

In the Beginning – Genesis 1

Gill Gough

We take so much for granted. We walk outside and experience the world around us, often without any thought of its majesty and grandeur. We see the sky, the trees, the oceans and seas, the mountains and rivers, exotic plants, food growing in fields, the divergence of animals and birds; any of which is immense and beautiful enough to overwhelm us as we try to consider their magnitude and splendour.

In our defence, from our own experience, and in our life time there has never been a time when those things did not exist. So perhaps we have an excuse to take things for granted. However there was a time when they did not exist. In fact there was a time when nothing existed at all – nothing, that is except the God who made all we see and experience. It is in his existence and activity that should cause us to marvel to an even greater degree.

It's important to remember that the beginning of the story, the beginning of creation, and the very beginning starts with God himself. It is not that God was the first thing created because God has always been there.

It was God himself who said, I BE, or I AM, or I EXIST

He therefore, as the only, the only divine, eternal Supreme Being stands above everything else.

This God who exists has a plan, one he has revealed progressively since he created the world. This plan begins with god himself. He works it out according to his will and by his mighty power. As his written revelation to us begins, we see that He is the central part in this grand narrative. He is the one alone who existed before the world was created. He is the one who took action to create. He is the one who will continue to work until the culmination of His great plan.

How should the reality of God's existence impact our lives today? If he alone is the eternal, sovereign God, working to bring about His will and plan, how do our lives and our plans relate to His?

God existed, lacking nothing himself, yet he chose to create the world and everything in it. God's creative acts, both in terms of what and how he created, inform us about his character and nature.

Passages such as psalm 19 provide us with the knowledge that everything God made would demonstrate and reflect His glory. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of his hands."

One aspect of God's nature we see in creation is his work to bring order out of chaos. God took that which was without form and empty and gave it both form and substance; like light, day and night, sky, earth and sea, plants, sun and moon and stars, sea creatures and birds, animals domestic and wild. God is intimately involved with his creation. He did not simply create the world, wind it up, start it spinning and then walk away. Again we see that God is intimately involved with his creation as we clearly see in his relationship with the first man and woman, walking with them in the Garden. Human beings made in the likeness of God.

Now I hear you say but I don't look like you, so how can we all be made in the likeness of God?

We are all unique it's true, but we recognise each other as human beings, different to animals and birds. We have the image of God within us, the nature of God within us, the heart of God within us, the love of God within us, but we don't always know it or show it.

And how do we take care of his world, his creation? At last the world is waking up, and becoming aware of the damage that humankind has done. It's not too late to save the planet if we all act now. If we take care of his animals and birds and fish of the sea, we don't want any more extinctions, we don't want to lose any species plants or creatures that he has created.

We can all cut down on waste, the use of plastics, pesticides, reduce our carbon footprint, think about and act upon global warming. Can you have a meat free day? It's a start and if we start in little ways we can stop the decline. This is a wonderful world that he has created; I want my children's, children's, children to enjoy it. Let's stop messing up the world. We must apply and use the intelligence that God gave us to solve eco issues and show that we really do care for his creation and give him the glory and praise and thanks that he deserves.

One last thing that we see in this story of creation is God's divine power. God spoke and creation came into being. He did not labour or toil as if it were some arduous task. He simply spoke the world into being. By his powerful word he created the world and by that same word he holds all things together, We see God's holiness and goodness in his creation of light and its distinction from darkness. The contrast of light and darkness appears throughout Scripture to symbolise good and evil. We see this word picture taken up by the Apostle John in his first epistle "Now this is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you; God is light and there is absolutely no darkness in Him"

I leave you to ponder this question.

How do God's power, His intimate involvement with creation, and His goodness motivate you to glorify this awesome Creator and to live in submission and obedience to His will?

The awesome God who exists and who created you has made it possible for you to know him personally.

While we can see and understand things about him through his creation, we can only know him personally through a faith relationship with his Son Jesus Christ.

So may God bless you today by opening your hearts and minds to the love of Jesus, to the knowledge that he cares for you and so we are commanded to love one another and care for his creation?