

4. Watch the BibleProject “Heaven & Earth” Video (on YouTube or at the BibleProject website). Why do they say that “the union of heaven and earth is what the Bible is all about”? (Take your time with this question, and offer a thorough answer.)

5. Look at your answer to question 3 and consider the larger epic story the Bible tells of union of heaven and earth. Another way to describe it is the that Bible is about Creation, Fall, Israel, Redemption, and New Creation. Why is this larger picture important for our discipleship and our lives?

**Resources:**

- “When Heaven Meets Earth: A 12-Part Biblical Study on Heaven from The BibleProject,” [https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Quarterlies\\_Other%20Downloads/workbook1.pdf](https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Quarterlies_Other%20Downloads/workbook1.pdf)

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SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

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**The First Page (A Series on Genesis 1)**

“What is the Bible All About? (The Heavens and the Earth)” (Part 1)  
Genesis 1:1

What would you say the Bible is all \_\_\_\_\_?

It’s not that we’re majoring on the minors; it’s that we’re often missing a major answer to the question of what the Bible is all about. And as we look at the mess of the church in our day and sea of people abandoning their faith, I think what’s often missing in our answer is part of the \_\_\_\_\_.

**The Truman Show (the Wonders of the “Skies” and the “Land”)**

“Hebrew grammarians call this [“skies”] a ‘plural of extension,’ meaning the word is plural because it describes something large or complex. It’s a linguistic trick that works well in English, too. By nature, the word ‘skies’ connotes something grander than ‘sky.’ It makes sense to think of the realm above us as a vastness of things, not as a single thing.” (Tim Mackie)

The Ancient Near East Conception of the Universe

These are not people like Truman with an understanding of the vast universe but actually living in a dome. These are people living in a \_\_\_\_\_ universe thinking they live in a dome.

Just like the fact that people in ancient times believed the mind was located in the heart and \_\_\_\_\_ and the Bible speaks of the mind as if it were located in the heart or gut, so also the Bible uses this flat earth/dome/waters way of talking about the skies above and the earth and the region beneath the earth. The Bible doesn't correct their conception of the where the mind is located, and it doesn't correct their conception of the universe and the earth's position in it.

God condescends or accommodates to our level of understanding in order to communicate to us, but he never \_\_\_\_\_ in Scripture that the earth is flat or the mind is located in the gut.

"Calvin spoke of God as having condescended to our weakness and accommodated himself to our capacity, both in the inspiring of the Scriptures and in the incarnating of the Son, so that he might give us genuine understanding of himself. ...Now we see why our Creator presents himself to us anthropomorphically, as having a face (Exod. 33:11)... These are not descriptions of what God is in himself but of what he is to us: namely, the transcendent Lord who relates to his people as Father and friend, and acts as their ally. **God sets himself before us in this way to draw out in worship, love, and trust, even though conceptually we are always like the young children who hear their parents' baby talk and know the talker only in part (1 Cor 13:12).**" (J.I. Packer)

### **Baby Talk and Worship, Love, and Trust**

- Pillars that keep the earth from \_\_\_\_\_:
- Threatening \_\_\_\_\_ waters above, around, and beneath us:
- The ends of the \_\_\_\_\_:

### **The Epic Story of the Skies and the Land**

The \_\_\_\_\_ of heaven and earth is what the Bible is all about.

### **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 are some of the most common answers Christians give to what the Bible is all about?
3. In the passage below, note how God's work and presence is described. They describe God as being clothed, stretching out the sky, riding clouds, placing the land on its foundations (pillars in other passages), and covering the earth with a watery vault. The images are obviously symbolic/metaphorical, but the conception of the land and sky is the only one they had. What are the points that are being made, and how do they lead to worshiping, loving, and trusting God?  
Psalm 104: <sup>1</sup> Praise the Lord, my soul.  
Lord my God, you are very great;  
you are clothed with splendor and majesty.  
<sup>2</sup> The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment;  
he stretches out the heavens like a tent  
<sup>3</sup> and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.  
He makes the clouds his chariot  
and rides on the wings of the wind.  
<sup>4</sup> He makes winds his messengers,  
flames of fire his servants.  
<sup>5</sup> He set the earth on its foundations;  
it can never be moved.  
<sup>6</sup> You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;  
the waters stood above the mountains.