

## GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (January 15, 2023)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

Is there any purpose or meaning to our lives? Some believe everything, including us, is the result of an accident. There is no real meaning. No purpose. We owe our existence to time and chance. Others suggest that an impersonal and/or disinterested power gave the universe an initial shove and then stepped away: no further interest or involvement. A third point of view, held by the majority of people throughout the majority of human history, is that a Divine power created us, and all things. Christian faith takes that third position further. Christians believe God not only created everything, us too, but that God did so because He loves us. God was, and remains, very involved in the world, and in our lives. Our lives have meaning and purpose. We have value. Christians base those convictions on the Bible. Christians believe the Bible was given to us by God to reveal who He is, and who we are. Genesis introduces us to our Creator, and then invites us into a relationship with Him. This morning we explore HOW God created. We will not all agree on “how.” Here at Grace, we believe the “how” is not as important as the “who” and the “why.” And, we believe, how we disagree is a better indication of our love for God and others than getting everything “right.” Learning together, growing together ... Grace and Truth.

### And God Said ... (Genesis 1:3-26)

<sup>1:3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, **the first day.**

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” <sup>7</sup> And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, **the second day.**

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. *And God saw that it was good.*

<sup>11</sup> And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. *And God saw that it was good.* <sup>13</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, **the third day.**

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and

for seasons, and for days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. <sup>17</sup> And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. *And God saw that it was good.* <sup>19</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, **the fourth day.**

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. *And God saw that it was good.* <sup>22</sup> And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening and there was morning, **the fifth day.**

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. *And God saw that it was good.*

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

### What DOES IT SAY?

1. What do these verses tell you (us) about how God created?

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

2. God said ... and there was! What does this mean?
3. What does, “And God saw that it was good” mean?
4. Is there any clear progression to creation in these verses?

### WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

5. How do you believe creation happened? Who was responsible for creation? How long did creation take?
6. What is the best evidence for your position? What are reasons others take a position different than yours?
7. How should you respond to those who hold other views?

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering, part of your day. Prayer is talking to God, and God talking to you. Ask God to help you be more respectful of others. Ask God for greater understanding and grace.

God will help us because He created us, and He loves us.