



New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

GENESIS 1:1-27 SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) What are three characteristics about God that we learn from the creation account? They formed Pastor Batzig's three points in the sermon.

His power, wisdom and goodness.

2) What is the significance of acknowledging God's power to bring everything out of nothing in the creation account? How does this impact our lives? What does the rest of the Scripture teach us about this? Specifically consider the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 121.

Sinclair Ferguson explains:

"He is worthy to be praised because He has created all things by His will and power and for His own pleasure they have been created. And that's what this passage is meant to do—it's meant to bow you down in worship and amazement that this God of such infinite power has exercised this power in order that you would know so well so that you would love Him, trust Him, worship Him, sing to Him and adore Him. And not only that, but that you would recognize—no matter whatever situation you are in, however dark and desperate that situation may be—this God has the power to help you. This God has the power to help you. You remember what is one of the most famous Psalms, number 121, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills," and as the Psalmist is looking toward the hills, they are not full of comfort they are full of danger. They are full of danger because he is going to go over those hills on his pilgrimage to go to Jerusalem. And he is wondering if he's going to make it there. "I lift up my eyes to the hills...where is my help going to come from?" Listen to his answer. "My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth!" Isn't that something to put courage into a faint-hearted pilgrim as he thinks about the dangers of crossing the mountains—until he remembers that his God made the mountains has power to sustain him."

3) What does the power of God in the creation account prepare us for with regard to redemption (new creation)?

Just as there was power to bring everything out of nothing in creation, there is power to bring life out of death in the resurrection. This is the New Creation power. It is first worked in Jesus and then in us. Compare Ephesians 1:19-20.

In order to help us understand this parallel between creation and resurrection, Geerhardus Vos explained the significance of the time between Christ's resurrection and His showing Himself to His people when he wrote:

"No eye except that of the angels had as yet rested upon his form. The time was as solemn and majestic as that of the first creation when light burst out of chaos and darkness. Heaven and earth were concerned in this event; it was the turning-point of the ages. Nor was this merely objectively so: Jesus felt himself the central figure in this newborn universe; he tasted the exquisite joy of one who had just entered upon an endless life in the possession of new powers and faculties such as human nature had never known before."



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4) What illustration does the Scripture use in Proverbs 8:22-31 (esp. vv. 30-31) to explain what God was doing in the creation of the Earth? Pastor Batzig's opening illustration helped capture this idea.

After shaping the house, He begins to fill the house. God builds the house and then fills it with things that will give Him pleasure. He makes the world and places man in it because He wants to fellowship with this man in His house.

5) What other way does the creation account teach us about God's wisdom in the work of redemption? Consider especially the act of dividing and separating throughout the days of creation.

At every point, God was separating to teach His people that they were to be separate in holiness and purity of worship from all the peoples on the Earth.

The God who divided the light from darkness, evening from the morning, the waters under the heavens from those above, the dry land from the sea, different kinds of fish, birds and animals from one another and the animals from man at creation is the God who separated the Jews from the Gentiles in the typical new creation of Old Testament redemptive history. All of this, in turns, serves to emphasize God's work of separating a people out of every nation from the world for Himself to be a new creation in Christ. The meta-narrative of Scripture is the record of God's redeeming work of separating a people for Himself out of the world. Genesis 1 and 2 were originally given to the Old Covenant church to help them understand who God was, what He had done for them and what they were to be as a people separate from all the nations on earth. This is, of course, fulfilled in Christ in the New Covenant people of God. In short, we are meant to see in the divisions that God enacts in the creation account His purposes of redeeming a people for Himself out of the world to be separate in holiness.

6) How is the wisdom of God seen in what he does with all of the things that He creates? Trees, stars, sheep, fish, etc.

God created the world to serve the purposes of redemption. God, in Christ, would come and die on a "tree" in order to save man from his sin and from the wrath than he deserves for rebelling against Him. Jesus used sheep and fish and other animals to explain God's care for His people. He told them, "If God so cared for the birds of the air, are you not of more value?" The wise men were led to the baby Jesus by a star. In the creation account of Genesis I, we read that the stars would be "for signs and seasons."

7) What phrase is repeated to teach us about the "goodness" of God in the creation of the world? What idea does the world "goodness" carry with it in Scripture? What does this teach us about creation?

"God saw that it was good..." - Blessing - That God intended to create a world that would display His blessing, and, in which, He would bless man--His image bearer.

8) What had to happen for the blessing that God originally intended for man to experience in the habitable world in which He placed him at creation to be restored to man?

God had to enter into the world that fell under the curse and Himself become a curse for us that we might receive the blessings of God by faith in Him. The Aaronic blessing had to be pronounced over Christ in reverse on the cross. Instead of "The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace," the Father pronounced over the Son on the cross, "The Lord curse you and forsake you, the Lord hide His face from you, the Lord pour out His wrath upon you and give you anguish of soul," so that we might receive the original creational blessings in Him.