

5. Read the passages below. They describe God as what some call “the Uncaused Cause.” He is eternal and self-existent. Why is this important and what are the implications?

Psalm 90: ² Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Isaiah 40: ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

John 5: ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

Colossians 1: ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Revelation 1: ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

6. Even if Genesis 1 is meant to teach that the earth was created in six 24-hour periods about 10,000 years ago, and even if the majority of future scientists came to the conclusion that the evidence points to that, how does the story of creation also drive home a message about why God created?

7. Why might the WHY of creation be more important than the HOW of creation?

The First Page (A Series on Genesis 1)

“Creation and Science”

Genesis 1:1

“I don’t believe in God. I believe in science.” (Esqueleto in Nacho Libre)

What (if anything) does Genesis 1 tell us about _____ God created the world?

Things Are Not Always as They Seem

When it comes to the Bible, things are not always as they seem.

- Sometimes God’s people missed the fuller meaning of God’s Word because of what theologians call “progressive _____.”
- Sometimes we too quickly read what WE think the Bible says without asking what it actually says. We’re prone to sacrifice reality for _____.
- Sometimes we fail to remember that Genesis wasn’t written to us even though it was written _____ us.

Just because we can find a word in our language to translate a word in the Bible’s language doesn’t mean we can now turn to an English _____ for the meaning of that word.

In the Beginning of What?

- The word for “beginning” in Hebrew can mean an exact point in time or it can refer to an _____ period of time (see Job 8:6-7; Jeremiah 27:1; 28:1).
- Does “in the beginning” mean the beginning of time or history, or the beginning of matter or the universe, or the beginning of the human race? Or could it be something as simple as the beginning of the story Genesis 1 tells? Or is it a summary of the story that _____ in verse 2?
- The Hebrew word for “create” (*bara’*) often means _____, assigning a purpose or designing and building with existing material (Psalm 51:10; 89:47; 102:18; Isaiah 4:5; 43:1; 31;22)

The Bible teaches that God is “the _____ Cause.” (See Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; John 5:26; Colossians 1:15-17; Revelation 1:8) He is eternal. He has no beginning. He simply is. And he caused everything else that is. But is this passage making that point?

Creation, Science, Faith, and Slippery Slopes

One of the questions we ask—because of our own cultural context—is how does this depiction of creation square with scientific models? And a question we often skip is whether or not Genesis 1 is even concerned with _____ creation came about.

There are a wide varieties of ways Christians who believe that Bible is authoritative, inspired, and inerrant have understood Genesis 1 as it pertains to the _____ of the universe.

Christians in the greatest danger of slipping down a slope are those that think they are on _____ ground when they’re not. They’re the most vulnerable. We’re all on slippery slopes.

Ancients didn’t know that thinking originates in the _____. The Bible never corrects that misinformation. It always, without exception, goes with their conception. Why would it be any different when it comes to the science of creation?

How many of us would walk away from Christianity if we believed that to be a Christian we have to believe our thinking capacity is _____ in our heart and our gut because that’s where the Bible locates it?

If God created everything in six literal days—something he could have done in an instant—then the WAY he did create, and the way he inspired the retelling of the way he did it, obviously also drives home _____ he created.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week’s sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What’s a book you’ve read, a piece of art you’ve seen, or a movie you’ve watched where it became apparent that what you were reading or seeing was something other than what it seemed to be?
3. When we read the Bible, things are not always as they seem. Sometimes an idea is incomplete until God offers more information later in the story. Sometimes we’re not willing to think deeply and we sacrifice reality for clarity. And sometimes we forget that biblical words mean much more or something different than their English equivalents. How do you see this at work with the word “justification” in the passage below?

Romans 4: ²² That is why [Abraham’s] faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” ²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our **justification**.
4. “In the beginning God created...” may describe the first act of creation or it may be a summary of what happens from verse 2 through the end of the chapter. If it’s a summary (and many scholars believe it is), it may be paraphrased as follows: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Here’s what he did. He took what was wild and waste (chaotic) and brought order, creating distinct realms and then filling those realms.” What differences would this interpretation make on our understanding of the creation narrative?