

Voice of the Church Message
Why Creation, and not Evolution?
Prepared by Pastor Jim Witteveen
Prince George, B.C.

The Bible tells the story of the origin of the universe in a very simply, straightforward way. And that story begins with a single, matter-of-fact statement: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

The first chapter of Genesis goes on to tell us what happened during the creation week. Over the span of six days, God spoke the universe into existence. The heavens and the earth, and everything that fills them, were created out of nothing, by the LORD's incredible power. And after each successive creative act, He made this observation of His handiwork: “It is good.”

And when the creative work of that first week was finished, the LORD surveyed the results, and declared, “It is very good.” And it was very good – the heavens, and the stars that fill them; the earth, and the living things that populated it; the seas, and the creatures that He made to dwell in them; and humanity, the crown of His creation, created from the dust of the ground to have dominion, to rule over all that He had made, on His behalf.

Everything fit together perfectly. Not an atom, not an electron, was out of place. It was all very good, fit together, working in unity and harmony, with the ultimate goal of bringing glory to the Creator. As the 24 elders before God's throne proclaim in Revelation 4:11, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

No human being was present when the LORD said, “Let there be light,” and when that light appeared in response to His command. No person saw the creation of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars. We weren't there when the LORD separated the waters above from the waters below, or when He separated the sea from the dry land. But we have the greatest witness of all to God's creative acts in that first week – His perfect Word. We know exactly what happened when time began – how all this came to be – because He has revealed it to us. God's Word is trustworthy and true, and we're called to trust in its message – to have faith. Because, as it says in Hebrews 11:3, “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.”

And so when we look at the world, and we examine the evidence of creation, we examine it through the lenses of God's Word. The faith that we have is not “blind faith.” It's not as if Christians have to close their eyes and disregard the evidence that's all around us in order to believe in the account of the opening chapters of the Bible. But our starting point is the truth of God's Word, and we move on from that starting point to examine the evidence. Our presupposition, our first principle, is that God's Word is true, and that God's Word must shape our understanding in every other area of life. And that includes our understanding of science, even the science of origins.

The difference between the Christian, who believes the Bible's account of creation, and the evolutionary scientist, who believes that the universe came into existence through a fortuitous series of events, through random processes, is not that the Christian begins with a bias and the evolutionary scientist doesn't. The difference is the bias with which we start. Everyone has presuppositions that form the very starting point of their thinking. The Christian simply begins with the presupposition that the Bible is God's Word, while the evolutionist begins with the presupposition that it's not.

And so, when we look at the world, we see something very special – something incredible. We don't see the result of impersonal, random forces, with no purpose and no end goal. We don't see a mere combination of chemicals that has no meaning or importance beyond its own existence. By faith we see what David wrote about in the opening verses of Psalm 19:

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world” (Psalm 19:1-4).

So in the end, does it make any difference whether we believe the Bible's account of creation, or secular science's theory of evolution? Can't we safely just jettison the Bible's story of our origins? Shouldn't we just simply recognize that the first three chapters of Genesis are an ancient, pre-scientific story, written by people who wanted to explain how the universe came into being, but people who didn't have the kind of technology or knowledge that we have today? Or perhaps we don't have to go that far; perhaps we could combine the current scientific understanding of origins with what the Bible has to

say, and hold to a form of “theistic evolution,” and re-interpret what the Bible says in the light of that understanding.

The fact is, it does make a difference which creation account you believe – and a big difference. The Bible tells us that everything was created very good, and that in that good creation human beings were created in the same state of perfection. They were able to do what God had created them to do, and they lived in perfect harmony with their Creator and all creation. But this all changed when Adam and Eve fell into sin. They rose up in rebellion against their Creator, and as a result, death came into the world. Where formerly all of creation had existed in peace and harmony, the results of sin reared their ugly head. Where once everything had been “very good,” thorns and thistles sprouted; the earth was cursed, along with humanity. And that's why things are the way they are today.

Apart from the Biblical account of creation, we would have no understanding of the purpose of the universe. We would have no understanding of what this world could be, and should have been, had Adam and Eve not fallen into sin. We would have no understanding of the fact that everything has a purpose; that there is a correct order to things; that there are ultimate standards, standards put in place by our Creator.

And ultimately, when we call the truthfulness of the first three chapters of the Bible into question, we are doing the same thing for the rest of God's Word. If we can't believe the Bible's creation story, why should we believe the story of the fall into sin? Why should we believe that God really did promise Adam and Eve that the seed of the woman would come, to crush the head of the serpent? And why should we believe what the Bible has to tell us about Jesus? Because after all, if we, in our intellectual arrogance, believe that we now understand the world better than the ancients did, why should we believe that Jesus commanded the wind and the waves, that He had the power to heal the sick and raise the dead, and most importantly, that He died on the cross to bring salvation to His people?

But the Bible is God's Word. It is true and complete, from beginning to end, from creation, to fall, to redemption, to the future of all things. In His love for us, the LORD has given us His Word, to be a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. His Word gives us understanding of who He is, and of what He has created, and also of our role within that creation. He has proven Himself to be trustworthy. And so there's no need to doubt any part of God's Word – from Genesis to Revelation.

PAGE 3