

"IN THE BEGINNING, GOD ..."

Genesis 1:1-2:3

"Seeing is believing!" That's the old saying.

Heb 11:1 tells us true believing is based on what isn't seen!

[NLT] *"What is faith? It is the **confident assurance** that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the **evidence** of things we cannot yet see."*

John **4:46-53**: Official's son is sick at home. He begs Jesus to come heal his son.

Jesus responds: *"Unless you people **see** miraculous signs and wonders, you will never believe."* Jesus tells him to go home; his son will live.

"The man takes Jesus at His word and leaves".

He believes without seeing, but receives what he hopes for!

That kind of faith is commended to Thomas. **John 20:29**: *"You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who haven't seen me and believe anyway!"*

We think Thomas is blessed because he sees the resurrected Christ.

Jesus says we're more blessed, because we have greater faith.

Faith isn't the result of seeing. **Faith is believing without seeing!**

We can't see Christ physically today. But the record's all we need.

Rom 10:17 *"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."*

No mention of "seeing is believing;" faith comes **by hearing** God's Word

WORKING DEFINITION OF FAITH Heb. 11:1-3

1. Faith is an assurance of things hoped for. 11:1

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."

It's confidence that what God has promised will come to pass.

2. Faith is a conviction about things you can't see.

Faith is believing what God says, even when we can't see evidence.

3. By faith, godly people gain approval from God 11:2

"This is what the ancients were commended for."

Faith counts on unseen God for approval—NOT outward appearances!

4. By faith, we understand the force behind the universe. 11:3

"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

People without Christ *never* come to same conclusions

because faith enables us to understand what life's about.

Our presuppositions about God and His Word—what we trust—determines our world view and our response to the creation/evolution controversy.

THE BIBLE IS OUR STARTING POINT: GOD HAS SPOKEN IN THE BIBLE.

We trust what the God of truth says.

Many people are like **the piano mice**, living inside a piano. Music fills their “piano world.” They marvel that someone above, yet close to them, makes such beautiful music. They love to think of the Great Player they can’t see.

One day a daring mouse climbs up the piano and returns pensively. He discovered how music is *really* made. Tightly stretched wires tremble, making music. They must revise out-dated beliefs. Only blind conservatives continue to believe in the Unseen Player. Another explores further and finds that hammers dance and leap on the wires. The Unseen Player is just a myth.

Nevertheless, the pianist continues to play.

For those who know THE Pianist, it’s clear: *“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what we can now see was made out of that which was previously not visible.”*

Scripture affirms God’s power: He spoke; it came into being.

However, this conclusion is based on faith.

We’ve heard the story of the child telling a friend:

“Faith is believing something you know couldn’t be true!”

Mencken: “Faith is an illogical belief in the occurrence of the impossible.”

Faith *isn’t* like that! Faith *isn’t* checking your brain at the door!

True faith is listening to what God says, and believing it.

“ God said it; [I believe it]; that settles it!”

Why are we surprised we’re engaged in a conflict of *faith*?

The war isn’t with the evidence, the war is over things *you can’t see!*

The war has to do with what we *believe* about what God says.

It doesn’t surprise me when PAGANS reject what God says!

What I can’t understand is why God’s people buy it!!!

Tony Evans: Evolution: The belief that nobody plus nothing equals everything!”

How can people develop this view of origins?

How can people contemplate complicated systems active in living creatures and come to conclusion they developed spontaneously *by themselves*?

How could blood and vessels *simultaneously* develop, so one can transport the other, without one self-destructing before the other comes along?

Can time explain complicated systems supporting animals & plants?

How can anyone explain the reality . . .

that random events have *NEVER* been observed leading to order?!

that non-life has *never* been observed producing life?!

that left to themselves, things *always* go *down* hill?! (*always degenerate*)

To imagine such incredible events occurring on their own,

requires more faith than existence of an Intelligent Designer => GOD!

You'd have to really want to deny evidence to come to *that* conclusion!
Whole system is built on rejecting God's right to rule.

So why would WE go along with their conclusions?!!

Darwin: "I'd give absolutely nothing for the theory of natural selection,
if it requires miraculous additions at any stage of descent."

Julian Huxley: Supernaturalism "runs counter to the whole of our scientific
knowledge ... to postulate a divine interference with these exchanges of matter
and energy at a particular moment ... is both unnecessary and illogical."

It's about **getting God out of picture**—freeing us from accountability to God!

So, WHY DO WE GO ALONG WITH IT?!!!

For a few weeks, we're going to consider **what God says about creation**,
in contrast to what scientism says about the evolution of the universe.

Propaganda of scientism is powerful and pervasive.

We begin to think science has all the answers.

Anyone who disagrees with the predominant view is "*ignorant*."

"How can ANYONE be so foolish, to believe such superstitious nonsense?"

Such suppositions nudge some Christian writers to make statements like:

"The story of Adam is valuable but it doesn't constitute a scientific explanation
of the origin of man. Like other biological groups, *man descends by evolution*
from earlier inferior species. There's no longer reason to debate the fact that
the first living creatures appeared about 2 billion years ago."

Henry Schaefer cites C. S. Lewis' description of his days as an atheist:

*"Somebody told him that science disproved God; and he believed it,
even though he knew nothing about science."* He BELIEVED their doctrine.

Atheist Richard Feynman, Nobel Prize in Physics: *"Many scientists believe in
both science and God, the God of revelation, in a perfectly consistent way."*

Henry Schaefer [U. Of Georgia chemistry professor; "One of most distinguished
physical scientists in the world" :] "A scientist never questions the basic
soundness of the scientific method. This faith of the scientist arose historically
from the Christian belief that God the father created a perfectly orderly
universe." "I am convinced that, ultimately, **nothing in the universe makes
sense** apart from a belief in the sovereign God of the Bible.

Fundamental question: Will we believe what GOD says? Or, trust word of men?

GENESIS: BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

Genesis goes beyond historical facts to **explain how everything started**.

It explains **Israel's birth and existence from God's point of view**.

God's dealings with all mankind 1-11

God's dealings with Abraham's family 12-50

Condenses more than 2000 years of history into 11 chapters.

FOUR MAJOR EVENTS		1-11	
1. Creation	1-2	3. Flood	5-9
2. Fall	3-4	4. Confusion	10-11

BEGINNING OF THE UNIVERSE 1:1-2:3

Original audience for whom book is written: **Israel in the wilderness.**

Coming out of Egypt, man embraced the gods of Egypt

–at least tried to unite their view of God with Egyptian gods.

Moses calls on Israel to confirm their covenant with Yahweh.

They had to throw away the gods of Egypt.

Part of pagan religions was their creation myths.

One purpose of creation account: debunk pagan concept of creation.

Another purpose: establish foundation for OUR world view and values.

On basis of world view, we establish our values.

In contrast to contemporary stories about earth's origin–filled with capricious, competing gods, Moses describes how the One sovereign God spoke.

The authority of His spoken Word creates world where man will live.

Initial summary statement: God created the heavens and the earth

1:1 *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

Then Moses describes HOW God did it. 1:2-2:3 1:2-3 *“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. 3 And God said, “Let there be light and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening and there was morning—the first day.”*

1:31-2:1 *“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning—the sixth day. 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.”*

We're not going to take time to read or to explain all the parts of the story.

I'm not smart enough to figure out all the details of God's work of creation.

I do know that what **I** don't understand, **God** can handle.

Possible explanations exist for ALL the problems presented!

We're so used to complicated scientific explanations,

we're embarrassed to just say what God says!

God began with empty, formless mass; He filled it and gave it meaning.

By careful craftsmanship of the Spirit, God formed the universe.

God spoke and it came into being—just the way He planned it.

He tells us how He made it in 7 days–Repeated Pattern:

Announcement: “*And God said ...*”

Command: “*Let there be ...*”

Report: “*And it was so*” [NIV] = “*So ...*” *God’s in control!*

Naming: “*And He called it ...*” *God rules!*

Ancient kings demonstrate dominion by (re)naming those they conquer.

Evaluation: “*It was good.*”

Chronological framework: “*First day ...*,” etc.

He tells us how He made it in 7 days–someone is wrong here,
either “*God is true and every man’s a liar;*” or God’s mistaken!

Story in Gen. 1-2, combined with genealogies of Gen. 5, don’t leave much
“wiggle room” concerning age of the earth–if we accept inerrancy.

Godly people disagree about meaning of “*days*”–teachers hold different views.

Significance of days–Evidence for 24-hour days–normal meaning.

Significance of “day” + an ordinal number.

Significance of “day and night.”=> forces me to young earth.

If these “*days*” were ages, things could never survive millions of years
waiting for the next “*day’s*” events.

You would have to make all the details into an allegory!

Numerous problems solved if God created a mature world

e.g., adult people. How old would Adam appear on day 2? like 2-day old?

Trees with rings Stars with rays, etc.

Why do we let pagans dictate principles on which we evaluate God’s world?

Reason age-dating is inadequate: *assume* what they’re trying to *prove*.

They assume creatures, plants, stars and chemical processes
start from zero. If God created them mature, they appear older.

They assume the decaying process has always been the same.

God says He *intervened supernaturally* in the process.

Leaves no *observable* explanation for how things got here!

Observable basis *millions* of times shorter than what test “*proves*.”

3 billion yr time table on less than 10,000 yr observable history.

We must base these assumptions on *FAITH! No one saw it!*

Changes in scientific explanations of facts.

We keep discovering reasons old explanations can’t be true.

So we come up with another explanation!

God’s Word hasn’t changed in thousands of years!

It’s a lot easier to shoot down what already exists,

than to come up with a better explanation that will last.

It's not the author's purpose to introduce man in chapter 1.

Mentions man briefly; points out difference from other creatures.

Only man is created in God's image.

He's God's representative on earth, to rule over creatures God made.

BIBLICAL CREATIONISM CONFRONTS MODERN SCIENTISM

Biblical account wasn't written to address modern science;

It was written to address contemporary paganism.

It *does* speak to our day. It's not a scientific textbook—but

God of truth *does* tell the truth when He addresses science.

Bible is *NOT* a "victim" of its culture

Bible confronts culture with a different view.

—as unpopular in their day as in ours!

They thought world was formed by capricious gods competing with each other!

Genesis says the one true, sovereign God *SPOKE*!

While Bible and paganism disagree,

witness of multiple pagan myths affirms existence of a common tradition.

Because Bible copies pagans? Or, common history behind both?!!

Choice between science and the Bible is an issue of faith.

Bible does speak to modern "scientism"

It denies

—its atheistic perspective.

—its man-centered view of universe.

—its materialism.

It affirms

—God exists

—God controls universe

—God requires submission

So, the choice between Science and the Bible is a matter of FAITH!!

Evidence isn't the problem—there's no contradiction

Same Designer produced both!

Testimony of Genesis: *The writer* believes God created the world,

by verbal commands, in what appears to be 7 literal days.

Genesis story reaffirmed by Moses—who recorded it in the first place.

Exod. 20:11 tells us what he means: God sets apart 7th day

because He made the world in 6 days —rested on 7th.

Jesus, the Son—*Who was there*—affirms validity of record in **Mark 10:5-9**:

"At the beginning of creation, God made them male and female."

LESSONS FOR US:

Fundamental premise: God has spoken through His Word.

Other explanations try to make peace with scientific "evidence."

We can't make peace with view built on proposition
 that man is independent and free to live how he pleases!
 Either God is God, and we're subject to His authority,
 Or God is not God and has no authority over us!

Man screams: he wants *nothing* to do with God's authority over us!

IMPORTANCE OF FAITH 11:6 Back to Heb. 11:3: "**BY FAITH**,
 [based on God's Word] we *understand that the universe was formed at God's*
command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible."

Whom are we going to believe?

Has God spoken? If God has spoken, we had better listen!!!

* **Without faith, you can't please God.**

The only way we'll ever live in a godly way—a way that pleases Him—

=> if we have a different perspective on life: **FAITH!**

* **The *only* way anyone *ever* comes to God:**

1. Believe that He exists

2. Believe that He rewards those who seek Him.

If we trust Him, it **WILL** affect our worldview!

It will change the way we see the universe

It will change the way we see God's authority over our life.

So, WHO WILL WE BELIEVE? Whom do YOU trust?