



Wk 1: Creation: 'It was very good' - Ch 1v1-2v3

This Weeks Summary

The whole world was created by, and belongs to God, who is glorious, mysterious, and wise, and whose Word is powerful. All that He does is good.

For Study:

- Read **Psalm 8** and reflect on the majesty of God displayed in the heavens.
- Read **Isaiah 40:12-26** and reflect on the greatness of God in creation.
- Read **Job 38-39** and reflect on the wisdom, mystery and power of God displayed in the world.
- Read **Psalm 147** and meditate on the truth in this Psalm - not just of God's power and majesty in creation, but also His care for His people.

This week we studied the creation of the world back in the very beginning. We saw the majesty, mystery, wisdom and power of a God who can create simply by speaking. We also saw that everything that God did was good - here are just a few other things that come out of the chapter:

1. He does everything in Order:

In everything He did, God set up an order to the natural world: sun and moon for day and night, plants reproducing 'according to their own kinds', animals that do likewise, and ultimately humanity, male and female, made in the image of God. God takes what was 'without form and void' (giving the idea of chaos and disorder) to something which is ordered perfectly. It would make sense if we were to try and emulate this order in our own lives, but unfortunately due to the entrance of sin we live in a world that so often lacks order. Our lives can be messy and chaotic, and often through no fault of our own. At times like this we need to remember the God we worship - a God of order who does all things well, and even in the midst of the chaos He is ordering everything behind the scenes, and working out His perfect plan for us. One day, when His kingdom is fully set up in the new heaven and new earth, perfect order will then be resumed for the rest of eternity.

2. He is a God of Beauty:

There's something completely mysterious about the concept of beauty. Can we even explain why we would call someone or something beautiful? It just is that way, and everyone in the world can grasp that idea even if they can't explain it. We all also know the difference between something that's created to be functional but ugly, and something that is created to be beautiful. So why didn't God make the world functional and ugly when it would have worked just as well? I can see two reasons - firstly it must give us just a glimpse of how beautiful God is in Himself - when we see Him it will surely take our breath away. Secondly, the beauty in the world must be there simply for us to enjoy - we don't have to explain something to be able to enjoy it. Where the spoiling of God's good world by sin should lead us to action in reaching a lost world for Jesus, the unspoilt beauty of nature should lead us to worship.

3. Work is part of God's good world:

God put Adam in the garden of Eden and gave him a job to do - he was to 'be fruitful and multiply' to the intent that he and his offspring would rule over the world God had created as His appointed rulers. We can have such a negative view of work sometimes, and in part that is due to the curse put upon the world in a couple of chapters time. Despite this, we should remember that even though our work is difficult due to the effects of sin it is still part of what we were created for. Whether we do paid work or are busy with other responsibilities, we should do it with all our hearts 'as for the Lord' knowing it is a gift from Him.

4. God always provides:

This is simple, but so important - God provided for Adam and Eve, and indeed for the animal and plant kingdoms everything they needed to grow and thrive, and He has promised to do exactly the same for us (Philippians 4:19). Sin can so often leave us of feelings of lack, and our flesh can begin to crave things in this world and we can begin to believe that we really need them when actually God has promised that if we trust Him we will never lack anything. If we feel like we need something the place to go is to prayer rather than starting to fight and strive for what we want. To know that God will always provide what you need in response to our prayers should give such peace and rest, and that leads us on to our final thing:

5. Rest is part of God's perfect world:

Firstly this has really practical implications for us - we were created to need rest built in amongst the hard work that dominates our lives. The New Testament frees us from any legalistic requirements placed on the timing of that rest, but wisdom tells us it is necessary for us to think through. Secondly this is maybe the first great picture pointing forward to God's ultimate plan for the world. You see, what the Sabbath principle suggests is not that we should be at rest one day a week, and stressed for the remainder of it. Rather the Sabbath points us to the ultimate rest that would one day come into the world in the person of Jesus (Hebrews 4:8-10). Jesus is the fulfilment of the Sabbath, and in Him we find true rest in the entirety of our lives as we trust the God who 'does all things well'.

For GC Discussion:

- Think of the applications that God's glory, mystery, wisdom and power have for us as His people.
- How should Genesis 1 shape our attitude towards God's Word?
- What implications do Psalm 34:8, and the goodness of God have for us as His people?

For the Kids: Psalm 8 tells us that though God is awesome, He still knows us, loves us, and thinks about each one of us - how does that make you feel?

Next Week:

We'll be studying Genesis 2:4-25 and thinking about the issue of 'Humanity'.

Notes & Questions

For Worship: listen to '*Countless Wonders*' by Chris Tomlin - you can find it on YouTube, or on the Hill City Church blog on the website.