

In the Beginning Was the Word (Part 2)

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[0:00] Gospel of John, chapter 1, verses 1-5.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. It was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? In 1 Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 18, the Apostle Paul writes, For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

I'll never forget the first time that I felt foolish for my faith in Jesus Christ. It was when I was in seventh grade.

[1:23] And in seventh grade, we used to have something called See You at the Pole. They may do that in Oklahoma. I'm not sure they do. And so what it is, is it's all the students from the middle school or the high school, they'll gather together around the flagpole in the morning before school starts, and together they will maybe sing a song or two, and then they'll pray.

We'll pray for our classmates. We'll pray for, just for our school and for our teachers. And so I was always excited for the chance to be able to do this, because I had older sisters and I would hear them, you know, talk about how they had participated in it.

And I was really eager and I was really excited when it was my turn in seventh grade. That morning, not many students showed up, but we had enough to form a circle around our flagpole, and we prayed for our school.

While the rest of our classmates kind of looked on, not really understanding or knowing what we were doing. And then I went to my first hour class, which was a science class, and one of my classmates, immediately before the bell rings, sits down next to me, and a lot of, most of the students were in the class, and he announces to them, Hey, everybody, Mike was one of those weirdos at the flagpole this morning.

They were, did you see them all? They were worshiping the flagpole. That's crazy. That's dumb. They're idiots. And he said some other things that aren't worth repeating.

[3:02] And I'll tell you, as a seventh grader, you've been in seventh grade before, many of you, hopefully. Yeah, some of you more than once. You know that seventh grade is a very difficult time in life.

Because in seventh grade, you really want to fit in. You're desperate, even, to fit in with everybody else. You do not want to be excluded or singled out.

And so my initial thought when my friend was doing this, or he wasn't my friend, but when my classmate was doing this, is that I wanted to, I was tempted to deny that it was me that he saw out there.

I didn't do that, but I did learn in that moment that being a Christian in that kind of a setting meant that I would be, or I would never, I should say, be considered one of the cool kids.

I would never be one who fit in with the cool crowd. And I'll tell you that that was a major struggle for me in middle school.

[4:13] A major struggle. Because I really wanted to fit in. And I really did not want to look foolish in the eyes of the world.

Christians have always, though, battled with the temptation to compromise with the world. To mix worldliness with godliness in hopes that they won't appear foolish.

In hopes that we won't be excluded from the world. From the groups that we so desperately want to be a part of and belong to. Christians who belong to the churches in the New Testament times struggled with this issue.

Just as we still struggle with this issue today in the church. It just comes with the territory, really. After all, many people treated Jesus as if he was foolish.

Remember? Remember, there was Satan himself. Who thought that he could tempt Jesus to bow down and worship him. Thought that he could fool him.

[5 : 26] The Pharisees said that Jesus was demon-possessed. They said all kinds of terrible things about him. They said that he was crazy. That he was insane. That his father was the devil.

Pilate, when Jesus stood before him on the day of his crucifixion, couldn't understand what to think about Jesus. He couldn't understand why Jesus wouldn't get on his knees and beg for his mercy. When Jesus talked about the fact that he was truth, Pilate dismissed him saying, Well, what is truth? He thought this man was a very foolish man.

Recently, I watched a video that was celebrating the 25th anniversary of Albert Moeller's time as president of Southern Seminary.

Southern Seminary is considered to be the flagship seminary of the SBC, though I'm very partial to Midwestern myself. And Monty is here, another Midwestern man.

[6 : 31] Amen? But there was a time when both Southern and Midwestern were very liberal seminaries. They are much different schools today.

And there was a battle in our seminaries over many issues. And primary among them was the issue of the inerrancy of Scripture, which is the belief that the Bible is completely true and truthful in all that it teaches.

At that time, many faculty and students at these schools were concerned, I should say, with being accepted and viewed as being part of the elite academic community.

That's why they had drifted to the point where they had drifted, because they wanted to fit in. And so they watered down the Word of God, and they watered down the gospel as well.

And in this video, Dr. Moeller is talking about his early days there at Southern Seminary. And after his first two years of being there, he was given a vote of no confidence by the faculty of the seminary.

[7 : 42] And then he described that time after he received that news that he and his wife, they had two young children. And they didn't want their children to see them weeping and trying to sort through all that had happened.

So they walked into their guest room, and they just collapsed into each other's arms as they weeped and as they prayed. And their six-year-old daughter at the time knew something that was going on.

And as they prayed, she slipped in a note underneath the door that said, I love you. And Dr. Moeller gets, I get teary-eyed.

He gets teary-eyed when he tells the story, because to him in that moment, that was the message from God that he needed to hear, to be resilient and to continue on. And that's exactly what he did. And thanks be to God, the trustees of the school stood by his side. And that seminary, though it's not Midwestern, has been a tremendous blessing to the SBC, my school as well, and I believe to the world.

[8 : 48] As a kid, my favorite baseball player was Cal Ripken, and his number was eight. And so as much as I could, if I could wear the number eight, I would. Pastors are different.

Pastors don't wear numbers on the back of their suit jackets, you know. But there are different things about different men that kind of make them stand out. One of the things about Dr. Moeller is that he wears glasses similar to mine.

And so when I was picking out frames, I thought, well, I'll wear this pair all the time. And then I saw this pair, and I'm like, that kind of looks like Albert Moeller, and I'll wear those. Maybe it'll make me look smarter than I am. So anyhow, you know, in just a small way to pay homage to a man, not to idolize him, and certainly not thinking that I can repeat his efforts, that would not be possible for me to do, but because I'm fond and I appreciate his commitment to the doctrine of inerrancy of Scripture and his unwavering commitment to hold himself and others to that, especially ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ and pastors who are in training.

I believe that the Bible is the Word of God. That's why I preach books of the Bible.

That's why every chapter is preached on. Every verse is preached on. Because I believe that every single word in this book is coming from God Himself.

[10:22] These are His words. And so I believe that the Bible is inerrant. I believe that the Bible is infallible. And I understand that holding that position makes those of us who hold it appear foolish to the world in which we live.

But however, as God's Word says, the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than man. One area, though, where believers are tempted, I believe, to compromise with the world for fear of looking foolish before them, is with the origins of the universe. The Bible says that it was God who created the heavens and the earth. And here in verse 3 that we've read, we see that Jesus was the agent through which all things came into being, through which all things came into existence.

And so believing that sets us completely at odds against the rest of the world who say that the universe and the reason for its existence and its purpose is completely different from what the Bible has to say.

And so the question becomes, will we seek to compromise what the Bible says with what the world believes, or will we stand firmly upon what God's Word says no matter what the world believes?

[12:05] So if you remember last week, we answered two of the three questions about Jesus in John's introduction of Him in verses 1 and 2.

There he tells us where Jesus came from, that Jesus comes from forever, that He never had a beginning, that He's always been, the Word of God has always been.

And then He answers and tells us who Jesus is, that He's the Word of God, that He's the second person of the Trinity, that in verse 14 He says He's the Word of God that became flesh, that He's the God-man, fully God, fully man, who died on the cross as atonement for our sins and who was resurrected on the third day.

This is who Jesus is. So now in understanding where Jesus came from, from forever, understanding who Jesus is, now John tells us more about what He's done and what He does.

And so the main idea for last week is the same main idea for this morning's sermon, which is this, Jesus Christ is the eternal, everlasting, life-giving Word of God.

[13:23] A lot of people say a lot of different things about Jesus. Now as a result of that, there's a lot of confusion about who He is. There's a lot of confusion about what He's done. There's a lot of confusion about where He came from.

So as followers of Christ, we must know the answers to these questions. And I'm telling you that when we know the answers to these questions, it will have a great effect on us.

It will have a great effect on our worship. Sunday morning isn't just something that we feel obligated to do. It's something that we can't wait for. To get in here and to worship. Our God and our Creator, our Savior.

And then it will also affect our witness. Understanding who Christ is, understanding what Christ has done. We are compelled. We must say something about Him.

We cannot keep silent. Now, for an unbeliever, this means something completely different. And I say this in love, but I tell you the truth.

[14:28] You've been wrong. Your understanding of the reason and purpose of your existence has been wrong. Your determination of what is right and wrong and your determination of what is valuable and what is worth pursuing in life has been wrong.

If Jesus is who John says that He is in this introduction, then the only appropriate response to Him is to bow down and to worship Him.

To give Him glory. Nothing else will do. And so here we see in verse 3 that the Word of God created everything. I'll read that verse again to you.

It says there very clearly, very plainly, all things were made through Him. And without Him was not anything made that was made. So Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God, created everything that came into being.

Every single thing. John emphasized that truth by then concluding his sentence in a negative respect. He says, and without Him was not anything made that has been made.

[15:38] So in case you weren't hearing me clearly, let me tell you that there is nothing in existence that was not created and made through Jesus Christ. Because we know where Jesus comes from, from forever, and because we know who He is, that He is the Word of God, that He is

the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, then we can understand how it is that He was able to create everything.

Only someone who is eternal, only someone who is uncreated, only someone whose existence is self-existent, is capable of speaking words and making nothing become something.

Only He is able to do that. Hebrews 1, 1-2 testifies to that truth. Long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these days, He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He created the world.

If you call yourself a Christian, that's what you must believe. That's what the Bible says. It's very clearly stated in the Word of God that Jesus, the Word of God, created everything.

[17:02] And there is no wiggle room on that. Second, we see that the Word of God sustains everything. Created it. Sustains it.

I remember as a young boy, I would oftentimes struggle to fall asleep. And one of the things that would keep me awake is the thought that millions and billions of miles away, outside of our solar system, there's a comet with Earth's name written on it.

Right? And nobody knows about it. And it's just hurling towards the Earth. And it's going to get here. And nobody's going to know it. It's going to be too late to do anything about it. Right?

We can't send Bruce Willis up in a spaceship to blow it up with a nuclear bomb. It's going to be too late. And we're all going to be annihilated. And we're all going to be decimated.

And that would really keep me up at night. So I take great comfort in Colossians 1.16, which says, God's words accompanied by sound theology have a way of putting our foolish notions to rest, our foolish fears to rest.

[18:30] By studying creation, a person gains a glimpse of the power and wisdom of the One who created it all.

The sheer size of the universe is staggering. In fact, the picture that you see there, that's a picture taken from the Hubble telescope, zoomed out as much as it could get of our universe.

And all of those little things that you're seeing, those bright lights, those are galaxies. And there's over 10,000 galaxies in that picture. And as you can tell, the picture cannot contain all that is in the universe.

And all of those galaxies are millions and billions of stars and planets. It's amazing. Take our sun, though, for example. It's just one star among an estimated 100 billion in our galaxy, the Milky Way. The sun has a diameter of 864,000 miles, which is 100 times the size of the Earth.

[19:38] In fact, the sun, our sun, could contain 1.3 million planets the size of the Earth within it. All this to say it's very big, right?

And as I mentioned before, there are hundreds of billions of stars like this just in our galaxy in the Milky Way. Astronomers estimate that there are millions or even billions of galaxies in our universe, which is ever-expanding.

We cannot see it all. We never will be able to see it all. But what they can see has led us to estimate that the number of stars in the universe is 10 to the 25th power, which roughly would be the same number of every individual grain of sand on all of the beaches of the Earth.

That's a lot. Our universe is immeasurable. It's vast. We're the only ones in it. Everything has been perfectly fine-tuned so that life here on Earth can exist.

And are we to suppose that all of that is only by chance? I can't believe that. Because even the slightest change in the rate of the Earth's rotation around the sun or its axis would be catastrophic for our planet.

[21:06] The Earth would either become too hot and everything would die or it would become too cold and everything would die. If the moon were any closer to the Earth, we'd have huge tidal waves that would flood our continents.

A slight change in the mass, even of an itty-bitty proton, would result in the dissolution of hydrogen atoms. And if that were to happen, everything would melt away.

The universe as we know it would cease to exist. Everything would be undone. Creation testifies, I believe, to the existence of an intelligent creator.

Max Planck was a German theoretical physicist, a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and considered today to be one of the modern founders of physics.

And this is what he had to say in taking all of creation into account. He said, According to everything taught by the exact sciences about the immense realm of nature, a certain order prevails, one independent of the human mind.

[22 : 11] This order can be formulated in terms of purposeful activity. There is evidence, he says, of an intelligent order of the universe to which both man and nature are subservient.

And so it's no wonder that when we look at pictures like this, when we think about our planet, our sun, our galaxy, the universe, that Psalms 19, 1-4 says, the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech. Nor are there words whose voice is not heard.

Their voices go out through all the earth and the words to the end of the world. And so the testimony of Scripture, the testimony, I believe, of nature is that it has a Creator and it's so clear that it could only be through the willful unbelief of man that anyone could reject that truth.

And so we find, though, that those who reject the Word of God are without excuse. Those who reject Christ's deity, those who reject Him as Creator, give evidence of a mind that is darkened by sin and eyes that have been blinded by Satan.

[23 : 38] That's what Romans 1, 20-22 says. For His invisible attributes, namely His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have not been made.

So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. So hear me. Evolution is a theory created by futile minds. And it's motivated by foolish hearts. The foolish hearts of men who don't want to believe in the biblical view of creation. Stay with me.

According to evolution, man created God rather than God creating man. And I believe that evolution is nothing more than fallen mankind's attempt to rid themselves of God and thereby do away with any sort of moral accountability to Him.

[24 : 52] I believe that it was devised to explain away the God of the Bible and in so doing, to do away with the thought that Jesus could be anything more than a poor son of a carpenter who grew up in Nazareth and who claimed to be God Himself and ended up getting crucified for it.

In his book, Bones of Contention, A Creationist Assessment of Human Fossils, Marvin Lubinau wrote this. He said, the real issue in the creation-evolution debate is not the existence of God. The real issue is the nature of God. To think of evolution as basically atheistic is to misunderstand the uniqueness of evolution. Evolution was not designed as a general attack against theism, the belief that there is a God.

It was designed as a specific attack against the God of the Bible, he says. And the God of the Bible is clearly revealed through the doctrine of creation. Obviously, if a person is an atheist, it would be normal to him to also be an evolutionist.

But evolution is as comfortable with theism as it is with atheism. An evolutionist is perfectly free to choose any God he wishes as long as it's not the God of the Bible.

[26 : 13] The gods allowed by evolution are private, subjective, and artificial. They bother no one and they make no absolute ethical demands on them. However, the God of the Bible, he says, is the creator, sustainer, savior, and judge.

And all are responsible to him. He has an agenda that conflicts with that of sinful human beings.

And he concludes by saying, for man to be created in the image of God is very awesome.

For God to be created in the image of man is very comfortable. Evolution is simply the latest means that our fallen race has devised in order to suppress our innate knowledge of biblical witness!

That there is a God and he created us in his image. That he created all things. That we are not free to do whatever we want in this world, in this life that we've been given.

You know what? This makes sense to me. Because ever since evolution has been taught in our schools as being the only theory that could possibly explain the existence of the universe and our being, and we're told, our children are being brought up in our schools being told that, hey, you're just a highly evolved animal.

[27 : 41] And so it's no coincidence to me that as we live in this world, the more that we are being told that we are nothing more than animals, the more like animals people in our world are acting.

Do you see that too? People in our world are acting like animals. Because after all, if all they are is a highly evolved animal, they're just doing what comes naturally to them. And yeah, they are doing what naturally comes to them because like you and I, they are born sinful. Evolutionary theories like favorable mutation over millions of years do not arise from honest scientific inquiry.

Because evolution, I'm telling you, is science with an agenda. That's why so many science teachers who believe in intelligent design, who teach intelligent design, have lost their positions with their school and they've been disgraced in their academic communities.

They're banished and they're excommunicated because they aren't willing to follow the protocol of the time. Today, there are many Christians who eagerly seek to harmonize creationism with evolution.

[28:52] But in doing so, they are making the grave mistake of calling the very first chapter, the very first verses of the Bible into question.

And if you are willing to question the very first chapter of the Bible, the very first verses of the Bible, if you're willing to question their truthfulness, then it's only a matter of time before you apply that same logic to other places in the Bible.

If I can question the beginning, then I can question the end and everything in between. When I, my first position as a youth pastor in a church that was a liberal church, there was pressure to harmonize evolution and creationism.

And I'll never forget one of the leaders in the church coming into my office and sitting down with me and saying, well, you know, Mike, the Bible is not a science book.

And he's right. The Bible isn't a science book. The Bible isn't a textbook. The Bible is revelation of God Himself.

[30:09] It stands above any other book. And so I'm telling you that I am much more comfortable today and always to stake my life on what the Bible says than on any theory that's been postulated by man.

How about you? I wish there would have been some more heartier amens. All right. But Jesus, what Jesus did could not be done by anyone who was not both fully human and fully divine.

In His divinity, He is the source by which all things have been made and by which all things continue to be made, continue to have existence.

But in His humanity, He was able to become the atoning sacrifice for our sins. God died on the cross for us.

As the God-man, He is then the source of all life and the source of all light, which we'll talk about next Sunday. today, you either accept that the Word of God, you either accept, I should say, what the Word of God has to say about the Word of God, or you will forever be left trying to reconcile two positions that make different claims that are unreconcilable.

[31:36] So then we see that the Word of God must be trusted. Must be trusted. But if Jesus Christ is the Word of God, through whom all things were created and through whom all things continue to be sustained, what does that mean for us?

Well, every worldview must answer four questions. First, why is there something rather than nothing? Second, what's gone wrong?

We can tell that something has gone wrong. Things are in disorder with ourselves between mankind. Third, is there any hope to fix what's gone wrong?

And then fourth, how is it all going to end? What's the end of the story? Here's how the Bible answers those questions. One, why is there something rather than nothing plainly stated in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth?

It was His plan according to His infinite knowledge to create the heavens and the earth. Second, what's gone wrong? Well, the fall. Adam and Eve sinned.

[32:45] We have the curse of sin. We all fall underneath that curse and its consequences. Children are born with a sin nature. That's why we don't have to spend so much time trying to tell them how to be bad.

They know. We have to tell them how to be good. Third, is there any hope? Yes. Yes, there's hope. And that hope is through Christ who was promised, who came, and who died for our sins on the cross, and who was raised from the dead.

There is great, great hope. Fourth, how does the story end? Well, that depends on who you confess Jesus to be.

If you know Him as Lord and Savior, then it ends with words that I could not use to describe how wonderful the ending will be. No more sin. No more death.

Perfect, absolute harmony between man and man and man and God, as we all so desperately want there to be. But if not, you've rejected the only atonement that there is for your sins, and as punishment for that, sinning against a just and holy God, you will spend your eternity in hell, where the Bible says there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[34 : 01] God sent forth His Son to die for sinners. That in believing in Him, we will have everlasting life.

And at the very least, let me tell you this, what does this mean for us as believers? You can trust Him. Jesus Christ who created everything, and who sustains all of these bajillions of galaxies, if He can do that, and He has no problem doing that, He's not sweating in heaven, oh, this is getting hard, God, how much longer?

Not at all. If He can do that without straining or sweating or perspiring even one bit, can't you at the very least trust Him for tomorrow?

Can't you at the very least live your life free of anxiety and fear? If He can do that, can't you trust Him that He knows the beginning from the end and that He's got you and He'll never let you go? That He will bring you through this life into the next? Can't you trust Him that He's the Alpha and the Omega?

[35 : 26] That He's the beginning and the end? Can't you trust Him that He will work all things together for the good? Can't you trust Him that He'll never leave you nor forsake you?

Can't you trust that even though you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, that He is right there with you? Can't you trust Him and fully devote your life to Him knowing that whatever you give in sacrifice to Him will be more than worth it at the end of this life?

The Bible shows us that there's never been one person who put their trust in God, who put their trust in Christ, who has ever let down or disappointed for that.

And all of church history tells us the same thing. Hebrews 12, 1-2, 2-3, hand of the throne of God. Listen to this. He wants you to trust Him. John 20, verse 31, John says, this is the reason why I'm writing this gospel, though he's inspired, right, by God to write it by the Holy Spirit.

[37 : 07] He says, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, He's the Word of God, He's the Creator, He's the Sustainer of all things, that by believing in Him, you may have life in His name.

He wants you to believe Him. He wants you to trust Him. He wants you to put not some of your faith, but all of your faith in Him today. I'll close by saying this.

You know that Satan opposes God at every step of the way that he can. And though I believe that he can never take salvation from a Christian, what he will try to do is try to make you think and believe that you are the center of the universe.

That everything revolves around you. That whenever your feelings get hurt, you have authority to tell everybody what you really think.

Throw things, toss things, whatever the case may be. Make you think that all of life is for you and is about you. This is a struggle every day.

[38 : 18] It's a struggle every day for me. I wake up and automatically I'm thinking about what's going to happen that day and things that maybe somebody said to me previously or whatnot or things that are still left to be undone and how important I am and how important it is that I do all these things or whatever.

That's why it's so important that every day as a believer we begin that day in prayer and in the word of God because then we're reminded no, I am not the center of this universe.

And we're reminded thank God that I'm not the center of this universe. That is the place of only one of Jesus Christ.

Are your eyes on him? Is he the center of your life? Is he the center of your marriage? Is he the center of your family? Is he the center of whatever it is that he has you to do?

Are your eyes on him? If they're not, like Peter walking on the water, as soon as you take your eyes off of him, you will sink. But thank God that when we start sinking, thinking that the world and the universe depends upon us and revolves around us, that he's there to pull us out of that pit and

remind us that all we need is Christ.
[39 : 42] Christ.