



Teaching God's Word to Train Disciples

Fellowship BIBLE CHURCH

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Once upon a time there was a college professor named Mr. Square. Mr. Square lived in Flat Land. Everything in Flat Land had just two dimensions: height and breadth. Nothing in Flat Land had any depth! The people lived in flat houses, ate flat meals, drank flat colas, thought flat thoughts and lived flat lives. Everything was flat. If a person turned sideways, you could not even see that individual!

Mr. Square taught mathematics at the local university. One night he threw a party for some of his colleagues on the faculty. Upstairs his little son, Pentagon, tried to sleep. As the little boy tossed fitfully, he

began to dream. In his dream Pentagon imagined that he was suddenly in a world where everything had not only height and breadth, but depth as well. What a difference that made! Houses and trees looked so different! Pentagon felt different. Life had a whole new dimension, and it was wonderful. But then his dream ended, and the boy awoke. However, Pentagon could not keep a dream like that to himself. Jumping out of bed, he ran downstairs in his bare feet and rumpled pajamas to tell the guests at his father's party that there was a whole new dimension to life. People did not have to go on living flat little lives anymore, thinking only flat little thoughts. There was a whole new dimension to life - the dimension of depth. Mr. Square was flabbergasted! Not only was he embarrassed over his little son's behavior, but he could not keep the boy quiet! The party ended in a shambles.

Learning to Relate to God

Genesis & Psalms

Part 1

In many ways our contemporary society has lost the dimension of God. We don't think we need that dimension.

And the reason we don't think we need the dimension of God is that we're not too very impressed with him. We have created in our culture a concept of god which is much less than who he is. We have remade God into a being that is only a little bit higher than ourselves.

The famous Quaker writer, Elton Trueblood, once called the Ten Commandments, "God's Charter of Respect." One of the greatest losses we have experienced as we've thrown out the 10 commandments is that we've lost respect for God, and we don't know how to relate to a god who no longer impresses us.

If we are to relate to god in the right way, we must be aware of who he is and what he is like. Today, I want us to learn to relate to god in the light of the fact that he is our creator.

1. CREATION TESTIFIES OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

The Bible tells us that Moses was educated by the Egyptians, but when Moses wrote about the creation, he didn't write it according to the theories he had learned. The Egyptian idea of how the world came into being was that there was some kind of ocean upon which appeared an egg. From that egg was born the sun god, and the sun god had 4 children, Geb, Shu, Tefnut, and Nut. From the rivalries of those children of the sun, the creation took place.

Today, we are more sophisticated than that. Today, we say everything that exists came from nothing. I think the children of the sun god makes more sense.

When Moses described creation, he simply said in

Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

The first verse of the bible is the explanation of all other things, and without it nothing else makes any sense. We could state verse one this way, in the beginning of beginnings before there was ever a beginning, back in the emptiness of the eternal past, there existed a being that we know as God, and that God is the creator of all things.

The concept of God is not a new one to anyone. As I understand, there has never been a civilization discovered on the face of the earth that did not have a concept of God and of worship. That is because God has stamped His imprint in all of creation.

Psalms 19:1-4, "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Notice that the creation does not simply declare the fact of a creator. It declares the "glory" of the Creator. What kind of Being must God be to create all that we see around us in this world. To even think about such a thing as creation is incredible! C.H. Spurgeon said the existence of this world is "no mere hint, but a plain, unmistakable declaration; and it is a declaration of the most constant and abiding kind." The world we live in testifies of a Creator God.

2. CREATION TESTIFIES OF GOD'S INTELLIGENCE

Just observing the world tells us that the god who created it must be infinitely intelligent. It would be hard enough to create plants, animals, people, the stars, planets and all the rest, but how do you make all these things work together in harmony? And the more we develop our knowledge of the complexities of this world, the more we understand there must be a Creator.

The intelligence of God is beyond our understanding.

3. THE CREATION TESTIFIES OF GOD POWER

The name translated "God" is the word "Elohim."

The name "EL" literally means "strong one or Almighty." The very first thing God revealed about Himself was that He is the "Strong One," the "Almighty One." There is nothing impossible for Him to do. He has unlimited power.

Jeremiah 32:17, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you."

What is the most awesome display of power you can imagine? We have seen in recent years the power of hurricanes that rip apart homes and businesses as though they were butter. We have also no doubt seen pictures of an atomic blast as it rises up into the sky and blows away everything in its path.

Those illustrations display great power, but they don't even come close to illustrating the power of God. This passage tells us that all there is on this earth, the majestic

mountains, the vast bodies of water, all of the animal life and everything else came into being as God spoke.

Genesis 1:3-12, "And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light "day;" and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning-the first day: 6And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." 7So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. 8God called the expanse "sky:" And there was evening, and there was morning-the second day: 9And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. 10God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. 11Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. 12The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good."

There is no effort implied in these verses at all. It was not as if God had to work for these things to happen; He just spoke and they were. That tells us

God is unlimited in His power. How would you like to have the ability to speak something into existence?

That is power the likes of which none of us can really begin to understand.

4. THE CREATION TELLS US GOD IS ETERNAL

When we use the word "eternal," we are referring to something that stands outside of what we know of as time. Time is a succession of events that we as created beings experience.

If God belonged to time, He would have had a beginning because time has a beginning. If that were the case, then He too would be a creature, and we would want to worship the one who brought Him into existence. But God has no beginning or ending. That means there is no "was" or "will be" with Him. There is only a continuous and unbroken "is" because everything is always in the present tense.

RESPONSE TO THE GOD OF CREATION

1. I MUST SUBMIT MY LIFE TO HIM

That's because the thing made belongs to the One who created it. If I make a toy boat, I can truly say, "This is mine. I made it and I own it." Since God made us, he has the absolute right of ownership over us.

2. I MUST LIVE MY LIFE BY HIS WAYS

God knows how things work because he is the one that designed them to work the way that they do. If you own a device of some sort and you cannot get it to work, the ideal thing would be to take it to the one who made it and let him work on it. There was a time when that thing that you own did not exist. It was only a thought in the mind of its maker. He knows where every part goes and how every part works, and he can fix what is broken.

What we don't sometimes understand is the fact that God created things to work in the moral, emotional and relational parts of life just as he did in the physical realm. It is God who put together that complex part of you that is called emotions, and he

knows how to make them work in a positive way.

When it comes to relationships, look in Ephesians 5-6 and you'll find God's instruction book on marriage, raising children, working for employers and overseeing employees. God tells us how the government is supposed to work. He knows it all because he created it all. That's why the book of James tells us that if we need wisdom we should ask God. Why? Because if he made it all, then he can make it work.

Living your life by God's ways is not losing your freedom. It is gaining your freedom and keeping your sanity.

3. I MUST PRAISE HIM

The subject of praise is one that is common throughout Scripture. The psalms, for example, the psalms are filled with praise to God.

Psalms 33:1-5 tell us to praise the Lord for who He is.

33:1 Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him. 2 Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. 3 Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy. 4 For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

Verse 6 tells us to praise the Lord for His creation.

6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

Praise is the response you have to something that is awesome. If you are watching your favorite baseball team play in the World Series, and your favorite player hits a home run, what are you going to do? You won't just sit there because you are in the presence of something great. Praise is a celebration of God's presence because He is great. When we sing praises to God on Sunday morning, that is not just for those who can sing really good. It is for all of us. The question is not do you have a voice. The question is "do you have a song in your heart. Do you praise the Lord?"

Praise goes beyond what we do at church. It includes what you do at home. If your prayer life consists of nothing more than asking for things and confessing sin, you are missing a great deal of the joy of prayer. Prayer is not complete until you learn to praise and thank God for who He is and for what He

has done in your life. It is that kind of praise that oils your soul and fuels your joy.

4. I MUST REVERENCE HIM

Charles Simmons said, "reverence is the very first element of religion; and it can be felt by everyone who has right views of the divine greatness and holiness.."

The problem is that we don't have a right view of God's greatness and holiness." We live in a time when people have a very low concept of God. God is made to be something like a genie in a bottle who exists to meet our needs or a good buddy who we really don't have to take too seriously.

Psalm 89:7, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him."

Psalm 33:7-9, "He gathers the waters of the sea into jars ; he puts the deep into storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. 9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

A young stranger to the Alps was making his first climb, accompanied by two guides. It was a steep, hazardous ascent, but he felt secure with one guide ahead and one following. For hours they climbed. And now, breathless they reached for those rocks protruding through the snow above them-the summit. The guide ahead wanted to let the stranger have the first glorious view of heaven and earth and moved aside to let him go first. Forgetting the winds that would blow across those summit rocks, the young man leaped to his feet. But the chief guide dragged him down. "On your knees sir!" he shouted. "You're never safe here except on your knees."

Having a correct understanding of who he is should, at times, make us want to fall to our knees in worship. At other times, we might just want to sit before the lord as David did in a darkened room as we experience the awesomeness of being in the presence of. We cannot see Him with our eyes but being with Him brings "joy unspeakable."

The most important thing you can do is to be rightly related to God. Being right with god is the thing that makes everything else work. It is the key that unlocks all of the blessings that you want and need in your life. We need to say with the psalm writer, "Teach me your way Lord."