

BEFORE ANYTHING, THERE IS GOD THE CREATOR

IN THE BEGINNING (GENESIS, PART 1) · GENESIS 1:1-2 · JANUARY 8, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

An Introduction to Genesis

- The name of the book of Genesis
- The structure of Genesis
- Questions raised by Genesis
- Our focus in this series

Genesis as a Revelation of the Kingly Power of God

- God's power to create
- God's power to rule over creation

Genesis as a Revelation of the Creative Craftsmanship of God

- God's powerful creativity and the creation from nothing (ex nihilo)
- God's manifold creativity seen in the variety of creation

Genesis as a Revelation of the Triune God

- The Father, the Eternal Word, and the Breath of God (1:1-3)
- The plurality within the One God (1:26)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What aspects of the world speak to you most powerfully about the creativity and power of God?
2. This weekend we begin a new preaching series, "In the Beginning," drawn from Genesis 1-3. This week we set up the series and explore the significance of the first few verses of

- Genesis 1. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then, whether you're on your own or with a group, read Genesis 1:1-2:3 aloud.
3. *Background: Genesis can be divided into two major units: the primeval history (chapters 1-11) and patriarchal stories (chapters 12-50). The primeval history encompasses early stories of God's work in the beginnings of the creation and early human history which set up the stories of God's work in the patriarchs to shape a people who would become the nation of Israel.*
 4. Verse 1 begins with a phrase translated in most English translations of the Bible as "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" and in some as "when God created the heavens and the earth." While there is much debate about the how and the when of creation, the Bible is clear that God is the One behind the creation. Why might this be so important for us to grasp at the very beginning of Scripture?
 5. According to Scripture, all of the created order is "contingent," that is, dependent upon God, while God is a "non-contingent" being, who does not need anything or anyone to exist. Why might it be important to understand this about God and the world?
 6. After reading through all of Genesis 1:1-2:3, what does this story tell us about God's wisdom and creativity?
 7. As you reflect on Genesis 1 and the work of God, how might you describe the reason why God created the world?
 8. Reread Genesis 1:1-2 and Genesis 1:26. How might these verses offer hints toward the Triune nature of God as Father, Son (and eternal Word), and Holy Spirit?
 9. What is one thing God is revealing to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize Genesis 1:1
- Consider going outside this week to explore God's creation. Even in this cold time of the year, the world is full of wonders. Notice things and give God thanks for them.
- Watch the Bible Project's video, "Genesis 1": bibleproject.com/explore/video/genesis-1/
- Read Tremper Longman's book *How to Read Genesis*
- Listen to all or part of Joseph Haydn's *The Creation*: [youtube.com/watch?v=Euls7R2BpvQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Euls7R2BpvQ)