

“Creation” – Sermon part 1 of “The whole Bible in 9 weeks”

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- **Video intro** (“Genesis where do we come from”)

The well known physicist Stephen Hawking, in his book “A brief history of time” says:

PPT – “We find ourselves in a bewildering world. We want to make sense of what we see around us and to ask: What is the nature of the universe? What is our place in it and where did it and we come from? Why is it the way it is?”

What he’s saying is that we want to make sense of the world we live in. And the Bible has the answer: the Bible says that God makes sense of the world because God creates everything, God orders everything and God rules everything.

PPT – God made the created the world, God ordered the world, God rules the world.

The opening chapter of Genesis gives us a picture of a world MADE by God, ORDERED by God and RULED by God. It’s easy to get into an argument about Creation. Was creation done in 7 x 24 hour days? Or does each day represent thousands of years? Is Genesis a myth? Is it poetry? Is it historical? Does it contradict science? Is evolution right or wrong? Is intelligent design right or wrong? People, Christians, have argued over these things for thousands of years.

And this is a real problem. We cannot avoid talking about Creation as Christians, because it’s a very important theme of the whole Bible. But these arguments miss the point. But we must talk about what the **Bible** says about Creation. Not argue about what it DOESN’T say. So we’re going to look today at what the Bible **does** say about creation.

Because what’s important about creation is what it tells us about **us** and **God**. What I want us to see today is that the creation of the universe is about the creation of a **relationship** – between mankind and God. In Genesis 1 and all through the Bible, Creation is about a **relationship** between mankind and God.

PPT – Creation is about relationship.

PPT – III – Tis is the world’s highest popping toaster! Made by Freddie Yauner. It pops toast 3metres in the air. Why? Why not! But what’s the point? When you buy a toaster you want it to toast bread, not pop it 3 meters in the air. Toasting the bread is what really matters because that’s its purpose.

If all we talk about in Genesis is the time it took for God to make everything, we miss the big purpose. Personally, I believe God **could** have created it all in 7 x 24 hour days, or over thousands of years. In fact, don’t you think if he wanted to, God could have created it all in 7 seconds, and even made it **look** like it took millions of years? But the TIME or the place of evolution takes us away from talking about the **important** thing – our **relationship** with God, which is the **focus** of the Bible and the **reason** for Creation.

So let’s start by looking at Genesis 1 and focus on these 3 things:

PPT – God created the world, God ordered the world, God rules the world.

Genesis 1 tells us that God creates **everything**. God speaks and things come into existence out of nothing. And he creates them with order. He creates heaven and earth, he separates the sky and waters and land, he separates the dark and light, and he gives order to everything – the vegetation, the sea animals, the land animals. God gives an order as he creates. As he makes the sun and moon and stars, he’s also creating the order of science and

mathematics and art. He's creating the laws of physics and chemistry and biology which will determine the way the earth will move. He tells everything how to behave, how to move, how to reproduce, how to eat. He makes it. He gives it order and he rules over it all. And at the end of each day we read "And God saw that it was good." Things are always good when God creates them because they have HIS order and HE rules over them.

And that's a big thing to take away from Genesis 1. God creates everything. He creates it with order. And he rules over it. He is in complete control.

PPT – Nehemiah 9:6 says: *"⁶ You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you."*

But perhaps most importantly, as we come to the end of Genesis 1, we see a universe in which God made US. God places US in the order of his creation and God also rules US. And we have a special place in His creation. Have a look from verse 26:

PPT – "²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness"

God creates mankind IN HIS IMAGE. That sets us apart from the rest of creation. WE were created in a special relationship with God. WE are made in his image so we are able to relate to him **personally**. And WE are given a special place, or order, in creation:

PPT – ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God puts us in the order of creation and tells us to **rule over** creation, but **under** him. Be fruitful and increase in number. Subdue the earth. Rule over every living creature. God creates us in his image, as rulers over his earth but under him. And finally, verse 31, after God made us,

PPT – ³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."

When God finishes creation with mankind as ruler over his creation, he looks at all he has made and it is... "VERY good."

Mankind is the "high point", the pinnacle, of God's creation. We are given a special place of authority in God's creation. If we want to make sense of the universe, we have to begin by understanding how God has created us in relationship, in his image and as rulers over the earth, but under him. Creation is about US in a relationship with GOD in his creation. And of course, that relationship gets damaged in Genesis 3 when sin comes into the Garden of Eden.

PPT – III – Catching a fish – Jonah and I caught this fish last month. It was so small that we didn't realise it was on the line for about 10 minutes. And in that time, it swallowed the hook... and the line and the sinker! There was no way to get that hook out and leave the fish alive. It couldn't be fixed or healed. The hook was entangled inside it. What it needed was a miracle!

And that's the story through the whole Bible. The world can't be "fixed" or patched up. The hook of sin goes right through the middle of each of us and entangles us, leaving us destroyed. Because of sin, the world started to become "undone" from the way it was supposed to be. What we need in our world is complete restoration and new life. A miracle. And that's what Jesus offers through his death and resurrection. The story of the Bible is about God restoring our relationship with Him by **restoring the order of Creation**. It's about a new relationship and a new life in a new world through Jesus.

PPT – 2 Peter 3:13 says: ¹³*But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.”*

God is preparing a new creation. Not a band aid solution. Not a healing. God is planning a **new** creation.

...So what does that mean for us TODAY? How does this change the way we live?

I think it means this for us –

You can't fix the world. I can't fix the world. Politicians can't fix the world. Wars can't fix the world. We can't take out the hook of sin and give new life to this world or the people of this world. But God can and God will. That's the hope we have to offer the world. A new creation through a new relationship with God.

But look closer. Remember that **creation** is about **relationship**. God's relationship with mankind, but also God's relationship with **you**. God didn't just create "mankind". He created you, personally, for a relationship with him.

PPT – Psalm 139: 13 says – *"You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb."*

Creation is personal. God created YOU. God made YOU in his image. God created you with a reason and a purpose in his creation – to be in a relationship with him. And God is making a new creation for YOU because this creation is only temporary.

What that means is that God KNOWS the problems **you personally face** because of the way creation is since sin. And GOD is able to fix those problems. Sometimes he fixes them temporarily in this world, but not always. But he does promise that he **will** fix **all** things permanently in the new creation.

The difficult thing today is that we still have to live in this temporarily broken world.

PPT – III – Ever seen a sign that says: "Temporarily out of order"? There's an expectation that it's going to be fixed – which is no good if it's on an escalator and you're really tired and you're carrying ten heavy bags of shopping. You see that sign and you see the escalator stopped and you think, "Why?! Why today?" I'm tired. I don't need this! Why can't it be fixed now?!

Sometimes there are parts of our lives that are temporarily out of order. Sometimes they get fixed, sometimes they don't. Health, relationships, financial matters. We **all** have things broken or not working properly in our lives because the whole order of creation is broken. And sometimes the hardest thing to hear is that it may never be fixed on this earth. The pain may not stop, the relationship may not be repaired, the sickness may not improve. Some things will be "out of order" until the new creation. So what do we do about that? What do we do while we wait for the new creation? How do we cope with the broken parts of our lives?

Let me suggest 2 things:

1. Keep your hope in the future restored creation. God will, as Revelation 21 says: "Wipe every tear from our eyes." We must truly believe that our future is more important than our present. It's what we live for.
2. Give that hope to others. Every person around you has broken things in their life. Every person needs to know that hope of new Creation. That is the message of the Bible. Creation in relationship with the Creator. And that includes people right here. In our community at All Saints. Be involved in each other's lives to help each other cope with these broken things. Because with the Holy Spirit at work in each of us, God's church becomes the life preserver God gives us until that final day when the new Creation arrives.

Let's pray – for our "broken" things, and for supporting each other.