

GENESIS 1-3
Message 9

INTRO: Genesis 1:14-19 (read). This past week I was reading from the news letter, *Heralds of Hope*. And Dr. J.Otis Yoder mentioned Psalm 11:3. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? And the answer is, the righteous can then do nothing. Their hands are tied. When one undermines the foundations of something, that puts the righteous out of the system. I want us to take note of our present educational system in America and to think for a moment of what they are doing to the foundations of Scripture. When it comes to evolution versus creation, which is taught? When you see the text books that our children are learning from, what perspective do they come from? Do they come from the perspective of creation or evolution?

Now I have heard great concerns of the plummeting of Christian influence in America. And we have done various things to try to boost and bolster Christianity, but very seldom do we begin on the foundation. The foundation, my friends, is creation. God created the heavens and the earth. And when God is removed from the picture, conviction of sin ceases to have its power. Is it any wonder that our people are not responding to God? We have undermined the foundation of all of the Bible when we say that man evolved. If the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do? Interesting that we seek to work when the foundations are in shambles. And this an area that needs work on our day. So it is necessary to have a series on creation, so that our young people and the church will not question creation. Our young people may go on to college or university but if you have established this solid fact that God created the heavens and the universe, then we will have our feet on solid ground. Then you will be able to move through some of these areas without being strewn by the wayside as you go through some of these systems.

So we are dealing with the foundational truths that are very important to us. We are looking at day four, the creation of the sun, moon and stars. Let me read from Doctor Henry Morris, "On the first day of creation God created and energized the entire universe, the infinite sphere of this divine activity and purpose. On the second day He made the primeval hydrosphere and atmosphere, for the terrestrial sphere. On the third day He made the

earth's lithosphere and the plant's biosphere. Finally on the fourth day He made the astrosphere, the celestial sphere." That is the sphere of the stars and planets. All of these spheres have been created up to this point in time. And this morning we are looking at the celestial sphere.

D. Day Four - Creation of Lights (1:14-19)

2. The creation of lights in general (1:14-15)

a. The place of these lights

So on day four, we have the creation of lights (14-15). On day one God created the light and divided the light from the darkness, but there is a difference between light and lights. Lights are a light source or light givers, whereas light is that which illuminates. We are not told what the light source of the first day was, other than that God created light. We are also not told what change took place between the light and the light source on day one and the light and light source of day four. We do know that God created the light and the light sources. It may be that God removed the first light source or light. It may be that He placed that light into the lights we now have, we are not told. But we do know that on day four God created light sources in the universe.

Now it may be that in the future sometime we will understand how God did these things, but we do not always have to understand why or how God did things. When He tells us that He did them we believe Him. Now sometimes it may seem that it doesn't match up with scientific facts, but just believe the Bible, science will catch up somewhere down the line. God is always right.

So let us look at the place of these lights. In verses 14, 15 and 17 we find that these lights were placed in the firmament of the heavens (read v. 14). Here we find the lights placed in the firmament of the heaven. You

will remember that the Hebrew word for firmament is raqia and it means an expanse from the verb to beat out or spread out, and it is called by Henry Morris "spread out thinness." And that is what you have here. You can feel it. Spread out thinness. In all of creation, there is no place where there is nothing. Not even between the ears as we think sometimes. There is no place where there is nothing.

Someone told me recently that nature abhors a vacuum. It will simply not put up with a vacuum, something where there is nothing. So the firmament is spread out thinness and the mixture of the gases that God created. You will remember that matter is found in three forms: solids, liquids and gases. The reason man can send objects to mars and operate the little vehicles on mars is because there is something between here and mars through which they can send these messages. If there were nothing, they could not do that. I understand that when you shoot a rifle and you have the bang, that is because the bullet smashes through the air and the air will not put up with nothing existing and so it has to make way in front of the bullet and closes in behind it, and that is what creates the bang. It is the coming together of these gases that makes this big bang. I understand that thunder works the same way. The lightning slices through the air. Nature abhors a vacuum and fills it in quickly and you get the bang from that. When you put a suction cup on a smooth surface and you want to pull the suction cup off, it won't come off because nature will not put up with a vacuum. So you are pulling on the centre of the suction cup and it tries to make a place where there is nothing and nature will not put up with that, so it holds it there. And then when the suction cup comes off the air smashes in and you have this plop sound. There is not a place, I understand, where there is nothing. I am not a scientist and do not understand all about that but here

is the reason for the bang, the rumble or the plop of the suction cup.

b. The purpose of these lights

1) To divide the day from the night

Now it is into this sphere in the outer universe the second firmament that God placed the lights on day four of creation. We want to look for a moment at the purposes of these lights. Let us read verses 14-15. We're going to look at the purpose of these lights. The first purpose is to divide the day from the night. Now we know from the world of science that it is not the sun that goes around the earth, it is the earth that turns. We talked about that and that it is not actually scientific to talk about a sunrise, it is actually an earth turn. Nonetheless, practically speaking it is a sunrise.

Now we know that we have divided time into 24 hours as far as the day is concerned. The earth revolves once in 24 hours. And in our last message, I asked you this question: why does God say that the evening and the morning make up the day, instead of the night time and the day time make up the day? Why doesn't He say that? I think there is a reason for that. We have observed from the standpoint of creation that the night was first. Now some say that is Hebrew thinking. No it is not Hebrew thinking, it is Bible thinking. It is God that made it this way. The night was first. The day time next. Now night in Scripture is often associated with evil. When we make this application night time is associated with evil and day time with good. Christians are said to be sons of the day and not of the night. The night is associated with evil deeds and the day with good deeds. In God's economy, when He speaks of good and evil, good always comes first and evil second. Now in the order of

creation, night came first and then came the light. But when God talks about day and night, He always talks about the day first, even though it was made second. That is one reason why God does not say that the night and day make up the day. I want to draw an important principle from this in Scripture in regard to eschatology, end time teaching. J. B. Smith, a man from Eastern Mennonite College, a great man of God, wrote that when God speaks of two classes of people, the good are always mentioned first. I have not personally checked that out, but he is a very careful scholar. He says the good are always mentioned first and the bad second. Now in Genesis, I want you to notice something (go to 1:5), it says God called the light day and the darkness He called night. Now notice that the day comes first and the night second though in creation they happened the other way around.

Now go to verse 4 (read). See, God divided the light from the darkness, not the darkness from the light. Then in verse 5, the day; God called the light day and the darkness He called night. Notice the day and the night and the light and the darkness. It is always in this order. Go over to verse 14, 16 (read). Always God is consistent. Always the day comes first and the night comes next. Even though that is reversed in creation. Look at verse 18. "...to rule over the day and over the night and to divide the light from the darkness." Notice how this happens seven times in Genesis 1.

I want to make an eschatological application from that. Turn to Matthew 24. Matthew 24 and 25 is a very important passage on end times. In verses 40-41 we're told, "Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the

mill, one will be taken and the other left." Now there was in the teaching of eschatology for a number of years scholars who said this refers to the rapture. One will be taken to heaven, the other will be left on earth, to go through the darkest period this world has ever known. Then there came a shift in eschatology. And they said, "No, that is wrong." Even premillennial, pretribulationists said that this does not refer to the rapture. It refers to the second coming at the end of the tribulation. And the one who is taken is taken in judgement and the one who is left is left on the earth to go through the millennium. Now, how do you determine which is right? I propose to you this morning that what J. B. Smith has said, that when you have two classes of people mentioned the righteous are always first, with this possible exception if it is an exception. From that you can deduce which one is right. And I maintain, though this is not the only line of reasoning for this, that this speaks of the rapture.

I was teaching at CSB and gave a message at a chapel time. And I pointed out to students how crucial it is how carefully we deal with the Word of God. Now they had just gone through a course in eschatology and I said, "In your eschatology course, how did you learn this passage. Where does it belong?" And they said, "We were taught it was at the end of the tribulation." But notice the principle that is set here. It is the day first and then the night. It is the light first and the darkness second. It is the righteous first and the unrighteous second. It is always so in Scripture. And so that is an important principle taught here.

2) To be time markers

Let's look at the second purpose of the light here, that they are to be time

markers. The first purpose is to divide the day from the night and the second is that they are to be time markers. I want us to notice this, "And God said let there be lights in the firmament to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and seasons, for days and years." They are to be time markers. Now I have used the Encyclopaedia Britannica more in this series than in any other. That is because we are dealing so much with scientific things. I want you to listen to this title of a section from the encyclopaedia in light of this section in Genesis: Here is the title of a section: Time determination by the stars, sun and moon. That is exactly what we have in this passage. God said, let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and for years. Take away the lights of the universe and our time becomes meaningless.

So they are to be for time markers. They are signs, we are told first. Now signs may refer to prophetic signs. There are at least two examples of this in Scripture. One was the star that led the magi to Bethlehem when Jesus was born. Then in Matthew 24:29 it speaks of another astronomical sign, which is the falling of the stars from heaven, which will mark the conclusion of the tribulation. So it may speak of this type of sign. Or it may speak of signs used for navigational purposes. How many of you have been out on the water and lost in the fog or the dark. If you should go out with my brother Ben on the ocean you will find that he will not fool around with the ocean. He will seek to never give it a chance to let it take him. If he is in the slightest fear of something he will get off. He has learned this by experience. Now if you were on the ocean, and you were caught in the dark and you couldn't see land anywhere, you wouldn't know where you are. But when the stars come out, then you can

determine where you are from them and you know which way to turn your boat. Just like signs.

I do want you to understand what this is not talking about. You see, there are two large fields of study with regard to the stars, one is astronomy and the other astrology. Astronomy is the scientific study of the stars. It is a useful field of study. Even our schools can teach this well. And it is a useful study. It is not wrong. Not so with astrology. This is the study of the stars in which you seek direction for life. So one can buy the horoscope. But this is not what God is talking about here. These are not signs how to live your life or to determine when is a good time to buy something or when is a good time to get married.

Turn to Isaiah 47:12-14 (read). The writer is speaking phiseciously to a nation seeking direction from other sources than God. Here the prophet is saying, "Hey, why don't you go check out with these guys. Ask them to help you." He is saying this phiseciously because they have left God. God did not give the lights in heaven for this purpose. You don't pull a paper out of a slot machine to get direction for life. We get our direction from one and one source only, and that is God.

Let us notice now that they are to be markers of seasons. The sun moon and stars were also placed there for seasons which can be most accurately determined from them. The basic meaning of the Hebrew word for season is *appoint*. It's an appointment and our earth has appointments determined by the sun, moon and stars. So we have the seasons.

Then they are to be markers of days. If it were not for the heavenly bodies created on the fourth day, we would have no sense

of time in the way we do, because our time is based on them. So we have divided the day into 24 hours and the hour into 60 minutes and the minutes into 60 seconds, and now in our computer age we speak of nano seconds, miliseconds and so on. Notice also that they were for days and years. They are to be markers of years. One of the things I lament most about having dropped out of school, and I like to say this for the benefit of our young people, there are so many things you can learn in school that can help one be a better Bible scholar. Very many things; scientific, math, social studies and so on. Young people, the greater the knowledge you have in these areas the more God can use you. I'm having to do a lot of research in things I did not learn. So I have to go back and learn. I was amazed to find how complicated the study of the year is. It is extremely complicated. It is astronomical, pardon the pun. The year has been variously calculated in times past. Now I need to make a point from this. The year has been variously calculated. There is the lunar year. And there is the solar year. Any one here know how many days there are in a lunar year? I understand there are 354 days in the lunar year. How many days in the solar year? Yes, 365.25. Which year did they use in the Bible? Yes, it was the lunar year. It becomes very important when dealing with Bible prophecy. Now what happened in Bible times is they followed the lunar year. The solar year follows the cycles of the sun. Now the lunar year was shorter than the solar year, so they added an extra month in the 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 19 year. After that the cycle would begin over again. That way they always stayed true to the solar year while following the lunar year.

Now this is important, because in our present system we use the solar year, but when we deal with Bible prophecy, we must

use the lunar year. Go to Daniel 9:24-> (read). Now this is a very, very significant prophecy, giving exact time markers. These dates can be precisely determined in our day. So there were first, 69 sevens. If you calculate 69 weeks you come to no significant time. If you calculate 69 solar years you come to no specific time. But when you calculate 69 lunar years, do you know where you come to? Sir Robert Andersen has done very complicated studies on this. And he says it comes to the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey. Sixty nine of these 70 7s have been fulfilled. One more week, that is prophesied in verse 27 has no historical fulfilment to our day. There are seven lunar years that are still before us.

3) To give light on the earth

Let's look at the last purpose of the lights. It is to give light on the earth (Genesis 1:15). This is probably the most important purpose of all. You will remember that the third description of the primeval earth was that it was enveloped in darkness. And the third purpose was to give light on earth. Darkness is the natural state of anything. Darkness is the way we are born. If you are here this morning and you have never accepted Jesus Christ, you are in the state of darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. Light is not the absence of darkness. Light is the presence of energy. Light is energy.

If you have never experienced Jesus Christ, I encourage you to seek Him. The time is coming when that decision will no longer be made. It will be forever too late. Now an interesting thing about light is that it dispels darkness. And if we have the light in ourselves, it will dispel the darkness and get rid of the evil. I marvel too in the study of light,

how very complex it is. As a matter of fact, to date mostly theories exist. There is so much about light we do not know. Mostly theories exist so far. But we can conclude that light is necessary to life. We can also conclude that it is energy. We can also conclude that light travels at 186 thousand miles per second. And that light makes things visible. And that more information reaches the heart and mind by light than any other way. So we conclude with the Lord, that when He had made the light, that it was good.

CONCL: So let us make some practical applications from light. Scripture tells us that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. He is fully light. There is nothing evil in Him (1 John 1:5). And light speaks of that which is good and darkness speaks of that which is evil. When the world was created, it was in a state of darkness. This is a natural state. It is a state in which we all start in, because we are born in sin. Turn to John 3:19-20 (read). The book of Ephesians says whatever makes manifest is light. Whatever shows me up for what I am is light. We don't like it, but it is light.

Now the Gospel is the light that brings us to the truth (2 Cor. 3:4-6). And once we become children of God we are told to walk in the light (Eph. 5:8). We are not to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). We are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. It does not matter if it is in business, marriage, political etc... Why? Because light has no communion with darkness. If you have light, the darkness must go. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14). In verse 16 our light is spoken of as our works. How is it in our life in the workplace? Are our works light or darkness. When we do wrong we hide God, when we do good we make Him visible. My life shall touch a dozen lives before this day is done, leave countless deeds of good or ill, ere sets the evening sun. This the wish I always wish, the prayer I always pray; Lord may my life help other's lives whoere it touches by the way.

May God make of this church a people who walk for His glory.