

Lesson 4: God Created the Heavens and the Earth – Part 1

J. Warner Wallace, author of *Cold Case Christianity* and featured in the film, “God’s Not Dead, Pt 2” writes that at the age of 35 he found himself a committed atheist, sitting in an evangelical church service with my wife. He was a tenured detective at a local police agency in Los Angeles County, and was known as a skeptic by his co-worker. He actually says that after every conversation with well-meaning Christians, his confidence in being an atheist were bolstered even more.

But one day while sitting his church with his wife—which is something he did because His wife was far more open to the claims of Christianity, he decided to do his own investigation into Christianity, and to begin his investigation, he bought a Bible.

He writes that homicide detectives employ a simple strategy when trying to determine if a death is a murder. Every death investigation presents one of four possibilities: the victim either died accidentally, died from natural causes, committed suicide, or was murdered. Only one of these circumstances requires someone outside the room to enter the scene. Homicide detectives, therefore, are looking for evidence of outside involvement. We ask one important question: Can the evidence “in the room” be explained by staying “in the room”? He says that he applied this approach when he examined the evidence for God’s existence. He began by asking the simple question: Can the evidence “inside the room” of the natural universe be explained by staying “inside the room?” He came to a rational, if not uncomfortable, conclusion. The best explanation for the evidence we see in the natural universe doesn’t lie in the universe at all.

He writes that the first evidence that argues for the existence of God is cosmological evidence. If the universe had a “beginning”, what began it? Scientists admit that the universe appears to be designed, even if many refuse to acknowledge the existence of a supernatural designer. The forces in the universe are incredibly and finely calibrated to make carbon-based life possible. Warner Wallace came to the conclusion that there was an external suspect who sounds a lot like the God of the Bible.

That’s what we’re going to look at in today’s lesson. But before we go any further, let’s review Lesson 3.

Review questions from Lesson 3:

1. Who is the only one who lived before the beginning? *God.*
2. Where did all the spirits come from? *They were all created by God.*
3. Did God create the spirits with bodies of flesh and bones? *No.*
4. Did God create all of the spirits good, or did He create some good and some bad? *God created them all good.*
5. Why did God create the spirits? *To be His servants.*
6. How many spirits are there? *More than can be numbered.*
7. Where did they all live in the beginning when God first created them? *With God in Heaven.*
8. Who was the most intelligent and beautiful angel created by God? *Lucifer.*

9. What position did God give Lucifer? *Leadership over all of the other angels.*
10. What did Lucifer do? *He planned to be like God and to take God's position.*
11. Who else followed Lucifer in His rebellion against God? *Many of God's angels.*
12. Did God know what Lucifer and his followers were planning? *Yes.*
13. What did God do? *He removed Lucifer and the angels who joined him in rebellion from their position as God's servants.*
14. Is there anything that God doesn't see, hear, and know? *No! God sees, hears, and knows everything.*
15. What place did God prepare as a punishment for Lucifer and his angels? *The Lake of Fire.*
16. What is Lucifer's name now and what does it mean? *Satan, which means "enemy, adversary, opponent, or accuser."*
17. Whom is Satan against? *He is against God.*

A. Introduction:

Many theories exist about what happened in the beginning.

- There are many theories about how the earth was formed.
- There are many theories about how life started.
- Probably, the most popular theory of our universe's origin centers on a cosmic cataclysm unmatched in all of history—the **big bang**. This theory was born of the observation that other galaxies are moving away from our own at great speed, in all directions, as if they had all been propelled by an ancient explosive force.
- However there is very little evidence supporting the Big Bang Theory, but one thing is certain, the big bang theory is an argument supporting atheism, and there is the principle of causality--that it is impossible for something to arise out of nothing. If nothing existed, how did you end up with the big bang?

What we are going to do in this lesson is examine what God has told us in the Bible about creation.

Keep in mind that the things taught in Genesis are upheld throughout the rest of Scripture.

- God created the world "ex-nihilo" out of NOTHING. Unlike a painter who takes a blank canvas and begins to create a painting, God had NO canvas, no paints. He created the world from NOTHING. He did not use a big bang, which would have been "something."
- He created the world from nothing by just speaking the word. An idea cannot arise out of nothing. Something CANNOT arise out of NOTHING. It is scientifically impossible for matter to always have existed.
- God never changed His mind about His record of creation.
- Genesis is an ancient book, but even the NT writings affirm the Genesis account of creation.
- Genesis has often been criticized as being a book of myths.
- But recent archaeology has confirmed many exact details, including names of people and cities back as far as the early chapters of Genesis.
- We need to listen to what God says in the Bible, because it's not a book of myths. It is true history.

B. “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1:1)

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

The word “genesis” means “beginnings” or “origins.”

- All things had a beginning.
- Nothing /no one (except God) existed before the beginning.
- What then did God use to make the heavens and the earth?
- “Created” means “to make out of nothing”
- “To make something out of nothing” is an idiom in our society.

Discuss:

If we want to build a house, what do we need? If we want to bake a cake, what do we need?

Can you think of anything you can make without first having materials to use?

Read Hebrews 11:3 (NLT)

³ By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

- God literally made the heavens and the earth out of nothing!
- God alone can make something out of nothing.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

How was it possible for God to make the heavens and the earth out of nothing?

- The Bible tells us that nothing is too hard for God.

Read Jeremiah 32:17 (NLT)

¹⁷ “O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!

- God’s power is beyond our comprehension.
- Is anyone stronger than God?
 - Angels?
 - Satan?
 - Demons?

No! God alone is all-powerful.

Theme: God is all-knowing.

How did God know how to make the heavens and the earth?

- The Bible says that the Spirit of God “moved upon the face of the waters.”
- In Henry Morris’ book, ‘The Genesis Record’, he notes that the word “move” used here is also translated as shake, flutter, or hover.

The word suggests the tremendous creative power of God, the Prime Mover of all things. --He alone sets

things into motion.

- He alone is the source of all energy.

God the Holy Spirit was moving, hovering, fluttering over the waters, vibrating with dynamic energy to create all things.

- God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all participated in the mighty act of creation.
- God is one, yet God is three in one, the Almighty, God, the Creator of everything.
- We cannot comprehend the Trinity; we cannot comprehend God's awesome power.

C. The earth, when first created (Genesis 1:2)

Read Genesis 1:2

- The earth was formless, void and empty.
- We will see God form it.
- We will see God fill it.
- The earth was covered by darkness.

Illustrate:

Try to imagine what it would be like if there were no light anywhere. Have you ever been in a cave with no lights? The darkness is so absolute that you can "feel" it.

Imagine this kind of darkness everywhere.

The earth was covered with water.

- There was no dry land.
- Water covered the entire world.
- There was no life anywhere on earth.

D. God was ready to create everything.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

God is all-powerful, and He was about to unleash His mighty power to create.

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E. The First Day: Light created (Genesis 1:3-5).

Read Genesis 1:3 (NLT)

³ Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

Theme: God is All-Knowing.

Only God could create light by simply speaking!

Think about this:

Wouldn't it be amazing if we could simply speak and have light appear? But it doesn't work that way. No, we are totally dependent on light that was created by God from the beginning of time. Whenever we see the light of the sun, the moon, or the stars: flip on a light switch, or light a match or a candle, let's remember that it was God who in the beginning created light. He alone could do that because He alone is all-powerful and all-knowing!

He created light out of absolutely nothing. Scientists can evaluate some of the characteristics of light. All of us experience and use some of the effects of light. But God alone understands light, for He created it.

Theme: God is Holy.

Read Genesis 1:4 (NLT)

⁴ And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness.

The light God made was very good.

- You will notice that each time God created, He said "It is good."
- *We are not able to make anything perfect.*

Even though things are usable, they still:

- Need repair
- Wear out

Or they are replaced because someone designed something better.

- What we make can always be improved upon.

Even the best state-of-the-art stereo equipment is labeled to indicate the amount of sound distortion it will produce.

Everything man produces is flawed. But everything God made was perfect because:

- God is perfect
- God is flawless.

I remember years ago having a repair man visit our home to repair our microwave, and soon after that, he came back to repair our dishwasher. I asked him why both appliances broke down at about the same time, and he told me an interesting secret. He said that the manufacturer had built into every appliance that we owned something known as "built-in obsolescence." That meant that each product was designed to break down after about ten years--and guess what? That's exactly what happened. And the repair man said

he was busy visiting most of the homes in our development because they all had the same brand of appliance and they all were breaking down and in need of repair at the same time.

Well God is not like that appliance manufacturer. He made everything perfect and flawless. Nothing that he made could be improved upon in any way.

Psalm 18:30 says, "As for God, his way is perfect...." Isaiah 6:3 says, "....Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord..."

Read Genesis 1:4-5 (NLT)

⁴ And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness.

⁵ God called the light "day" and the darkness "night." And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

God divided the light from the darkness.

- He called the light "day"
- He called the darkness "night"
- This was the first day in the beginning of the world.

F. The Second Day: Firmament created (Genesis 1:6-8)

Read Genesis 1:6-8 (NLT)

⁶ Then God said, "Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth."

⁷ And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens.

⁸ God called the space "sky." And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

On the second day, God created the air and the sky.

- Above this "firmament" or "thin, stretched-out space" that we call the atmosphere, God placed some of the water from the world He had created.

- It is important to remember this point in God's account of creation because it will be an important factor in a later story.

Theme: God is all-powerful.

Theme: God is all-knowing.

- Again, God merely spoke, and the firmament was created.

Look at the vastness of the sky. We can only see a tiny portion of what encircles the earth. Yet God spoke and created all of the earth's atmosphere, and it was perfect.

G. Conclusion.

Unlike man's theories, God's written account of creation has not changed.

- He was there before the beginning.
- He is the Sovereign Creator, and He alone knows how all things came to be.

God has told us throughout His Word that He created everything.

As we study the Bible, we see that God is absolutely sovereign, greater than all and more powerful than all. Nothing is too hard for Him.

- He is the source of all energy and the Creator of all matter.
- He made everything from nothing.

We have covered the first two days of creation. We will explore the rest of creation week in our coming lessons.

- As you go about your duties in the days ahead, think about what we have studied thus far about God.
- He is infinitely greater than we can imagine, but He has given us the Bible, His Word, so we can know Him.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth? *God*
2. What did God use to make the heavens and the earth? *God didn't use anything. He made everything out of nothing.*
3. Why was God able to make the heavens and the earth? *God is almighty. There is nothing He cannot do.*
4. How did God know how to make the heavens and the earth? *God knows everything.*
5. Who taught God how to make everything? *No one taught God.*
6. Is there any person or any spirit who knows everything like God does? *No. Only God knows everything.*
7. What was the condition of the earth before God began to prepare it for people to live in it? *It was without form and in total darkness; no land and no life.*
8. What did God do in order to create everything? *He spoke and commanded that things appear.*

Next in Lesson 5: *God created the Heavens and the Earth, pt. 2*
