

Foundations in Creation

Leadership Class

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Well, it's four months since we last met and back in June 10, for a recap, Nathaniel was speaking to us and we were challenged to guard the gospel against those who would replace the gospel with seven things, seven points he had. First, for those who would replace imputation of righteousness with conformity to the law. I'll repeat that, those who would replace imputation of righteousness with conformity to the law. Secondly, those who would replace obedience to Christ with restriction of what is good. Thirdly, replace preaching the word with worthless programs. Fourthly, replacing discipleship to build a Christian mind with counseling to fix a felt need. Because he elaborated on all these points and we were challenged to guard the gospel against those who would replace the authority of the office of elders with relationally driven personalities. Those who would replace liberty in Christ with lustful licentiousness. And finally, those who would replace the word preached with smooth speech. And so we were challenged to guard the gospel against all these issues and I want to pick up there because our topic this morning is "Foundations in Creation," and whether we're leaders or potential leaders or just Christians generally, we must guard the gospel but to do that, we first of all have to understand the gospel and then be able to defend it.

And so my first point this morning is, what is the gospel? Let us remind ourselves, what is the gospel, and people often will quote John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Sad to say that in our post-Christian secular and pagan culture, quoting that verse is just woefully insufficient. And why? Well, the terms need to be defined. You know, that verse, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life," raises a lot of questions in the minds of those who are secular, pagan, post-Christian; they don't have any knowledge, the knowledge that you and I have from God's word. And so questions arise, "Well, who is God? Or what God are you talking about because there's lots of gods. People have the Hindu gods and etc., the Muslim god. And how can God have a Son?" That's a totally foreign concept. in our post-Christian culture. And then the big one, "If God loves the world, how can there be all the death and suffering we see and experience today? If God is in charge of everything and we see all this death and suffering, well, God must be bad. He must be malevolent. Why would I want to worship him? And you know, what is eternal life? You say, you know, should not perish but have eternal life. Well, when you die, you're dead and that's it. That's the end of everything." That's what most people today believe in our

post-Christian secular culture, and so if we're going to present the gospel, we've got to be able to answer these questions and we need to be able to define the terms that we use to explain them.

Now, a classic example of what I'm talking about is context. Missionaries, when they go to a pagan culture, they look at the context of the people and they study the culture and they try to figure out how people think. Well, Paul, the Apostle Paul, was also very astute. Okay, when he went to the Jewish synagogue, what did he do? He opened the Old Testament Scriptures to show them who the Messiah was and then preached Jesus. But what did Paul do when he went to Athens? And in Acts 17, I'll get you to turn there, what did Paul do when he went to the Areopagus on Mars Hill to speak to these Athenians? Now they were pagans. You know, they believed in many gods, in fact, they had altars everywhere to all the different gods, and so Paul realized this and of course they even had one to the unknown God, and so what did Paul do? Let's read what he said to them in Acts 17, beginning at verse 22. Verse 22, Acts 17,

22 So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, 28 for "'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, "'For we are indeed his offspring.' 29 Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

So where did Paul begin when he was speaking to pagans in a pagan culture? He began with God as the creator. He went back to Genesis because he realized that the gospel begins there. The very foundations of the gospel are found in the early chapters of Genesis because Genesis tells us who God is. Paul in verses 24 and 25 says, "The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything."

So Paul brilliantly here under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, of course, summarizes the gospel beginning in Genesis and he first had to establish to these pagans, who didn't know who God was, that the God he was talking to them about is the creator of all things, that he has an eternal Spirit, that we disobey God that we deserve punishment, you know, commanding people everywhere now to repent, because he's fixed a day on which he will judge the world, but God sent a man, Jesus, okay, by a man whom he is appointed, of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. God sent a man, Jesus, who died, rose from the dead for our justification and by whom he will judge everyone. So Paul established all of those parameters in presenting the gospel.

So the creation account in Genesis is foundational to the gospel, as we'll talk about this morning and indeed, all biblical doctrines can be traced back to their foundations in Genesis and so I want to elaborate on that statement, which is my next point about I'm going to talk about some of the doctrines with their foundations in Genesis. Well, first of all, God as creator, I've already mentioned that. So if we go back to Genesis 1:1 begins, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." And so there's no explanation, no apology. No, we're told that when God made time, space and matter, that's in the beginning, that's when time began, God created the heavens, that's space, and the earth, matter, God already existed. God immediately introduces himself, defines himself without explanation or apology as the eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, transcendent creator of everything. And so that is the whole foundation on which the Scriptures are built. Who is God? He's the creator. He knows everything. He's all-powerful. He was before all time. He's eternal. He's a spirit. And so it's right up front there, right at the beginning and so when we're presenting the gospel, we've got to tell people who God is and he establishes who he is by his work in creation, the one who has the power to create all things, including you and I.

The second doctrine that we find here in the Genesis account of creation is the doctrine of the Trinity. It's there. It's there, it's very clear, in fact, when we point this out because in verse 1, we've already been introduced to God the Creator, God the Father, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," and then in verse 2, we read, "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." So, immediately we're introduced to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God. And then in verse 3, we read, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." And who is the Word? When God spoke, it was none other than Jesus, because we know from John 1:1 and 2, it tells us in the opening of John's gospel, in fact, John starts his gospel exactly the same way as Genesis does, "In the beginning," and what we're told is, "the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." And that clearly states, identifies who Jesus is. He is the Logos, the Word, the communication from God. So when we read here in Genesis 1, "And God said... And God said... And God said...", that's Jesus is being introduced, the Word. He was the agent of creation and so we also learn there that he was co-equal with God, and that's what John reminds us.

And then in John 1:3, John goes on to say, explaining what we just read there in Genesis 1:3, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." In Genesis we read in verse 3, "All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," that's John 1:3 and it's identifying that Jesus was the creator. So when God spoke and it happened, that was Jesus because we're told that everything was made through Jesus Christ. In fact, Paul in Colossians 1:16 says the same thing. He reminds us that as God's beloved Son, Jesus was the agent of creation, the Logos, God speaking. Paul says, "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through him and for him." And so every time we read here in Genesis 1, "And God said... And God said... And God said...", that's the commentary on who is doing the actions. It is Jesus, the Word, who is acting in creation. Similarly, the writer of the Hebrews, in Hebrews 1:2, tells us the same thing, "but in these last days he," that is, God the Father, "has spoken," communicated, "to us," that is, "by his Son," the Logos, the Word, "whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." Okay, so, Jesus again is being identified as the agent through whom God spoke, God created, none other than the Word, the Logos. And the writer of the Hebrews in chapter 1, verse 3, also reminds us that as God's Son, he is co-equal in nature and essence and power within the Trinity because we read in verse 3, "He," speaking of Jesus, God the Son, "is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power." And so you can see the consistency of the language that is being used here because it echoes Paul's declaration in Colossians 1:15 and 17, that he, Jesus, is the image of the invisible God and he is before all things and in him all things hold together. And so Scripture corroborates Scripture. We can see that consistency in the terminology and the words that are used.

And then finally, in the Genesis account, in speaking of the Trinity, we get to verse 26 and here we read that there was communication within the Trinity. What do we read? "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" And so the language there is reminding us it's the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were involved. They were communicating. There was that fellowship and communicating from eternity and here they are discussing and together acting and the Trinity is involved co-equally in creating man. "Then God said," the Trinity, that is, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and after our likeness.

So we've already seen that the first doctrine is God is creator, then we've learned about the Trinity, and now we've been introduced to man's nature, the next doctrine that's found there in Genesis. Man's nature. We're told that man is made in the image of God. We're told here specifically in chapter 1, verses 26 and 27, we're told that specifically the makeup that God gave man when he created him. What did we read? "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him." And so what does that mean? Well, the theologians have talked about this often, but you would think that if God has a three-part nature, as it were, the three members of the Trinity, then that would be reflected in the makeup of man. And so when we dig in here in Genesis 2:7, remembering that chapter 2 is a commentary on chapter 1, chapter 1 of Genesis, a chronological account, chapter 2 dives

in at different points within that sequence of days to elaborate on certain details. It's a different approach to explaining what was happening during that creation week. And what do we read in verse 7? "then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." So first of all, man was formed from the dust of the ground, similar to the animals, that is, a physical body. Physical material, from physical material, dust, the ground, adam, of course, means dirt, God created a physical body. But then we read that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God's eternal Spirit was breathed into Adam and man became a living creature. The Hebrew word for living there is nephesh and that word is also used with respect to the animals, the living creatures, nephesh and so that is the soul. So body, soul and spirit are reflected here. The animal's having a body and a soul, man having a body, spirit and soul, and there's some debate amongst theologians about the latter two divisions.

But no other creature, we should note here, that no other creature, when we read the Genesis account of creation, no other creature was created in God's image or after God's likeness. Not even the angels. Note that. Man is different from the animals. He was and is meant to be the pinnacle of God's creation, and unlike the animals was designed to have fellowship and communication with God, hence the makeup of man, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." You have fellowship with like, like has fellowship with like. So if God is to make man to have fellowship with him, then man has to have a similar nature to be able to communicate with God. And of course, until Adam and Eve disobeyed God, we read that Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day, and they shared that fellowship together. Genesis 3:8, we read about that.

So as I said, theologians have sought to define what do we mean by God's image and after his likeness and there's various Scripture references to these terms of body, soul and spirit. So for example, in the New Testament, in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we read, "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." That's Paul. And Paul again in 1 Corinthians 7:34, "And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit." And then in Hebrews 4:12, the writer to the Hebrew says, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit." And of course, in the New Testament, other terms are also used, such as the heart which is the seat of life, strength and emotions, and the mind, which of course is the seat of rational thought. And so for example, in Matthew 22:37, Mark 10:30, and Luke 10:27, Jesus made this comment, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." So a multiplicity of terms, and then again in the right of the Hebrews, in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

So, back to Genesis 2:7, of course, it's clear from that passage, that verse, that God forms man's body of the dust from the ground. He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,

the spirit, so that he could become a living creature, a living soul, a soul. So we've talked about God as creator, talked about the Trinity, and we've talked about the makeup of man in God's image. What about right and wrong, the moral law? Where do we get right and wrong from? You see, we've seen such an erosion of standards in our culture today because there's no authority that says what is right and what is wrong; everyone makes up his own mind, does that which is right in his own eyes. We're told specifically in Genesis 2:16 and 17, God defined right and wrong. He defined it as obedience to his commands and his instructions because what do we read there in Genesis 2:16 and 17, "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" So Adam and Eve were being tested here. They were given a specific command and expected to obey and if they disobeyed, the punishment was to be death. And so right, what is right, is here being defined by God as obedience to him and his commands and his laws, and wrong is being defined as disobedience, breaking those commands and laws, and we're told that that would have dire consequences.

Now, of course, what right does God have to do that? Well, he has every right because he is the creator of everything, and so he owns what he created. You know, if you make a painting or produce a book, you own it because you're the creator of it, and so you have the right to do with it as you please. And because God is the creator, he has the right to tell us what the rules are and he has the right to expect us to obey those rules. Because he's the one who gave us our bodies, he's the one who gives us our breath, he's the one who gave us our life, and so we're totally obligated to him, to obey him, not begrudgingly, but out of gratitude for the life and breath that he gives us. And so it's very clear here that God has explained to Adam and Eve his authority to set rules and expect their obedience and therefore right and wrong are defined with reference to God and his commands, which leads into the next doctrine and that is of sin, which of course is the breaking of God's laws. That's the disobedience side of that equation between right and wrong. And so in Genesis 3:8 through verse 13, we read this, "And they heard the sound of the LORD God in the garden," this was after the the temptation, the deception of Eve and Adam and Eve eating of the fruit.

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11 He said [that is, God], "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12 The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So here we see Adam and Eve have chosen, chosen to disobey God and that is defined as sin, disobedience to God. In fact, the word "sin" isn't mentioned there, but it comes up in

Genesis 4, where we read about Cain. Genesis 4:6 through 12, we read, "The LORD said to Cain," remember, Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices and God was displeased with Cain's sacrifice. And so the Lord spoke to Cain to engage him on this. "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." Okay, so God is here using the word "sin" in reference to Cain's disobedience because Cain was disobedient in the sacrifice that he brought. It was the wrong sacrifice, and God wasn't happy, and Cain was angry that God wasn't happy with his sacrifice. Well, because he disobeyed what God said should be a sacrifice, and we'll come back to that in a moment.

So what happened? "Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him." The first murder. "Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' He said, 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?' And the LORD said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground...which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.' " So God here is defining sin but in both of these passages, he's defining sin as succumbing to the temptation to do what is known to be wrong. I mean, Adam and Eve had been clearly instructed by God not to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, and they chose willingly to disobey. They knew and they disobeyed. That was sin. And Cain knew what the acceptable sacrifice was and he disobeyed, and the consequence of that disobedience, rather than repenting and doing what he should have done, he went a step further in anger, sin led to more sin, he murdered his brother Abel. And so sin is defined as doing what is wrong, known to be wrong, contrary to God's specific commands and laws and starting with Adam and being followed by Cain.

Now, of course, this is the same basis that Paul uses in the New Testament of sin's definition and origin in Adam's disobedience. What do we read in Romans 5:12 to 14? "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man," referring to Adam, "and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned--for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." What is Paul saying here? Even though the moral law, the 10 Commandments hadn't been given until the time of Moses, Paul is reminding us that sin had already entered the world through Adam and death had already reigned from Adam to Moses because people were sinning after the likeness of Adam. And so God here clearly defines sin and we see sin, of course, traced through the Old Testament and then dealt with in the New Testament with the gospel which, of course, brings us to the next doctrine that it has its foundations here in Genesis, death. Death. We read it earlier, but in Genesis 2:16 and 17, what did we read? "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'"

Now you will find many compromised biblical scholars and so-called scientists who would tell us that Adam and Eve obviously didn't die because when they ate of the fruit of the tree, they didn't drop dead physically and so it can't be physical death that they say when they ate of that forbidden fruit. And the reason they say that, of course, is because they believe that death had already been around for millions of years. So they say, "Oh, it was just spiritual death." Well, no, no, it's not that. If you have a correct understanding of the Hebrew used here, the Hebrew text says in the phrase, "you shall surely die," the Hebrew literally means "dying, you shall die," and the implication is there is that death is a process, that Adam and Eve began to die physically when they disobeyed God, when God pronounced the judgment of the curse.

And of course, that's further enhanced, that understanding is further enhanced about what God did as a consequence of Adam and Eve's sin because what do we read? That God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden. Why? Well, let's read Genesis 3:22 to 25. "Then the LORD God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever--' therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life." Why? Well, because if Adam and Eve had access to the tree of life, they will live forever in their sinful state. And so, in that sense, God driving them out of the garden so that process of death would continue until they finally died completely, that was a loving act, if you stop to think about it. If Adam and Eve, in their rebellion against God, knowing good and evil, having eaten of the forbidden fruit, now continue to eat of the tree of life, they would have lived forever. They would have lived forever in their sinful state, which would be a definition of hell on earth, because we know what the consequences of sin on the earth was subsequent to Adam and Eve. The earth became so wicked and violent that God sent the flood judgment. So if God didn't stop them, block them from going to the tree of life, they would have lived forever.

But yet we read, of course, that Adam did eventually die. In Genesis 5:5, verse 5, we read, "Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died." In fact, if you read through chapter 5, it talks about Adam, "and he died," and talks about the next guy, "and he died," the next guy, "and he died," the next guy, "and he died." So you get the point that they did die physically. They didn't have access to the tree of life and the degeneration set in as a consequence of their rebellion against God. They were removed from having access to the tree of life. I mean, they had access to that in the garden of Eden and that's how we know that Adam and Eve were, a provision was made for Adam and Eve to live forever. If they hadn't rebelled against God, they would have eaten of the tree of life continually in the garden of Eden and they would have lived forever in fellowship with God, which of course is what God has planned for the end of all things. And so God had to pronounce that death, he had to remove them from the garden so they wouldn't have access to the tree of life and so it would set up his rescue plan, which we'll come to in a moment.

But Romans 5:12 and 14 again reminds us, "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned--for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." And Paul also in 1 Corinthians 15:21 to 22, "For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive," which we'll come back to shortly.

So sin, well, what's the next doctrine that has its foundation here in Genesis? Well, the curse, why we have disease and suffering in the world. Remember what we read there in Genesis 3:17 through 19, "And to Adam he said," that is, God, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you." Not Eve's fault, it was Adam's fault. Cursed is the ground because of you, Adam. "In pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Very clearly, very clearly pointing out the consequences of man's sin was death and God was pronouncing a curse that would remind Adam for the rest of his life about his disobedience. He would have to suffer. He would have to work the ground hard by the sweat of his brow and the curse introduces disease, suffering and death because of Adam's disobedience. Notice it's not Eve's, it's Adam's disobedience, his sin, because he ate of the forbidden fruit. He could have chosen not to, but Adam willingly ate of the fruit that God told him not to.

And so God cursed the ground to make it harder to yield its produce for man's food so that man would have to gain his food by the sweat of his brow and eat it in pain. And of course, thorns and thistles now sprouted when they didn't exist before. So, for example, when we find fossilized thorns that are supposedly 400 million years old, they can't be there for millions of years before Adam because the curse wasn't pronounced until after Adam was created. So the thorns and thistles have to come after man. So the fossils have to come after man. You get the point? The thorns and thistles are not mentioned until we have this curse and so man worked harder to obtain his food. He had to till the ground. He had to begin to cultivate the ground to harvest the plants of the field. And the end result of this process was disease and suffering, which would have its finality in death. In fact, the fossil record, of course, is a record of death and we find the evidence of broken bones, of tumors or cancers. In fact, there's a whole field now called paleopathology where they study all the tumors and cancers and everything that are found in the fossil bones. So it was there. The fossil record is a record of disease, suffering and death and so it has to have come after the fall, not before, after the curse.

So man's body was eventually returned to the dust of the ground because man was taken from the ground. Now, of course, no mention is made here in this passage of the fate of man's soul or spirit. However, it's very clear when we go to Genesis 5 and we're reading through the list of people and I said before, "he died, and he died, and he died," but there

was one exception, wasn't there? Enoch. We read in Genesis 5:24, "Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." So he didn't die, he was translated. God took him and so Enoch is given as an example of God taking man's soul and spirit and returning it to him. God who breathed life into man's body to make him a living creature claims authority and ownership to call that soul back to him. And so that, of course, totally denies the secular thinking that after you die, that's it, there's no life after death because here we read Enoch had life after death. God took him because he was having fellowship with God so God said, "Well, come up here and have fellowship with me in heaven." And so God took him.

And of course, we also know from the New Testament, that death is not the end. In 2 Corinthians 5:10, Paul reminds us, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or bad." And the writer of the Hebrews adds, chapter 9 verses 27 and 28, "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

So this is another reminder that the gospel and the consummation of all things are rooted in what happened back there in the early chapters of Genesis and so Genesis has to be a true record, a reliable record of true literal history or else the gospel doesn't make any sense.

Well, the next doctrine, and this is a tough one for a lot of people because they experience it, pain, pain. And you might think, most people, a lot of people think, "Well, pain was a consequence of the curse." No, not at all. Pain was necessary right from the very beginning when Adam and Eve were created. Why? Well, how else would Adam and Eve protect themselves? If they touched something that was sharp or hot, if they didn't experience pain, they wouldn't know to pull back. So some level of pain is good. It's good. If you meet people, there are people that are born without the ability to experience pain, and a person like that will put their hand on a hot plate and their flesh will be burning and they'll have no sensation. You see, pain, a level of pain is good because those receptors remind us, "Well that's hot, that's sharp, I shouldn't go there."

So it's to protect ourselves but we need to note what God said in his judgment of Eve, following her succumbing to Satan's temptation, to remember Eve was deceived by Satan into disobeying God's command not to eat of the forbidden fruit. What did God say to Eve in Genesis 3:16? "To the woman he said, 'I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.'" Notice that God didn't say, "I'm now going to introduce pain in childbirth." He just said it would be multiplied or increased, implying that there was already pain in childbirth. It implies that if Eve had conceived and given birth before the curse, there would have been some level of pain involved even in God's very good creation. Now that might seem counterintuitive to you, but no, pain has a function in God's design of the human body and it warns us that if something's not right

or it's detrimental, and so it may well have been there for Eve if she had conceived and bore a child before the curse.

And what did God say to Adam in verse 17, chapter 3, verse 17? "And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life.'" The cursing of the ground was due to man's sin and it brought increased pain for man and his work to produce food from the ground.

Well, here's an interesting doctrine, if we can call it that, food. What about the diet we eat? And people debate these issues, but let's be frank here. Genesis 1:29 through 31 makes it very clear that the initial food that God provided for man and the animals was only plants, seeds and fruits. Verse 29 in chapter 1, "And God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.'" And then we read in verse 31, "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." In other words, it was in God's perfect plan man eating plants, seeds, fruit was very good. It was in keeping with God's perfection, with God's holiness. I mean, what did Jesus say to the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:17? You know, the rich young ruler said to Jesus, "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" What did Jesus reply? Again, define your terms. "Why do you ask me what is good?" Okay, what do you mean by good? "There is only one who is good," and he was referring to God, God alone, because God alone is perfect and holy. So when God declared his creation very good, his standard was his own perfection and his own holiness and so there was nothing wrong in eating the plant foods, eating the plants. Now, of course, some will say, "Well, wait a minute. Don't plants die when you eat them?" And we'll come to that again in a moment. That's a very important issue. We'll come back to that in a moment.

And what happened after the curse? Did God change the rules regarding the diet? Nope. Genesis 3:17 to 19, "And to Adam he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'" So man was still going to only eat plants and make bread, of course, from the seeds and grains, but now by the sweat of his brow in the post-fall, post-garden world.

But then what happened? Well, as we move forward in Genesis, we read that the world became rampantly wicked. There was violence and in fact, it says every thought of man was evil continually, and so God judged the world with a flood, the global flood cataclysm, and that changed everything. God destroyed the earth and clearly, there were changes that occurred in the earth. Remember in Genesis 6:13, we know that God was going to destroy the earth with man because God specifically said to Noah, "And God said," Genesis 6:13, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth." So the world

after the flood was a different world. Clearly the environment was harsher, maybe the soils were less nutrient rich, but God was obviously acknowledging this new reality when he gave man another instruction about his diet, his food because now, only now, God was giving official sanction for man to add meat to his diet. In Genesis 9:3 and 4, we read, "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood." And so, you know, the main food was plants, but now God said you can supplement that with meat, but the flesh, not the blood, and we'll come back to that in a moment.

And this is reinforced even in the New Testament. Okay? And what happened to the Apostle Peter? Remember he was staying, in Acts 10, he was staying with Simon the Tanner in Joppa and Cornelius, the Roman centurion, wanted to learn and so he sent messengers to get Peter, and what do we read in Acts 10:9 to 16? God gave a vision to Peter to teach him a lesson. Okay, he wanted to teach him that the Romans, the Gentiles were just as acceptable to God as were the Jews. But what was the lesson? Well, we read verse 9, Acts 10.

9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." 16 This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

So again, you know, Peter was given permission to eat these animals, but I'm not mandating people's diet today, I'm just merely talking about the doctrines that are here in the Scriptures, rooted in what we're told there in Genesis.

Well, the next doctrine, the promised Redeemer and the atonement. So even as God pronounced the curse with disease, sin and death, suffering and death as the punishment for Adam's sin, he also announced the promise of a Redeemer who would come and defeat the serpent where Adam had failed this Redeemer would succeed. And where do we read that, about that? In Genesis 3:15, "I will put enmity between you and the woman," speaking to the serpent, "and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." Who is the "he" he's referring to? He's referring to the coming Redeemer who would atone for Adam's sin, who would defeat Satan, he would bruise Satan's head. And then we read in Genesis 3:21, what did God do for Adam and Eve? "And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." That's an interesting statement there that most people sort of read over and don't see the significance of. To make these garments of skin for Adam and Eve to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness required God killing innocent animals and

shedding blood. A sacrifice was made to provide skins to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness. In the Hebrew text here, the word for clothed is often translated covering. It's the same word as used for the atonement which required the shedding of the blood of an innocent lamb to provide a covering for sin. Remember, because of Christ's death and the shed blood, we're clothed in his righteousness. Again, the terminology through the Scriptures continues to be repeated and so there's more here than just God giving Adam and Eve skins, clothing them with skins of animals. No, there was a sacrifice involved, the shedding of blood of innocent animals because they hadn't sinned, Adam had sinned, and that covering was to cover their nakedness which they realized they were naked when they sinned. And so God was providing an atonement right before them and so this is a picture that foreshadowed the sacrificial system that was instituted under the law in the time of Moses and so it was a picture and a practice given to Adam that Abel and Cain knew about because we read that Abel brought the best of his flock as his sacrifice. Cain brought the vegetables and God wasn't happy with that sacrifice. Why? Because the mandated sacrifice was the blood of an innocent animal had to be shed, the lamb. And so there's consistency here. And then we go to the Passover lambs, you know, the night of the exodus from Egypt. The lamb was slain, the blood was draped over the lintel of the house so that it was a covering over the household so that when the angel of death came over, the angel of death would see that covering of blood and bypass that household and not slay the firstborn. So again, the pictures are consistent right through. These examples were a foreshadowing of the Redeemer who was the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ who was perfect without sin, who as the infinite creator would shed his blood on the cross to atone for all sin of all people everywhere and throughout all time. So the doctrine of the atonement and the coming promised Redeemer are there, the foundations are there in those early chapters of Genesis.

Well, here's another interesting one, clothes, because in Genesis 2 and 3, we learn about the origin of clothing. Now the origin of anything gives us its meaning and Genesis explains why we wear clothes and what the standard for clothing is, in fact, and why nakedness is unacceptable to God. So we read in chapter 2 that Adam and Eve were naked and the man, verse 25, chapter 2, "And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." Why? Because they were created by God. They were in fellowship with God. There was no need to cover their nakedness because there was nothing wrong with their nakedness that had been created by God. They were not ashamed of their nakedness. However, when they disobeyed God and sinned, what do we read? Their eyes were opened and they perceived their nakedness. And so that's what sin does, sin exposes our nakedness before God. God sees, God knows, we cannot hide from him and we see that in Genesis 3:6 and 7. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." So what was their solution? "And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths." So notice their solution, they sewed fig leaves together but what happened? Their solution, man's solution, was not acceptable to God. Indeed, God first said to Adam and Eve, "Who told you you were naked," in verse 11. And what was God's solution? God's

solution was a more complete covering. Instead of loincloths, we read in verse 21, "And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." It was a complete covering. And so here we have not only the clothes were necessary, but God's standard. It was a complete covering, complete covering.

Well, another doctrine that we find here in Genesis, the value of life. Genesis 1:29, 31. Of course, we read that before, "And God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food'... And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." Plants, the seeds and the fruit diet was God's perfect provision, and as I said before, some falsely claim that meant death existed in God's very good creation from the beginning as plants had to die when they're eaten. But the question is, do plants die in the same way that an animal does? No. Let's look at God's definition of life. The Hebrew word used for life, as I said before, when God refers to living creatures here in the Genesis account is the word nephesh, and the word nephesh is only used in describing the animals that God created on days five and six, and this also when God made man and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living creature. Okay. And so that word nephesh, life, is only used in respect of animals and man. And God further specifically defines the seat of life and what life is when he refers to the blood as being the lifeblood. Plants do not have blood and therefore they're not defined as life by God because we read in Leviticus 17:14, "For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life." Okay. God sent the flood judgment to wipe out a corrupt world that was full of violence and bloodshed. Man was murdering, animals were carnivorous, dinosaurs, for example, and then after the flood, God emphasized the value of life as opposed to the shedding of blood in murder and he established capital punishment for murder. We read that in Genesis 9:5-7, "And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image."

This explains a lot of things. The plants didn't die in the garden of Eden when they were eating the fruit as their first diet because they don't have life, they don't have blood, God doesn't regard them as living. So there wasn't death in God's very good creation. The plants were specifically provided for food. But it also explains why Adam and Eve's fig leaf aprons were unacceptable to God. Because sin was so serious, it required a blood sacrifice of innocent animals as necessary. The plants hadn't died to be a substitute. The fig leaves hadn't died to be a substitute for Adam's and Eve's beginning to die physically. The lesson was that an animal had to die so they knew that the punishment for sin was death. The animal died in their place to give a covering for their sin. The blood was shed. And it's also explains, again, why Cain's sacrifice of vegetables was not acceptable to God because God required that blood sacrifice as the attainment for sin. And of course, when we read these passages about God's standard for the value of life, of course it applies to the abortion issue in the day in which we live.

Well, here's another hot button topic, gender. The origin of gender is here in Genesis, of course. In Genesis 1:26 and 7, we're told that when God created man, he created man and

woman, only male and female. "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." And then in Genesis 2, we're given more details about the creation of woman. In verse 21 to 23 we read, "So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.'" And Jesus affirmed and taught exactly the same truth that there are only two genders created by God and as the basis for that truth, where did Jesus quote from? He quoted from Genesis as real literal history and he knew because he was there as the creator. What do we read in Matthew 19:4? "He answered, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female?'" There's only two genders, male and female. There is absolutely no biblical basis for any other genders. We were created by God as biologically distinct and to espouse anything else other than two genders, male and female, as crafted by God is not only anti-biblical, it's anti-science. Have you noticed the stupidity that is going on today? People actually deny the science to say that there's more than two genders. I mean, even Richard Dawkins, the atheist says there's only two genders. That's what science teaches us. But you see, when man sins, God turns him over to foolishness and that's what we're seeing today in the denial of this biblical doctrine of only two genders, male and female.

The next doctrine that's found here in foundational here in Genesis creation, marriage. Genesis 1:26 and 27 we read that. "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." And then when we're given more details in Genesis 2:21 and 22 about at the creation of Eve, what are we told? We're told about the first marriage and God arranged that marriage and God defined that marriage. In Genesis 2:23 and 24, we read, "Then the man said," Adam said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." And what's God's commentary? "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Why were Adam and Eve one flesh in the first marriage ordained by God? It's literally because they were one flesh, okay? Eve was taken out of Adam and that's why we have the picture when a man marries a woman, they become one flesh because that's the pattern back here in Genesis. Eve was taken out of Adam. She was literally bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. That's why she was called woman. She was taken out of man. And so this is the picture of marriage that is derived from the literal origin of Eve from Adam and so God thus declares there's no other basis for marriage, one man with one woman for life, end of argument. And Jesus affirmed that and emphasized God's plan when he taught on this issue and he quoted from Genesis 1:26 and Genesis 2:24 in his response. What did he say in Matthew 19:4 to 6? "He answered, 'Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man

separate." So the foundation and value of marriage are given here in Genesis creation, as instituted by God.

Well, here's another controversial topic, male leadership. Now I'm treading on toes. What happened? Well, we're told that because of Eve's succumbing to Satan's deception when Satan tempted to eat of the forbidden fruit, there were consequences for Eve and for all women afterwards because what do we read in Genesis 3:16? "To the woman he said, 'I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,'" there will be tension, "but he shall rule over you." Eve was to submit to her husband Adam and to his leadership even though Adam had failed, he failed the leadership that he should have exercised when they were tempted by Satan. He could have. But God was here mandating male leadership, first by order of creation, because Adam was created first and then Eve was taken out of Adam. Okay, so that's the first reason of male leadership that is given and secondly, because Eve was deceived and led her husband into sin but he was held accountable for that, because he should have led his wife to resist Satan's temptation.

But these are the very reasons that Paul uses, okay? Paul uses these reasons when he ordains male leadership. In 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 8 we read, "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. For man was not made from woman, but woman from man." And then in Ephesians 5:22 and 24, and then verse 31. "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Do you hear that? Did I read that before somewhere else? Yep. Paul was quoting from Genesis 2:24 just as Jesus quoted from that in Matthew 19:4 to 16.

But here's the rub. Some will say, "Oh, but it only applies within marriage." No. No, it doesn't. Paul is quick to dispel that on the same basis of this doctrinal foundation in Genesis creation. What does Paul say to Timothy in 1 Timothy 2:12 and 14? "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." So exactly the same two reasons why God mandated male leadership, headship in Genesis, Paul refers to here in 1 Timothy 2. And of course, our culture has rebelled against this mandate by God, and even many churches and Christian ministries have also succumbed to follow the culture on this issue, and I've observed, like you have, that the failure of many churches and Christian ministries on this issue is having a devastating impact. It impacts churches, it impacts ministries, and it impacts families. And dare I say it, we've even seen it here in our own congregation where husbands have not led their wives and families and they're no longer with us as a consequence.

Well, another issue and I'm watching the time but I'm going to go over time. I'm sorry about that but there's so much to cover. The calendar. What about the calendar that we

have? The basis for our calendar with days, weeks, months and years are only found in Genesis, in Genesis creation as instigated by God. So first, in Genesis 1, a day is defined by God in his plan and order of creation. In Genesis 1:5, "And there was evening and morning the first day." Verse 8, "And there was evening and morning the second day." Verse 13, "And there was evening and morning the third day. Verse 19, "And there was evening and morning the fourth day." And verse 23, "And there is evening and morning the fifth day." Verse 31, "And the evening and morning was the sixth day." And then in Genesis 2:1:3, "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation."

So first of all, God defines the day and, secondly, God created timekeepers on day four for the regulation of man's activities. What do we read in Genesis 1:14 and 15? "And God said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.' And it was so."

And then third, God patterned our week culminating in the Sabbath rest because on his work week of creation, that culminated in his Sabbath rest. And we're reminded of that in Exodus 20:8, 9 and 11. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." They had to be literal days, otherwise you'd have to work for millions of years before you got a day off. And Exodus 31:15 and 18 is a repeat of this. "Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD... Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed. And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God." See, there's no other basis for the seven-day week apart from what God established when he created the universe and this commandment and its basis was written by God's finger on stone. Notice that? He wrote with his own finger. And notice that God created the day-night cycle on day one, but he didn't create the sun until day four.

Well, here's another issue, work. Why do we work? Well, God instituted work as good. First of all, based on his own example that he worked in creation, he worked to create in six days, and then he rested on the seventh. Not that he was weary, Why did God do the Sabbath? Because he was setting an example to us. Why did God work for six days and rest for one? Because he was setting an example to us. So we read in Genesis 1:1 to 3. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation." And so man

indeed was created to work in the garden of Eden and to tend it. Do you notice that? In Genesis 2:15, we read, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." So work was good. Adam and Eve didn't sit around all day doing nothing. God designed work to be done in the garden to tend it.

So work was a blessing from God and a joy in the garden, tending it and the animals, and there were no thorns or thistles or weeds or pests, no violence or carnivory among the animals. So it was a joy to do that work because there was nothing that was opposing their efforts in that work. But of course, all that changed, didn't it, the curse? Because we read in Genesis 3:17 to 19, "And God said to Adam, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'" And Genesis 3:23, "therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken." So work became more difficult because of the curse. So work was and still necessary. Adam and Eve had to take the fruit to eat it. They had to work in the garden of Eden, didn't they? But that work became harder as a consequence of the curse.

So work was and is still necessary to provide for our daily sustenance. It just became harder. But as Christians, it should still be a joy to work because God set the example to us in working to create us. He made us to work in exercising dominion over the earth. That's what he told, instructions he gave to Adam and Eve that they were to have dominion over all of creation and that required work and it was to be joyous. So the value of work and the standard for work is here based in Genesis creation and for us, it should still be a joy to work.

Well, just a couple more things before we wrap up and there are many more doctrines that I could have chosen, but here's another one that's important. Languages, people groups and cultures. Okay, from Adam to Noah, men were all one people by descent who spoke the same language and it was the same with Noah and his three sons after the flood. They and their families were one people speaking the same language but what happened? They rebelled and they disobeyed God's command. We read that command in Genesis 9:1, "And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'" That was the command. They were told to spread out, fill the earth. But what did they do? We read that instead of filling the earth, they congregated down on the plain of Shinar at Babel. And we read these words in Genesis 11:1 to 4, "Now the whole earth had one language and the same words." They were one people all descended from Adam, all descended from Noah. "And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.'" That's the language of rebellion. They knew God had said to them they were to fill the earth so what do they do? They said, "Let's make a city so that

we won't be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." They specifically knew about God's command and they specifically disobeyed. They wanted to make a name for themselves but not only did they want to build a city, they were to build a tower. What's the significance of the tower? With its top in the heavens. No doubt, it was to be a center for false worship and evil practices. We'll come back to that in a second.

So what did God do in response to this rebellion? Genesis 11:5 to 9. "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, 'Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down,' notice "us," the Trinity, "let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.' So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth." Babel means, of course, confusion.

So what happened at Babel when God judged the disobedient one language people, explains why we have the different languages and thus the different ethnic groups and cultures around the world even today. And of course, some of their false wicked practices went with them. How do we know that? Because we know that some of those cultures that left or developed as a result of the people that left the Tower of Babel, what did they do? They built ziggurats and pyramids and those ziggurats were the focus of false worship and human sacrifice. The Mayans and the Aztecs, for example, they wickedly practiced human sacrifices. So that's what gives us the clue that the tower was a center of false religion and evil practices.

So there's no basis therefore for racism based on different skin shades, we're all the same skin color by the way, we have the same pigment, some have more, some have less, we're just different shades, different appearances, different ethnicities, because we're all descended from Adam through Noah and his three sons. So we're all related as mankind, the one kind, one race with different people groups and that's exactly what Paul preached at Mars Hill, which we referred to earlier. Paul actually cited what happened at the Tower of Babel. What did we say in Acts 17:26? "And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place." That's right. God, Paul is saying God had divided the earth in the days of Peleg based on his confusion of the languages, to allocate different boundaries for each of the people groups, for their habitation. So once again, the past history back there in Genesis is the foundation for our understanding of present languages, tribes and nations. There's no basis for racism. We're all, and of course now we're all one in Jesus Christ.

Well, finally, another doctrine which is interesting. Do you realize last things, the last things in Revelation often recapitulate the first things in Genesis? And so if we don't understand the basis of the first things in Genesis as literal, then we have no literal way of understanding the last things in Revelation. Well, for example, Genesis 1:1, "In the

beginning God created the heaven's and the earth." So we have the creation. What do we read in Revelation 21:1? "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more." New creation. The first creation in Genesis 1, the new creation in Revelation verse 21.

And then in Genesis 1:2, what do we read? The earth was covered in water and the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the world. There was a global sea. What do we read in Revelation 21:1? There was no more sea. No more sea. "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more."

And then thirdly, we read in Genesis 1:3 of God's light before the sun, "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." God didn't make the sun, the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day until day four. So God's light was there in the first creation without the sun. What do we read in Revelation 22:5? "And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever." So again, there'll be God's light without the sun in the new creation.

Then in Genesis 1:26, we have man's rule. Man was given, verse 26, "And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Man's rule was instigated. What do we read in Revelation 20:4? "Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was give." Man's rule. "Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands." So in the first creation in Genesis, we have man's rule. In Revelation, in the new heaven and new earth, we have man's rule.

In Genesis 2, we have the old Eden, verse 8, "And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed." And there was all these trees that were good for sight, good for food, and a river flowed out of Eden, and man was put in the garden of Eden. So we have the old Eden there in Genesis 2. What do we read in Revelation 22:1 and 2? "Then the angel showed me the river of life," a river, "bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." So there's a new garden in Revelation, the new Eden.

And mention there the next example, we have the tree of life in the Old Eden, okay, Genesis 2:9. "And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden," okay? And what do we read in, and we also read that in Genesis 3:22 to 25. Okay, when God put man out of the garden of Eden, it was so he wouldn't be able to eat of the tree of life. The tree of life was there in the first Eden. What do we read about in the New Eden? We read it earlier. First of all, in Revelation 2:7, "To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." Revelation 22:1 to 2, we read that

earlier, "Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life...The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." So if it was a literal tree back there in Genesis, it's a literal tree there in Revelation. Last things recapitulate first things.

What about Satan? Well, in Genesis 3:1, Satan was free. "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made." So he was free to roam the earth and to tempt Adam and Eve. But what do we read in Revelation 20:1 and 3? "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit." So in Genesis, Satan is free. In Revelation, Satan is bound.

In Genesis 3:17 is the pronouncement of the curse, "cursed is the ground because of you." What do we read in Revelation 21:4? "He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Revelation 22:3, "No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him." No curse. The curse vanished.

In Genesis 6 through 8, we read of worldwide judgment, the global flood cataclysm, which covered all the mountains under the whole heaven and lasted more than a calendar year, unlike any local or regional flood, of course. And what do we read in Revelation? Okay, the global flood in Genesis 6 through 8 was a judgment, a global judgment on man's wickedness, What do we read in Revelation 19:11 through 19? We read of the progressive judgment of man, his wickedness, his political systems, and his whole world. So again, man is judged just as he was back then there in Genesis.

And then finally, Babel. We just read in Genesis 10 and 11 about the city and the tower that was the focus of man's rebellion in refusing to obey God's command to disperse and fill the earth, Babel or Babylon. What do we read in Revelation 17 and 18? We read about Babylon, the city and world order of sinful wicked men that's established in the last days to worship Satan and under Satan's control in attempt of a global rebellion against God.

Well, that's just a sampling of some of the doctrines that are found there, found their foundation in creation. Let me just circle back then with my closing point here to where we began. We talked about the gospel, how we proclaim the gospel, how we need to define our terms, and our terms come from Genesis and they're defined there and go all through the Scriptures. So the third point here, the gospel depends and is built on these doctrinal foundations. As I said before, we live in an increasingly secular and pagan post-Christian culture that no longer understands or believes in the doctrinal foundations we believe there in Genesis, exactly the same as the Athenians that Paul preached to on Mars Hill. And just as the gospel didn't make sense to the Athenians, it doesn't make any sense

to the people around us today and unless we recognize these realities, we will become increasingly impotent in presenting the gospel to those around us.

You know, what is the most asked question that people have today that's used as an objection to biblical Christianity? Let me give you two personal anecdotes. Our daughter Rachel works as a campus missionary on a campus in Australia, and recently they had an outreach event. They wanted to engage the students to reach them and so they put up posters around, "If you were to ask God a question, what would be the question that you would ask him?" And what was the question? Well, I'll tell you the answer in a minute. My mother-in-law passed away recently, sadly, and Kim many times tried to witness to her and got no response and it was really only in her, literally in her last days that I heard her make a response, a partial comment. Kim didn't catch it, but I did, and it's exactly the same as that question the students would ask. "If God is a God of love, why is there all the suffering and death in the world?" If you talk to people out there, that's the big issue. You know, even many Christians are confused on this issue and it stifles and blunts any efforts to preach the gospel because the gospel doesn't make any sense if death and suffering have always existed because it's effectively accusing God of either being the originator of death and suffering, or that God is impotent, he's unable to stop death and suffering. If suffering and death have always existed, then how can God save us from death and suffering? And how has this come to be in our culture? It's because of the teaching of atheistic evolution and millions of years of death and suffering. For decades, kids in the public school have been indoctrinated with this idea that there is no God, we can explain your origin as a result of evolution, and it happened over millions of years. Nature read in tooth and claw through death and suffering, man came into existence. That's what evolution is. The fossil record, they say, is a record of death. Some animals died out. The fittest survived and passed on their genetics to the next generation. And little by little, with changes, we evolved. Death and suffering originated life. And so that's permeated our culture and it's changed our culture. No longer do they understand where death and suffering came from, as taught in Genesis, they now believe that death and suffering has always existed and so immorality has increased. Why? Because the Bible is regarded as irrelevant and so the standards of God's word have been abandoned. Evolution and millions of years have permeated the church so that most Christians don't accept a literal Genesis anymore, a literal history. Instead, they regard Genesis as a myth or it must be reinterpreted to accommodate the millions of years because after all, they say, you know, the majority of scientists can't be wrong. Haven't they proved the earth is billions of years old? Well, no, they haven't done any such thing. And when was truth ever decided by majority vote? What did Jesus say in Matthew 7:13 to 14? "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." See, he's saying the majority are wrong. They get it wrong. They go through the broad gate.

Truth isn't determined by majority vote. Truth is defined by what God has told us and so it has to be emphatically emphasized, and I can't emphasize this enough, all compromised interpretations of Genesis incorporate millions of years of death and suffering before man came into existence. Whether it's theistic evolution, the day-age idea, analogical days,

progressive creation, the framework, cosmic temple, even the gap theory puts billions of years of death and suffering before the days of recreation and theistic evolution is teaching that God used death and suffering over millions of years to bring man into existence. Furthermore, all those compromises insist that the Genesis flood was only a local flood confined to the Mesopotamian region and that's ludicrous, because if you think about it, when the waters drain out of the Mesopotamian basin, where do they flow to? The Persian Gulf. Where did the ark land? Opposite direction on a mountain. Come on. You see, most Christians don't seem to understand or they conveniently forget that the millions of years and death and suffering go hand in hand. You'll get Christians who think it's okay to believe in millions of years, but they don't realize that they're also believing in the death and suffering. Why? Well, the fossils are in the rock record that is accumulating over millions of years, and so the fossils in those rock layers are a record of death and suffering. So as soon as you say the rock layers teach millions of years, you're believing in millions of years of death and suffering. You cannot accept the millions of years without also having death and suffering occurring through those millions of years.

So in effect, the acceptance of millions of years of death and suffering accuses God of being the originator of death and suffering. So why would anyone want to worship a God who is so malevolent, so bad and uncaring, inflicting us with disease, suffering and death? I mean, that's what people think out there. And how could a God like that save us? If he was powerless over death and suffering, and so he had to allow us to evolve using death and suffering, how could he conquer death and suffering on a wooden cross? See, it doesn't compute, it doesn't make sense. And so these are the reasons why we all need to understand and to be able to stand firm on and defend the authority of God's word and its historicity in Genesis. That means being unapologetic about insisting on six-day creation, a young earth, and the global flood cataclysm, no matter what the majority of scientists say, whether atheist, agnostic, or Christian. Now, no matter what they say about the so-called evidence, no matter their derision or vilification of us, the bottom line is that the gospel is at stake and the eternal destiny of billions of people are at stake for whom Christ died. So the gospel only has its power and makes sense in its foundation in the literal history in Genesis 1 to 11. As I said before, this is why we must believe, understand, believe and defend that foundation no matter what is held against us or whatever persecution it entails.

So let me sum up. God created in six literal days a perfect world without sin, without diseases, without thorns, without thistles, without weeds, without violence, without suffering, without death and that was only six to seven thousand years ago. The first Adam failed the test and sinned. His disobedience, his sin brought diseases, thorns, thistles, weeds, violence, suffering and death into the world, and God was totally justified as the holy perfect creator in setting the rules in his creation and justified as the righteous holy judge in punishing Adam and all his descendants for breaking those rules. However, as the all-knowing, all-powerful and all-loving God, he already had a rescue plan, didn't he? He had a plan of salvation with his Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. The judge, the judge of Adam chose to lay aside his glory as the only begotten Son of God, the Logos, the Word, the co-equal creator, the agent of creation, God's spoke and it was so, he set aside his glory to be born of a virgin, to become our kinsman,

redeemer, the second or last Adam, because his family lineage can be directly traced back to the first Adam, due to the literal family history recorded in Genesis chapters 5 and 11. Why do we have those genealogies? They're the history, the family history of Jesus and that's why those lineages are brought up again in the gospels. Who is this Jesus? He is related back to the first Adam. That's why Paul can tell us he's the last Adam, the second Adam. Whereas the first Adam failed, this Adam is perfect, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself to be offered as the infinite perfect sinless sacrifice to shed his blood to cover all sin of all people everywhere throughout all time. Then finally as the infinite creator he had the power to rise from the grave and thus conquer death and it's because of that he can promise us eternal life with him in the new heaven and new earth where there is no more sin, suffering, pain, crying or death. Isn't that a glorious message of good news? And that's what we're called to defend and we need to defend it, we need to be able to understand it, we need to understand its foundations, the terms that need to be addressed in a culture that doesn't understand and doesn't believe the foundations of the gospel there in the creation account.

Well, with that I'll just close with a word of prayer and then if there's any questions we can have some questions, I guess, or you're free to go.

Father, we thank you for this time together. We thank you that your word is coherent from end to end because you are the sole author. You used different men at different times and different places to write down your communication and yet, dear Father, there's the one message that flows through it from beginning to end. And there's one focus, it's on Jesus, your Son, the one who was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, the one who was your rescue plan, the one who set aside his glory to become our Redeemer, to become our Savior by the shedding of his blood on the cross. We thank you that death couldn't conquer him and that he rose victorious over death and therefore, Father, we can look forward to eternity with you, where there will be no more death, suffering, crying or pain. What a glorious message. Father, help us to understand, to believe, burn it on our hearts, burn it on our minds, so that, Father, we are equipped and able to defend your word from the very first verse, and to present the gospel to a dead and dying world that needs to hear this glorious message. Thank you then for this time together. Thank you again that your word is clear and there's no doubt in your word in any way, and we just commit ourselves to you in the rest of the day as we thank you again for all these things in the name of our blessed Lord and Savior. Amen.

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