

# Resolving the Age of the Earth Issue for the Christian

*Guest Speaker*

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**Bible Text:** John 1:1-14; 2:1-11

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Some of the things I want to say tonight may be revision for many of you but there are things that I want to emphasize. This is obviously something I'm passionate about and concerned about. I think of my own home country of Australia, of course, I don't look like Don and I don't even sound like Don, Pastor Don, but as a resident alien, I think I'm able to make some observations about the church and the state of the church in the USA and, indeed, it applies across the whole of the Western world. I don't know about you, but it grieves me to see the increasing ineffectiveness of Christian witness in this country and in many parts of the West.

I was interesting in the latest statistics. I saw recently an article and it said 75% of Americans call themselves Christians, but when you start digging underneath that figure, you find 25% would be cultural Christians. They just go through the motions because that's what their parents did and their grandparents did. Then there would be another 25% the surveys show that would be congregational Christians. You know, they attend church and they go through the motions but it's really nothing more than a social club in that sense. Which really only leaves about 25% of the US population that we would call Christians by conviction and those 25% would seem to say that they believe the Bible is the literal word of God. But really when the rubber hits the road, when you think about what's happening in this nation in the years that I've been coming over here and now living here three years, it's the pace of change that we see is staggering and I would say overwhelmingly that the way we see things slipping in the culture parallels the way things are slipping in the church.

So why is the church losing ground? Why isn't it salt and light as it used to be? Think about what happened in Joshua 7. Joshua 7, if you've got your Bibles, quickly turn there. The children of Israel had gone into the land under Joshua and they had no trouble following God's instructions in bringing down the walls of Jericho. In a sense, they were super-confident and what happened? They only sent a small force up into Ai and, lo and behold, they were defeated. They were defeated and Joshua went before the Lord. We read in verses 8 and 9 of chapter 7, he went before the Lord to cry unto the Lord, "What's gone wrong? You know, you brought us out here to be defeated." And what was the problem? God says to Joshua in verse 10, "Get up! Why have you fallen on your face? Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them."

There was sin in the camp and whenever there's sin in the camp, God's people lose their cutting edge and I would say that there is sin in the camp, sin in the church in the West, the sin of compromise, the sin of unbelief. They say they believe that God's word is the literal word of God but do they really believe it? I don't think they do and the key issue is this issue that I want to address tonight. So many Christians have questions about the first 11 chapters of Genesis, the days of creation, the age of the earth, was Adam a literal man. In fact, one of the biggest theological debates at the moment among evangelicals, supposedly evangelical Bible-believing Christian leaders and theologians is whether Adam was a literal man. That's how far the church has slipped. You might not have your ear to the ground with the rank and file, but in our ministry in "Answers in Genesis" we have our ears to the ground with the theologians and the Bible scholars and we hear what's coming out of the seminaries and we hear what's happening in the pulpits and there's an uncertain sound on these issues.

So where do we go if we want to affirm the historicity of those first 11 chapters of Genesis? Well, I'm going to take us to John 1. If you'll turn with me to John 1, I'm going to read the first 14 verses because I believe here we have the key to resolving this issue about the age of the earth. For Christians, there should be no doubts in our minds and the question we have to ask ourselves, in fact, the question that everyone will one day have to stand before God and answer is: who is Jesus Christ? And I firmly believe that if we're clear on who Jesus Christ is, this issue just settles itself immediately.

What do we read in John 1? Verse 1,

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. 9 The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Familiar words. We need to pause and think clearly about what the Apostle John is saying here. You see, we don't have to go to Genesis 1 to resolve these issues, we can start here in John 1.

The Logos, the Word. Jesus was the Logos, the Word, the communication from God and so we read that, of course, in Hebrews 1, if you want to turn there quickly, Hebrews 1:1-3, we read these words,

1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He 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.

So Jesus, the Logos, is the ultimate communication from God. The prophets had come but now God had sent his Son. And who is Jesus? None other than the Creator himself. John says and the writer of Hebrews affirms here that through Jesus Christ all things were created. He's the Creator of all things as Paul reminds us over in the book of Colossians, if you want to turn there. Colossians 1, very familiar verses. Verse 15,

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 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. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Now, we could just stop there and we could read that and read that and read that. In fact, it would be a worthwhile exercise just to get aside in the quiet and read and reread those verses. Let them sink into our hearts and into our minds. Who is Jesus? None other than the Creator, the one who not only made all things but sustains all things. And when he says that not a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father knowing about it, don't you think he cares for us? If he's holding all things together by his power, all the nitty-gritty details that we don't take any notice of from day to day, we expect the sun to rise, the sun to set, the air to be there for us to breathe, Jesus the Creator is providing and sustaining that for us day in, day out.

You know, friends, what we find here in the Gospels is that Jesus never ceased to be the Creator. When he was there walking the streets of Israel, he was still the Creator. Do you realize that? Yes, he laid aside his glory as Paul tells us, reminds us in his epistles, but he never ceased to be the Creator. Why do we know that? Well, my first point tonight is this: Jesus, the Creator, A. demonstrated his power, and B. always spoke the truth. I'll repeat that. Jesus the Creator when he was here on this earth, demonstrated his power and he always spoke the truth.

Yes, we read in verse 14 of John 1, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Yes, Jesus was fully human. No question about it. We read where he experienced weariness, he fell asleep in a boat, he suffered pain, he suffered anguish when he sweated drops of blood there in the garden of Gethsemane, and yet all the while when he was tested when he was in the wilderness, he was without sin. But in all that time, he never ceased to be the Creator.

How do I know that? Well, his miracles. His miracles were demonstrations of his power. They were signs that he was and is who he said he was. Think about it. You know, we read those miracles and we're going to go through some of them tonight, but we don't let it sink into us what the significance of those miracles are, that he was demonstrating his power as the Creator.

Turn with me to Matthew 8. The first way in which he demonstrated his power was power over nature, over the created order, and in Matthew 8 we read that, in verse 23, Matthew 8:23, "And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea," this is the Sea of Galilee, a very open area where the winds can rush down through the hills, "so that the boat was being swamped by the waves," we read, "but he was asleep." He was tired. Fully human. Tired. "And they went and woke him, saying, Save us, Lord; we are perishing." I mean, these are hardened fishermen, remember? Some of these disciples are hardened fishermen. They have experienced storms on the Sea of Galilee before, so it must have been a ferocious storm. "And they went and woke him," we read, saying, 'Save us Lord; we are perishing.' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?' Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea," and an hour later there was a great calm? No, instantly, "there was a great calm." The word "instant" isn't there but it's obvious. Why? Well, the disciples just sort of, "Oh yeah, ho-hum"? No, "And the men marveled, saying, 'What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?'" Do you catch it? As the Creator, fully human, asleep in that boat, he could arise, immediately command the winds and the waves to be still. From a raging storm to a millpond instantly. Power as the Creator over the created order. Why? Because he made them.

I'm reminded what we read over in Genesis 1. Is there any difference between what we just read? When Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm, what do we read in Genesis 1:3? "And God said," Jesus said, the Creator, "'Let there be light,' and there was light." Instantly there was light. Why? Because he was in charge. He commanded and it was so. It happened.

Friends, why is it that so many Christians doubt those words in Genesis 1 when we can read in Matthew 8 that Jesus did exactly the same thing in front of eye-witnesses? We should rebuke ourselves if we doubt the Creator's method. Jesus was demonstrating not only his power but how he created, how he had authority over what he created.

Then we read over in John 6, another example of his miracles where he was in charge of the elements. John 6. Turn with me there. It's good to read these things together and not to gloss over them so they sink in. Verse 16, "When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But he said to them, 'It is I; do not be afraid.' Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going." By the way, have you ever tried walking on

water? There is a law of gravity, isn't there, that says if you try to walk on water, you're foolish because you'll sink. Why could Jesus walk on water? Because as the Creator he made water, as the Creator he made gravity and he could choose to suspend that order whenever he chose to. And he was, again, demonstrating to his disciples his power to impress upon them that he was who he said he was and is.

So that's the first subpoint: he had power over nature or the created order. But then he also had the power to create. John 2. I'll just briefly refer to this passage now because we'll be coming back to it in a moment. In John 2, we read where Jesus took water and turned it into wine and many people read that and they don't realize the significance. A little chemistry lesson here. You know what water is, don't you? It's got hydrogen and oxygen in it, atoms combined. Wine is complex organic molecules. It has other things besides hydrogen and oxygen in it. It has carbon in it. So if water was changed by Jesus into wine, it means that he had to create what wasn't in the water to make it wine. It was a miracle of creation demonstrating before eye-witnesses that he had the power to create.

Then over in Matthew 14:15, we read about a dire situation where he had all these people that had come to listen to Jesus speaking and in verse 15 we read, "Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' But Jesus said, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.'" Desolate place. "They said to him, 'We have only five loaves here and two fish. And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over." They started with five loaves and two fishes and they ended up with 12 basket fulls left over after everyone had been filled. How many? "And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children." That's over 10,000 people probably fed from five loaves and two fishes. How did Jesus do it? He broke the bread, he broke the fish, he kept on multiplying it. Did he have to plant wheat and wait for it to grow and then crush it to make flour? No, it was an immediate need and he was creating more fish and more bread so people wouldn't go hungry. As the Creator, he had power over that bread, over that fish, and he could do it.

We read again in the next chapter exactly the same thing. Verse 32 of chapter 15, "Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 'I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.' And the disciples said to him, 'Where are we to get enough bread in such a desolate place to feed so great a crowd?'" Hadn't they gotten the message earlier? By the way, we often sort of point at the disciples and say, "Boy, they were thick-headed numskulls. Why didn't they get the message?" Hey, let's point the finger at ourselves. We read these verses and we don't get it either sometimes. "And Jesus said to them, 'How many loaves do you have?' They said, 'Seven, and a few small fish.' And directing the crowd to sit down on the ground, he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and

the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up seven baskets full of the broken pieces left over. Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children." Wow. Again, Jesus demonstrated that he had the power to create and he did it instantly. He did it instantly. He didn't need any time at all.

So that's the second subpoint: he had the power to create. But next we read he had the power over life. Go back to John 9 and here we read something very significant. Verse 1 of chapter 9, "As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.' Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing." It sounds simple enough, doesn't it? But did you catch the point? This wasn't only a man who was blind, this was a man who was born blind.

Think about it. When you and I are born and we start to develop, what are we taught? We're trained to point to things and we're told what the word is. We connect concepts with words. We see and we learn to read, we learn to write. We can identify a tree. We can identify a door. We can identify a window. It all gets programmed in our brain. This was a man who had never seen any of those things. He was born blind. I want to suggest to you that here the power of the Creator over life is displayed magnificently and not only did he have to heal the man's eyes, his physical eyes, but at the same time he programmed this man's brain so that he could understand what he was going to see when he saw it, because when we read the rest of the chapter, we see that this man had complete faculties restored which meant that he understood what was going on around him, who people were and what he was walking around through. In fact, we read in verse 32, "Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind." Of course, Jesus was able to do that. As this blind man said to the Jewish leaders, "If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." That's right. As the Creator, Jesus had the power over life.

And in Matthew 9, we read, of course, that he had the power over dying people. We read in Matthew 9 of Jairus' daughter and verses 18 and 19 of chapter 9 we read, "While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, 'My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.' And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples." Then we go down to verse 23, "And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, 'Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping.' And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went through all that district." Why? Well, as the Creator of life, Jesus had power over life and he had power over death. That's why he could say the girl was only sleeping, because he knew he was going to bring her back to life again.

The most outstanding example, of course, in his ministry was that of his friend Lazarus in John 11 and let's quickly turn there. "Now a certain man," verse 1, "was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha." Then we go on to verse 14, "Then Jesus told them," that's his disciples, "plainly, 'Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.'" So they traveled to where he was. Verse 17, "Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days." So if there was any doubt that he was dead, that was well and truly gone. Then we read verse 38, "Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.'" Ah, but what with man is impossible, with Jesus the Creator it's possible and what do we read? "So they took away the stone," verse 41, "And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out." So without a doubt, Jesus had power over life.

Well, not only did he demonstrate who he was by his power, with his miracles, but as the Creator he always spoke the truth, part B of point 1. Why did he always speak the truth? Because as the Creator he is the truth. Remember what he says in John 14:5-6? "Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Friends, if Jesus ever told us a lie, then he cannot be the way, can he? It means that every word he spoke as God the Creator, had to be true.

We read in John 3, what did Jesus say, verse 12, John 3:12? "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" Interesting because Jesus did talk about many earthly things as we'll see in a moment. In fact, Jesus quoted from Genesis 1 to 11, earthly things. If we don't believe what Jesus said about earthly things, the early history of the human race and the early history of the earth, then how are we to believe in the heavenly things he tells us?

Then over in John 5, on another occasion when Jesus was talking to the Jewish leaders particularly, he said this, verse 45, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" Like I said, Jesus referred and quoted from those early chapters in Genesis, the writings of Moses. Jesus said, "If you don't believe what Moses wrote, how are you going to believe my words?"

Turn with me to Mark 13:19 where Jesus said this, "For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be." So Jesus was clearly identifying that there was a creation and that God created it.

Turn back, then, to Mark 10, just a few chapters back. Mark 10 and we read in verse 6 because the Pharisees had asked him a question about divorce which, of course, is a question about marriage and Jesus is saying, "Well, if you want to understand all about marriage, you've got to go back to where marriage began." Verse 6, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh."

It's repeated also for us in Matthew 19. Two of the Gospel writers record it for us, the same episode probably. Matthew 19:4, "Have you not read," these were the Jewish leaders. It's almost sarcastic, these guys who prided themselves in knowing the books of the law and Jesus said, "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." Notice what Jesus is emphasizing here: from the beginning of creation, not after millions of years of cosmic evolution and biological evolution. No, from the beginning of creation God made them male and female.

Of course, we read about that in Genesis 1:26-27 where 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." Jesus was quoting from Genesis 1:26 and 27 but then he goes on to quote from chapter 2 of Genesis. What do we read? We read about God causing a deep sleep to fall on Adam and he takes a rib and he forms woman. "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.'" Then what do we read, verse 24? Exactly what Jesus was quoting from, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." By the way, he quoted those two chapters as referring to the same event. There weren't two accounts of creation, just a little bit more detail in chapter 2, fleshing out what happened in chapter 1.

And Jesus quoted from those two chapters as literal history. We don't believe what Moses wrote, how are we going to believe Jesus' word? Of course, Jesus knew about what happened back in Genesis 1. He was there. He created. He knows exactly what he did in his work of creation.

Well, we also read in Matthew 23 that he referred to none other than Abel, Adam's son, Abel. Matthew 23:34, "Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar." Exactly the same words are quoted from Jesus over in Luke 11:49-51 because Jesus was referring back to Genesis 4 where we read about Abel.



What do we read about Abel? Well, we read, of course, that he was Adam's son, which Jesus refers to Abel, and what do we read? In verse 8, "Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. 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.'" What was Jesus referring to? The blood of innocent Abel back here in the Gospels, Abel as a real, literal, historical person.

Then over in Matthew 24 we read Jesus speaks about the days of Noah. Verse 37 of chapter 24, "For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man." Repeated again in Luke 17. What is it a reference to? Back over to Genesis 6. Keep your finger and flick back over to Genesis 6 and what do we read? Chapter 6, verse 7, "So the LORD said, 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.' But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man." So Jesus was referring to Noah as a literal man who lived in a literal historical period.

Then we go on in Matthew 24 to read what happened. Verses 38 and 39, "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away." Swept them all away. Jesus is referring to the flood as a literal historical event where there was an ark, there was a flood, and it was a life destroying global flood. Swept them all away.

Why do I know it was global? Because Jesus was comparing it to his second coming. Will Jesus' second coming be a global event? "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the days of the Son of Man." Do you see how careful we have to handle Scripture?

What do we read over in Genesis 7:1? God said to Noah, "Go into the ark." So they went into the ark. Okay, verse 5, "And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him." Verse 11, "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened." And we read what happened. The flood continued forty days, verse 17, the waters increased, the waters prevailed, verse 18. Verse 19, "And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered." Verse 21, "And all flesh died." Verse 22, "Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died." Verse 23, "Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark." You see, Jesus was describing those events accurately. He spoke the truth because he was the Creator, the one who is the truth.

Well, this brings us to our second point and here it's crucial: Jesus' power and his word outranks man's fallible reasoning. What do I mean by that? Well, turn with me to John 2 which is the other passage I wanted to focus on tonight. John 2. Remember the details

here. Follow with me. Jesus went to a wedding at Cana in Galilee. His mother was there with him.

2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

You see, friends, Jesus instantly turned that water into wine. As I said before, it was a miracle of creation. He spoke the wine into existence from that water. He told the servants, "Fill the jars with water."

What do we read in Genesis 1:11? "And God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.' And it was so." Instantly he commanded it into existence.

Verse 24, "And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds--livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.' And it was so." Jesus said, "Fill the jars with water," and it was so, there was wine.

Now, notice what happened. The master of the feast tasted the wine approvingly, didn't he? And when he spoke to the bridegroom, it's obvious that he was assuming that wine he had just tasted had been produced from grapes that had grown on vines, that had been harvested, crushed and fermented. He assumed by looking at the evidence that there must have been a lot of time involved in that wine but he was wrong, wasn't he? Dead wrong. Absolutely wrong. No, Jesus had created the wine mature, fully ready to drink. Why did he do that instantly? He did it to fulfill an immediate need.

Think about what happened back there in Genesis 1. We just read about it. God commanded the vegetation to come into existence and it was so. And what do we read in verse 12 of Genesis 1? There were fruit trees already bearing fruit. Why? Because God knew three days later Adam and Eve would be hungry and they needed food. He created it instantly. He didn't plant seeds that Adam and Eve would have to stand around waiting to grow and blossom and have fruit while they went hungry. No, just as Jesus in Genesis created immediately, instantly, a mature, fully functioning world because he wanted to

provide a home for man, in this instance, he created mature, fully ready to drink wine instantly because there was a need. There was a need.

Now, I know you've probably heard the phrase, "Oh, that wine must have had an apparent age or an apparent non-history." No, there was no history. The only history was that a split second ago it was water and now it was wine. It wasn't old because it was wine. Those who saw what happened knew that this was fresh wine instantly. It didn't have a history. I don't like that term. No, Jesus created mature, fully ready to drink wine to fulfill an immediate need.

Now, people say, "Oh, but the world looks old and if you believe in Genesis, God has deceived us. If he tells us it's young and it looks old, he's deceived us." No. Did Jesus deceive anyone in that miracle? Absolutely not. He did it in front of witnesses, the servants. They saw what happened because he commanded them to fill up the waterpots. In fact, John is very careful to put in that parenthetical comment, did you catch that in verse 9, "(though the servants who had drawn the water knew)." They were the eye-witnesses. In fact, Jesus went a step further. He even gave the master of the feast a chance to find out exactly what happened. Why? He sent the servants with the wine to the master of the feast. By the way, in the same way Jesus didn't deceive anyone when he fed the 5,000 and 4,000 from those few meager loaves and fishes, when he broke them to create more. Who were the eye-witnesses? His disciples. They're watching him. With so few and they finish up with all those basket fulls of scraps after everybody, thousands and thousands of people, had full stomachs. They were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

So Jesus didn't deceive anybody in doing these miracles. And by the way, the bread and the fish looked the same as the original, didn't they? No, and here's the important lesson: the master of the feast at the marriage feast of Cana deceived himself because, you see, he wrongly interpreted the evidence using his human reasoning alone, rather than asking the eye-witnesses who saw what happened that Jesus had sent to him.

Isn't that sobering? Let that sink in. You see, how old is the earth and the universe? Do they really look old? Now, we get these questions all the time in our ministry when, after all, it takes billions of years for light to reach us from the furthest galaxies. You've heard that, I'm sure, the skeptics claim. And in my field, the radioactive dating of rocks, oh, with such certainty, with those absolute ages of hundreds of millions and even billions of years, the earth must be that old because, look, they get these absolute numbers from their machinery when they date these rocks. And of course, you can look out and all around us we can see that rocks must take a long time to form. I mean, it takes a long time to erode all that mud that goes down the Ohio River to get down to the Mississippi and right down to the delta where it builds up piles and piles of mud over years and years and years. It must take a long time to form rocks.

So if the Bible says by a simple reading that God created in six little days and we can add up those genealogies to give us a chronology for the age of the earth, and if the earth is therefore only young as God's word says it is, attested to by Jesus, the Creator, who quoted from those early chapters, then God must be deceiving us, people say. I mean, the

world looks old so God must be deceiving us if it's young. No. No. What do we read in Job 38? Turn with me there quickly. Job 38. You know the setting, don't you? Job had been suffering, asking all these questions: why, why, why? And then God spoke to Job from a whirlwind. What did God say? Verse 2, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements--surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone," and God goes on, "Do you know this, Job? Do you know that? Do you know this? Were you there? Did you do this? Can you understand this?" Verse 31 and 32, God says to Job, "Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion?" speaking of the stars. "Job, do you understand about the stars out there and the galaxies?" What was Job's response? Chapter 42, "Then Job answered the LORD and said," verse 1, now verse 2, "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Solomon, the wisest man, we're told, that ever lived, what did he write? The book of Ecclesiastes. Chapter 1, very sober words, verse 2, "Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity." Verse 12, "I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind." Verse 16, "I said in my heart, 'I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.' And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." What a sad commentary on the human endeavor to gain knowledge.

Ah, but what was the end of the matter? We turn to chapter 12 at the close of the book and after Solomon had gone full circle. He says this, verse 13 of chapter 12, "The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil."

Then over in Isaiah 45 we read these sobering words. Isaiah 45:5-7, "I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things." Verse 9, "Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles?'" Verses 11 and 12, "Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed

him: 'Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands? I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.'" Do you catch what God is saying here? Does the clay, the created thing, have the right to tell the potter how he made it? You know, it is arrogant for finite, fallible, human man with his supposed reasoning to tell God that he didn't have the power to create as he describes how he created.

Can anyone explain to me how Jesus stilled that storm or walked on water? Can we scientifically explain how Jesus turned that water into wine? Or how he created bread and fish? Why do we need to try and explain it? Shouldn't we just marvel in his power as the Creator that he could do those things? And if he could do those things when he would walk this earth, surely he can provide for us our daily bread just as he provided for those people in the wilderness.

So why should we try to explain how God created in Genesis 1? After all, wasn't that a unique period of earth history when God was demonstrating his power just as Jesus was demonstrating doing his miracles?

Or should we question what he tells us he did? How dare we? How dare we? Does man know all things? Is man infinite? Hardly. "Man's heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The natural man doesn't seek after God." How can we trust the words of finite, fallible, sinful men and women, ourselves included? How can we trust our own reasoning when all our understanding ultimately comes from God and his word? How arrogant that we can think that we can arrive at truth using our own reasoning alone?

And yet that's what so many people do today. "The world looks old." Well, how do they know? That's only them deciding truth for themselves. Do we know how light travels in all regions of space? Has anyone been out there to the galaxies to measure how fast it goes out there? No. The claims that the Bible is not true are based on assumptions that are untestable when they talk about light traveling through space. What about radioactive decay that they use to date rocks? Has it always decayed at the rate we measure today? Well, that's only an assumption. How do we know? Were the scientists back there millions of years ago to test the rocks back then? No. Utter arrogance to tell us that things have always been the same.

By the way, why do they think the earth looks supposedly old? Well, it's because the assumptions they use. Like I said before, they look at rivers carrying mud down to the delta to see how long it takes to build up that mud into layers. "Oh, it must take long time periods for rock layers to form." What's the assumption? That only present observable processes and the rates at which they occur today, that's all that's required to explain how the earth and its rock layers formed. What's missing? What's missing in that reasoning? It's a direct denial of God's word. It's a direct denial that, "In the beginning God created." It's a direct denial that there was a Noah and an ark and the flood came and took them all away just as Jesus said.

Why should Christians, therefore, worship at the altar of science as if these men with letters after their name have greater reasoning and ability than we have when all we have and need is God's word? By the way, I'm not saying that we throw our brains away. That's not it at all. What's the command? "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, your mind and your soul." God expects us to use our minds but in subjection to his word. He's the one who's told us what happened in the past. He was there. He's the eye-witness. Yet so many Christian scholars, leaders, academics, bow at the altar of human reasoning. They accept what the secular scientists say who deliberately deny God's word and don't take what God said into account in their understanding of the world and how the world operates and then they want to dump that on God's word and guess what? They tell us that God's word is not correct; that we need to correct what God says.

They're calling Jesus a liar. Oh, I've heard them say, "Oh, but he was just accommodating to what his hearers understood. You know, he was just accommodating what he was saying to the culture in which he was living in at that time." You mean he deliberately told lies? Things that he knew weren't true? That's what they're saying. No, Jesus knew exactly what he was saying. It was the truth and it was the truth not only for that culture but for our culture. It was the truth back in the day of Adam and the day of Noah; it's the same truth 2,000 years ago as in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Jesus, the Creator, created instantly just as he said he did, not how men think he did. Just as he said he did and he demonstrated it by his miracles. By the way, we forget that with God, the Creator, time is irrelevant. Why? Because God is the infinite one who lives in eternity. He doesn't dwell in time. He created time. He made time for our benefit. He dwells in eternity, therefore, time is irrelevant to him.

By the way, people say to me, "But why does God leave things seemingly so unanswered as if, you know, they're vague?" Now, we've got lots of questions and at times it does appear we look through a dark glass when we do our scientific investigations and yet Paul says in Romans 1, that the evidence for God's existence is clearly evident in the things that he's made, for those who have eyes to see. What's the ingredient that we need to have? Hebrews 11:3, "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible." You see, God expects us to exercise faith in who he is, his character that was demonstrated by Jesus when he walked this earth. The one who had the power over nature, power over life, who spoke the truth.

That's all sufficient for our need to understand how God created which brings me to my last point as we close, point 3: Jesus the Savior derives his power because he is the Creator. You see, some people don't think this issue of Genesis 1 to 11 matters. Now do we really have to believe that Jesus instantly created all things to be saved? No. Acts 4:12 makes it quite clear. How are we saved? On what basis? "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." And over in Romans 10:9 we read, "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Go back to the question that we asked at the beginning: who is Jesus Christ? This Savior, this one whose name we are to confess, who is he? None other than the Creator. And how could he have saved us if he was merely human? No, it's because he was and is the Creator that he had the power to save us. Indeed, if you think about it, we're so familiar with John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." Think about it. How much more strongly and powerfully could God demonstrate his love for you and for me than to send his Son, the Creator of the universe? I mean, that sends goosebumps up and down my body when I think about that and say it right now. That's what was happening. God loves you and I so much, each one of us, that he sent Jesus, his Son, the Creator of the universe. Wow.

And he sent his Son, Jesus, the Creator of the universe, to die for us. Why was that necessary? Well, we read that one man could die for one man and isn't that true? People get posthumous valor awards for laying down their lives for their fellow countrymen but one man can die for one man, think about it: only the infinite Creator could die for all men in all places throughout all time. That's why he had the power to save us. As the infinite Creator, he could die for each one of us so that all our sins were nailed to that cross. That's why I'm absolutely certain I'm saved because I have an infinite Creator who is my Savior who dealt with all my sins on that cross because he had the power as the Creator to do that.

Furthermore, as the Creator, he had the power over life and death, didn't he? He demonstrated that. And what did he do? No man could take his life from him, he laid it down willingly for you and for me, but he had the power to take it up again and he rose from the dead. And because he lives, it's our guarantee that we will live also. "I go to prepare a place for you that where I go, you will be able to come with me."

Why do we have such certainty? Why do we have such certainty about eternal life? Because the eternal, infinite, Creator Jesus Christ rose from the dead. The last enemy that was defeated is death. "Death is swallowed up in victory," Paul shouts in 1 Corinthians 15. What do we read in Romans 5:12? We read, "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." Then over in 1 Corinthians 15, well-known passages for us, but let's remind ourselves. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "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." And what do we read in verse 14 of that chapter? "And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." Ah, because as the Creator he could rise from the dead, it really is good news. Our faith isn't in vain because we worship a living Creator. The power of the Gospel, friends, depends on Jesus' power as the Creator. Rob him of the Creator's power and you rob the Gospel of its power. It's not a Gospel that saves if it's not a Creator Jesus who has the power to save us.

You see, friends, going back to where we started, do we as Christians really really believe that Jesus is the Creator? Think carefully about it because, you see, when we remind ourselves of that, I'm speaking to myself here as much as to anyone else, you know, in

the worries of life, the little things that bother us, when we recognize that Jesus is the Creator who indwells us by his Holy Spirit, then it must change our lives, it must change how we live, it must change how we pray because he's the Creator who sustains things, all things by his power, which we read in Colossians 1:17.

So why is the church losing its power? Well, because of unbelief and compromise, yes. What does Paul say to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3? Let's read those words, 2 Timothy 3:1, "But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty." Verse 5, "having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power." Friends, when Christians put man's word based on finite, fallible, sinful, human reasoning above and, indeed, in judgment on so many times on God's word, they're having an appearance of godliness but denying its power. When you deny the power of the Gospel, you have nothing to offer.

Friends, you and I can't change the church in the West by anything we can say or do, but we can start with ourselves, can't we? Now I challenge you tonight as much as I would challenge myself that we need to repent of our lack of belief. Repent of our unbelief. You know, Peter says in 1 Peter 4:17, when judgment comes, where will it start? With God's people. You know, we need to repent of our unbelief. We need to really really believe that Jesus was and is the Creator. As I said, it will change our lives. It will change how we pray. It will change how we serve him and how we witness for him.

So this issue of the age of the earth is so easy to settle, isn't it, when we understand who Jesus Christ was and is. And as the Psalmist said in Psalm 119:160, "Thy word is true from the beginning."

Let's bow in prayer.

*Father, we just bow and tremble in awe and adoration and praise before you tonight. As we've meditated on these passages of Scripture, we pray that your Spirit will have driven it home to us again tonight, that we serve a risen Savior who is, indeed, the Creator, the one who has the power to sustain us and sustain all things around us. Help us, Father, to keep our faith and trust firmly in you in all things. And we pray this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.*

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