

# Grace Evangel Fellowship Pulpit

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## IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED

### A Message

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*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* (Genesis 1:1)

With these words God opens His revelation to mankind. “*God created!*” While the passage is quite simple and straightforward, let us contemplate several important points.

#### 1. IT IS A HISTORIC FACT THAT GOD CREATED.

In my seminary days I was required to take a course in philosophy. I can still recall reading the various philosophical proofs of God’s existence. Some were so philosophical that they made no sense to me. Maybe they were just over my head. I may have been a bit intimidated because I remembered something that wise old sage, Steve Martin, once said. “When you study philosophy, you remember just enough to mess you up for the rest of your life.”

But there was one philosophical proof that made perfect sense to me. I believe it was referred to as the “Watchmaker Proof.” You happen upon a pocket-watch. Not a new-fangled computerized, digital watch; but an old wind-up watch. You take it apart and examine all of the gears and springs; and you observe how the many intricate parts mesh together and move in synchrony, keeping time. And you think, “This watch, with all of its moving parts all working together for the purpose of keeping time could not have created itself. This bunch of parts could not have accidentally fallen together in such a harmonious way. There must have been a creative and intelligent watchmaker behind all of this.”

So also with this universe; and especially with this planet earth that we call home. The marvels of nature. The atmosphere that enables us to breathe. Water and food that enable us to live. Life begetting new life that enables us to propagate, generation upon generation. The miracle of the human body. Its ability to heal itself after an injury. Our ability to see and hear.

So we step back and look at all of this and we can only come to one conclusion ... all of this could not have simply self-created! There clearly was a creative and intelligent Creator behind all of this. It is the only logical explanation. And so it is a historic fact that “*God created,*” as revealed in the first few words of the Bible.

The apostle Paul says it like this in Romans 1:19 ...

*That which may be known of God is manifest to them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*

In other words – though God is invisible, we can clearly see Him in the things that ARE visible, that He has created.

At times we hear from those who claim that science is at odds with the Scriptures, and so the Scriptures cannot be trusted. But if God did choose to reveal Himself to mankind, and if He did so thru the Scriptures, then there should be no disparity between His Word and science. But a few things must be taken into consideration on this point.

First. Science continues to evolve. We cannot trust that scientific fact as we know it today is indisputable fact. When we look at scientific discovery and hypothesis throughout the past, we see it has evolved. Scientists are still trying to figure all of this out. Those noted scientists of the past who were so distinguished and learned and expert have often been reversed by those that follow. So before we contend that science has proven the Scriptures wrong, let us begin by not being so trusting of science as we know it today, as being absolutely correct.

Second. Is the Bible version we have chosen a good reliable translation of the Scriptures as God revealed them in the original languages? Or is the translation really an interpretation that incorporates the biases of the translator? Maybe the words we read in our Bible are not really the words God had His chosen writers use in the original manuscripts; because of liberties taken by the modern translators.

And third. Assuming we do have a good, reliable translation; are we interpreting it correctly. Many today simply turn to the experts – those pastors, preachers, professors, authors, teachers – who they determine can be trusted. But we must ask the question in this case – have the experts I have chosen figured all of this out correctly? Many will contend that science is wrong because it conflicts with the Bible, and the Bible cannot be wrong. I would agree this is correct, but only if we are correctly translating and interpreting what the Bible is really telling us.

Let's consider just one example. Genesis 1:2 ...

*And the earth was without form and void. (KJV)*

Many Christians today claim the earth must be young. God created it without form, and He proceeded to shape it into the earth as we know it. He then created man and woman; and so it began. These believers will count the generations from Adam and Eve and their immediate descendants to the present time. And they conclude that the earth can be no older than 6000 years or so.

When science reports anything older than 6000 years these believers will dispute science, claiming it to be inconsistent with God's Holy Word. And those of the world claim the Bible must therefore be false as it is inconsistent with good science.

But is this argument necessary? The Concordant Literal translation of Genesis 1:2 is as follows ...

*Yet the earth became a chaos and vacant.*

Now if this is a correct translation, there could have been a long “gap” between the creation of the earth in Genesis 1:1 and its lapsing into a condition of chaos and vacancy in the following verse. This theory seems to be supported by Isaiah 45:18 (*He did not create it a chaos*).

Some linguists claim that we find a causative verb in the original Hebrew that would imply action ... became instead of was. There is additional support for this position beyond the Isaiah passage already mentioned. But suffice it to say for our present purposes that there is a POSSIBILITY that the translation “*became*” is correct, in which case the earth could very well be much older than 6000 years. And if this is the case, scientists claiming a very old earth are not in conflict with the Scriptures.

All this to say ... sometimes there appears to be a conflict because science is not correct; and other times there appears to be a conflict because the Bible is not translated or interpreted correctly.

I think of Nicodemus when he was told, You (meaning all of Israel) must be born again. His response? Am I to crawl back into my mother’s womb? He did not understand that Jesus’ words were figurative in nature.

How often does this occur in our own interpretation of the Scriptures? Something God has revealed figuratively, to make a point, is interpreted literally. And we then use the literal “fact” to show a conflict with science. At times we may even say something equally as ludicrous as “you must climb back into your mother’s womb so you can be born again,” claiming this must be scientifically possible because it’s in God’s Word. And so we make a spectacle of ourselves and we destroy the credibility of God’s Word.

Another thing to remember – it is not the Bible’s intent to tell us everything about everything. If we are looking for complete scientific accounts on things, we will be disappointed, and we may look so hard out of desperation that we begin to see scientific “facts” in the Bible that aren’t really there. God only reveals to us those things He wants to reveal; nothing more.

As Ambassadors it is crucial that we utilize a good, reliable translation of God’s Word. And it is crucial that we are interpreting God’s Word correctly. If we are faithful in doing so, there will not be a conflict with science ... because this entire universe was created by God.

*I have made the earth, and created man upon it.  
I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens,  
And all their host have I commanded.  
(Isaiah 45:12)*

*For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens;  
God himself that formed the earth and made it.  
He hath established it.  
He created it not in vain [chaos in CV], he formed it to be inhabited.  
(Isaiah 45:18)*

*Praise ye him, all his angels.  
Praise ye him, all his hosts.  
Praise ye him, sun and moon.  
Praise him all ye stars of light.  
Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.  
Let them praise the name of the Lord;  
For he commanded, and they were created.  
(Psalm 148:2-5)*

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF HARMONY.

If this universe and this human life were created by God, then harmony with the creator and with His creation would seem to be quite important. God designed all of this using His blueprint. If we ignore the blueprint and do things our own way with disregard to the blueprint, we stand to be in conflict with God and His design; and trouble lies ahead for us at every turn.

We know there are natural laws that are very important to scientists, and actually to every one of us. Consider just one of these natural laws – gravity. If we are to live a happy and fulfilling life, we would be wise not to ignore gravity. It is a part of how God created this world. Ignoring gravity could have catastrophic results. We must, then, live in harmony with this important attribute found in God’s creative design.

When we make decisions in this life, we can seek to understand the way in which God has designed things, or we can ignore these things. I would suggest that to ignore natural laws or the revealed blueprint provided by God in His revelation – the Bible – will lead to a life of failure, catastrophe, pain, agony, and a continual and unsuccessful seeking of contentment and happiness.

Yes, the Bible is also a part of God’s creation. God spoke, and creation came into existence. That is the power of His word! He spoke, and His revelation to mankind was heard by His chosen prophets, and His written Word was preserved for us.

All of what we can observe in this universe and in these human bodies has been created by God, and science can help us to understand the natural laws God has built into His creation. Understanding the natural laws can help us to make technological advancements for the betterment of life. And likewise understanding God’s revealed word to mankind can help us to live harmoniously with the Creator, again for the betterment of life.

What is meant by living harmoniously with the Creator and with His creation? I think of a video that I observed in my shop class in high school many years ago. The video demonstrated why a tool should be used only for its designed purpose. Use a screwdriver as a pry bar and it soon ceases to be useful as a screwdriver.

So also it is with God’s creation, including His revealed Word. God has a design for things. He has revealed behaviors that He approves of, and behaviors that are improper. Observe the instructions found in His blueprint – the Bible – and one can live harmoniously. Happiness, fulfillment, and contentment will follow. Ignore and challenge the blueprint, and one finds himself facing self-imposed problems and challenges at every turn.

Love of money. Self-centeredness. Ignoring the design of male and female sexuality. Stealing. Lying. Coveting. Turning one’s back on God and His design will always bring conflict and unhappiness.

Listen closely now. It is not what feels natural that causes you to be in harmony with God and His creation. It is being consistent with God’s design for this universe; what He has determined to be the natural order of His creative design ... as revealed by the laws of nature and by that which He has revealed in His Word. That is what determines harmony as opposed to conflict with God and His blueprint.

Living in harmony does not mean “if it feels good do it” as many might claim. Some teach us to ignore feelings of guilt and do what comes naturally. This might work if there was

no Creator and no creative design to this universe and to this life. But there is a Creator. And there is logical design built into His creation. So to live harmoniously we must seek to understand the Creator and His design – the blueprint.

And if we choose to ignore the blueprint and the Creator, our ability to reason intelligently or to be guided by our conscience will eventually be lost. Paul says it like this in Romans 1.

*Knowing God, not as God do they glorify or thank Him, but vain were they made in their reasonings, and darkened is their unintelligent heart. Alleging themselves to be wise, they are made stupid, and they change the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of a corruptible human being and flying creatures and quadrupeds and reptiles. (1:21-23)*

*Wherefore God gives them over, in the lusts of their hearts, to the uncleanness of dishonoring their bodies among themselves ... (1:24)*

*Therefore God gives them over to dishonorable passions. For their females, besides, alter the natural use into that which is beside nature. Likewise also the males, besides, leaving the natural use of the female, were inflamed in their craving for one another, males with males effecting indecency, and getting back in themselves the retribution of their deception which must be. And according as they do not test God, to have Him in recognition, God gives them over to a disqualified mind, to do that which is not befitting, filled with all injustice, wickedness, evil, greed, distended with envy, murder, strife, guile, depravity, whisperers, vilifiers, detesters of God, outragers, proud, ostentatious, inventors of evil things, stubborn to parents, unintelligent, perfidious, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. (1:26-32).*

In other words ... turn away from God and His blueprint – the design He has incorporated into His creation – and you lose the ability to reason, or to know right from wrong, or to understand natural versus unnatural, or to live a fulfilled life as God intended for us. Little by little we begin to question God's blueprint, hearing the voice of Satan whispering, just as he once did to Eve in the Garden; "Did God really say that?"

In short ... turn away from God and His blueprint and we become out of harmony with God and the natural order of things as He created them.

### 3. THIS HOLISTIC LIFE.

If God created all things, then the implication is that all of life – physical and spiritual – are a whole. This life is holistic. It cannot be divided into physical and spiritual. The spiritual is always at work behind the scenes of the physical.

*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)*

Life is a whole. Undivided. Faith and real life. Faith and your job or career. Faith and your business. Faith and how you function as a father or mother, sister or brother, neighbor or friend, boss or employee.

If you attend an organized church, you cannot soak up the spiritual and then set it aside as you enter the world outside. That is the danger of religion – the ability to divide the

spiritual and the physical. The ability to keep the spiritual isolated to a certain day or a certain place, not letting it carry-over into other days or places.

But always and in all places ...

*This is the day which the Lord hath made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)*

*Be rejoicing in the Lord always! (Philippians 4:4)*

*Let nothing be worrying you, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)*

*In prayer be persevering. (Colossians 4:2)*

*Be rejoicing always. Be praying unintermittingly. In everything be giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:17)*

For a part of my life I set aside all of my favorite secular music from my youth, listening only to “Christian music.” But after a time it seemed the Christian lyrics were contrived and artificial, and not always consistent with the lives of the artists. I began to return to the music of my roots ... the Beatles, the Bee Gees, Led Zeppelin, Bob Dylan, and so on. And I began to appreciate some of these secular lyrics. At times God is openly acknowledged, though not always understood. And at times the honesty in the lyrics showed one who is searching. And even when none of this is present, the lyrics of most secular artists provide great discussion starters ... great starting points. I am reminded of the time Paul found a very secular city at Athens. When asked to address the Athenians at the Areopagus he used a secular touch-point to begin his argument:

*Men! Athenians! On all sides am I beholding how unusually religious you are. For, passing through and contemplating the objects of your veneration, I found a pedestal also, on which had been inscribed, To an Unknowable God. To Whom then you are ignorantly devout, This One am I announcing to you. The God Who makes the world and all that is in it, He, the Lord inherent of heaven and earth, is not dwelling in temples made by hands, neither is He attended by human hands, as if requiring anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all. (Acts 17:22-26)*

Now let’s turn our focus to your job ... your career ... your livelihood. Paul writes:

*All, whatsoever you may be doing, work from the soul, as to the Lord and not to men, being aware that from the Lord you will be getting the compensation of the enjoyment of an allotment: for the Lord Christ are you slaving. (Colossians 3:23)*

Every decision we make on a minute-by-minute basis must be informed by and guided by our faith. Because this world in which we live, and these bodies in which we live, are holistic – physical and spiritual. At work, at home, at school, at a friend’s house, at the grocery store – always and everywhere God’s blueprint must be considered, lest we stray from being in harmony with Him.

It is often difficult to remain focused on the spiritual side of things when the physical, visible things are all that we see. They pound away at us. We are kept busy being a parent or a friend or a boss or an employee – and after awhile we lose sight of the spiritual

side of things. But the spiritual, the invisible side of life is always there. Unseen; but always there!

Living holistically has always been a struggle. It is a struggle Satan takes full advantage of – keeping us focused on the physical, the visible. But consider the very definition of faith (Hebrews 11).

*Faith is an assumption of what is being expected, a conviction concerning matters which are not being observed. (11:1)*

*By faith we are apprehending the eons to adjust to a declaration of God, so that what is being observed has not come out of what is appearing. (11:2)*

*Noah was apprized concerning that which is not as yet being observed. (11:7)*

*By faith Moses left Egypt, not being afraid of the fury of the king, for he is staunch as seeing the Invisible. (11:27)*

It takes deliberate action to keep the spiritual before us and to remain whole. Quiet time. Time to contemplate God's Word and the spiritual realm. Not always easy; but necessary if we are to live in harmony with God and His blueprint.

If we live in harmony with the Creator and His blueprint, we can learn to be content in all circumstances.

*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. (Hebrews 13:5)*

*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. (Philippians 4:11)*

*Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. (1 Timothy 6:6-8)*

And a harmonious life will be a peaceful life.

*Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (Romans 12:14-18)*

When Israel, and when the Church (as seen in the Scriptural record) lived most harmoniously with God the Creator and with His blueprint, they did so holistically. The division between faith and life was non-existent. All was a part of the whole.

And for we who are believers, living holistically means being a faithful ambassador, for that is our commission ... our great commission.

*All is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, how that God was in Christ conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them, and placing in us the word of the conciliation.*

*For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching: For Christ's sake be conciliated to God! (2 Corinthians 5:18-21)*

Some laud those “doing the Lord’s work.” They are lifted up and placed in a special category; a bit closer to God. But I would contend that we are all doing the Lord’s work. We have a great commission. It must motivate us 24x7 – wherever we are – whenever it is. In every situation and circumstance, we have our commission. We cannot set it aside while at work, or at a party, or working thru a dispute with a neighbor, or dealing with a family situation – our commission is always with us – because in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth – ALL of it. And ALL of it is a part of the whole; and this life that we live ... comprised of the physical and the spiritual ... is holistic.

How then shall we live? This is a question we must ask ourselves continually. Life is filled with decisions that have consequences, good or bad. Consider the Creator’s blueprint. Consider it all holistically. Seek to be in harmony with Him, and with His created order.

For in the beginning God created!

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This overview contains the thoughts and opinions of the author and is a work in progress as his study of the Scriptures continues. Some things that God has revealed are very clear. That Christ died for our sins; that He was entombed; and that He was roused (1 Corinthians 15:3) is clear. That all are to be ultimately reconciled to God thru the work of Christ is also very clear (1 Corinthians 15:20-28). But on many specifics in the Scriptures there are a variety of interpretations and opinions, and none should conclude they have the complete and final understanding on these matters that are less clear. The reader is encouraged to consider various opinions, but to study and to think for himself. Within the Body of Christ we should study and discuss our understandings so as to mutually reach a more complete understanding of that which God has revealed.

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*Unless otherwise noted, Scriptures are taken from the Concordant Literal  
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