

In the Beginning, God | Genesis 1

from the series, Worldview Matters: Studies in Genesis 1-11

Worldview is the lens through which we see all of life and answer the important questions: Who am I? Where did I come from? What's wrong with the world? Is there a solution?

It is vitally important that Christians form a biblical worldview, and Genesis 1-11 provides an essential foundation.

MAIN IDEA: God is the creator of all things.

1. The existence of God (v. 1-2)

God is not a created being, and therefore does not merely “exist.” Rather, he is. He is being, not becoming. As we see in Genesis 1:1, the beginning of time was not the beginning of God. He was before, outside of time and space. God is creator. The word “create” is used six times in this first chapter, but it is not the same word for “to make.” God does not “make” things as a man would; he creates something out of nothing.

Why did God create? He created because and for his glory (Psalm 19:1). We can also look to the New Testament, which tells us of Christ that “all things were created through him and for him” (Colossians 1: 16). When did God create? This is not a question that the text is interested in—it’s not the focus. The issue is not when God created, but that God created.

2. The creation of the world (v. 3-25)

As we move to the geo-centric view of creation, we find that on days 1 through 3, God formed the earth, and on days 4 through 6 he filled it. It is important to avoid two different misunderstandings of the relationship between God and creation. First, we are not pantheist or panentheists—that is, we do not believe God is the material or in the material. He is distinct from what he has created. But, we are also not deists. We do not believe God merely created the world and then stepped back, letting it tick on without him like a wound-up watch. God is involved in the world he created.

How does God create? With his voice. And throughout redemptive history, God speaks to dead people and brings them to life—he brings something from nothing.

What did God create? Day one: light. Note that he has not yet created the sun—the light is himself (cf. Revelation 22:5). On day 2 he creates the sky, the atmosphere, possibly the exact tilt of the earth. Day 3, the sea and land and also plants, trees, and seeds. We notice on these days of creating form, there is a theme of separation—the light from dark, the waters of the skies from the waters of the earth, the land from the sea; in the same way, his people will be separated out from the other nations. Days 4 through 6 are about filling—the heavens with sun, moon, and stars; the sky and seas with birds and fish; the land with beasts and bugs; and then, mankind.

3. The uniqueness of man (v. 26-31)

God creates man in his image and his likeness—he is a special species of creation. What does it mean to be human? We are self-aware, self-reflective, and self-conscious. To be made in God’s image is not an issue of capacity and quality, but one of identity and ability to have a relationship with God. Discipleship is best understood as a project in recovering our true humanity—this is only possible through Christ’s gift of salvation and identity in him.

God blesses his people in three ways in this first chapter of Genesis: in the ability to reproduce; in dominion over the animals; and the provision of plants for food.

We must read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament, in light of who Jesus is. What God is doing in creation is setting the stage for redemption.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Genesis 1 essential for developing a biblical worldview?

2. How does Genesis connect to the gospel? Why is important to read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament?

3. How is humanity unique among creation? What does it mean to be created in God’s image?



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