it was so verse 9 and God said let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear and it was so verse 11 and God said let the land produce vegetation etc and it was so verse 14 and God said let there be lights in the expanse of the sky verse 24 and God said let the land produce living creatures verse 26 and God said let us make man in our image in our likeness and it was so the word of God plays a central role in creation and the word of God is a person the word of God has a name and his name is

Jesus God the Son John tells us that in John chapter 1 in the opening verses of John chapter 1 it says in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God he was with God in the beginning through him all things were made without him nothing was made that has been made in him was life and that life was the light of men the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us we have seen his glory the glory of the one and only who came from the father full of grace and truth and John in these opening verses is introducing us he is pointing us to Jesus and as God speaks in Genesis 1 in creation we hear the voice of Jesus and this is not some far out speculative theory that

I'm sharing with you Jesus tells us that he was there in creation remember in John 17 when Jesus is praying as he approaches the cross he says in this prayer John 17 verse 4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do and now father glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began before the beginning in the beginning in this work of creation we see God the father God the spirit God the son Hebrews chapter 1 verse 2 in these last days he has spoken to us by his son whom he appointed heir of all things and through whom he made the universe and if we fast forward from Genesis chapter 1 to the

New Testament gospels and think about the ministry of Jesus all this fits together Jesus speaks and things happen Jesus speaks and storms are stilled and demons are cast out and sins are forgiven and the sick are healed and the dead rise all that happens in response to the word of Jesus sometimes we sing he speaks and listening to his voice new life the dead receive the mournful broken hearts rejoice the humble poor believe see as Jesus spoke in Genesis 1 he spoke into what was formless and empty and dark and there was light and there was life and still today as

Jesus speaks into the formless and empty void of our sinful dark hearts there is light and there is life as Jesus spoke in Genesis 1 what we know as this world was brought to be there is creation and still today as Jesus speaks into our hearts there is recreation he makes us new creations through faith in him Romans 12 we saw that so from the beginning we learn that God is one and yet God is three God is trinity which means that God is in his very being relational sometimes we look at relationships in this world and they look to be perfect some relationships just look to be the absolute perfect package

[47 : 56] Donald McSween who is sharing his testimony this evening he has been married for I don't know how many decades I can't remember but he told me that he has never had an argument with Rachel in his married life now is that the perfect relationship well I think the reality is it's probably not maybe Donald is just very good at doing what he's told I'm not sure see the only ever perfect relationship is this one the one that we see in Genesis chapter 1 the relationship between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit there's no jostling for position within the Trinity there's perfect unity perfect constant unity there's no clashing over who does what within the Trinity there's that perfect synergy all working together in the one mission endlessly and within the Trinity there's no tension but there's this perfect fellowship there's this perfect community there's this perfect love and if we apply this to ourselves for a moment because we have been made in the image of

God and we'll come to that in due course because we've been made in the image of God we long for this we long for what we see in the Trinity this quest for true love that's deep within us this quest for meaningful relationship this desire that we have for unity and for fellowship God has put that in us these desires find their root in God Father Son and Holy Spirit and these desires can only actually be met in knowing him Psalm 37 verse 4 says delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart now why does the psalmist write that well he writes that because he knows that the deepest desires of the human heart are found not in fame and fortune but rather in knowing and delighting in the

Lord himself so we see that God is eternal we see that God is triune he is trinity Father Son and Holy Spirit one God the third thing we see here is that God is creator and some may be rubbing their hands together now and thinking at last we get to delve into some of the theories of evolution and science and the days of creation and all these details that some people are so fixated on and I have to tell you in advance I'm probably going to disappoint you thoroughly if that's what you're looking for I'm reminded of what Alistair Begg often says he says the main things are the plain things and the plain things are the main things and what I want to hold on to here is not the peripheral theories of how all of creation happened but just that main plain central truth that it did happen that God is creator

William Still speaking on this chapter said that the best way to read Genesis chapter 1 is the simplest way he says the best way to read Genesis 1 is as near as possible to how a little child would read it not to allow intellectual pride to become an obstacle and not to demand in our reading that God would give us his creation design calculations as if we could understand them but simply to humbly accept what is clearly taught here and that's the doctrine that God is creator and let me say this is not some optional point of doctrine for the super pious sometimes we meet people who profess to be Christians who seem to want to opt out of every discussion to do with creation and when the truth of God as creator is ridiculed in the public square or rubbished by teachers in some schools so-called

Christians shrug their shoulders and say well you know secondary issue not a core truth I don't even want to talk about it but the reality is this is a core truth this is one of the main plain teachings of Genesis chapter 1 that God is creator and God is unique in his creative power we should see that also we say of some people you know they're very creative people you know artists for example they're so creative we say as we as we look at the works of art that they produce but the thing is an artist needs a canvas and an artist needs paints and an artist needs raw materials to be creative with before anything beautiful and remarkable can be formed but God God made everything from nothing such is his creative power he made everything everything that takes our breath away in the majesty of what's around us here he made it from nothing with a word what was there in the beginning we're told in verse 2 now the earth was formless and empty so what did

[54 : 19] God do well he brought form into the formlessness and he filled the emptiness that's a summary if you want a two line summary of what God did in the work of creation he brought form into the formlessness and he filled the emptiness John MacArthur said the earth was like an unshaped lump of clay awaiting the potter's loving hands and we see then this form emerging and the creation being filled as God speaks we see that as God moves through the days of creation there's an order there's a symmetry about the way God creates and I'm not going to go into the details of this but if you have this open in front of you you'll find it helpful look at day 1 verses 3 to 5 God formed the light the day and separated from the darkness night and if you go from day 1 to day 4 we see that

God filled the day and night sky with the sun and the moon and stars God forms and then he fills day 2 God formed the sky the expanse and the sea that's verses 6 to 8 day 5 God filled the sky with birds he filled the water with fish and sea creatures day 3 God formed the dry land and vegetation that's verses 9 to 13 then in day 6 God filled the land with mammals and reptiles and finally with man there's the forming and there's the filling in God's orderly and systematic work of creation and if you're scanning these verses with me then you'll see that there are certain words or phrases that are recurring for emphasis that will note

God said and it was so that's one of these recurring phrases it's a phrase I think that's repeated seven times and it's a phrase that highlights the power of God God said and it was so I was talking to the children about Alexa you know we speak to Alexa and Alexa is able to do some things but very much unable to do other things her power or its power is very much limited or think about politicians they're very quick with their words they speak they make promises but very often they have no power to make these promises happen but everything God says it's done God said and it was so such is his power and just for an illustration of that look in particular at day four verse 14 God said let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth and it was so

God made two great lights the greater light to govern the day the sun the lesser light to govern the night the moon and then there's that amazing line he also made the stars almost a throwaway line he also made the stars now if you went out for a walk on Wednesday evening it was a clear sky and you look up and there is just this awesome display of stars and when we take the time to look up we're lost for words because they are so vast and so majestic and yet God simply spoke them into being such as his power he also made the stars you know we sing oh lord my god when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made I see the stars I hear the mighty thunder thy power throughout the universe displayed then sings my soul my saviour

God to thee how great thou art you know that's the response that we're to be brought to as we survey creation we should bow and worship not demand answers and squabble and fixate on peripheral issues we should be those who are overwhelmed by the wonder of what God has done and cry out with the hymn writer how great thou art God said and it was so the second phrase the recurring phrase within the days of creation is God saw and it was good that's a phrase I think that's mentioned seven times and it highlights the perfection of God if God said and it was so highlights the power of God God saw and it was good highlights the perfection of

[59 : 56] God you know we begin projects with great enthusiasm and focus house renovations you know we have grand designs we have high expectations we we may have very precise specifications and we start off on that on that note but after a while we get tired we get frustrated you know the standard of our work and attention to detail slips and a few months down the line of a renovation project and we're saying oh well it's not perfect but it's just going to have to do but there's nothing of that in God's creation everything that he made was good it was very good before sin came in to spoil so from day one to day six we see God in a very orderly way giving form to what was formless and filling what was empty but don't overlook day seven before we move on what did

God made on day seven this is chapter two verses one to three well on day seven God made a holy day he made a day of rest and I wonder have you ever have you ever considered why God made this holy day now was it because God was tired after the the work of creation we can hear Isaiah the prophet answering that question with a resounding no God was not tired Isaiah 40 verse 28 the Lord is the everlasting God the creator of the ends of the earth he will not grow tired or weary and his understanding no one can fathom so we need to ask the question well if God does not grow tired why did he rest after the work of creation and the answer I think is he did it for our sake because we get tired we get physically tired we get spiritually tired and because

God made us he knows that we need rest and so he made this special day a day designed for us to wait upon him a day designed where we would put our hope in him and wait upon him until our strength is renewed again Isaiah 40 29 to 31 he gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak even youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall but those who hope in the Lord or those who wait on the Lord the old version says will renew their strength they will soar on wings like eagles they will run and not grow weary they will walk and not be faint the holy day the sabbath that God made on day seven is a day where we are it's a day that we are gifted where we stop work and we wait upon the Lord until our strength is renewed so these are the days of creation a very quick look at them but I know a big question for some people is how long was a day was a day 24 hours and some would say yes

Strassner says we are given no reason to believe that the six days of creation were not six literal days Genesis 1 says again and again that on each day there was evening and there was morning that doesn't describe a millennium but the normal sequence of one 24 hour day Eric Alexander if you want a different view argues that these days of creation may not necessarily be 24 hours he observes that we measure a day from sunrise to sunset but as there was no sun and moon until day four it would be difficult says Eric Alexander to talk about a day using the measurements that we recognize and that we know and if you want my own thoughts I think well you know if we have no problem believing in the resurrection and if we have no problem in believing in the miracles of

Jesus then there should be no great challenge in believing that God could do the work of creation in six days of 24 hours but then equally there's no problem in believing that God may have chosen to take longer God is a supernatural God he is able to do supernatural works and if you can't agree with that I would say with J.B.

[65 : 31] Phillips in the title of his book your God is too small God is not small God is eternal he is trinity he is creator and the last thing and it's just a final word God is knowable we can know him why do we have Genesis 1 why did God speak creation into being why did he make us the answer is because he wanted to it was as Ephesians 1 puts it according to his good pleasure Augustine famously said you have made us for yourself oh Lord and our heart is restless until it rests in you so

Genesis 1 is the beginning of the story of the God who is eternal the God who is triune the God who is creator and the God who wants you and I to know and find rest in him we'll pray Lord God we struggle to find words to be able to think through and respond to the wonder of these truths but we ask that you would give to us the faith that we need and Lord we pray that you would enable each one of us to realise that amazing truth that this God who is eternal this God who is our creator our maker this God who is triune is a

God that we can know we thank you that you have revealed yourself to us in creation through scripture and supremely in Christ and we ask Lord that you would help us not to turn away from you but to turn in reverence and awe and worship to you and to take this invitation that you have given us to know you and to be with you eternally and we ask these things in Jesus name Amen O worship the King all glorious above O grateful he sing his power and his love our shield and defender the ancient of days pavilion in splendor and curdled with praise

O tell of his might O sing of his grace whose robe is the light whose canopy space his
chariots of wrath your deep thunder clouds foam and dark is his path on the wings of the
storm the earth with its stone of wonders untold almighty thy power hath bounded on hold
hath established it fast by a changeless decree and round it hath cast like a mantle the
sea thy bountiful care what tongue can we cite it bleeds in the air it shines in the light it
streams from the hills it descends to the glade and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain
real children of dust and feeble as frail in thee in thee in thee do we trust nor find thee to
fail my mercy how tender how firm to the end hath love, what angels delights to hymn thee
above.

The heart blur creation, though feeble there lays, with true adoration shall sing to thy
praise.

[72 : 03] And I may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the
fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forevermore.

Amen.