

Note: *This is a verbatim transcript of the live broadcast. It is presented as spoken.*

You've come at a point when we're beginning a study on the book of Genesis. And we've been making our way through the first verse in the first chapter, the last two presentations. The good news is today we may finish chapter 1. So I'd like to invite you to turn with me in your Bibles to that first chapter in the first book. Genesis 1:1. We're going to be looking at the six days of creation. This is Genesis, His Story. And it's talking about a good beginning. The Lord started off with a good beginning. Everything God does is good. Hope you don't mind if I back all the way up to what I've covered already and read that first verse again. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Now in the first chapter we're going to find that God does a lot of creating. First of all, He creates the environment, the vegetation, animal life, and then, ultimately, human life. And there's no accident to the process and the sequence of creation that we're going to find here. I tried to spend enough time last week explaining that I believe that God did create through His word, not through a bunch of long multi-million year biological accidents. But I believe that the Lord created by the power of His word. He spoke things into existence.

First thing we notice here is it says, "The earth was without form." Genesis 1:2, "The earth was without form and void. And darkness was on the face of the deep." I want to pause at this point. Someone might wonder, you know, "In the beginning did God speak all of the matter into existence 6,000 years ago?" Not necessarily. And some of the things I'm sharing with you about the nature of the cosmos back when God began to create, I might have it wrong. But to my understanding, He came to this corner of the universe and there may have been a black chaotic orb. The earth was here, probably had some of the base ingredients that are still on the earth such as water. But it was a chaotic orb. There was no form, no design. It was just a shapeless mass. And the Bible tells us, "Then the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water." So here you've got this chaotic mass, and the Spirit of God is hovering over the waters. God begins creating with this orb in space. It does not even say the earth was spinning yet. There's no day or night. It's dead, so to speak. There's water but no life.

Incidentally, if you read in your Bibles in Jeremiah 4:23, it says, "I beheld the earth and lo, it was without form and void." Now what is Jeremiah talking about? Who are the scholars here? Is he looking back at Genesis, or is he looking ahead? He's looking ahead. You know the Bible tells us that when Christ comes again, that the earth is going to be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. And in the same way that God began with nothing, and the earth was void when He started creating, He is going to again reduce the earth to that condition again before He recreates it and makes a new heaven and a new earth. The earth is void, it's a chaos. I think it was Martin Luther who said that God makes from nothing. And until we become nothing, He can make nothing out of us. God creates from nothing. And until we become nothing He can make nothing out of us. In other words, we must humble ourselves and realize what we really are. God is the potter and we are the clay.

So He begins creating. Now another very important point I want you to notice as we move through this first chapter is that God creates through His word. The Bible says, "Then God said." Over and over again you're going to find that phrase, "Then God said." The word of God has inherent creative power in it. If you forget everything else in this message today, the most important thing I could leave with you is that there is power in the word of God. Jesus says, "The words that I speak, they are Spirit and they are life." There's life in the word of God. There's inherent power in the word of God. First time I started reading the Bible I had absolutely no intention or desire to believe it. I was simply reading it to educate myself on what I thought to be a fable so I could argue with Christians. But I underestimated the inherent power in the word of God. It is never without effect. And when you hear the word of God in any degree, it has a transforming influence.

Everything God creates, He creates with His word. The Bible does not say, "And God said, 'Let there be

primeval ooze. And hopefully, after long enough, something will happen to that ooze.” That’s not how it happened. He spoke and it was done. You can read in Psalm 33:6, 9, I’ll combine those two passages there, “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.” Not through all these biological accidents. “And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. For He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast.” Everything in the Bible makes it very clear that it was by virtue of God articulating His will that things happened. And you can find thousands of examples of this in the Bible where God spoke and it was so. God said something and it became a reality.

Now who is the God that created with His word? We know that God consists of three persons. In another study we’ll talk more about the person of God. But we’ve got God the Father and the Son. The Bible tells us that it is through God the Son, Jesus, all things were made. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Who is that talking about? It’s talking about Christ. Jesus is the one who made the world. I’ve heard a song that’s often sung about, He made the tree that He died upon. He made the people who crucified Him. He is the creator. And God the Father committed all creation to God the Son.

Was He the only witness of the creation? No, there were others there beholding. It was not a secret event. It was not like the Manhattan Project, there in the deserts there by Alamogordo where they made the atomic bomb, until finally it blew up we didn’t know anything about it. It was something that was planned. As a matter of fact, the devil was infuriated that God was making this new world and he could not be in on it. He does not have the creative power of Christ. All the devil can do is create illusions. But the Bible says that the angels beheld. You can read in the book of Job 31:7, it says, “When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Now I don’t have time to read that whole passage, but you read what it says before and after this excerpt and it’s talking about the creation of the world. Wouldn’t it have been something to see the world being created in six days by the word of God? Some people think, “Doug, how ignorant can you be to really believe that God created all of this in six days?” You know, I used to think that way. Now as I get to know God better, I’m wondering why it took Him so long. He could have done it in 30 seconds. The only reason I can think of that He took so long, six whole days... I mean what show have you ever gone to that lasted six days? Is because there were others watching. And He was letting them behold. Can you imagine all the dynamics that were transpiring all over the planet as He spoke these different events into being? But I believe that it was six literal days that God took, and the angels, of course, were incorporated.

Alright. We’re making progress. Let’s go to the first day. And we’re going to look at just the six days. In future presentations I will present what happened on the seventh day and I’m going to take my time going through the subject of the Sabbath truth. That seventh day. But for now, day number 1. “Then God said,” verse 3, “let there be light.” Day 1 God makes the light. “And there was light. And God saw the light that it was good. And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.” Now I want to pause and expand on this just a little bit. First of all, God says, “Let there be light.” Whenever you begin to make something, if you go into your shop and you’re going to create, you begin with light. Now beyond that, He separates the light from the darkness. Evidently, God begins spinning the world on its axis so that there will be divisions of light and darkness. Now someone is going to say, “Now wait a second, Doug. I’ve got you now. How can there be days when the Lord does not make the sun until the fourth day?” I’ll get to that in just a minute. I mean I’ll get to the fourth day in a few minutes. But the Bible says God is light. He is the light of the world. And when Christ came to this orb and began creating, He set it in motion. I think as He came and He began creating He said, “Let there be light.” And you know, light is what, directly or indirectly, brings the life to the world.

As a matter of fact, photosynthesis, that incredible miracle where light is converted into chemical energy, is the means through which we get all of the food that we have on the planet. And that all comes from light. You can understand why so many of the Pagan cultures used to worship the sun. They at least knew that it was the light, the beams, the rays, from the sun that creates this chemical reaction in the vegetation that produces the food and all the life and energy that we have on our planet. So God begins

by releasing this power of light.

Day number 2 is the atmosphere. The Bible says... Oh wait a second. Before I get to the atmosphere, something else I want to bring out. Notice here it says, "The evening and the morning were the first day." Now in our western culture we say, "Day and night, day and night, day and night." We do the sequence that way. In the Orient, they do not begin the day in the morning. They begin the day at the evening. And so that's why Moses is using this language. "From evening unto evening shall you celebrate your Sabbaths," the Bible tells us. A day begins and ends in the evening. After the sun goes down tonight in the Oriental culture, you would refer to this morning as yesterday. After the sun goes down tonight, if we get together, we could refer to what happened here in church as yesterday. Now you and I go, "Huh? What kind of kooky way is that of thinking?" But that was perfectly right according to the Oriental and Biblical way of measuring time. So God doesn't say, "Morning and evening." He says, "Evening and morning were the first day."

Day number 2 the atmosphere is made. Genesis 1:6-8, "Then God said, 'Let there be a firmament, an expanse, in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.'" Now God creates this atmosphere around the planet. And you know, as NASA and our space people began to talk about space exploration, you know one of their big challenges as they look at both the moons and the planets in our solar system... And really, we may have some hope of getting to Mars before Jesus comes. We might have hope of even getting to one of the moons of Jupiter. But there is very remote hope of getting out of our solar system. Because if you go to the nearest star—they're not sure, it's either Alphacentury or Alphaproxi—you'd have to travel four light years and that's 186,000 miles per second for four years. The speed of light for four years to get to the nearest star. But they don't expect to find much life. You know why? None of the moons or planets in our solar system have the atmosphere that we have. There is something unique, incredible, miraculous about the very air we breathe. You know, it is the perfect combination of gasses. And you know, there's a lot of other features that if it wasn't just the right balance, nothing would work. Our atmosphere is the perfect balance that we need. If we had a little bit too much oxygen, our atmosphere would burn. You know, oxygen burns. If we had a little too less then everything would die and we'd starve.

As a matter of fact, I understand that certain creatures, if you take them in an airplane, you know when they fly on jets, they can't live above certain altitudes that you and I can live above because there's such a delicate balance in the gasses of the earth. Are you aware that what you exhale rises? Did you know that if everything we exhale settled we'd all suffocate ourselves pretty soon? That's good news. Because the methane and everything rises. Otherwise we'd all suffocate the planet pretty soon. The oxygen settles. What you exhale, the plants inhale. What the plants exhale on a sunny day, you and I inhale. What a beautiful symbiotic relationship. You think this is an accident? God creates this atmosphere.

Now in the Bible you've heard me say before... Be patient with me, I repeat these things. Because not everybody's always at every presentation. There are three words for heaven. The first heaven is the atmosphere around the earth where the clouds float, and the wind blows, and the birds fly. That's called the first heaven. The second heaven was the place where the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the planets are up in space. That was the second heaven. The third heaven is the one we're referring to when we say, "Our Father which art in heaven." It's paradise, the dwelling place of God. That was the third heaven. The Bible says when Jesus comes back that He's going to make a new heaven and a new earth. He's not necessarily talking about the rest of the universe, or His dwelling place, but the atmosphere around our planet is going to be recreated. So He makes this beautiful atmosphere and all creatures breathe this atmosphere.

The Bible speaks of the breath of life. When we get to Adam we'll talk more about that. But trees breathe. People breathe. Single cell organisms breathe. I remember in Biology 101 in elementary school, we were looking at the anatomy of a worm. Pretty simple. I won't go into it right now. But I noticed that they didn't have any lungs. And I asked my teacher, "Where's the lungs?" Has a heart, one little artery, and a heart, got an intake and output, had no lungs. And he said, "It breathes through it's skin." And

leaves breathe. And protozoas breathe. And fish breathe. You know what happens if you don't keep the bubbles going in your aquarium? The fish suffocate. And so everything breathes this atmosphere, so it's appropriate that God talks about this breath of life.

So He begins. He's making the environment. He's preparing to make life. Then day 3 He makes the land—now we're on day 3—the sea and the vegetation. Continues to prepare the environment to begin with. Genesis 1:9, "Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place and let dry land appear.' And it was so." Don't forget. God said, "And it is so." If you believe the word of God, it is so in your life also. Now I would like to have seen that. I would like to have watched from a helium balloon, but it would have been nice to watch as God spoke and the earth began to tremble. And all of these continents began to rise up out of the sea, and the waters began to rush away. Wouldn't that have been something to see? The land, back before the flood, was not as rugged and jagged as it is now. I don't believe that they have the mountain peaks that go up 28,000 feet. I think that the earth went through another convolution during the time of the flood. But there were these beautiful rolling hills, and all this land. But all you've got is land and water.

So He now creates the vegetation. And you know that there is more vegetation in the water than there is on the land. Did you know that? He makes vegetation on both, but He separates them. And the Bible goes on to say, Genesis 1:11, "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth grass.' Now that, of course, would be the wheat and the food that we eat. 'The herb that yields seed, the fruit tree that yields fruit, according to its kind whose seed is in itself, on the earth.' And it was so." And all over the planet all of this vegetation, and all of these different forms of planet life begin to come into being. Think of all the diversity of plants there are. What if He had made the plants before He made the water? How long would they have lived? Or before He made the soil? It wouldn't have lasted. And through this miracle of photosynthesis, look at the diversity of foods that are available in the world today. All of these beautiful, exotic fruits and plants. God is setting the table before the people and the creatures come in. He's creating a beautiful environment. You know why? Because everything is good. God is a good God and everything He's making is good. So He sets the table with all this diversity.

Day 4. The sun and the moon and the stars. Genesis 1:14, "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens.'" This is now the second heavens that He's speaking about. Let there be lights in the heavens. "To divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and..." I'll get to that in a second, "...and seasons, for days and years." Now in the heavenly bodies and in the planets, from those lights we get our seasons. Why does a month have approximately 27 days? 31 days? Because that's the lunar cycle. The lunar cycle takes about 28 days. Isn't that right? Then you've got the sun of course. The earth rotating on its axis. The sun is what's in the heavens to divide our daytime. We've got our months. The years are divided, and the seasons, by the earth rotating around, or revolving around, this principle light the sun. I've heard someone say before, "What in the sun, moon or stars gives us our seven day week?" There's nothing. The whole world has a seven day week and the only place you can trace that to is when God created in the beginning. But it also says they're for signs. You know, the wise men followed a star to mark the birth of Jesus, didn't they? The Bible tells us that God sometimes manifested different signs in the heavens.

Go to Genesis 1:16. It tells us there are two principle lights. We've got two great lights. "The greater light to rule the day." That's what we would commonly call the sun. "And the lesser light to rule the night." Then it says, "He made the stars also." Now I don't believe this is saying that at this time on the fourth day is the first time any star or galaxy appeared. I think it's saying as a retroactive statement not only did He make the lights in our galaxy, He made all of the stars as well. You know when you look up at space at night and you see what you think are stars, if you had a high powered telescope you would discover that in the bowl of the big dipper are five—is it...wait a second, I want to get this right—two billion stars, because there are over 500 galaxies in the bowl of the big dipper. But still, you know how many galaxies there are in space? The astronomers, using the Hubble telescope say, "There are an infinite number of galaxies," and a galaxy can have 200 million stars in it. Each of those stars is a blazing sun like ours that could have planets revolving around it. Do the math on that for a second. 200 billion stars. One galaxy.

200 billion suns. Potential solar systems. We've got, what, nine? Someone told me they may have found one more planet beyond Pluto. How many of you have heard that? It's not a big one. They don't know whether to classify it as an asteroid or a planet, way out there beyond Pluto. Might have nine, might have ten planets in our solar system. There could be suns in these other galaxies that have thousands of planets around them. There's a lot of other life around there.

You know I read that parable in the Bible that Pastor Pedro was talking about in his children's story. A shepherd who has a hundred sheep and he loses one. He leaves the ninety and nine safe in the fold, and he goes out into the dark, and the cold, and the storm, to find that one lost sheep. Not only is that a picture of how God saves people in the world, that's a picture of what Jesus did. In that He left the unfallen worlds of the infinite universe and He came to this planet. Think about what He did, because there was this one lost world. He became a man in this world. He could have just gone [snap] like we're a speck of dust and made another one. If you think about how immense the cosmos is. And yet God spoke all that into existence. Can you say, "Amen?" Am I the only one who is moved and inspired? When I think about how big God is, and yet He would stoop to being a human on this planet. So then He makes the sun and the moon and the stars. And the world is still rotating. The days are now divided by their facing the sun.

Day number 5. He makes the sea and the air creatures. Genesis 1:20, "Then God said, 'Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures. And let the birds fly above the earth and across the face of the firmament of the heavens.'" Now God makes His...the creatures in varying degrees. He fills the air environment. He fills the water environment. And in a little bit He's going to fill the land environment. And it would have been something to see, as God speaks and suddenly the oceans are filled with this tremendous diversity of sea life.

You're probably tired of hearing me say it, but this last year, the year 2000, Karen and I went to Roatan and we did a brief evangelistic series. We did have a side motive. We wanted to get our scuba certification. We had been scuba diving before, but we were sort of renegade. We weren't certified to do it. So we finally got certified. And we were scuba diving around some of the most beautiful coral reefs in the gulf there, there in Roatan. Just spectacular. And you know, never are you going to have a sensation on earth so much like heaven, unless God takes you into vision, as going around a warm coral reef because it is so... How many of you have done this before? Snorkeled or scuba dived? And it cannot be California waters. I won't go swimming off California. I'm scared of sharks. Are you crazy? I'm not going to do that. It's not that bad. But it's cold, is my big problem. And the other thing is the coral and plant life in some of the colder regions is not as vivid. It's like the coral reefs in the warm waters are like the difference between the rain forest and the arctic tundra.

I've got a theory. And again, I might be going out on a limb. But wouldn't it have been mean for God to make all this beauty under the ocean and say, "Adam, it's really beautiful out there. Too bad you can't hold your breath long enough. Too bad you can't see it." I believe that Adam perhaps had abilities that man has lost. How many of you would agree with me that man has not been becoming more profound, and more features, and skills, and gifts, and abilities, with the degeneration of sin. We've lost them. Do you agree with that? I think that Adam not only did he live longer, not only was he taller, I think that Adam may have had abilities where he could go underwater and see the sea creatures. I don't know if it meant that he could just hold his breath for hours. I used to, before I got my scuba license, I used to free dive. And free dive, I still do that, it's where you hyperventilate before you go down and you can stay down for two or three minutes. And look at things. And it's got its benefits because you don't have all the scuba apparatus that can be very hindering. But I think Adam could probably free dive for an hour. And he could go down and he could see. And things weren't blurry like they are with our eyes unless we put a mask on. There was all that beauty down there.

And God made all these creatures in the air. Think about all the different kinds of birds, and the winged creatures. Not only the ones that fly but some of them that pluck around on the ground. There's so much diversity among the creatures. How someone can believe in evolution? I'm ashamed that I used to

believe that. Because it just does not make sense. And that these birds, with their hollow bones, and the way their little feathers... You ever look at the way their little feathers zip together, and they preen their feathers? And they say that they came from dinosaurs. These little lizards that ran off the rocks. And they ran off the rocks until pretty soon they developed aerodynamic design before they hit the ground. And they tried to pass that on to their posterity.

You know one thing I think is interesting though, is that the creatures that God made on the fifth day principally are egg-layers. I know that there are some mammals that fly, like the bats, and there are dolphins and whales in the ocean. But principally they are egg-layers. And then you get to the land creatures, principally the mammals; and they of course are mammals. That's what they are. They don't lay eggs. Unless they're a platypus, and then they're sort of a paradox. And so He makes these sea creatures. Someone wrote, "From the countless sholls of small fish to the great sea monsters. From the tiny insects that fly to the king of birds. The waters and the air were suddenly made to swim with creatures formed to live in their respective elements."

Day number 6. God makes the land creatures and man. Genesis 1:24, the Bible says, "Then God said, 'Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind, and cattle and creeping things, and the beast of the earth after his kind.' And it was so." And God spoke and the tremendous diversity of animals that suddenly began to swarm. Now I don't know if God just zapped them into full grown state or, I don't know if God suddenly made a little bitty horse and it grew up while the angels were watching all that sixth day. I don't know if He made a little bitty deer and it grew into a full grown deer. I don't know exactly how God did it. But He spoke these animals into existence. And they were able to get up and begin functioning. And all the diversity of animals, you notice what it says, after their kind. Now you know one thing that evolution can't explain is there are so many different varieties of creatures that cannot cross breed. They are made after their kind. Now you can breed dogs with dogs, and cats with cats. Because they're the same kind, the same family. But you cannot breed a monkey and a sheep. You cannot breed an alligator and a bird. They are different kinds. And for all this diversity... You know there are hundreds of thousands of different kinds of creatures in the world today? To all evolve so distinct and not be able to mate with each other but only with their own kind. Evolution doesn't have an explanation for that. The other thing that's missing is you can find thousands of thousands of fossils of the different kinds, but they cannot find the fossils of the intermediary links that they claim existed between these species. They're not there. Because God made them after their kinds. They were separate, distinct, isolated categories. And they don't cross over. And scientists are sure trying right now in test tubes to break those laws and see if they can make a half-monkey/half-sheep. I don't know what they'd do with it, but they think that it'd be fun to try. I won't even predict on whether or not they'll have any success on that, but I don't think that it's God's will for us to tamper with creation that way.

So He makes this great diversity of creature. And then as the crowning act of His creation, Genesis 1:26, the Bible says, "God says, 'Let us make man in our image.'" The Bible tells us that man was made in the image of God. Man was not made like a chimpanzee. God does not look like a chimpanzee. There's a few definitions in the Bible. Man was made in the image of God for a couple of reasons. The Bible tells us that man was to have dominion over everything else that had been made. God made everything and the crowning act of His creation was man made in His own image. As you read on in the Bible it gives more detail in Genesis about the creation day, and about the naming of the animals, and the creating of woman, that we'll get to. But I want you to know that the Bible tells us He made man. And He says, "God created man in His own image..." this is Genesis 1:27, "...in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them." Man was, of course, comprised of, it's a species type, and that we're male and female. Now the name of the first male was Adam. And the Bible tells us that the word Adam... The Bible is not real clear what the word Adam means. It's of an uncertain origin. It's a name that God gave to him. It could be a word play on the word in Hebrew for dust. The word Adama is dust. And what was Adam made from? It says, "He formed him from the dust." Now something else you'll notice is during the days of creation God simply speaks the land, and the planets, and all these things into existence. But when God is getting ready to make man, what does He do? God gets down on His knees and He begins to pull

the dust of the planet together. And with His own hands, He tenderly shapes man. Now I don't know if He put him on a wheel and tried to spin him like a potter does. I don't know if He just started pressing His fingers in where the eyes were supposed to be. I don't know if God had some magical force that He used with His hands as He went over the clay and it converted the clay into skin and various organs. I'd like to see that, wouldn't you?

You know, I have another theory. You're beginning to wonder about some of my theories, aren't you? I have another theory that when we get to heaven, God is going to have a library—probably not books, but some kind of disks or something, an angel we can ask—who will play back for us whatever we want to see. The Bible says nothing will be secret. All things will be open. And I would like to go to the archive and say, "I want to see the day God made Adam." And I want to do slow play. And I want to watch how God made Adam. And then after He forms him, He breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. It's almost as like He's giving him CPR not to revive him, but to bring him to life for the first time. And Adam becomes a living being.

And I remember one of our kids asked us one time, "Dad, did Adam have a belly button?" You have to think about that because the belly button is there, if I'm not mistaken Doc, because you were born. It's like, you know, which came first? The chicken or the egg? But He probably made him look like everybody else. I don't know whether or not he had a belly button. That's a very interesting thing to think about. But he had a mind that was created knowing stuff.

You know, you can go buy a computer at the computer store or Costco, one of these places. And it used to be you bought a computer and you had to format the hard drive, and load all the programming, and load the systems. Now you buy a computer it's already got Windows installed, it's already got a lot of programs, they're already set up with the internet accounts and all this stuff, stuff you don't want, is already on the computer. It's preprogrammed. That might be a crude analogy, but I think Adam was, to some extent, preprogrammed. I think that when he was created he knew how to speak. He didn't have to struggle learning how to speak like a baby does. I think that when he was created he had perfect balance. He didn't stumble along after God made him and keep falling down and crawling that first day until he could learn. Adam wasn't struggling to roll over. Adam had control of his dexterity. He could reach out and he could tell, through his mind, his fingers how to move and they knew how to move.

You know it reminds me of a time when a man who had never walked before and Jesus healed him. And the Bible says he jumped up... Actually it was Peter, I'm sorry. Jesus healed him. But it was Peter and John who healed him. Never walked before. He jumped up. He leaped. I mean, if you had never walked before you wouldn't start out leaping wouldn't you. You'd start out crawling, get some crutches, hobble along until your legs develop strength. But when he was healed he suddenly had all his control, and all his dexterity, and all of his balance.

Adam was made fully operational. He came from the factory preprogrammed, so to speak. He was able to converse with God. He had a certain amount of awareness. But only a fraction of his hard drive was being used. If you buy one of these computers they do have a lot of programming. But I've never yet seen someone where the hard drive is filled up. 99% of it's still free. Adam was created to also learn. His mind was a hungry vacuum. He had an insatiable curiosity. And part of his purpose in life was to look at the things that God had made in this garden, and look at the creatures that were in the water, on the land, in the air, and wonder. He was created I think with a desire to know. And I think that God implants that in us. As we go on we'll find out that he was created with some other special wiring that did not appear to meet its fulfillment in anything he saw around him. And God did that on purpose. And then he made woman. But the Bible tells us that when God made everything, He made everything good.

God took the man, He placed him in the garden. What was the name of the garden? The Garden of Eden. The Hebrew verb Adan means delight or pleasure. It comes from the Septuagint translation. It's an expression of, "The Garden of Eden is the garden of delight or paradise." It was a place of pleasure. Now you know why I wanted to emphasize that? Now I'm getting to my sermon title. A Good Beginning. God made everything good. Are you aware of how many times He uses the word good in the first chapter?

Seven times exactly. He says, "Good, good, good, good, good," six, "good." The seventh time God says it differently. "Very good." Isn't it interesting how God always makes the seventh special and unique in some way? "Good, good, good, good, good, good, very good." And after He makes man and He finishes the garden the Bible says, Genesis 1:31, "And God saw that everything that He had made..." How much? Everything He made. "And behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." God didn't make anything bad. God made everything good.

Now you know, it's a simple thought but for me it's a very profound thought. Some people wonder why God allows us to suffer. Why do we have hardship? Why do we have struggles? Why do we have conflict with people? Why is there so much misery? Why do the innocent suffer? Why, why, why? If God is love, why is there so much bad? Why is there so much evil? That's not God's will. If you ever question the ultimate will of God, please take a look at Genesis chapter 1. That is the perfect will of God. God wants everything good. He wants you good. He wants you to live forever. He wants you to live in paradise. He wants you to be surrounded with a delight. He wants to satisfy all of your needs. This is what God's plan was. All of the frustrations of that plan, and the evil and the suffering that we see in the world, are not God's perfect will. He, when Jesus comes back, will restore us to that perfect good will. But we must be good. Now that may sound a little bit basic, but... How many of you tell your children to be good? Fess up. Some say, "You're being legalistic. Don't tell your children to be good. That's behavior oriented." I'm sorry, maybe it is, but it's a fact. God wants us to be good, and we want our children to be good. Isn't that important? The word good that's used here is the word *Toab*. In the widest sense this is the way that word in Genesis translates. It means beautiful, best, better, bountiful, cheerful, at ease, favor, fine, glad, graciously, joyfully, kindly, kindness, liketh, loveth, merry, most, pleasant, pleaseth, pleasure, precious, prosperity, ready, sweet, wealth, welfare. These are all the different tentacles of that word that's used, good. Everything about the definitions of the word, they're good things. And this is what God's designed for you and me. James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect is from above and comes down from the Father of light with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."

Everything good comes from God. But what about us? Are we good? That's our problem. We're separated from God because God is good and we're not. We're separated from the garden because the garden was good and we're not. And those things that are not good often contaminate those things that are. Somebody gave us a bunch of oranges. They gave them to us in a big plastic bag last week. If that person's here they may not like what they're about to hear. I noticed they sat on the counter for a couple of days because, bless their hearts, we already had oranges. I know, it's because we already some too, in the fruit basket. And they're in the bag. So I noticed one day that you could sort of see, the bag is translucent, that one of the oranges was turning a little green. And it's not because it wasn't ripe, it was getting moldy. Now oranges are unique. When they get this spore in them, and they start to rot, it just overnight takes a firm healthy orange and makes it green much. In one night. It's amazing to me how quickly it worked. So I looked in the bag and I said, "Well, that's a bad one. I'd better get it out of there or it'll contaminate the rest." And in taking it out I watched some of the green powder fell on the other oranges. And I didn't do anything about it because I thought, "I haven't got time to wash all of these," and I threw it in the garbage can. You know what happened? That green powder that fell off that one moldy orange, the next day several more were getting soft and green. We've got green powder, we've got sin. And it's contagious. And God had to separate us from the garden until he could purge us from the sin. Now I took one of those oranges that got the green powder on it and I washed it and I dried it. And I set it down. And the other ones continued to decompose and that one stayed clean because it had been washed from those spores. Well the spores of sin have contaminated the whole planet. And the Lord came to purge us from that. The Bible tells us that one day... Romans 7:18, I'm sorry. "For I know that in me, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." That's our condition. The purpose for the plan of salvation... It says, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" We can't, but God can. Can God make us good? Can He? He can. He can transform us, friends. He's going to restore everything in the world to being good, and He can make you and I good once again also.

One time a young ruler came to Jesus. And he said, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

This is Luke 18:18, 19. How did Jesus respond? He said, "No one is good but One and that's God." Someone asked me this week, "Why did Jesus say He wasn't good?" He didn't say that. The rich young ruler came to Christ and said, "Good Master." And it was just platitude of greeting, he didn't expect anything from it. And Christ went back to what he had said. He said, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One and that's God." Only one person would ever come into the world that would be good, and that would be God become a man. In us, in all other humans, there's no good thing. He wasn't saying He wasn't good. He was trying to help the young ruler identify that He was God. Because He was good. And He's going to restore the world to that good state again. The Bible tells us that every tree that does not bear good fruit, Matthew 3:10, is going to be cut down. We want the Lord to make us good. Amen? And as Christ moves into our hearts through His Spirit, He transforms us. And the things that we once loved we hate, and the things that we once hated we love. And He changes us.

Now probably one of the most important things I could leave you with as we go through this week of creation is that the gospel is in the creation itself. You could look, for instance, and I'd like to quote from Matthew Henry's commentary, the first day. "In the new creation, the first thing that is wrought in the soul is light. The blessed Spirit works upon the will and the affections by enlightening the understanding. Those who were by sin and darkness, by grace become light in the Lord. Observe that at first there was nothing desirable to be seen," speaking of the world and its chaotic mess. "The world was without form, and void, and confusion, and emptiness. In this manner the work of grace in the soul is a new creation. And in the graceless soul, one that is not born again, there is disorder, confusion, and every evil work. It is empty of all good. For it is without God. And it is dark. In its darkness, in itself, in this condition, by its very nature, it's ill until the Almighty grace works a change in us by bringing light." What God did to the world when He began creating, when there was confusion, and darkness, and a void, He brought light, is what He does for us. And you could take that same analogy through each one of the days of creation. Jesus is the light of the world. The first day there's light. Amen? The Bible says that He gives us the breath of life, the Holy Spirit. The second day He makes this atmosphere. The third day is the day when the Lord made bread and He made wine. He made these two ingredients that are symbols of the gospel. The fourth day He makes the sun and the moon and the stars. They're symbols for the Word of God. You go to Revelation 12 you've got the church who's standing on the moon. She's wearing the sun. She's got stars above her head. And the Bible tells us that this represents the people of God with the light of the world. Also we are guided by the sun, moon, and stars. Some of you remember when Paul was in a ship that was in a storm on a sea. And they didn't know where they were going because the mariners didn't have GPS back then. They could not see the sun, moon, or stars and they didn't know where they were. They didn't have a compass back then. The Bible said it's for signs, they're for guidance. And so this represents Christ, the light who guides us. Furthermore it tells us that on the fifth day He made the birds. Christ tells us that He would take us underneath His wings. He made the fish. Jesus wants us to be fishers of men. And then on the sixth day is when Christ made the first lamb, it's when He made the animals. And the clean animals, of course, that are used for sacrifice. And then He made man. And Jesus is the second Adam. Everything about the creation day tells us something about the Lord. Probably the most potent thing to remember is it said, "God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

One day there was this leper who came to Jesus. You can find this in Luke 5, Matthew 8. Luke says, the physician, he was full of leprosy. And he said, "Good Master." Everybody probably just scattered as this leper, covered with leprosy, came to Jesus, because he was unclean and he was contagious. He falls down at Jesus' feet, looks up at His face and says, "Lord, if You want to, if You will, You can make me clean. You can make me good." And you know what Jesus said? He reached out and touched him and He said, "I will. Be thou clean." Very simple. Three words. What happened with those three creative words? The leprosy left and he was a new creature. He was clean. When God says be something, it happens. Right? Be thou clean. And what the Lord said to the leper He says to us. His power is available for us to be new creatures in Christ. Amen?

You know, if we look at the creation week and we think, "Boy, that was wonderful. I'd like to see a video someday of the creation week," and we miss the most important part that this reminds us that He can

recreate us and make us new creatures, then it really doesn't matter. If we understand the creation week, and we believe in creation and not evolution, but we have not yet experienced a new creation it does us no good. What's more powerful, what required more power? For God to speak the continents up out of the ocean, for God to speak all the vegetation on land and sea, for Him to speak the birds and fish in the air and the water, for Him to speak all the land creatures and indeed man into existence? Or for Him to speak a new heart in you and me? Does that require less power? Can you see why it's important for us to believe that God's word can create us new? What is the greatest miracle? The greatest miracle is when He creates us new. Amen?

And with that thought, I'd like to invite you to turn to our closing hymn, 111, It Took A Miracle. And we're going to stand and sing together about that creative power that can recreate us. 111 in your hymnals.

[Singing]

This morning we've been considering the good beginning the Lord made when He created this world. People have often questioned God. "If God is good, if God is love, then why?" As we look back at Genesis this morning we can see God is love, God is good, and His plans for you are still good. The thoughts that He has for you are good thoughts. Amen? Some of you maybe have been going through struggles where you've questioned if God has a good plan for you. It might be represented in your health, in personal conflicts, in your family, or finances. You may have received your utility bills this week. And you wondered, "Lord, are You still good?" God is good. Amen? Do you believe that friends? Some of you might be weighed down with some doubts and concerns about God's creative power, about His plan for your life and you'd like special prayer. He would like to activate that miraculous power in your life today and give you faith that He is still good. If you'd like to come for prayer we'd like to invite you to come then as we sing verse 2.

[Singing]

You know, our study this morning on creation is a dry discourse unless it does something practical to help you recognize that recreative power that the Lord has. What He did to bring everything you see into existence He can do to recreate you. If there are any here today, you've not yet enjoyed or claimed that power to create in us a clean heart, a new heart, a new life with new desires and new goals, and you'd like to ask God to work that creative power in you, to give you a new heart and a new soul, you can come as we sing the last verse. And we'd like to pray for you in a special sense to that end.

[Singing]

I love that song. You know I picked that song earlier in the week and I've been singing it all week long. I just love that song. Nothing is greater than the miracle of how the Lord transforms us through His recreative power.

Father in heaven, Lord we've marveled this morning as we have considered how majestic and omnipotent you are in that you could speak, and simply by virtue of the power of Your word so much transpired. Our minds cannot take it in Lord. It's so incredible, it's so miraculous, it's just something that's incomprehensible. That you could speak this vast planet and all of its resources into existence. Indeed the sun, and the moon, and the stars. And yet, Lord, sometimes we doubt that that same word has the power to change our hearts. Please forgive us for our lack of faith. And right now I pray that each person here can first of all, Lord, believe that You are a good God. That your plans for each one of us are good plans. And in spite of this world that's been detoured by an enemy, where there are many who are in rebellion to Your good will, we know that ultimately everything will again be good, good, very good. I pray, Lord, that we'll never cease to remember that you are a good God. And that You will someday bring us into that world that's made new, recreated, where we can live in paradise with You in that city. So please bless us to that end, Lord. Give us the new hearts, clean hearts, that we might be found worthy for Christ's sake to be in that place and to be ready for Jesus' coming. And it's in His name we plead. Amen.