

## **CCH Sermon 19SEP21 Genesis 1:6-25 “Introducing God”**

**VI4,**

**Recap: started last week looking at Gen 1: just first 5 verses**

We saw that it introduces us to our wonderful **God**:

The God who is **there**, God who **speaks**, who **creates**

And the invitation was to **worship** him

with **reverence**, with **obedience** and with **dependence**.

**Today we will focus on more creation, looking into days 2 to 5 and some of 6. Genesis gives us the lenses to view life as it is.**

**But Just a top tip for Bible study. This book is first of all about God.**

We love to look at a facebook photo and see *our* face. We do start to see human faces appearing in Gen 1 (and more so next week when we are introduced to humanity). But the Bible is first a book about God. By looking at what the Bible teaches about him first of all, we are better able to look with the correct lenses at life.

So today we are going to look at 3 things about Creation. But in doing so, we will learn more about the God who made it.

**Last week we saw my carpentry project, tells you that as a 10 year old my creativity was fairly basic. But someones handiwork does tell you about them.** Our girls' artwork tells you what they are into. Princesses and unicorns. Other artwork in museum: meticulous, gifted, deranged or angry!

**3 things we're going to see about the Creation, and 3 things that it tells us about God and how we can react.**

**I) First thing about the Creation is that it is CREATED.**

Now that sounds pretty obvious, but it's important.

Just look at verses **20-21**. day 5....

Isn't that incredible? Isn't that mindblowing? God only needed to speak and all sea life and bird life created.

Let's just pause for a moment. The **vastness**: the (vault) expanse of the heavens.

The **volume**: Swarms v21 water teems (makes me think of one of those

Attenborough documentaries: blue planet: dolphins rounding up bait fish). The

**variety**: just birds alone we have such diversity: emus, sparrows, eagles, hummingbirds, penguins, corncrakes. (not to be confused with cornflakes) breathtaking.

But the point is this..... Creation didn't just “get there”. What you see around you wasn't there all along. It had a maker. Creation is Created. (it's implied in the word creation but it needs to be said). Creation is Created.

There is an awesome mind behind the complexities of this universe, there is a powerful, sovereign, unique, God who made everything there is, and who made you and me. As we saw last week, with only a word he created the universe. With only a sentence he put whole galaxies into place.

All-that-there-is (vast oceans and deserts and jungles and gorges and chasms, and ice caps and barrier reefs) were thought out, designed, and simply spoken effortlessly into being by an Awesome majestic God.

**It is a created Creation, and it points to an awesome God.**

**He is awesome. We should really fall before him in adoration and wonder. What a mind to conceive of all this. What power to make it. What generosity. He didn't need a creation. He was content in relationship with the Son and the Holy Spirit in an eternity of love. But he is an outgoing God who spills over with creativity and generosity. A created creation, an awesome God.**

**So here's the big question. Why do we find ourselves getting so wrapped up in Created things?**

Our hobby, our latest project. Why do we not let the creation point us to the creator? Do you know what it's like for every thought to be focused on that next birthday present that you so want. The Bible says we are tempted to worship the Creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1).

**Now you might say, Charlie you are getting ahead of yourself. That's chapter 3, sin and idolatry. But can I point out one detail from day 1?**

The culture that Genesis was written into in the Ancient Near East was polytheistic. That means they worshipped many gods, even the gods of Sun and Moon. But Genesis calls them the big lamp and the little lamp. It's almost 2 purchases you can make at IKEA.

I think the writer is seeking to draw a deliberate contrast with the thought around him to say, let the creation point you to the real God, not to worship what you see around you. Yes there's a glory in the Creation, the sun even does God like things governing and separating and giving light. But don't worship the creator.

And I think we need to hear this. When we read "Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves" (Lev 19:4), we think that's not us. I remember driving down a road in suburban Brussels where we used to live and saw a man worshipping some metal.

He was a young lad and he'd obviously just been given a car, and he was polishing it. It wasn't just a car, it was his status symbol, his dream, his baby, his ticket to freedom!

And aren't we the same. The pension, the boyfriend, the new gadget. It can suck us in like Golum ("my precious"). We must turn. That's how to start being a Christian- turn "from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thess 1:9) and it's how we continue as a Christian- ongoingly turning from false worship that only disappoints. To the true God of the Bible.

And indeed the God who is presented to us here, is just so magnificent in comparison with all those puny deities that we fall for. He is **sovereign** (in other words totally in charge), he is **powerful** (He only needs to speak and it happens) and he is **unique** (There are no other Gods or rivals. He is the creator- everything else is part of the creation, and so we dare not blur the distinction- more on that in a mo).

We have a created Creation and it points to an awesome God so turn to him.

***The more I read Genesis, the more I see we are in God's hands. He is our maker, our owner, our King, and we are in HIS hands. He Deserves our respect and love.***

2<sup>nd</sup> thing about Creation.

**2) It is an ordered Creation.**

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I've got a diagram for you on the ppt of the days of the week of Creation.

Hope you can see it.

Let's walk through the chapter again and get the structure.

VI Summary. V2 2 key terms.

**Formless-**

in other words no shape or structure, and secondly it is **empty** (in other words void without content). The picture is one of complete chaos - like the raging waters of an endless ocean.

If you like God has 2 problems to rectify: no **form**, no **content**. and the 6 days of creation can roughly be split into days 1-3 where he overcomes the first- no form. And then days 4-6 where he overcomes emptiness- no content. You'll see that here, as we go through the days.



Verses 3-5 are day 1



Here we see God creating light






and separating it from darkness, and he calls the light day and the darkness night.


Note the repeated patterns that come up at the end of each day. Evening and then morning. The Hebrew way of speaking of a day.





The next paragraph: Verses 6-8 are day 2.

(slowly) First he  separates the chaotic waters by making an  expanse or canopy, which he calls  heaven or sky. And this makes sense of the water above (in the clouds) and the water below (in the seas).


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In verses 9-13 we move onto Day 3 , and this comes in 2 parts.


First there's the gathering of the waters together and the dry land , these are called earth and seas .

Now the formlessness problem is pretty much solved. We have a habitable earth with sea, sky and land. But before we move to Day 4 there is a bonus. **Verse 11**. And sure enough, effortlessly it was so: trees and plants (v11-13). Day 3.

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 Verses 14-19 day 4


Now here we start addressing the content question. And days 4 to 6 match 1 to 3 very precisely. So on day 1 we saw the creation of night and day. **V14**

so content is given to those places. 

The sun and the moon and the stars. The fourth day.

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 Verses 20 -23 are day 5, and see how here we have content given to the form/shape created on day 2. There we had the expanse separated from the waters.



So v20 swarms of living creatures in the waters. 

And birds flying across the sky.

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And then to Day6.  A biggie! From verses 24 to 31

On day 3 the seas were separated from the land, and then there was the bonus of the vegetation.

On day 6 we have the land creatures , verses 24-25 (livestock, creeping things, beasts of the earth) and then mirroring day 3 there is the bonus. Except it is not simply a bonus, it is the **crown** of the creation verse 26-30. Man and Woman .

Man and Woman will get a whole sermon next week.

As will their and our work the following week.

As will day 7 to round off the series. **Rest**.  There it is at the bottom of the diagram. The **pinnacle** of creation. (humanity the crown, rest & reln the pinnacle).

Well the point of all that is to show the intricate and delicately planned nature of the Creation. God shapes (left hand column) and then he fills (right hand column). It is an intentional, crafted, created, creation. An **Ordered** creation.

The point is not that this is a science textbook account of the creation. Xns disagree on how to understand those days literal 24hour period? Some say it is, some say it isn't: the sun isn't created until day 4, so it isn't a day in the sense of one revolution of the earth on its axis moving in a circle around the sun. So some say it's a poetic stylised account of the creation in the format of the days of the week, or that the days are epochs of time.

The big point is WHO. This ordered creation points to a **PURPOSEFUL** God.

A God, who makes plans, and fulfils them. A God who orders and separates and intricately arranges things. [🖱 black screen] What a far cry from the thinking of the ancient near east. Mankind as a random byproduct of the gods sleeping around.

What a far cry from the atheistic ideologies of scientists like Richard Dawkins. *“The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference.” (from “river out of Eden” 1995).*

I'd be happy to talk more about Science and Faith at another time (we may have an evening service on it) but I believe that science when rightly understood and the Bible when rightly understood will always be in agreement and I'd recommend the debates of John Lennox on Youtube if you'd like to see a scientist who is a Christian..

Sometimes atheist Scientists even go beyond their brief and import their anti God agendas, like Richard Lewontin the Harvard Genetist who says we “cannot allow a divine foot in the door” as we explain the world.

Far better like Steven Jones, Professor of Genetics at University College London to say: “Science cannot answer the question that philosophers or children ask: why are we here, what is the point of being alive, how ought we to behave? Genetics has almost nothing to say about what makes us more than just machines driven by biology, about what makes us human. These questions may be interesting, but scientists are no more qualified to comment on them than is anyone else” (he's a humanist!)

Listen to **God** on God in his own word here in the Bible. And he is an awesome and purposeful God.

### The application?

**TRUST God.** This world has come from somewhere. It is going somewhere- the judgement seat of Christ. It is ordered perfectly, it does have rhyme and reason.

Can't you see that God is purposeful. He is making plans, he is working everything out. Sometimes life is confusing, sometimes events in our lives are simply devastating, and we feel that God has abandoned us. But trust him. He is a purposeful God and you can trust him. He made the world.

He designed the hummingbird, he made Everest, he organised the exact measurements of gravity, so that our planet would neither be flung out to space or sucked into the sun. He made palm trees, porcupines, playstations and people, He gave us laughter, lorries, lemons and lunar eclipses. He designed whirlpools, waves, web spinning spiders, whales (the beast and the country). Trust Him and obey his every word.

I love the image of life being like a tapestry where all we see is the reverse side- what looks like a tangle of jumbled threads. But on the other side, our glorious Creator is weaving a beautiful picture that will one day all make sense.

He knows what he is doing. Will you trust him?

3) finally **Creation is GOOD pointing to a generous God.**

**You can't miss this in the passage.**

Verse 4 And God saw that the light was good.

Verse 10 And God saw that it was good

Verse 13 And God saw that it was good

Verse 18 And God saw that it was good

Verse 21 And God saw that it was good

Verse 25 And God saw that it was good

Verse 31 God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

Notice that after the creation of mankind it is not just good but **VERY** good.

God is so generous. He is a kind and gracious God. He makes a universe that is habitable and good for us. It is beautiful.

Yes today it is fallen, and out of sync with us. There are earthquakes famine and natural disasters, but those are because we have rebelled against God- read all about it in chapter 3. This world was created good. And we can still see that beauty and goodness today in the leaves beginning to turn, a glorious sunset, in the stars in the night sky, or the flight of a flock of birds overhead.

I hope you all have time in your busy lives, particularly on your day of rest (to jump ahead to chapter 2) to get out and pause and enjoy God's creation. Take time to just stop and worship the creator.

One morning I went for a run to Spring common and saw the mist just hanging a few feet above the grass. It was beautiful. Near Hartford Marina I counted 5 different types of flower in one hedgerow, and of course many tasty blackberries.

Don't hurry. Let Creation in all its beauty remind you of that repeated phrase, and it was good, and it was good and it was very good. And let it point you upwards to a generous Creator to be thanked.

If you are not a Christian, can I **challenge** you. Did this all get here by accident?

If it did how do you explain it? And who do you thank?

And if you are a Christian, can I **encourage** you. The one you are seeking to follow is real. He put this all here.

Don't give your allegiance to other Gods. Worship the God of Genesis I alone. Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Recap.

**Let's respond to God in song....**

Indescribable: Awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim.

And the final lines- You see the depths of my heart and you love me the same!