

26-0531a Transcript

26-0531a - *In the Beginning... Why Genesis Still Matters*, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and John Kessler

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In the Beginning... Why Genesis Still Matters

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 0:22): Mike Mathis **Genesis 1:1**

(0:04) *I'll be reading the first scripture reading from Genesis chapter 1 verse 1. (0:13) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. That completes the reading. (0:22)*

2nd Reading (0:27 - 1:20): John Kessler **2 Peter 3:3-7:**

(0:27) *Good morning. Second reading today is 2 Peter chapter 3 verses 3 through 7. (0:35) Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, (0:40) following after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? (0:45) For ever since the fathers fell*

continued

asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning (0:50) of creation. For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God (0:58) the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of and by water, (1:04) through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. (1:09) But by his word, the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, (1:15) kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. It's the word of the Lord. (1:20)

Transcript (0:04 - 28:58), Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(1:25) Good morning. It's good to see everybody here today. It's an honor to stand before you. It's (1:32) one of the six men, you believe it, six men who share in the preaching ministry here. (1:40) Today I want to speak on a subject that is foundational to everything we believe.

(1:47) In the beginning, why Genesis still matters. As many of you know, we are currently studying the (1:55) first 11 chapters of Genesis when I preach. Having already covered the first three chapters, (2:01) this morning we're going to pause to consider why these opening chapters are so critically important, (2:09) not just for our young people but also for every one of us.

As a reminder, we began this series (2:18) after reading Kevin Kane's article in October of 24. Why are we losing them when they leave for (2:27) college? The article highlighted alarming studies. One from campus renewal estimates that 60 to 80 (2:36) percent of Christian young people leave their faith when they head to college.

(2:43) George Barnett's extensive research interviewing 22,000 adults and 2,000 teenagers and 25 (2:52) different surveys revealed that two-thirds of young people turned from their religion (3:00) during their college years. And even more troubling, the study found that those (3:06) who grew up regularly attending Bible class are more likely not to believe all the stories in (3:15) the Bible are true or accurate. Are more likely to doubt the Bible because it is written by men (3:22) and has errors in translating.

They are more likely to accept that gay marriage and abortion (3:29) should be legal. Are much

more likely to believe that God used evolution to change one kind of (3:36) animal into another. They are more likely not to believe the earth is less than 10,000 years old.

(3:44) Are more likely to believe dinosaurs died before people were on the planet. (3:50) And are more likely to believe that good people don't really need to go to church. (3:57) The pattern is clear.

There's a direct connection between what people believe about Genesis (4:06) and whether they remain faithful to God. When we undermine the authority of God's Word in the (4:12) beginning, we create a slippery slope that eventually undermines the entire Bible, (4:19) including the cross, the resurrection, and our hope of heaven. The truth applies to all of us, (4:26) not just our youth.

And our faith stands or falls on how we view the foundation of Scripture (4:33) from the very beginning of the Bible and creation account. And for that reason, we started our study (4:40) of Genesis with a plain reading of the Scriptures without forcing the text to agree with modern (4:46) cosmology. And it must be noted that there is a major disagreement between the predominant (4:53) modern cosmology and the straightforward testimony of Scripture.

And so this morning, (5:00) we will diagnose the problem we face and defend why a plain reading of Genesis (5:08) is not naive but necessary, beginning with the problem we face today. (5:18) We live in a marketplace of competing worldviews, a vast variety of, I wanted to say smorgasbord, (5:26) but I use a graph to help me smooth out my sermon. It took like 10 pages and cut it down to three and (5:35) a half.

Anyway, I wanted to use smorgasbord, and it took the whole statement out, so I changed it (5:43) to a vast variety of ideas. As of May 2026, the world population stands at approximately 8.3 (5:54) billion. Most people still identify with the religion roughly 75%.

Christianity remains the (6:03) largest at 2.5 billion. Next is Islam, around 2 billion, and it is the fastest-growing religion (6:15) due to higher birth rates. Hinduism at 1.2 billion, Buddhism at half a billion, (6:23) and the unaffiliated—maybe you've not heard of these people—the unaffiliated non-religious, (6:29) sometimes called the nuns, and that's not N-U-N, but the N-O-N-E-S.

The nuns—I don't have any faith—the (6:39) nuns are the atheist agnostics and secular humanists, and they come in around 1.9 billion, (6:47) just under Islam. They're the third largest category. The nuns represent a large and growing (6:55) segment, especially influential in education, media, government, and elite institutions.

(7:05) The culturally dominant worldview in the West and in global institutions is this secular (7:12) materialistic humanism, blended with postmodern thought. Postmodernism is responsible for all (7:22) the kookiness we see in our culture today. This blended worldview assumes only natural—I'm (7:29) sorry—only nature exists.

Only natural explanations are valid, and truth is largely (7:37) socially constructed. We just make it up. It rejects grand metanarratives, especially (7:45) the Bible's overarching story of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation.

So understand this (7:53) culturally predominant worldview is not the majority belief, personal belief, of everyday people (8:01) who remain predominantly religious. They call it persistent, persistently religious, (8:10) as in, you know, that persistent cough. Anyway, it creates tension then with this (8:22) persistent religious majorities.

In contrast, the biblical worldview presents two realms. (8:29) The natural realm we can observe, and the spiritual realm that we can't, that is revealed by God. (8:37) God has also given evidence in the natural realm of his existence and the things he has made.

(8:43) Scripture declares itself to be the true metanarrative, God's own account of reality. (8:50) As Hebrew 11:3 states, by faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, (8:59) so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (9:05) Tonight, we will go through Genesis chapters 1 through 3 and what they reveal about the (9:13) biblical worldview.

But first, let's address the heart of the conflict. (9:19) The problem of origins. Why assumptions matter.

We live in the present. We cannot directly observe (9:31) the past. Every attempt to reconstruct history, especially origins, requires assumptions or (9:42) trustworthy testimony.

Consider this analogy. I'm going to have an analogy now, John. (9:49) The car accident.

Imagine you come upon a serious car accident that happened 30 minutes ago. (9:59) You didn't see it. You only arrived at the scene after the event.

How do you determine what (10:05) happened? What caused the accident? Who's at fault? First option is forensic investigation. (10:14) This is assumptive historical science, historical science based on assumptions. (10:19) You examine the skid marks, the position of the cars, the damage, the traffic light, (10:25) the weather data, and make educated guesses based on present evidence.

The skid marks suggest (10:32) the blue car was going too fast. The dent pattern suggests the red car ran the light. (10:39) Based on how glass usually breaks, this must have happened at this angle.

(10:46) And this is useful, and you can build a plausible reconstruction, but it's still inference built (10:53) on assumptions about how things normally behave. It's called uniformitarianism. (11:02) You weren't there.

You didn't see those. You didn't see whose fault it really was, (11:09) and multiple people could look at the same evidence and come up with different conclusions. (11:16) Another option is an eyewitness testimony, or if you will, revelation.

A person steps forward and (11:25) says, I was sitting right there at the intersection. I saw the whole thing, (11:31) and they give a clear, detailed account, who ran the light, what the cars were doing, (11:36) and the sequence of events. This is revelation, testimony from someone who was present (11:45) and saw it with their own eyes.

So apply this to Genesis. Historical science, evolution, (11:54) deep time, and big bang is like arriving at the scene of creation millions of years later (12:02) and trying to reconstruct what happened using only present processes and our assumptions (12:09) about the past. Genesis is the eyewitness testimony of the only one who was there, (12:19) the creator himself.

In the beginning, God. We can't observe a past event directly, (12:28) and note that both sides use faith. They are forced to use faith, something that we believe (12:36) to be true.

With historical science, you can build a very plausible reconstruction, (12:42) but it's still inference, a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning (12:49) built on assumptions about

how things normally behave. But revelation, I was going to say (12:58) revolution, but revelation is the superior source when the eyewitness is trustworthy. (13:08) So here's the point.

Both approaches require faith. The difference is where you put your faith. (13:17) With the forensic approach, you put your faith in your own reasoning power (13:21) and your assumptions based on the fact about the past.

With the eyewitness, you put your faith in (13:29) the reliability of the person who was there and is telling you what happened. So the question is, (13:36) where will you place your faith? Infallible assumptions or in the trustworthy word of (13:44) the creator? A second problem faces every worldview. Something cannot come from nothing.

(13:54) Therefore, something or someone must be eternal that everything came from. (14:02) Modern cosmology claims that the universe had a beginning, the Big Bang, yet insists everything (14:10) must have a natural explanation. And this creates a contradiction.

Nature cannot be both eternal (14:19) and have a beginning. Furthermore, the second law of thermodynamics shows that the universe is (14:28) winding down the opposite of what an eternal universe would require. And believe me, (14:37) this is a big problem for naturalistic science.

We want to believe that all there is, all there was, (14:46) all there is, all there ever was, and all there ever will be is the cosmos. When the (14:52) cosmos had a beginning, just refute that statement. It's interesting that they're the (15:00) ones that say that had a beginning anyway.

And isn't that what Hebrews 11.3 told us? By faith, (15:09) we understand that the universe was created by the word of God so that what it seemed, (15:17) what we can see, nature was not made out of the things that are visible, the things that we can (15:25) see, nature. Hebrews 11.3, so nature was not made out of nature. The Bible resolves this beautifully.

(15:38) Nature did not create itself. God, who is eternal, powerful, and supernatural, (15:46) created all things. We are told in Romans 1 verse 20, for since the creation of the world, (15:54) from the very beginning, God's invisible attributes, his eternal power and his divine (16:01) nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made.

(16:08) The very two attributes necessary to be able to create nature, eternal power and divine nature (16:15) are listed here in the context of the creation of the world. God is eternal from everlasting (16:23) to everlasting. Psalm 41 verse 13.

Therefore, his power is eternal. And God's divine nature (16:33) is spirit, not physical. John 4.24. He is supernatural and he has the necessary attributes (16:43) to bring something like nature into existence.

So where did God get the material to make nature? (16:52) One possibility, and this is speculation, one possibility is God made it from the only material (17:00) available, himself. Perhaps this is the meaning of Acts 17.28, where he says, where Paul says, (17:08) for in him we live and move and exist. Or to say it another way, we live and move and exist (17:16) in him.

He's the material we're made of. Instead of star stuff, we're made out of God's stuff. (17:21) I prefer that better, by the way.

Okay, so, or as it says in Psalm 139 verses 7 through 10, (17:40) where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, (17:47) you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there. If I take the wings of the dawn (17:56) and if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there your hand will lead me.

God's everywhere (18:04) because everything was made out of God. Think of this, if there is a spiritual realm, and there is, (18:13) then a purely natural lens acts as a filter that hides the truth. And all your assumptions (18:23) will necessarily produce incorrect results.

And that's where man is today. (18:34) Now, we've seen the problem. Let's put the two worldviews side by side and let the contrast (18:41) speak for itself.

And I want you to see clearly the difference between what our culture assumes (18:48) and what God has revealed. And we'll compare them point by point. First, (18:55) the predominant worldview operates on uniformitarianism, the assumption that the (19:02) present is the key to the past.

And they say, the processes we see working slowly today have always (19:11) worked that way. Therefore, they need millions and billions of years for everything to form. (19:20) But the Bible gives us something far better, the creator's own eyewitness testimony.

Genesis is not (19:27) a guess made billions of years later. It is God telling us exactly what he did and how he did it (19:34) in the beginning, God created. Second, our culture insists that there can be no supernatural (19:43) intervention that's clearly a slight of God.

That's the whole point of saying that. (19:53) And why they insist on natural only. Miracles, divine creation, and even the resurrection are (20:02) dismissed as pre-scientific myths or helpful, possibly moral stories.

I added the possibly (20:09) moral stories. Yet scripture warns us about this very attitude. Romans 1 tells us that (20:17) men suppress the truth about God that is clearly seen in creation.

And 2 Peter 3 (20:24) says scoffers will deliberately forget the creation and the flood. The Bible does not (20:30) treat the supernatural as a problem. It treats the rejection of it as the problem.

(20:38) Third, the modern view requires deep time, fast ages, slow gradual change. Without that, (20:46) their whole story collapses. But a plain reading of Genesis demands six literal 24-hour days.

(20:55) The text is straightforward. God spoke and it was so. Evening and morning, day one, day two, (21:03) day three, day four, day five, day six, and it was so.

Fourth, look at the order of events. And this (21:15) is interesting because those who are religious, even in the churches of Christ, who want to (21:23) make the word day in Genesis chapter 1 into long periods of time, (21:31) that's not the only problem or disagreement between Genesis and modern cosmology. (21:41) That's only one of the problems.

Another problem is this right here, the order of events. (21:49) Modern cosmology teaches that stars and galaxies form billions of years before the earth. (21:56) The sun came before the earth.

Simple life came before complex life. And fish before land animals (22:03) and the birds came last. Last is the epitome of evolution.

But Genesis represents a very different (22:14) order. Earth and water exist first. Plants are created on day three.

Before the sun on day four. (22:22) Birds and sea creatures appear on day five. Before the land animals on day six.

And human beings (22:30) are the crowning climax of creation. These are not small differences. They are completely (22:39) opposite sequences.

So in addition to the length of a day, if you want to support (22:47) evolution from a religious point of view, you can't do it. (22:52) Because the whole sequence is totally out of kilter. And finally, and this is crucial, (23:02) the predominant worldview says death, suffering, and struggle existed for millions of years before (23:08) humans even appeared.

And in their story, death is natural, just a part of the process that produced us. (23:17) The Bible says exactly the opposite. Death, suffering, and the curse on creation (23:23) entered the world because of man's sin.

Genesis 3 and Romans 5-12. Romans 8 tells us that creation (23:33) itself groans under the weight of the curse, waiting for the redemption that is coming. (23:41) But here's the bottom line.

The same Bible that tells us about the cross tells us about creation. (23:50) You cannot consistently accept one while rejecting the other. If you weaken Genesis, (23:58) you weaken everything that follows.

But when you stand firmly on Genesis as written, (24:05) you have a solid foundation for the entire gospel message. So in conclusion, (24:14) we have seen the stark contrast this morning. On one hand, we have the culturally dominant worldview (24:21) in this corner, a mixture of secular materialism and postmodern skepticism.

(24:30) And the postmodernists are the scoffers of 2 Peter 3. And that tells us that we are nothing more (24:42) than cosmic accidents, the projects of time and chance, and impersonal processes. On the other (24:51) hand, we have the clear, powerful testimony of the creator himself. In the beginning, (24:58) God created the heavens and the earth.

If the same inspired word that reveals the cross (25:05) also reveals creation is true, and it is, then everything changes. It changes how we view (25:14) ourselves. We are not evolved animals.

We are image bearers of a holy God. It changes how we (25:23) view sin. Death and suffering entered the world through Adam's transgression, not through millions (25:31) of years of nature red in the truth and claw.

It changes how we view redemption. The same God who (25:40) spoke the universe into existence is the God who sent his son to die for our sins and rise again. (25:48) It changes how we view the future.

The God who created all things will one day make all things (25:55) new. So, what does this mean for us right now in 2026? At what time? Number one, believe God's word (26:07) from the very first verse. Commit to a plain reading of scripture.

Stop trying to make Genesis (26:15) fit the latest scientific consensus. Let God's testimony stand on

its own authority and merit. (26:23) Number two, teach the next generation the whole counsel of God.

Do not let them leave home (26:30) thinking the first 11 chapters of the Bible are optional or mythological. Saturate them with the (26:38) truth that the Bible is trustworthy from the beginning to the end. The studies we referenced (26:44) at the beginning of this lesson are not just statistics.

They're a warning. Number three, (26:52) live like the Bible is true. If God created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh, (26:59) then he is Lord over every area of your life, your time, your money, your relationships, (27:06) your sexuality, and your worldview.

Nothing is outside his authority. And finally, number four, (27:15) stand unashamedly on the authority of the scriptures. When the world mocks you for (27:21) believing Genesis, and they will, they'll even call it dangerous.

That's been in congressional (27:31) testimony just recently. Remember, you are standing with the apostles, with the Lord (27:40) Jesus himself, and with the God who cannot lie. Think about that.

So, Genesis (27:51) is just something God made up because we weren't scientifically savvy. He lied. (28:01) If evolution is true, and that's the real way that things came about, (28:06) then what he wrote there in the beginning is a lie.

And you know what? It isn't because (28:12) God cannot lie. We are extending the invitation now to anyone who is subject to it. If you are (28:21) a Christian, but you have a loud doubt about the foundation of God's word to weaken your faith, (28:27) repent, and return to full confidence in the authority of the scriptures, even beginning (28:32) in Genesis.

You want to study further, strengthen your family's faith, or simply pray, (28:38) the front is open, and we are here to help you. So, let's stand and sing, confident (28:45) that the God who was there in the beginning is still here with us today, (28:52) and his word still matters now more than ever. Come. (28:58)