

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

A Walk Through the Old Testament

Genesis 1-2

Dr. Jeff Stivason

August 16, 2019

Jeff: (*Announcement*) All right. Somebody just asked me what the dates were for this. September 3, October 8, November 5. It's the first Tuesday of every month in September, October and November. That's the Paideia Center for Theological Discipleship. So we're reading Gregory the Great's *Pastoral Rule*. It's a great book, an ancient book, written in the 500s. It's got to be a hit. (*Laughter*) If you want to try some of that, go to the website and they'll send you the book. It's at paideiacenter.com

I wanted to tell you about this. I was just cruising the Internet the other day and I just typed in Don Maurer.

Brave Men: Oh, wow!

Don Maurer: What?

Jeff: Yes. I just typed in Don Maurer. Four things came up that I never expected to come up. (*Laughter*) The first thing is the guy from the Dos Equis commercial about the most interesting man in the world. And what he says startles me. He said, “I don't always listen to music. But when I do, it's Don Maurer.” (*Laughter and applause*) And Ted, you're not going to believe it.

Ted: Oh, gosh!

Jeff: Right after that, right underneath it, was this. Kermit the Frog. “I love it when Don plays ‘Rock of Ages’ to the tune of ‘Over the Rainbow.’” (*Laughter*) Anyway, I had those three things I just thought I would share with you. (*Laughter*) But Don, I did not realize that you were friends with the most interesting man in the world and the greenest frog in the world. (*Laughter*)

Don: I'm about to croak! (*Laughter*)

Jeff: So Don, why don't you lead us and we'll sing before we pray.

Don with the Brave Men, singing James Ward's tune:

Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Jeff: Well, thanks for picking one we all know. (*Laughter*) Why don't we pray now?

Father in heaven, we are so thankful to gather together, and for us to come together and enjoy the presence of one another and the gifts of one another. It's just a delight. Thank You, Father, for the time You've given to us to be in Your word, that we might search it and know it, that it might more importantly search us. And may Your Holy Spirit who inspired this word also bring it to bear upon our lives in such a way that we are changed, different, changed and fashioned according to the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ, our elder Brother and our Savior.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Father, as we come into Your presence today, as we open up Your word, we pray for more knowledge, but not just more knowledge. We pray, Father, that Your Holy Spirit would do that work in us for which we pray. We also ask, Father, that You will indeed bless this Word to us. Give us the conviction that it is indeed Your word, for it is. Help us to understand that it is the place where we stand, that it is the only safe place today in a world of words, in a world swimming with spin. This is the Word that is true. Father, help us to stand there.

Father, as we think about those mentioned earlier, we think about Tom and ask for Your blessing to be upon him in his struggles. Lord, we certainly pray for Nancy. We lift her up again that You will bless her and strengthen her by Your grace. We certainly pray and give You thanks that the infection was able to be knocked out so that they could put in the port and begin the chemo. We certainly pray for her well-being and for the efficacy of the chemotherapy. Father, we pray as well that Sig and Nancy would be able to accumulate the funds that they'll need for this long journey. And we pray, Lord, that Your blessing will be there.

Father, we pray for Sandy and ask that You would continue to bless her. We pray for Jim and ask that You will bless him in his battle. And Father, certainly we pray for our brother Bruce, and give You thanks for his ongoing strength, and we know that it resides in You. We pray for him as he battles Parkinson's and as he continues to teach. In all these things that he does, we just pray that You would be a blessing to him and that he would be a blessing to others, that he would find a great deal of encouragement in Your Holy Spirit residing in him.

Father, again we turn our attention to You, asking that You'll bless our time together, for we ask it in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: All right. You've got the outline. I've decided to throw the purpose statement up on the front. Today what we're going to be looking at is basically the first two chapters of Genesis, but really we're going to move ourselves into the third chapter.

We're going a little slow. You're probably saying to yourself, "I don't know if we're going to get through the whole Old Testament in 36 weeks if we keep looking at two chapters at a time." And you are right. (*Laughter*) So we're not going to look at everything in this kind of way. We're going to take large sections and just digest them pretty quickly.

But there are places in the Bible that are foundational. And I would say to you that we're not going to give enough time to what we're going to look at today. But that's true of everything we're going to look at.

But we need to stop and pause, and we need to reflect on the first couple,. Maybe the first three chapters in Genesis with some due reverence. Why? Because the first three chapters of Genesis are going to tell us everything from why we wear the clothes that we wear to why we need a Savior. It's really, in some way, logically speaking, using a Biblical logic, it answers all of our questions. And so I want us to think about these first three chapters. And I want us just to digest them fairly quickly. But I want us to pause as

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

we do. Why? Because they give us a Biblical world view, a world view that we need in order to approach the world.

And there are some other reasons. Remember I said to you that Augustine’s dictum is that the New is hidden in the Old and that the Old is revealed in the New. We’re going to see that come out in an important way today.

So anyway, that’s the purpose. Next week’s assignment, if you want to jump ahead, is to read Genesis 23-36. And again, what I’m basically doing is that when I say to you to read the assignments, it’s not that we’re going to come back to the readings. But what I want you to do is that I’d like you to read through the Old Testament getting the story, getting as much of the story while we’re walking through the way we’re walking through it as you can. So the next set of chapters is 23-36 of Genesis.

Here’s the outline I want us to think about today. I want us to look at *the creation account in Genesis 1*. Really its Genesis 1 and 2. I want us to think about *the creation of man*. I want us to think about *three creation ordinances*. And then I want us to think about *the creation covenant that God makes with man*. Here we’re going to be stretching our wings a bit, going into the third chapter, and in some ways setting ourselves up for what’s to come next week, because next week we’re going to look at Genesis 3-11. So it’s a large chunk of Scripture. But we’re going to give a lot of our time to chapter 3 next week. So this gives you the lay of the land that we’re going to look at. So any questions thus far, because we’re leaving behind some of the introductory stuff that we did in the first couple of weeks? Anything at all? No? Okay.

Well, let’s get started. Let’s look at *the creation account*. I want you to be clear with me about this. When you open the Bible it says this in Genesis chapter 1. And you open your Bibles and you can take a look there. It says, “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*”

Now one of the things that I want you to understand is this. I want you to understand that the Bible begins with the cold hard fact of creation. “*In the beginning God created.*”

Now I want to tell you something before I move further than this. Christians are divided about how God created. Some Christians believe that God created in the space of six days, and all of it very good—six 24-hour days. And some believe that God created in the space of what we know. But Moses framed it poetically for us in a six-day week.

However, whether you believe that God created in six literal 24-hour days, or that Moses used a six-day framework in order to tell us that God created, the fact remains that God created. How God created is a matter of debate among Christians.

Now I want to tell you something. I think there are ways of talking about creation that I think are untenable. For instance, I personally think that the Christian evolutionary view is an untenable view. For instance, I don’t believe that God created hominids. And you can go back even further and say that He creates these single-cell organisms and they evolve. And pretty soon you get *ramipithicus* and all of that which comes from it, including the line of hominids which become what we are today, advanced species as we are. (*Laughter*)

And so when Genesis 1 and 2 come about, you basically have a populated earth of hominids. And God reaches down and selects two of those hominids and says, “These are

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

going to be the first parents.” I don’t think that’s tenable if you buy into the Scriptural account of creation.

So I do believe that there are ways of looking at creation that are incompatible and inconsistent with the book of Scripture. But I think that there are plenty of ways that you can look at creation that are compatible with Scripture. They may not be the ones that I would hold. But certainly they would be compatible. For instance, I really don’t have any problem in the world with someone saying, “I don’t believe that creation was constructed in six literal days. I believe that God showed Moses what he did.” And Moses said, “Hey, how am I going to write this?” (*Laughter*) “You know, You’ve given me 500 words or less, (*laughter*), in order to communicate what You did in creation. I just wonder how I’m going to do this.” Well, I believe that Moses may have said, “You know what? I’m going to organize what I saw. And I’m going to organize it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, of course, in a six-day framework. And I’m going to try to show what it was that God did in the space of time that I don’t know. But I’m going to use six days in order to do it.”

I don’t have any problem with that, as long as, in the back of that, you believe and affirm that God created, and that it’s not inconsistent with any other portion of Scripture. Now you may think that’s inconsistent with other portions of Scripture, and you may want to debate that. But you may want to take up that debate with a framework hypothesis person and not myself. (*Laughter*)

“*In the beginning God created.*” Now when we talk about “*in the beginning God created*”, we talk about a couple of things that we want to affirm. There are a couple things that we want to affirm. First of all, we want to affirm that *creation is ex nihilo*. It’s out of nothing. God did not take pre-existent matter and say, “What am I going to do with this? It’s been sitting around the universe for a long, long time. Hey, I’ll make the world!” (*Laughter*) That’s not what He did, right? Out of nothing.

Now what is nothing? It’s what sleeping rocks think about. (*Laughter*) Right? Because I can hear someone say, “What’s nothing?” And you’re going to go, “I’ll close my eyes, and nothing is black.” No, it’s not. Nothing is nothing. So let’s not spend a lot of energy trying to think about what nothing is.

But here’s what we want to affirm. What we want to affirm is that God didn’t create pre-existing matter and turn it into the universe that we have.

But here’s something else that we want to be careful to do. We want to take care to affirm that *creation is not God*. Now do you know what? I want to tell you something. I’m going to go off on a tangent here and say to you that there are ways in which we can think about these kinds of things and get ourselves into a bit of a conundrum. If this doesn’t mean anything to you, that’s fine. But the question that some philosophers were asking is this. How can anything exist?

And there was a philosopher by the name of Bishop Berkeley who said, well, if something exists it must be perceived, right? To perceive something is to ensure its existence.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Now one of the things that Berkeley ran into was objectors. And one of the objectors said to him, “Well, what if no one is around to perceive the ocean, or some portion of the jungle? What do you do then, Bishop?”

And he said this. He said, “God is everywhere, perceiving.”

Don: Amen.

Jeff: Don’t amen it yet, Don. (*Laughter*) But Berkeley had to say that everything was in the mind of God, which means then that you’ve got a problem with materiality, because if everything is in the mind of God, how can material substance be a part of an eternal spirit?

So there are very interesting ways to think philosophically about some of these things. But what we want to affirm when we say that God created *ex nihilo* is that God created something, and it’s not Him. It’s not Him, it’s not His thoughts, it’s not Him. It’s something other than Him.

You know, there was a guy by the name of Cornelius van Till. He used to do this. He used to draw two circles. One of them represented God and one of them represented creation. And what he would do is that he would draw lines to those. And I can tell you more about that at another time. But what he was saying is that this is the Creator and this is the creature. And there is a difference. And that’s one of the things that we want to affirm when we talk about creation *ex nihilo*. It’s not only that it wasn’t that it was pre-existent matter that was lying around, but it’s not Him. Okay? So He creates out of nothing, *ex nihilo*.

Secondly, *He creates by divine fiat*. He got into a little car on 38 2nd St. (*Laughter*) Divine *fiat* means that He creates with the command of His word. So we affirm creation *ex nihilo*. We affirm creation by divine *fiat*. All right. So when we talk about “God created,” we think about those things, okay?

Let’s move on and look at this beautiful picture.

Transcriber’s Note: A picture of a galaxy.

Jeff: What is that beautiful picture? That beautiful picture is the Milky Way.

Don: A candy bar? Sorry.

Jeff: What?

Ted Wood: He said, “A candy bar?”

Jeff: A candy bar, Don? If that helps you, go ahead. (*Laughter*) It’s all about whatever works, Don, right? (*Laughter*) When you pull that candy bar apart, the caramel just streams across the Milky Way. (*Laughter*)

Now up until the 1920s we thought that we were it, that the Milky Way was it in total. And in the 1920s, as when Hubbell brings out that big telescope that he carried in his pocket for a long, long time and said, “Hey, let’s use this.” And he was able to see what we can see with the naked eye, and that is that this is the Milky Way. But the Milky Way is only one galaxy in the midst of the universe. He was able to see stars beyond the Milky Way, and eventually planets, and so on. He realized that there were galaxies beyond us. And so the world that God created and the universe that God created is so much bigger than we initially thought.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

I want to read something to you. This comes from a guy by the name of Dyson Freeman. Does anybody know Dyson Freeman?

Ted: Yes.

Jeff: Yes? I figured you would, Ted. I really did.

Ted: He’s an astronomer, right?

Jeff: Well, Dyson Freeman was a professor of physics at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. He was born in England, Ted, which is the reason I thought you would know him. *(Laughter)* He worked as a civilian scientist for the Royal Air Force in World War II.

Ted: The RAF.

Jeff: Yes. For those Anglicanites among us, that’s RAF. He graduates from Cambridge in 1945 with a degree in mathematics. And he goes on to Cornell University as a graduate student in 1947. And his most useful contribution to science was the unification of the three versions of quantum electrodynamics. We’re having a little class on that after the Bible study. *(Laughter)* So if you want to get familiar with that, just hang around. *(Laughter)*

I don’t know if this guy was a believer or not. But this guy has a great book. Check it out. *“The more I examine the universe and the details of its architecture, the more evidence I find that the universe in some sense must have known we were coming.”* *(Laughter)* Great quote. *(Laughter)* I mean, that’s a quote that intimates design. Great quote.

All right. Now this is great. Think about this. So now we know about our galaxy. And we know that there is a universe outside of our galaxy. And we can’t even number the stars. So did you ever look at how they number them? They say that there are 100 billion to 400 billion stars, give or take. *(Laughter)* But I don’t believe Scripture says this. *“He made the stars also.”* *(Laughter)* I just love that! *(Laughter)*

All right. Now we’re going to talk a little bit more about creation. But here is what I want to do. We can sometimes talk about creation as if we could manage it. And when we realize that the Milky Way is one galaxy in the midst of the universe, we begin to realize that this is not manageable. This is only manageable for God, not us, right? There is something bigger here. And we can sometimes reduce it when we read the Scriptures. We shouldn’t reduce it because it can’t be reducible.

Now I want to move on. I want to talk about *some patterns that you’ll find when you read Genesis*. For instance, if you read Genesis and the creation account, you’re going to find a verbal pattern. There will be an announcement: *“God said.”* There will be a command: *“Let there be.”* There will be a report about that: *“And it was so.”* Then there’s an evaluation: *“It was good.”* And then there’s a time. It was x day. And so that’s the pattern. If you’re looking for the pattern that reoccurs in each moment of creation, that’s it, the verbal pattern,--announcement, command, report, name, evaluation and then time.

There’s another pattern here. And it corresponds with what you find in the very first set of verses. It was formless and then it’s formed, empty then filled, dark and then

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

luminaries were created, and then it says that the sea and the dry land emerge. Okay, so another pattern.

Now what’s the result of that? Well, the result of that is that you find this pattern. Now let me just say this to you, because this is important. Remember when I said to you about maybe Moses saying that it’s not that God couldn’t do it in the space of six literal days. “But how am I going to communicate this creation that God revealed to me? How am I going to communicate that? Well, I’ll do the six-day week.” So what you have is that on day one you have light, day two the expanse, and then on day three the waters.

And you notice that the corresponding features are on four, five and six. So day one is light, day four the luminaries. Day two is the expanse, day five is the birds and the air and the expanse. On day three the waters are gathered and land is created. And on day six man is created, as well as the other creatures. And then on day seven He rests. Go ahead.

Bill Stolze: Jeff, I just thought of this. Are there any chiasms here? *(Laughter)*

Jeff: You know what? I’m not telling you. *(Laughter)* Until you can come back and tell me whether or not that was a real chiasm that you introduced in our speech the other day, I’m not talking. *(Laughter)* I thought about you the other day. *(Laughter)*

All right. So it’s either six 24-hour days or a framework for communicating what we can’t grasp, because the finite can never contain the infinite. I think that’s funny, because when we look at what we just looked at, how can the finite mind contain the finite? The finite is the universe as it exists. You know, 100 billion to 400 billion stars, that sort of thing.

All right. A question for you. This is the question people stumble over. They always say this. They’ll say, *(mocking tone)* “Wait a minute! How can it be six 24-hour days, because the light was created on day one and the sun was created on day four. *(Laughter)* You get that, correct? And so they say, “That’s just dumb!”

But I want you to think about this. When was this written? This was written by Moses during the time of the Exodus. You know, he’s in his tent. Everybody’s going, “Where’s Moses?”

“He’s in there writing.” And he comes out and he goes, “You’re not going to believe what I just wrote!” *(Laughter)* “Come here!” *(Laughter)*

I want you to think about that. During that time, the sun and the moon were gods. The names of those things were gods. They were used to define who the gods were. If you ask me, as I’ve said before, I think one of the reasons why Moses starts with “And God created light,” and then later He creates the luminaries, is to show that the luminaries are subservient to the One who creates light and who doesn’t need the luminaries because He said, “Let there be light.”

Now for instance I think that holds water, because we find that very thing elsewhere in Scripture. Revelation 22:5: “*They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the LORD God will be their light.*” The idea is the same. The Giver of light does not need the luminaries, which have become gods to people. He doesn’t need them in order for there to be light.

I think that’s the idea that you find in Genesis. And I think that may be the reason why you have light created on day one and the luminaries created on day four. But you don’t have to believe that. I’m just suggesting that to you.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Well, we’re going to go on. But I want to stop and ask you if you have any questions before I do. Any questions? Any—

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff looks around to avoid someone who raised his hand.

(Laughter)

Don: No! *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Don?

Kirk Ellerbusch: Go ahead, Don.

Don: How can you—

Jeff: You know, whenever they start out with, “How can you”,-- *(Laughter)*

Don: All right, okay. Let me put this as gently as I can. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: I’m about to take a beating.

Don: Is the framework hypothesis tenable when God explicitly says that the reason for the Fourth Commandment is that He says, “*For in six days the LORD God made the heaven and the earth?*”

Jeff: Well Don, that’s why I’m a six-dayer. *(Laughter)*

Don: Okay, yes.

Jeff: I’m going to give my brothers in the framework view the benefit of being Christians.

Don: Sure. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: But I’m not necessarily going to give them the benefit of being right.

Don: Okay. I can buy that. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Right? I mean, we do that in other things.

Paul Deffenbaugh: Yeah.

Tom Hansz: If God rested on the seventh day, are we still in His rest?

Jeff: Well, I’m going to talk about that soon. That’s a creation ordinance.

Tom: Okay.

Jeff: I’ve got one in the back.

Bill McCoy: We’ve talked about this before. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Go ahead.

Bill: I understand your point of view. The other point is that God created time on the first day, because it says that after the first day that “*there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*” So He had to create something. Man was coming. Time doesn’t mean anything to God, but it certainly does to man. This also needs more support today, six literal days of creation.

Jeff: Well see, I think that as soon as you create something, whether it be something of substance or light, you create time, because like I said to you before, light travels. And as soon as it travels one nanosecond, time is there. So I think that when God creates time, time is created along with whatever He creates. He says, “*Let there be light.*” The second after He speaks that out of eternity, time is involved, because it has to be, right?

Brave Man: I think so.

Jeff: There has to be a starting point and then a succession, whether it’s the light traveling, or whatever it has to be. I’m not disagreeing with you. I’m just saying that I think that whatever was created in time was created by the eternal God. Pat?

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Pat: If time begins when light is created, then when God creates this light, how do we physically define that time? Is there even a way?

Jeff: No. *(Laughter)* See, this is the difficulty. We have to be careful not to shape the Bible in an Aristotelian philosophical way, so that in order for there to be eternity, God has to be an unmoved sort of being. He can't think successively because that involves time. He can't do anything, He can't be concerned about anything, because that would involve time. So we've got to be careful not to reduce God to some Aristotelian conception of God.

But we also have to realize that whenever we talk about God we're going to do it as time-bound creatures. So we're going to talk about Him. Even when we talk about Father, Son and Holy Spirit loving One Another, we can't do that apart from time, right? How is it that that's done? And I think that's left unexplained to us. I think we're just left with saying that God is eternal. And I think that what we want to affirm is that in terms of who God is He is immutable. He is unchanging. But in terms of God's internal dynamic, we want to say that it's a living dynamic. There's a living relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit—not that it's mutable, but it's a living dynamic. And how we talk about that has to be in temporal terms. We can't go beyond it. It's a great question. And I think we have to just acknowledge the limits of being able to only go so far. Yes?

Ted: Just as a footnote to your talk, I would claim to be a framework hypothesis person. So that either makes me unsaved, or it makes me gravely in error.

Jeff: Yes. *(Laughter)*

Bishop Rodgers: Just one comment. Part of the problem with people is that they try to coordinate natural science with the Biblical account, without recognizing that natural science has already defined itself in such a way that it cannot deal with the reality of the revelation of God's creation.

Let me just give you an example. We ask why is the water boiling on the stove? People say, “Well, because b.t.u.s set at sea level create radical perturbations.” Or you could say, “Because Aunt Minnie wanted a cup of tea.” *(Laughter)* Now the Bible is much more like Aunt Minnie. I mean, God put us here. That's purpose. Today the scientists have defined themselves as not to have any purpose. So that's just very limited. And I think we waste a lot of time trying to coordinate with this rather reductionistic world view.

Jeff: Yes. That's really important.

Ted: b. t. u. stands for British thermal units. *(Laughter)* I'm British. *(Laughter)*

Bishop Rodgers: A friend of mine. *(Laughter)*

Brave Man: Moving right along.

Jeff: I'm having so much fun with this. *(Laughter)* Actually I had a lot of fear about coming here, knowing that Ted was a framework guy. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: All right. Let's talk about *the creation accounts*. It looks like there are two creation accounts. If you open it up, it looks like Genesis 1:1-2:3 is about one account, and then 2:4 starts out with a second account and goes through to the end of the chapter. And here's the way you want to look at that. The first account, 1:1-2:3, is a general account of creation. 2:4-25 focuses in on day six, the creation of man.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Now the reason I think that it’s helpful to look at it like that is because the New Testament does that very thing. It takes that as a pattern. For instance, if you look at 1:1-17 of Matthew, it’s a genealogy, the genesis of Jesus. That’s the Greek word that’s used, the genesis of Jesus. And it’s a general genealogy. This person was born, this person was born, this person was born, and so on.

And then in verses 18-25 we focus in on Jesus’ birth. He’s pulled out of the genealogy. And you get a much more specific account of His birth. And I think that Matthew, under the inspiration of the Spirit, is patterning itself and patterning what he’s doing after the creation account.

Now why is he doing that? Because he’s showing us that in Jesus we have a re-creation of sorts. So he’s doing that very intentionally.

So I think that’s how we want to look at the two creation accounts. There are a lot of things to say about that. But I think that when you look at it like that, general to specific, and then seeing the parallel in the New Testament, it’s helpful.

I want to talk about some things regarding the creation of man. We think about the *imago Dei*. We think about the image of God in man. There are three things that I just want us to think about when you look at this.

The first is this. Notice that *both Adam and Eve are created in God’s image*. And yet they are created *male and female*. They are distinct biologically.

You know, I don’t know if you’ve ever heard this. Have you ever heard the talk that R. C. Sproul did way back years ago? I’m surprised that it’s still on sale, but then again I’m not. It’s on homosexuality. Have you ever heard this? No? You’ve got to get it if you haven’t heard it, because it’s as entertaining as Sproul is.

There’s just this one little thing. There’s one part in this. And some of these things I’m surprised they don’t edit from Sproul, I just really am. (*Laughter*) You know, if somebody came to me and was struggling with his sexuality and didn’t know whether they were a man or a woman, he’d say, “Here, let’s go into the bathroom. Take off your clothes. What do you see?” (*Laughter*) Now I think that’s pretty good advice. (*Laughter*) So that’s all I’ll say about this.

Now the second thing I want you to think about when you think about attributes, I want you to think about God, because when you think about attributes regarding God, you think about attributes that are *communicable* and *incommunicable*. In other words, those incommunicable attributes are attributes that He does not communicate to us—things like timelessness, omniscience and omnipresence. Those are incommunicable attributes not communicated to us.

But then there are *communicable attributes*, things that were communicated to us. And when you think about communicable attributes, you think about knowledge, righteousness and holiness. And that is really the seat of the image that is marred in man. When Colossians and Ephesians tell us that God in Christ restores the image, those are the three things that are said to be restored—the true knowledge of God, righteousness and holiness, okay? So when you think about attributes, think about the loss of those three. And think about reclaiming those three in Christ. But there are more. There is love

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

and those sorts of things. But the New Testament certainly mentions those three as the seat.

And then *the broad and narrow*. When you think about the narrow image of God, think about what I just said: knowledge, righteousness and holiness. When you think about the broad image, think about the ability to reason, for instance. That’s creation in the image of God broadly speaking.

So fallen man may have lost the knowledge of god, righteousness and holiness. But fallen man has not lost the ability to reason. For instance, I’ve told you this before. But if we drive out to the stop light, the fallen man, if he’s sitting with you, can say, as you drive through the red light, “That’s red!” He can be just as panicked and terror-stricken as anyone, because he knows that is red, right? He knows it’s a red light. He knows that it can’t be green and red at the same time. Why? Because he operates according to the law of contradiction. It can only be either red or green. It can’t be both at the same time and so justify you’re going through it. And so he knows a red light when he sees it.

And that’s the broad image of God in man that’s not lost. It’s misused as scientists will oftentimes misuse it, as we’ve talked about earlier. But it’s not lost, okay? It’s not lost.

You know, I want to tell you something. It’s just an aside. But you are scientifically astute. And you know for a while they were saying that the pinky, in terms of evolutionary process, was getting smaller and smaller because we don’t use it. And so we are eventually going to lose our pinkies. Did you realize that? (*Laughter*)

Now I want to tell you guys something. I want to tell you that there is a purpose for the pinky. When you get out of the swimming pool, what other fingers can go like this? (*Laughter*) No charge for that one. (*Laughter*) No charge.

All right. So *man’s purpose*. I’m going to put this broadly: to serve the Lord and glorify Him. That’s the purpose of man in the Garden: to serve the Lord and glorify Him.

Now let’s move on to *the creation ordinances*. Do you know what? I didn’t do this one thing. I wanted to share this with you. Just pretend that it’s back in with our talk about creation.

So over the years I have had some classes that I’ve taken from institutions that weren’t Christian institutions. I took these classes in order to find out what they believed and what they would actually teach at the college level about certain things. So I’ve taken a biology class and I’ve taken an anthropology class from institutions that I knew would teach me evolutionary process and human evolution, and so on.

I had to use this one textbook. And I was reading about how things came to be. And I wanted to pull up these sentences and read these to you. These sentences are great. Listen to these sentences. You tell me if this sounds more like science or faith. This is on page 355 of this particular biology text.

It’s talking about the creation—not the creation, but evolutionary beginning. It says, “*The atmosphere of gases dissolved in rain, and were carried down into newly formed oceans where life may have originated.*” Where life *may* have originated? And you know, wait a minute; that’s faith language.

And here’s another one. “*Therefore the proto-cell,*” this cell that may have originated in the ocean, “*the proto-cell likely*” (*laughter*), “*likely was a heterodrome, an organism*

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

that takes in pre-formed food.” That’s a huge assumption, on the basis of the word *likely*, and so on. I just thought that was funny.

So anyway, *the creation ordinances*. Now I’ve talked to you about these before. What is a creation ordinance? A creation ordinance is a mandated command or a principle that God gave in our pre-fall state, and which directs us how to glorify Him and enjoy Him today. That is a creation ordinance or a creation mandate.

Now I want to teach you about the functional use of a creation mandate, a command or principle that God gives in our pre-fall state. How is it used? Let’s take a look at those texts. I’m not going to throw them up on the board because I don’t have them written in. Just take a look at them.

1 Corinthians chapter 11:8-10.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Corinthians 11:8-10, NKJV. *“For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.”*

Jeff: This is the discussion about head covering which we are not going to talk about. *(Laughter)* We are not going to talk about it. You’re not repeating after me, are you? *(Laughter)* So regardless of where you are on the head covering issue, notice what Paul appeals to in verses 8-10. *“For man was not made for woman, but woman for man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. That is why the wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.”*

Transcriber’s Note: ESV.

Jeff: *“Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor man of woman.”*

Now again, regardless of whatever you think about the head covering argument, the point is that Paul roots it in the creation ordinance. He roots it in creation.

Look at 1 Timothy chapter 2, verses 11-13.

Transcriber’s Note: 1 Timothy 2:11-13, NKJV. *“Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”*

Jeff: Now this is the place where people argue that women ought not to be pastors in churches.

Bishop Rodgers: And they’re correct.

Jeff: Yes. And look at how he roots it. He doesn’t root it in culture. He doesn’t say, “You know, the culture says.” He roots it in creation. Look what he says. *“Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man. Rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor”*, and so on.

Transcriber’s Note: ESV.

Jeff: The point is that when he talks about women not being elders, not being teachers in the congregation, he roots it in creation, a pre-fall state of things.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

And then, for instance, take a look at Matthew 19, when He talks about marriage. *“Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?”*

Verse 4. *“Have you not read that He who created them in the beginning made them male and female,”* and so on. So He roots these things in creation. And in so doing I think we ought to remember, for instance, that the person who says, “Look, we can argue away Paul’s rationale for women not being ministers by talking about the culture and what was going on in the culture at the time,” I would say to that person, “That’s not the argument that Paul is making.” Paul is not making a cultural argument about why women can’t be ministers. Paul is making a creational argument about why women can’t be ministers. And if you can defeat that argument, then fine. But until you can trump that argument, they can’t buy into it. And so that’s the force of a creational mandate in the New Testament.

Notice, for instance, that the Sabbath Day, which means cessation or rest. It’s interesting. If you look at it in Exodus 20, verses 8-11, you’ll notice that the Sabbath Day is rooted in creation.

Transcriber’s Note: Exodus 20:8-11, ESV. *“Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son, or your daughter, your male servant or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath Day and made it holy.”*

Jeff: It’s rooted in creation. So people will oftentimes say that the Sabbath is not really reiterated in the New Testament.

Now that depends. If you see the Sabbath as the Lord’s Day, then it most certainly is. But some people don’t see that.

But the point is that the question then becomes, how do you nullify the Sabbath when the Ten Commandments are rooted in a creation ordinance? Now that’s a question that you’ll have to wrestle through. I happen to think that the Sabbath is the Lord’s Day. It’s a perpetual sign of the rest that we will have in Christ.

And when we went through Hebrews I made that argument for you, that there is a rest that remains, and there is a rest that typifies that. And he uses two separate words to do that. But I’ll not go back through that now. If you want to think about that, you can go back through those. Maybe you weren’t listening, but that’s the framework of mine where you can go back through and listen. And you’ll notice that in that argument in chapter 4 of Hebrews he does talk about a Sabbath rest that is to come that’s prefigured in the rest that’s weekly. Okay?

Anyway, *work* is another one of those. It’s not a curse, but a norm. It’s a creational mandate. We’re to work. That’s why Paul could say that he who does not work does not eat. I’ve got a joke for that, but I want to just keep going. *(Laughter)*

Marriage is a creational mandate. Matthew 19. Mutual help, procreation, subduing the earth. 1 Corinthians 7 talks about intimacy. This is one I’ve got to tell you. No, I’m not going to tell you. *(Laughter)*

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Brave Men: Please! Come on!

Jeff: Okay. You know, 1 Corinthians 7 says, “*Do not deprive one another but for a time,*” “and only for prayer, and then come back together again.” Right?

Ted: Yes.

Jeff: And you know what they’re talking about. They’re talking about intimacy, right? One day I was not mindful of my days, and I preached that text on Mother’s Day. *(Laughter)* The men were smiling.

Bishop Rodgers: And the women were not. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: No.

Brave Man: You did not earn points.

Jeff: No, I did not earn points. *(Laughter)* The covenant is defined. But I’ll tell you what I did. I’ll just go back. I was planting a church at the time. I had been ordained. My ordination was contingent upon my finishing seminary. I had been in an independent church and transitioned into the Presbyterian Church. And so I was church planting and finishing seminary.

And so I was church planting and finishing seminary. And I had written my exegesis paper on 1 Corinthians 7, and I was just swamped. It was May. I was swamped and I thought, you know what? I’ve already done the exegesis on 1 Corinthians 7. I’ll transition from that exegesis to the homiletical material. And I just wasn’t thinking about Mother’s Day. *(Laughter)* I’m terrible that day! *(Laughter)* But I started to see new people coming into the congregation. “Oh, this is really good!” *(Laughter)* But this was Mother’s Day! *(Laughter)*

Brave Man: They could not become mothers without that. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: All right. Now *covenant is defined*. This is just the Kids’ Catechism. It’s “*a relationship that God sets up with us and guarantees by His word.*”

Now let’s parse that out a little bit. We’re going to do it simply. There’s a *precept*, a *penalty*, and a *promise*.

The precept was for Adam. Do not eat from the tree in the middle of the garden. The penalty was “*You will surely die.*” And the promise was “If you don’t eat, you’ll receive life.”

So if you can parse that covenant out, what does that relationship look like? It looks like a precept, a penalty and a promise. That’s putting it simply. We’ll get into more of the covenant as we walk through the Old Testament. But that’s the idea.

I want to say a couple of things to you really quickly. This was a *probationary covenant*. How do we know it was probationary? *(mocking tone)*, “That’s nuts! You’re not saying that Scripture is probationary.”

Well, let me ask you a question. If God says, “Don’t eat from the tree in the middle of the garden or you’ll die, and if you don’t eat from it, you’ll get life,” don’t you think that implies that the covenant will eventually come to an end, that there’s a time frame on it, so that Adam can inherit life? And he’s not going to be millions and billions of years down the road going, “Hey, when is this ever going to end? When can I get life?” You know what I mean? God is going to say that there is going to be some time commitment

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

to this. So it's a probationary covenant, limited in terms of its time, even though it's not stated in the Scripture as being obvious.

It's works-oriented. Think about this. You say, Wait a minute! Doesn't this mean that Adam is going to work for his salvation? And you've got it! Look, are we saved by works? Yes, we are. But they're not our works, right? They're the works of the second Adam.

Now doesn't that make sense? If the first Adam had to work in order to be saved and failed, the second Adam has to work in order for us to be saved, that His righteousness might be imputed to us as though we had worked for that righteousness. And so salvation is works-oriented in the Garden. Had Adam obeyed, he would have lived forever. He would have reached out to the tree of life and plucked the fruit of life. And that would have been the sacramental means by which he would have eaten and lived forever. But he didn't. And so the tree of life was barred from him. But his salvation was going to be based upon works. And our salvation is based upon the work of the second Adam. So it's works-oriented.

And *it's federal.* He was a representative of his posterity. 1 Corinthians 15 says, “*In Adam all die.*” Had Adam obeyed, it would have been “*In Adam all live.*” But it's not. So the second Adam is also the Head of a federal covenant. In Christ we live. And we're either in Adam or in Christ. Only two possibilities.

Remember what I said when I started at the beginning and I said that you can summarize the whole bible in terms of two Adams—the first Adam and the second Adam? That is what I mean. This is the idea from that. So it's federal.

And I want you to come back, because I know you don't know what Adam will do. *(Laughter)* When we get to Genesis 3 I'm going to reveal to you what Adam did. So it's a cliff-hanger. *(Laughter)* And you've got to come back for it. That's all I have. *(Laughter)* Don, go ahead.

Don: Jeff, how would you respond to somebody who would say that really the original covenant was gracious because God didn't have to shower Adam with all of those blessings. So that was gracious in and of itself.

Jeff: Well, the Protestant scholastics made a distinction between the grace of God in establishing the covenant to begin with and the works that were required for Adam to merit the benefits of that covenant. So they made that distinction. I would say that in light of conversations today I probably wouldn't say that it was a gracious covenant to begin with. I would say it was a benevolent covenant.

Don: Wow! Okay.

Jeff: Because grace implies that there was demerit. When we talk about grace, we need to understand that there is not just neutrality. There is demerit. And that's what requires grace. When we talk about goodness we can talk about God being good. And we can talk about Him being benevolent in a way that doesn't require us talking about the recipient of that benevolence being demerited in any way.

So Adam was not demerited at creation. He was created good. So God created a good covenant and required Adam to obey in the midst of it. Does that make sense?

Don: Yes.

“The Covenant of Creation” - Class 3

Jeff: Okay. Anybody else? All right. Well, let's pray. Father in heaven, thank You for this day, for the time You've given us, for Your word. And Lord, thank You for giving us that Word, for indeed it is a sure place to stand. We pray that You'll bless us and strengthen us by Your grace. And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. (*Applause*)