

Beginnings: Solutions for today's issues from Genesis.

Lesson for Sunday, March 13, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

- Today we are beginning a series of lessons designed to coincide with Pastor's new theme, "Beginnings."
- Throughout human history, mankind has wrestled with the big questions of life. What do you think some of those questions are? *Allow for some discussion...*
 - Is there a God? What does it mean to be human? How did we all get here? What is my purpose in life? What went wrong? Why is there so much evil and suffering? Where is time headed?
- The first 11 chapters of Genesis are the key to understanding the rest of the Bible, and in these rich chapters, God provides answers for life's most important questions.
- These chapters provide the foundation for a Christian/Biblical worldview.

BIBLE STUDY: Genesis 1:1

1. The Creation of Time – *"In the beginning..."*
 - a. "In the beginning" refers to the beginning of time, space and matter. This is the beginning of the world which we inhabit.
 - b. It does not mean that there was nothing before Genesis 1:1.
 - i. Genesis 1:2 – The Holy Spirit of God existed before the world.
 - ii. John 1:1, 2 – Jesus (the Word) existed before the world.
 - iii. John 17:24 – God existed before the world.
 - c. In other places, the Bible tells us more...
 - i. Ephesians 1:4 – Before the foundation of the world, God was making choices.
 - ii. 1 Peter 1:20 – Plans were being made...
 - d. Before time began (Gen. 1:1), Persons existed, there were relationships (Trinity), communication, choices and plans.
 - e. We could read this first verse, "When time began, God was already there."
2. The Creation of God - *"In the beginning God..."*
 - a. Atheism is often considered the fastest growing religion of our times. Interestingly, the Bible never tries to prove the existence of God. This verse presents God's existence as a self-evident fact. What other verses in the Bible make this point?
 - b. When you study your Bible, words are important. The word "God" in verse 1 is "Elohim" in the Hebrew. It means the Strong, Mighty One, the Supreme Being. It is a plural noun that strongly hints at the Trinity – three Persons but all the same essence.
 - c. What does Genesis 1:1 teach us about God?
 - i. He is eternal: He has existed since before the beginning.
 - ii. He is infinite: If He can create the heavens and the earth He is unlimited in knowledge and power.

- iii. He is personal: He is not a force. He thinks, feels, loves, etc.
 - d. Think about it! In the first verse of God's Word, it refutes:
 - i. Atheism: In the Beginning, there is God
 - ii. Pantheism: God is transcendent...above time, matter, space.
 - iii. Polytheism: One God, Elohim...created all things.
 - iv. Materialism: Matter had a beginning & there is a reality outside matter.
 - v. Dualism: God was alone when He created.
 - vi. Humanism: because God—not man is the ultimate reality.
 - vii. Evolution: God, not some impersonal force, created all there is.
- 3. The Creation of Creation - *"In the beginning God created..."*
 - a. How did God create? The word "create" means to shape or to fashion.
 - b. We refer to the creation process with the term "ex nihilo" which means out of nothing.
 - i. There was nothing to create from. No preexisting materials.
 - ii. Only God can create. Humans "make;" God creates.
 - c. God created with His Word (Psalm 33:6; Romans 4:17; Hebrews 11:3; Colossians 1:16; John 1:3).

APPLICATION: There are two primary applications of Genesis 1:1.

- A biblical worldview begins with God. If God is the Creator of everything, then this is His world and we are accountable to Him. Contrast with how most live, "This is my world and I am accountable to no one."
 - What are the implications of this in our daily lives?
- From the very beginning, God's Word contradicts evolution which states that matter has always existed and life is basically random.
 - The result of evolutionary thought is a life with no meaning.
 - But the Bible starts with an intentional Creator who creates nothing just for the sake of it. The existence of God is the beginning of discovering my purpose for living.