

Rejoicing In Creation

Series Bible Study

Seeing the Genius (April 19)

Creation is both living things (the biosphere) and non-living (ecosphere). We would also include extra-dimensional spaces and living things that the Bible would call Heaven or the “unseen”. All observable things show tremendous order, purposeful design, profound genius and often great beauty. Where there are seeming flaws, inefficiencies and damage, we can be relatively certain that these are the result of either sin and/or the curse.

Read Genesis 1:1-27

This account gives a simplified description of everything God did to create this complex universe, planet and all the life on it.

What do you think is meant by the repeated phrase, “And God saw that it was good”?

Is the world still “good”? If so, in what ways? In not, in what ways?

Do you think that life is on any other planet in this universe?

What is required to produce life?

What makes mankind special? Are we merely “specks” in the universe to quote Bill Nye?

How could science actually be a way to worship God rather than dismiss Him?

Read 2 Peter 3:1-7

Peter wants us to know that God will destroy and remake the whole universe in His time. He warns that there will be skeptics.

In what ways are people skeptical about either God creating all things or God destroying all things?

There are many reasons why people doubt. What particular reason is given here?

Why will God destroy and remake all things?

Read Matthew 14:22-33

Jesus did many miracles, what makes walking on water unique to you?

What was Jesus trying to prove to His disciples?

Why would Jesus invite Peter to come out of the boat?

Why would Jesus require Peter to have faith?

Acknowledging the Creator (April 26)

Some people go out of the way, against logic, to deny the existence and creative genius of God. We can fall into similar patterns just by letting their worldview seep into our thinking. For instance, it is easy to talk about how some thing “evolved”. If we are not cognizant of the very real limits of evolution, then we are essentially giving God’s glory to “another”. Even worse, to nothing more than chance.

Job believed in God’s existence and that He was the Creator. What Job failed to acknowledge was that there could be circumstances beyond his own knowledge and that God is good.

Read Job 38:1-18

Is it reasonable to believe that we, as humans, have the ability to know what happened in the distant past?

How would you describe the emotions God is expressing here?

In what kind of situations might we be inclined to judge the actions or inactions of God?

Why is it unreasonable for us to do so?

Because we were neither there nor do we have knowledge of what goes on in Heaven or in the mind of God, how should we respond to circumstances that we can’t explain?

Has God done anything worthy to be trusted, acknowledged as wiser than us, or credited with the genius we find in creation?

This long scolding can be summed up in a few words. “Who do you think you are?” We are in no position to judge God nor are we in position to create theories about the distant past that ignores God’s presence and power.

Read Colossians 1:15-20

Who is Jesus? He is the human incarnation of the Son of God. The Son of God is responsible for the design and creation of all things living and inanimate, visible and in parallel to this universe. From Seraphim to pond scum, Jesus was involved. It was created by His power and for His purposes. He retains ownership.

In what sense is Jesus, the “firstborn of all creation”?

What do you think is being referred to by “thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities”?

This is a clue to the answer of the first question. What is “firstborn from the dead”?

If everything is made for Him, what is Jesus’ purpose for elephants, squid, angels, viruses and you?

Read John 1:1-5

The Son of God is referred to as the Word. It is clear that the Son's existence pre-dates Creation. Time is a part of creation, so it is hard for anyone to imagine a being without a beginning.

What do you think "in Him was life"?

The scientific definition of life is usually to be self-replicating. Consequently, a virus may be active but not alive. A bacteria is alive.

Should there be another definition of "life"?

What is "light" and "darkness" used in this verse?

Nature Care as Worship (May 3)

Even though God himself plans to burn down this universe and start over, still this universe, and in particular the living things of this world, have a value to Him. Caring for it was our first job as humans. It continues to be our stewardship.

Sometimes creation care is diminished in the eyes of Christians because of other groups that care about it. Creation care seems to be the purpose of choice for those who don't believe in a God-given purpose. The radical Green Movement, intentionally chose paganism as it's theological underpinnings. Still, creation care is a Christian's job and cannot dismiss it because of its associations.

Read Genesis 1:28-31

What do you think "fill" the earth means? Other creatures were also told to "fill" the earth?

Is there such a thing as "full"? How do you know what that is?

It is important to note that this command is given before sin entered the world. "Subdue" would have a very different meaning after sin entered the world. What do you think "subdue" (v.28) meant in context?

The original planet was a "no death" ecosystem, as will the New Earth. That is not true for the present time.

How do you think that worked or will work?

Read Romans 8:18-25

What kind of "futility" has the rest of living things been subjected to for present era?

How does the creation "groan"? Can we ease its pain?

How is mankind and other living things bonded together according to this passage?

What will be the ultimate solution of our groaning?

Read John 10:1-10

This Sunday is typically Good Shepherd Sunday. While this text is from the normal schedule of readings (the pericope) and not specifically chosen for our nature care theme, how can we apply the example of Jesus in his care of us, to our care of the planet?

Who are the robbers in this passage?

How is it that true disciples of Jesus “know His voice”?