

## Text: Gen 1

Today I'm going to attempt to start my "The Bible Story" series. I think I want to work through the narratives, the story, of the Bible. A lot of the Bible is narrative. Various estimates are given.

We don't have to preach narratives as narrative, but if we pay attention to the narrative, God can teach us things that we don't necessarily pick up in a more detailed text-based sermon.

One writer called the difference as between "a commentary-application format" and "a stream-of-consciousness format."

However, I have a purpose in mind for adopting at least an occasional series of narrative oriented sermons. I hope you find them helpful.

I've called this message,

### *The First Bible Story*

Now, the passage isn't really written in story form, but it does tell a story. It is Genesis 1, and the story is creation.

We all probably know the story pretty well. Or at least, we might think we do.

Of course it is the seven days of creation. Who can recall what happened on each day?

Day 1: Light

Day 2: Division of waters below and waters above

Day 3: Separation of land from the waters, and plant life

Day 4: Lights in the heavens: sun, moon, stars

Day 5: Sea creatures and "air" creatures

Day 6: Land creatures and Man

Day 7: God rested

When we come to this passage, we tend to think of it in technical and apologetic terms. We want to look into the science, to various theories of how it can be there was light before stars, and plants.

Today I want to simply go through the story, thinking about the message of Genesis 1 apart from apologetics and science.

## I. Before the beginning (1-2)

The earliest time I recall telling this story was at kid's camp, the year my mom roped me into being a counselor. I was 14, and I had the youngest kids, I guess about 8-year-olds.

For evening devotions, I read the *Egermeier's Bible Story Book* to them, starting here at creation. As I recall, it stirred up a lot of questions.

How did we get here? What existed before creation? Before the beginning?

- A. "Before the Beginning" is the wrong way to say it
  - 1. There is nothing before the beginning
  - 2. Yet there is God, without beginning or ending
  - 3. The story begins with God
- B. God is behind every story in the Book
  - 1. The story today tells us God made everything there is
  - 2. In the rest of the story, God is not far away, even in Esther where God is not mentioned
- C. At the beginning God made "the heavens and the earth" — but not in a defined way: "formless and void"

## II. Preparing the earth (3-19)

- A. Light prepares for demarking time
- B. Separation of the waters prepares for atmosphere and sea and air creatures
- C. Gathering together the land prepares for the land creatures, and plants feed them all
- D. The sun, moon, and stars complete the environmental system

## III. Filling the earth (20-25)

- A. The seas are filled with sea creatures
- B. The air is filled with birds

### C. The lands are filled with living things

Everything God made was good.

## IV. Adding one man and one woman (26-31)

### A. God decided to make man (in general) in his image

### B. God gave man a purpose: to rule over all creation

### C. God spoke to man and gave man his mandate

Man can be a “collective” noun – we learn from the second story (or the first story part two) that God created man in one man and one woman

God spoke to man: God made man for interaction; he didn’t speak to any other creatures in the creation week

God made man last, implying God made all for man

### D. Everything God made was “very good” — better than good

1. The word “good” has the idea of pleasing, beauty, quality

2. The word for “very” is an adverb, with the idea of “excess,” “completeness,” “muchness”

When we are called to love God with our whole heart, “whole” is “muchness.”

“All things have their natural goodness by creation. Things are not good, because they have a being only, but because God gave them such a being. Neither did God make them, because he saw they would attract a goodness to themselves; but he made them in such kind, as to bring forth that goodness he before determined they should. ‘And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.’”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> John Bunyan, *An Exposition of the First Ten Chapters of Genesis*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2006), 424.

## V. And God rested (2.1-3)

- A. God made everything in the first six days, “heavens and earth and all their hosts” — the multitude of lives and creatures on the earth, and everything surrounding them
- B. God set aside (sanctified) the seventh day because creation work ended, making the day holy for man

### Conclusion:

The inescapable sense of the creation story is that God made creation for man, and man for himself.

God made creation indescribably beautiful, a beauty it still retains though the marred and broken by the fall.

When we think of Creation, we should think of heaven, which Jesus went to prepare. Creation is not heaven, but heaven is what Creation should have been.

When we think of Creation, we should think of God, who made all things, and we should worship him with all our heart, mind, will, and strength.