

Introduction:

1. It is the opening statement of the greatest of all literary works. It is incredibly simple, yet amazingly profound. It is the Creator's own declaration of the creation. It is Genesis 1:1.
  - a. That verse is the very first verse of our Bible reading for 2012. We are reading through the history of the Old Testament events. If you have not yet begun, it's not too late.
  - b. A new addition this year: Bible reading classes that will be concurrent with the reading.
2. Genesis is the book of beginnings. The name itself means beginning. It is not the story of God's beginning, for He had none. It is our beginning, and the beginning of all that we see. There are powerful lessons to be learned from the opening chapters of this book.

The Lesson:**I. Lessons about God.**

- A. From the beginning, God's power is evident, Genesis 1:1.
  1. His power is implied in His name (Elohim). The Hebrew word means "strong, mighty."
  2. In the Genesis account we find all five of the requisite elements necessary for creation. (They are time, space, matter, energy, action. Even evolution acknowledges these.)
    - a. Time: *In the beginning*. Our universe had a beginning point. It has not always existed.
    - b. Space: *The heavens*. Expanse with height, width and depth is necessary for physical things to exist. The expanse in which things exist is our universe. God created space.
    - c. Matter: *The earth*. This was not the only matter, but that which matters most to us. This is the physical substance of which our universe exists. (There are two more things that are acknowledged by all for our world to come into being. The Bible alone supplies knowledge of those things to us.)
    - d. Energy: *God*. He is the great energy source from which all things exist. Evolution has no answer as to where the energy came from that brought all things into being.
    - e. Action: *Created*. God used His energy; He brought force to bear on the time, space and matter that He created. Some believe in a big bang. We ask, "Who lit the fuse?"
  3. God is powerful. We can see His power in creation, Romans 1:20, but only in the Genesis account do we learn the details of the creation.
- B. From the beginning, God established order, Genesis 1:11-12.
  1. Each plant produced seed "according to its kind." From the apple tree came apples that contained apple seeds. They do not contain tomato seeds or cherry pits.
  2. This order is consistent throughout nature and is admitted by all as a fundamental truth of life on earth. What is true of plants is true of animals, Genesis 1:24. No exceptions.
- C. From the beginning, God's creation was very good, Genesis 1:31.
  1. The Hebrew word means "fine, beautiful, precious, sweet," all that we relate to "good."

2. It was good because it served man's needs; good because it all worked together; good because it showed God's glory. The use of "very" indicated intensity, to a high degree.
3. Every part of God's creation was good. The beauty and harmony, glory and goodness of the creation tell us something about our God as a good, loving God.
4. "But," someone asks, "what about all the ugliness and wickedness we see in the world?" That is not the way God created. His creation was good; it was man who corrupted it.

## II. Lessons about man.

- A. From the beginning, man was given choice, Genesis 2:15-17.
  1. Man could choose to obey God or disobey; this was the only prohibition expressed to man. Adam could partake of anything else in the garden, but not of this tree!
  2. "Why did God give him that choice?" Animals were created only with instinct. But man has free will and volition, the power of rational choice. Choice had to be there. Adam is not a robot—and neither are you. Do you want choice to be taken from you? You are human!
  3. Adam had the same choice you and I have. All men are given choice, Joshua 24:15. You, like Adam, can use your power of choice for good or evil.
  4. With Adam's sin, he introduced all manner of evil into the world, Genesis 3:17-19. Our sins, and the sins of others, bring all manner of evil into our world today. Remember, it is man who corrupted God's creation. God's creation in Genesis 1:31 was very good.
- B. From the beginning, man was given work, Genesis 2:15.
  1. That is a key point because some men treat work like it was sin! Work existed before sin! It's always been God's plan that men work. And if you don't? See 2 Thessalonians 3:10.
  2. Work is good for man. It gives him a sense of worth and accomplishment, Ecclesiastes 5:12. Lack of work leads to boredom and destruction, Ecclesiastes 4:5. Work is good.
- C. From the beginning, man was given marriage, Genesis 1:27; 2:18-24.
  1. It is increasingly important in our current environment that we understand that marriage was instituted by God. It was given to man, but not instituted by man. Therefore, people should accept it as it was given by God. When people choose to just live together without marriage, that is a corruption of God's order; same sex marriage is a corruption of God's order. Divorce without legitimate cause is a corruption of God's order, Matthew 19:3-9.
  2. We cannot make marriage and marriage laws to just be whatever we want. We must respect what God gave from the beginning.

### Conclusion:

1. These truths—found in the very beginning of the Bible—are fundamental. They help us understand things about God and the world in which we live. They remind us of basic truths about life—truths that must be respected for our own well-being.
2. From the beginning, God has expected man to obey Him. Many things change. This does not.