

Lesson 2 “God Alone”

In today’s lesson, to borrow from Star Trek, “We’re going where no man has ever gone before.” And I’m not talking about the mission of the Starship Enterprise---I’m talking about God’s creation of our universe and galaxy, which is one of billions of galaxies. Here’s a brief video clip to give you an idea of the vastness of our universe which is just one of many universes out there...

Today’s lesson will expand your mind...we’re going to get a clearer understanding that all this didn’t just happen with a big bang—it was created by an intelligence far beyond that of any man, and the power and might of Almighty God is more than we can even imagine.

I also want to let you know that we have a website...

Before we begin, let’s review Lesson 1: On the Intro to the Bible.

- We said that we’re doing a chronological study of the Bible, in the order in which the events took place in history. (show chronological timelines)
- We said that the purpose of this Firm Foundation teaching series is to build a strong foundation in our lives. Most Christians know very little about the OT and without a proper understanding of the Old Testament, you can’t have a proper understanding of the NT—because the NT is built on the foundation laid in the OT.
- And starting next week, we’ll begin at the very beginning in the book of Genesis. Here’s what the writer Eugene Peterson has to say about building a foundation starting in the book of Genesis:

It is...”First, God. God is the subject of life. God is foundational for living. If we don’t have a sense of the primacy of God, we will never get it right, get life right, get *our* lives right. Not God at the margins; not God as an option; not God on the weekends. God at center and circumference; God first and last; God, God, God.

Genesis gets us off on the right foot. Genesis pulls us into a sense of reality that is God-shaped and God-filled. It gives us a vocabulary for speaking accurately and comprehensively about our lives, where we come from and where we are going, what we think and what we do, the people we live with and how to get along with them, the troubles we find ourselves in and the blessings that keep arriving. Genesis uses words to make a foundation that is solid and true. Everything we think and do and feel is material in a building operation in which we are engaged all our life long. There is immense significance in everything that we do. Our speech and our actions and our prayers are all, every detail of them, involved in this vast building operation comprehensively known as the Kingdom of God. But we don’t build the foundation. The foundation is given. The foundation is firmly in place.”

- We said that God’s Word, the Bible, is true and accurate—written by 40 different authors over a span of 1600 yrs—and that the author of the Bible is God Himself. The accuracy and trustworthiness of the Bible has been confirmed again and again with every archaeological discovery, including the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.
- The Bible is comprised of 2 parts, the OT and the NT. The OT focuses on God’s dealings with the Israelites or the Jews and his creation of the nation of Israel, including the land

which he has deeded to the Jewish people. Israel is the most valuable real estate on earth, and it is God's special possession.

A. Introduction

We're going to learn about God from God Himself.

What is He like?

How can we know Him.

In our first lesson, we said that God is the main character, the central focus of the Bible.

He is the one who gave this message to us.

The Bible is a book of true history—history from God's perspective.

B. Only God is eternal. All else has a beginning.

Genesis 1:1 (NLT)

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Before the beginning, there was:

- No universe
- No earth
- No angels
- No Devil
- No plants
- No animals
- No people.

All these had specific beginnings.

C. God alone had no beginning; God will have no end; God is ETERNAL.

- God is supreme and sovereign.

Psalm 90:2 (NLT)

² Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God.

- God did not have a beginning
- God was not created
- He has always been alive
- He has always been and always will be the same
- There never will be a time when God does not exist.
- God can NEVER die.

D. God is a Trinity.

Genesis 1:26-27 (GW)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, in our likeness. Let them rule the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the domestic animals all over the earth, and all the animals that crawl on the earth."

²⁷ So God created humans in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female.

Even in Genesis 1:1, the Hebrew word for God is a plural word.

As we study God's Word, we will discover that, although there is only one God, there are three persons who are equally God. Who are these three persons?

They are named in Matthew 28:19 in what we call The Great Commission,

Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV)

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

God is three persons who are eternal: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All are equally God.

God is so much greater than we can imagine, and the Trinity is beyond our understanding. For now, we will just establish that these three persons are ONE GOD who is eternal and that God, the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all equally God.

With modern telescopes, we also learned more about objects beyond our solar system. This is a thick dust cloud in the Eagle nebula, which is about 7000 light years away from our Sun. That means that if you were traveling at the speed of light, it would take you 7000 years to get there.

This nebula is 7000 light years away, still within our own galaxy. I'm going to show you more and more distant objects, beyond our own galaxy, so try to keep in mind the great distances of these objects.

This is the Andromeda galaxy. It was less than 100 years ago that we learned that our galaxy was only one of many galaxies. Scientists estimate that there are 1 trillion stars in the Andromeda galaxy. There is a massive black hole in the center of this galaxy along with 26 more black holes. Andromeda is the nearest large galaxy to our own, about 2 million light years away (that means it would take 2 million years for you to get there, if you were traveling at the speed of light).

Here's another galaxy, called the **Whirlpool galaxy**, which is 22 million light years away. That's ten times further away than the last galaxy I showed you. Galaxies like this are sometimes called "Grand Design" spirals by astronomers, referring to the way they appear to have been laid down in a perfect spiral pattern by a master craftsman. Through modern science, we can learn **how** God crafted this beautiful pattern! It has to do with density waves traveling through the galaxy, causing new stars to form along spiral lines. The waves are related to the satellite galaxy on the left, and computer simulations of the two galaxies have reproduced this exact spiral structure. So we have a reasonably good scientific understanding of how this spiral structure came to be. Does that mean it is any less glorifying to God? No! It means we can think God's thoughts after him and understand at least some of his work in the universe.

Now think about the fact that we live on one little planet called Earth--orbiting one star in a galaxy of billions of stars, and our galaxy is **just one of billions of galaxies in God's creation**. A new study using the Hubble telescope has now concluded that there are trillions of galaxies in our universe. Try to wrap your head around that?!!

Some people react to this by feeling profoundly insignificant: they think maybe God is just some idea we puny humans thought up to make us feel better, or an idea which can't possibly have relevance in this huge universe. **They think that if God did exist, he couldn't possibly care about us while he is governing this whole huge universe.**

All the more amazing that God created all this which goes into ETERNITY, and just as we can't get to the end of all the galaxies which go on and on...so also, we can't figure God out because He's eternal and we are finite. But we can get to know Him as we study the Bible—which is His revelation of Himself to us.

E. Because God alone existed before all things, God is completely independent of everything and everyone.

- God was there alone before the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars and the galaxies.
- He doesn't need air to breathe
- He doesn't need food to eat or water to drink
- He doesn't need the sun.
- He can see perfectly without any light
- He doesn't need to sleep; He has no need of day or night.
- God doesn't need any source of energy.
- He never gets tired, thirsty, or hungry

When we recite the Apostles' Creed in church, we begin with the words, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." This is how the prophets in the Bible present God—as a God who SOVEREIGN, who is **so powerful that he is in TOTAL CONTROL of both nature and history**. Therefore, he can make miracles happen in nature and he can cause movements to happen in history. In our 21st century, scientific age, most people think that history is the result of economic forces, but God is in total control of both nature and history. There is NOTHING going on in the world that God doesn't know about. There is NO scientific discovery being made that God doesn't know about. He is complete wisdom and knowledge and the source of truth.

Isaiah 40:28 (NLT)

²⁸ Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding.

Psalms 147:5 (NLT)

⁵ How great is our Lord! His power is absolute! His understanding is beyond comprehension!

How long could we live without food, water or oxygen?
How many days could we function without sleep?
We are totally dependent in these areas, but God does not need anything or any person.

F. God is Spirit.

John 4:24 (NLT)

²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

We cannot comprehend one who has such ability, yet has no material body.

God does not have flesh and bones like humans, animals, birds, or reptiles.
Because He does not have a material body, He does not have bodily needs.

God is not just a “force” as some would describe Him. No, God is Spirit, a Trinity of three persons—all with mind, personality and will.

He is the God who has personally given us His Word so we can know Him
We are limited in our understanding. We are limited by our bodily needs.
But God has none of these limitations.

G. God is in all places at the same time.

Where is God? Where was He before everything existed?

Through our study of the Bible, you will see repeatedly that God is everywhere.

- God made everything, and He is present everywhere.
- He is NOT “in everything.”
- He is the Creator—distinct from His creation.
 - God is higher than all
 - God is greater than all He has made.
 - God fills the universe.

Jeremiah 23:23-24 (GW)

²³ “I am a God who is near. I am also a God who is far away,” declares the LORD.

²⁴ “No one can hide so that I can't see him,” declares the LORD. “I fill heaven and earth!” declares the LORD.

Is there any place you can hide from God?

God alone was before all things; He alone is greater than all; God is SOVEREIGN.

Webster’s Dictionary says that “sovereign” means “ruler, supreme in power, chief”)

The Bible often refers to God as “The Most High”

Psalms 83:18 calls God “the most high over all the earth.”

Isaiah 45:5, God says, "I am the Lord and there is no one else, there is no God beside me..."

Let's just face it....God is beyond our comprehension:

- a. He is truly greater than all.
- b. He alone had no beginning
- c. He will have no end.
- d. He has need of nothing
- e. He has no bodily needs because He is Spirit
- f. He is in all places at the same time.
- g. God is greater than all and more important than all. He is the Most High: He is Sovereign.
- h. He alone can tell us about the beginning which we will study in the weeks ahead.

Questions:

1. Was there ever a time when God was not living? *(NO)*
2. What does God need in order to exist? *(God doesn't need anything.)*
3. Does God have a body? *(No)*
4. How many Gods are there? *(There is only ONE GOD)*
5. Who are the three living beings who are the one God? *(God, the Father, God the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit).*
6. Is there some remote place on earth that you can go to where God would not exist? *(No)*
7. What do we mean when we say that God is Sovereign? *(He alone is ruler, supreme in power, and the God Most High)*

Our Next Lesson #3—we'll look at the God who created the spirit beings and Lucifer's rebellion.