Back to the Garden.

* What does Genesis 1 have to do with evolution?

#1 - Text ‘notes’ to 231-412-2866 for sermon notes.

Some people are on one end of the spectrum and are committed to macro evolution.

While others believe these words are strictly to be taken literally – These days are 7, literal 24 hour days, as first posited in the 17th century by Archbishop James Ussher of Ireland. Ussher calculated from the generations in the bible that the earth was created 4000 years before Christ making the earth just over 6000 years old today.

At Genesis Church, scripture is our supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

Scripture that is meant to be taken literally we take literally. The most important thing in interpreting the bible is to understand what is its genre.

 - In interpreting the Bible, genre triggers reading strategy.

“From the heavens the stars fought,
    from their courses they fought against Sisera.” Judges 5:20

 “He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified, and on the third day be raised again.’ ” Luke 24:6-7

“Genesis 1 and 2 are only contradictory if you think they are trying to give you some sort of literal description of how creation actually took place. To me, that is a signal that we are not to read it as a literal depiction” Dr. Temper Logman, Old Testament Scholar.

Genesis 1 has poetic signs: laid out in a rhythmic structure, refrains are used (repeated statements) like “God said, let there be…”, “God saw it was good”, and figurative terms “lesser light”, “greater light”, “beasts of the field.”

Type of literature: “exalted prose narrative.”

There are two ways to classify evolution:

* Macro Evolution – from the goo to the zoo to you – complete naturalism.
* Micro evolution – there are biological processes at work in the world (natural selection & some adaptations within species etc.).

“Belief in evolution as a biological process is not the same as belief in evolution as a world-view.” Tim Keller

Genesis 1 and 2 are not as much teaching the method of creation but the meaning of creation. It’s not as much about how God did it, but more about who He is, what He created, and why.

God is the Good Gardener and we can trust Him.

Three distinct periods of salvation history:

1. The Gardener created a good Garden
* How do we know that it was a good garden? Because God kept saying it!
* He is good because He brings order!

 And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Genesis 1:2 NASB

* God brings order to it v.3-4 (Let there be light and He separated the light and dark), v. 6 divided waters a couple of times – in the sky and then v. 9 (let waters be gathered into one place) v. 14 day and night, seasons and years.
	+ Order to humanity – human’s authority over creation and life is to be valued, marriage, sexuality, gender, work and rest.
	+ Gardening tips…. For society - God has a design in mind that He is bringing to His creation.

**15**Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and tend it. **16**The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17**but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will certainly die.” Genesis 2:15-17

* + We do not always understand the wisdom for the order He bring but He has His reasons…. (After the counsel of His own will… Eph 1:11).
	+ God gives order so that life will flourish.
* A good garden has potential – pointless to plant a garden without production of something good!

And God said, “let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures and let birds fly over the earth across the face of the vaulted dome of heaven. So God created the great seas creatures and every living creature that moves with which the waters swarm according to their kind and every bird with winds according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them saying, “be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.” Genesis 1:20-22

* + There is a dimension to the Gospel in creation: to be others focused.
1. But we did not and we have not followed God’s order, and today we stand outside of the good garden.
* “Did God really say…?” Questioning the character of God.

**4**The serpent said to the woman, “You certainly will not die!**5**For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:4-5

* When we follow God’s order – guidelines for flourishing, we have life – follow our own ways we have death.

**23**So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. **24**So He drove the man out;  Genesis 3:23-24

* Banished from the Garden – but sent out from the Garden with the continuation of the orders given to carry out.
1. The Gardener will restore the Garden.
* Through a Hero to come Genesis 3:15 .

  God told the serpent:
“Because you’ve done this, you’re cursed, cursed beyond all cattle and wild animals, cursed to slink on your belly and eat dirt all your life. I’m declaring war between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers. He’ll wound your head, you’ll wound his heel.”

Genesis 3:14-15 The Message

* Proto evangelium – First mention of the Gospel.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **2**down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. **3**No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him…. And they will reign for ever and ever. Revelation 22:1-3, 5

* Every tribe, every tongue of every nation will be together in unity worshiping and serving the Lamb.

Next Steps:

* Get into Scripture this week: Memorize Genesis 1:1, and or read/listen to several times Genesis 1, 2 and 3.
* Share: In what areas do you find trust in the Good Gardener easy? Are there any areas where you find yourself asking something like “did God really say?”
* Reflect: On the stewardship and mandate that remains in your wilderness. How are you bringing the goodness of the garden into your world?

Resources:

Genesis Mission, Values and Beliefs: <https://genesispetoskey.com/our-beliefs/>

James Ussher’s Chronology of Young Earth: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ussher_chronology>

Importance of Genre in interpreting the Bible: <http://www.veritas.org/what-genre-is-genesis-1-2/>

Creation and Evolution Essay by Tim Keller: <https://biologos.org/articles/creation-evolution-and-christian-laypeople/>

Good Hebrew for Tov: <https://www.andsonsmagazine.com/inspiration/tov-an-explosive-word>