

Beginnings: The Givenness of Creation (Part 1)
Genesis 2:4-17

The creation of life

- “These are the generations of” occurs 10 times in the book of Genesis.
 - This heading signals a new narrative, story section.
 - This section continues through the end of Genesis 4, narrating creation and fall of man.
 - The story begins with a need for workers for the ground. (vv. 5-6)
 - The creation of the man described in v. 7 shows both skill and care on God’s part.
 - The word “formed” was often used of potters who formed clay into useful vessels.
 - The word “breathed” suggests intimacy and nearness.
 - The biblical account of creation stands in stark contrast to other accounts.
 - A purely materialist view of life cannot well account for the incredible design and beauty apparent in human beings.
 - Signs of design are everywhere:
 - We think.
 - We reason.
 - We have a moral compass.
 - We feel guilt.
 - We a sense of the divine, the reality of eternity, a coming judgment.
 - We hope and dream, love and worship, feel and fear.
- I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:13)*
- The creation account dignifies man without deifying man.
 - We are made, so we have real limitations and boundaries.
 - We are made *by God*, so we have incredible value and capacity.
 - We were made to know and love our Creator.
 - We were made to live with our Creator in eternal fellowship.

The invitation to life

- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not for education but discipleship purposes.
 - The function of the tree was to reinforce their creaturely existence.
 - They were to rule the creation, but they were to be ruled themselves by the Creator.
- Application from the “tragic” tree.
 - As we think about our own lives, do we look to the Creator for how creation works?
 - Do we think that God should rule over us in every respect and at every point?
 - Do we remember that this creator God is also the covenant God, not only powerful and sovereign but loving and merciful?

Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers... has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. (Exodus 3:13-15)

... And the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. ²⁴ And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ God saw the people of Israel—and God knew. (Exodus 2:23-25)

... I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. (John 10:17-18)

- Every biblical command should be seen through the prism of the cross.
 - Christ’s rule is not harsh but loving. (See Matthew 11:28-30)
- The tree of life was not an afterthought but a continual access to life.
 - After the fall, God lovingly expelled Adam and Eve from the garden so that they would not have access to the tree in their fallen state. (Genesis 3:22-23)
 - By partaking of the forbidden fruit, they lost access to the life-giving fruit.
- Application from the “God-given” tree.
 - There is only one way to eternal life, and that’s the ultimate tree of life, the tree on which Jesus died for sinners.
 - Partake of this tree like your life depends on it, because surely it does.

Take hold of that which is truly life. (1 Timothy 6:19)