



SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Christian Doctrine, Part 3: God Creates (The Doctrine of Creation)
Genesis 1 - August 31, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - Building a table with all the materials + thorough instructions, being in awe of those who have skill & creativity, and the pale comparison with God's activity in creation.

Looking to **Genesis 1** as the Bible's (poetic) creation narrative:

I. What Happened at Creation?

- "In the beginning" (*reshit*) - signifying a start at an indeterminate time
- "God" (*Elohim*) - pre-existing the beginning, eternal
- "created" (*bara*) - a type of creative act that is only ascribed to God
- "the heavens and the earth" - a figure of speech meaning everything

This is foundational for the truth of the rest of the Scriptures. If **Genesis 1:1** is not true, then all of Christian truth crumbles along with it.

God's initial creation is of matter that is formless (*tohu*), empty (*bohu*), and dark (*chosek*). (**v. 2**)

- "Let there be light" remedies the darkness
- Days 1-3 organize a structure remedying the formlessness
- Days 4-6 fill that structure with life remedying the emptiness

Invite Discussion: Old Earth, New Earth, Gap Theory, etc... (not crucial to the doctrine proper)

II. What does the Doctrine of Creation teach us about God?

- God is **uncaused**, yet the **cause** of everything else that exists
- God is **independent**, yet all that exists is **dependent** on him
- God is immensely **powerful**, performing **creatio ex nihilo** (creation out of nothing)
 - **Romans 4:17** & **Hebrews 11:3** as NT affirmations of this ability of God.
 - Reveals that God is *beautiful, creative, generous, holy*
- God is **good**, and he alone has the capacity and authority to declare what is good.
 - "And God saw that it was good" (5x in **Gen. 1**)
 - **"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil."** - **Is. 5:20**

If this God and this Doctrine are NOT correct, what are our options? We now must believe that:

- **Everything** somehow arose out of **nothing**
- **Order** somehow arose out of **chaos**
- **Personhood** somehow arose out of the **impersonal**

III. What does the Doctrine of Creation teach us about Creation?

- Creation is **not necessary**, but it is a **gift**.
 - As such, creation God's first **grace** and is a pre-cursor to the gospel itself.
- Creation is **distinct** from God, and fully **dependent** on God
 - **Cornelius Van Til's Creator/Creation diagram** as crucial for understanding the doctrine.
 - **Nehemiah 9:6** & **Acts 17:28** as biblical supports for this idea
 - **Sin**, in essence, negates the Creator/Creation distinction, and either reduces God to a part of creation, or in denying him, elevates humanity into his position.
 - When this happens - **Jeremiah 4:23** says that humanity drags creation back towards formlessness (*tohu*), emptiness (*bohu*), and darkness (*chosek*).
- Creation is in need of a **Savior**
 - The Creator will not allow his creation to crumble. The Son comes on 2 rescue missions:
 - In his first advent, Christ came to **reconcile** sinners to God in the gospel. (**2 Cor. 5:19**)
 - In his second advent, Christ will come to **re-create** all that has been broken. In the new heavens and new earth - *tohu*, *bohu*, and *chosek* will be dealt with forever (**Rev. 21-22**)



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What part of God's creation is most meaningful to you?
2. How does creation bear witness to God's existence?
3. What difference does it make that the universe had a beginning? Does the Christian gospel really depend on the biblical account of creation?
4. Why is the idea of "creation out of nothing" incredibly important when it comes to understanding God?
5. Why is the Creator/Creation distinction so important for a Christian's understanding of reality?
6. In what ways is the tohu/bohu of Genesis 1 still a cultural and natural threat as a result of sin?
7. How can the doctrine of creation lead us to understand the gospel more fully?