

Genesis 1:3-5

Worshipping the Creator

01/29/17

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

(Pastor prays)

Today hundreds of people gathered in this one room to have the Bible read, to sing in unison and to hear a man speak for half an hour (or so) from an ancient book. Very often we discuss *how* – style, place, feel. We discuss *when* – Sunday, Saturday night, what time on Sunday. But not often enough do we actually discuss *why*. *Why* do we gather? *Why* did you come? *Why* do some quit coming?

The story of creation strips the varnish off Christian worship so that we can stop asking "when" or "how" and deal with the "why." Questions about *how* only divide us. The question about *why* (the goodness of God, the sinfulness of man and the redeeming power of Christ), that doesn't divide us.

Genesis 1 unifies us. It reminds us that there is a God... and I'm (we're) not Him. This creation account was put here by Moses not to divide people. We have enough of that in the world. This account is put here as a call to worship, an invitation for you to come and see that God is good. In short...

Creation Shows Us Why We Worship God

Creation Shows Us the Importance of His Judgments

His judgments. What does God think of my life, my lifestyle and intentions of my heart? When you read verses 3 and 4 together, you hear God giving a judgment. *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.*

Verse 4 says, *God saw the light was good*. God looked at His creation and He made a judgment call. He declared it good. Here is the first judgment in the Bible thereby reminding us that God alone is judge, which is a terrible thought.

In Isaiah 6 when Isaiah (who was probably the holiest man of his day) saw a passing glimpse of God on the throne, he instantly became aware of his outright sinfulness. So be careful using that phrase, “Only God can judge me.” While it is true, it is a much more frightening phrase than most of us imagine.

Here in the text we have the first judgment in the Bible: “*God saw that it was good.*” In fact, he will say it seven times about His creation. So what does this tell us about God? This shows us that God and God alone is judge. But He does judge. He alone has the right to evaluate and His evaluation is the only one that matters, and we have largely ignored His evaluation.

Chuck Swindoll was right when he said, “We would rather be liked than be Holy.” I wonder what would happen in the average Christian's life if she cared *only* about what God thought? If we really believed what creation shows us – that God alone assigns value, that He is the only one who can make moral pronouncements? In the text, the idea is that God, after creating light, surveyed His work and made an evaluation and He take pleasure.

This is a disturbing thought for me: not so much that God saw, but that he saw *and* made a judgment; and that is really the centerpiece of our problem. It is that God sees and makes a judgment, a judgment that culminates in what Paul wrote in Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*, and that the wages of that sin is death.

That’s what bothers me. God sees and makes a judgment, that the sin in my life-- big and small-- is a moral offense to God, a breaking of the moral law and the penalty is death. Now this is where Christ comes in. Living perfectly, then dying on the cross, taking the punishment in the place of sinners so that any person here who believes in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection is saved and reconciled and free to worship. Creation shows us *why* we worship. His judgment in Christ is forgiveness.

Creation Shows Us the Scope of God’s Authority

You see it in the text, a truth that runs throughout the Bible. That truth is that God makes distinctions and the key phrase is in verse 4, *And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.* He draws a clear distinction.

You will find this principle of separation throughout the creation account. Darkness and Light in verses 4-5, upper and lower in verses 6-7, verse 18 is day and night. In fact, the word “separation” occurs over and over in the creation account. God makes clear distinctions: John 3:16, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.* It’s true that God loves the world by giving the world Jesus. But His covenant, saving, distinguishing love is expressed fully to those who are in Christ. It is reserved for those who come to Him, who have faith in Jesus.

God makes distinctions not like we make distinctions. We group people. Black/White, Old/Young, Rich/Poor, Republican/Democrat. We do it on class or rank or color or politics. That’s not how God makes distinctions. He cuts across all of those grains. God has only two distinctions, "my people" or "*not* my people. And the distinguishing factor is Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said these things: “I am the true vine.” “I am the bread of life.” “I am the light of the world.” “I am the door.” “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” There is a distinction. Even the word “Church” in Greek Εκκλησία (Ekklesia) means “called out” or a particular people in the King James version.

The point is that Jesus says we are to be *in* the world but not *of* the world. And so much of modern-day Christianity is nothing more than just baptized paganism. Christians are not to be just a *nicer* form of the world around us. When we come to Christ, we are absolutely *transformed*. The terminology Jesus used is that we are "born again." Paul

likens it to going from death to life, and that transformation makes a distinction. Let me offer up a third thought before we take The Lord's Supper.

Creation Shows Us the Joy of a New Day

When you read verse 5, the phraseology is a little foreign in the second part of the verse. *God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.* Evening and Morning. The first day.

That's not how I would have said it. I would have said "morning and evening." But The Lord said "evening and morning." It reminds us that every evening is followed by a morning, that every dark night of the soul is followed by a morning. These are evidences of God's lovingkindness, faithfulness and steadfast love. The Psalmist tells us His *anger* is but for a moment. His *favor* is for a lifetime. Weeping may last for a night, but Joy comes in the morning.

When you give your life to Christ, every day the sun comes up is another chance at life. Evening equals Darkness. The Morning is Light. The death of Jesus and the resurrection of Christ shows us the hope found in the Lord Jesus.

(Pastor prays and prepares the congregation for The Lord's Supper)