

Sunday, August 23, 2026 - Creation and the God Not Bound by Time – Pastor John Henry Raskin

Key Scripture: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” — Genesis 1:1

Big Idea: The God who spoke creation into existence is the same Lord revealed in Jesus Christ. At Cana, the One through whom all things were made spoke again, and ordinary water became wine—showing that creation’s God had stepped into creation to reveal His glory.

A Pastoral Word on Creation and Time: Faithful believers may hold a literal six-day view of creation, while others may see the days of Genesis as allowing for a much longer process because God is not bound by time. This difference does not diminish God’s glory, nor should it divide the church. What we must hold together is that God is the Creator, creation is His purposeful work, and our salvation rests in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—not in settling every question about the length of creation’s process.

Genesis: God speaks	“In the beginning,” God creates by His Word. Light, life, order, and abundance come from His command.
John: The Word becomes flesh	John tells us that all things were made through the Word, and that this Word became flesh in Jesus Christ.
Cana: Jesus speaks	When Jesus turns water into wine, He does more than solve a wedding problem. He reveals the glory of the Creator present among His people.
Our response: believe and worship	The disciples saw His glory and believed. We are invited to see Jesus not merely as teacher or miracle-worker, but as Lord over creation itself.

What This Means for Us

- Jesus is not separate from the Creator. The miracle at Cana points us back to Genesis: the same divine power that brought the universe into being is present in Christ.
- Creation and redemption belong together. The Lord who made the world also enters the world to restore joy, reveal glory, and call people to faith.
- God’s timing is not limited by our understanding. Whether creation unfolded in six literal days or across a longer process, God’s glory is not diminished because He is Lord over time.
- This is not a Gospel or salvation issue. Believers may differ on the length of creation’s process while standing together on the essential truth: Jesus Christ is the eternal Word, Creator, Savior, and Lord.

Reflect and Discuss

1. How does the miracle at Cana help me see Jesus as more than a teacher or prophet?
2. What does it mean that the Creator entered His creation in the person of Jesus Christ?
3. How can I hold convictions about creation with humility and charity toward other believers?
4. Where do I need to trust the Lord who is not bound by time?

CREATION AND THE GOD NOT BOUND BY TIME

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last week we studied the second Psalm and saw how by allowing us to “Kiss the Son” God had provided from the very beginning a means of salvation despite our human inclination to rebel against His Sovereign Will.

Today I want to challenge you to open your hearts and minds even further and consider something that you might have thought about but never talked about.

There is a question that a great many people carry into church and never once say out loud.

I want to say it out loud this morning, so that whoever has been carrying this question knows they are not alone.

The question goes something like this:

I believe the Gospels. I believe that Jesus is the Christ. I believe He lived. I believe He died. I believe that He walked out of a sealed tomb on the third day.

But when I get to the first page of the Bible... when I read that God made the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh — something in me pauses.

Because I have seen photographs of galaxies.

I have read that the light from them has been traveling for billions of years.

I have stood at a canyon rim and with my own eyes looked down at a mile of stone made beautiful by millions of years of erosion by wind and water.

And I do not know what to do with that.

If that is you, I want you to hear me say this clearly before we go any further:

you are welcome here, you are not stupid, and you are not a bad Christian.

Some of you have quietly assumed that the best thing to do with this question in church is to keep your head down and hope nobody asks.

There are some subjects that can make some Christians uncomfortable.

Creation is one of them.

Some people hear the words “six-day creation” and immediately think, “Well, I'm a Christian, but surely we don't have to take that literally.”

Others hear the same words and say, “If you don't believe the universe was created in six literal days, as the Bible says, then you can't be a Christian.”

And somewhere in between are people sitting right here in Abundant Life church who aren't sure what they think.

Some are believers. Some are seekers. Some are convinced and some are skeptical.

But let's face it, there are many of us who love Jesus but struggle with Genesis.

And I want to begin today by saying something very important:

God is not threatened by our questions.

The Christian faith does not require us to turn off our brains.

We should examine the scriptures as well as consider the evidence and we should also ask questions that pertain to both.

Most importantly we should recognize what Scripture actually says and distinguish it from what we have heard and sometimes assume Scripture says.

Here is a scripture that is easy to understand.

Isaiah 55:8-9

8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.

9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

And because of our limited understanding of God's ways there is another question we need to ask.

And it is this:

What if, because of our limited understanding of what God is capable of doing, we have unconsciously made God subject to the ordinary processes by which we experience the world?

What if, in our desire to reconcile our faith with what we as humans have learned ABOUT God's creation, we have forgotten something very basic about God?

God is Creator.

And if God is truly Creator God, then He is not trapped inside the limitations of His creation.

The Bible, in Genesis, begins with this astonishing statement:

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

It doesn't begin by explaining where God came from.

It doesn't begin by explaining how God got there.

It doesn't say, "In the beginning, God evolved."

It says:

"In the beginning God created."

Before the universe, God. Before matter, God.

Before stars, God. Before planets, God.

Before human beings, God. Before time as we know it, God.

And let me tell you what I am not going to do this morning.

I am not going to argue astronomy with you. I am not an astronomer.

I am not going to stand up here and argue geology with you. I am not a geologist.

I am not going to put a slide on the screen with a chart of radiometric decay rates and pretend I have settled a debate that people far more educated than I am, have not settled.

And I am not going to hand you an argument to win this year at Thanksgiving dinner.

I am going to do something much simpler, and I think, much more dangerous to unbelief.

I am going to take you to a wedding in a remote village outside of Bethlehem that we will read about in the Gospel of John.

But first, let's see how John begins His Gospel.

He says:

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And then John says:

John 1:3 - All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Who is the Word that John opens his Gospel proclaiming?

Jesus Christ.

The carpenter of Nazareth is the Creator of the universe.

The hands that touched the leper were the hands that fashioned Adam.

The voice that said, "Lazarus, come forth," was the voice that once said, "Let there be light."

And if that is true...and the Christian faith says it is, then we need to take seriously what Jesus is actually capable of doing.

And that's where I want to take you today.

From Genesis to a Wedding in the small village of Cana.

Because the first miracle Jesus performed publicly gives us a remarkable window into the God who created the universe.

John 2:1-11 - On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.

When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom. And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

I am going to assume that the believers in this room are very familiar with this story.

But perhaps, in our limited understanding of God's ways, we have made this story small.

We have made it a story about a hostess who ran out of refreshments and a kind guest who bailed her out.

That is not what John is telling us.

John explains exactly what he is telling us in verse eleven.

This was the beginning of signs. This was the first miracle of Jesus.

This is where the glory got manifested.

Of everything Jesus could have done first, this is what He chose.

And I want to walk you through a few things this wedding story says — some things that I believe have the power to reopen a door in your mind that you may have closed a long time ago and assumed was closed for good.

Start with the arithmetic, because the arithmetic matters. Six stone waterpots. Twenty or thirty gallons apiece.

That is somewhere between a hundred and twenty and a hundred and eighty gallons of wine.

This is not a symbolic sip. This is more wine than that village had probably seen at one time in a generation.

Now walk backward from a glass of good wine and count what it ordinarily costs to produce it.

A grapevine does not bear usable fruit the year you plant it.

You are three, sometimes four years out before the fruit is worth pressing.

Then you need a season — sun on the leaf, rain at the root, a hundred and forty days of ripening, and a farmer with enough patience to wait for the sugars.

Then harvest. Then crushing.

Then the yeast does its slow work, weeks of it, converting sugar to alcohol.

Then aging — months at minimum, years if it is going to be called good.

Then a man with a trained palate says it is ready.

Every single one of those steps is time. Not one of them can be hurried by wanting it badly. That is what wine is: time that you can taste.

And at Cana, water went into the pot, and out of the pot came something that a professional — the architriklinos, the man whose entire job was to taste and to judge — sampled and pronounced better than what had been served all night.

He rendered a verdict, and the verdict was: this is the good stuff, and somebody has been holding out on us.

He is tasting a cup of wine from the stone pots that had been filled to the brim with water.

He is tasting a history that never happened.

There is sunlight in that cup that never fell on a leaf.

There is rain in that cup that never soaked a root.

There is a harvest in that cup that no one ever picked, a fermentation that no clock ever measured, an aging that no cellar ever sheltered.

If you had handed that cup to the finest sommelier in the Roman Empire and asked him how old it was, he would have given you a number. And his number would have been wrong by every year he named.

The wine bore the marks of a process it never underwent.

And it was not fake wine. It was not a trick of the palate.

It was actual wine, and it had come into existence, mature and complete, moments before, at the word of Jesus.

Now let me ask the question this sermon exists to ask.

If Jesus of Nazareth can speak a hundred and fifty gallons of aged wine into existence in six stone jars in about the time it takes to walk across a courtyard...

...on what grounds do we insist He could not speak an old universe into existence, the exact universe which science is able to detect, in six literal days?

Not because He could not have chosen to take longer.

But because that is the claim that gets made, isn't it? Not that God chose slow, but that fast is impossible.

That the universe must have taken the time the evidence says it took, because that is the only way anything ever gets old.

The first miracle at Cana says: no. There is at least one other way. And the one other way is standing in the courtyard with wet hands, smiling at the servants.

Now I want to say something about the Gospel of John and the man who wrote this account. He has already told us how to read it.

You cannot understand John chapter two until you have read John chapter one.

And you cannot read John chapter one without seeing Genesis chapter one underneath every word of it.

So, let's look at how creation actually happens in Genesis 1.

I encourage you to make the time to read it again this week and count how many times you find the phrase "and God said." It is there again and again.

That is the mechanism of Creation. That is the entire process as described. There is no intermediate stage narrated.

There is no scaffolding brought to our attention.

There is a word, and then there is a world.

Now compare it with the story we just read from John Chapter Two.

At the wedding Jesus said: "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them.

"Draw some out now" He said. They did. And it was wine.

No process. No delay. No hocus pocus.

A word from Jesus, and then a new reality.

The mechanism at Cana is the mechanism at creation, because the Man at Cana is the Word at creation.

And this is why I think John put this story first.

He is not just telling us that Jesus is all-powerful.

He is telling us that Jesus is the living Word of God from Genesis 1,
And He is doing in a Galilean courtyard the exact kind of thing He did
over the face of the deep.

Here is the second thing to notice, and this one is often skipped.

Everything God makes in Genesis, He makes mature.

Adam is not created as a fertilized cell.

He is created as a man, standing up, able to speak, able to work, able
to name animals, able the same day to look at a woman and compose
the first poem in human history.

Adam at one hour old had the body of a grown man.

Had you examined him, you would have concluded he was thirty years
old, and you would have been off by thirty years.

The trees were not created as seeds.

Genesis says they came forth yielding fruit, and Genesis 2 says the
garden was full of trees pleasant to the sight and good for food. Fruit
on the branch of a tree that was days old.

The birds are flying. The fish are swimming. The dry land is dry.

Every created thing in that garden was, on the day it was made,
functionally older than it actually was.

Because that is simply what it means to create a functioning world out
of nothing rather than to grow one over time.

A world made ready for a fully-grown man created from dirt to live in, on day six must be a world with soil in it, and science tells us that it takes centuries for dirt to become soil.

Cana is not the exception to how God works. Cana is the pattern, small enough for us to see it.

Now I need to say something carefully here, and I want the people who may be feeling uneasy to hear it especially.

There are men and women in this room whom I love dearly, and some of whom I have served alongside for years...

...who read Genesis 1 and understand those days as long ages. They are not heretics. They are not compromisers.

Many of them have thought about this deeply over years, as I have.

And there is a genuine biblical thread they are pulling on.

PSALM 90:4 - For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.

2 PETER 3:8 - But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

God is not standing inside time waiting for it to pass.

He made time. He is not older today than He was yesterday.

If God, who inhabits eternity, chose to unfold His creative work across spans of time so vast that our numbers stop meaning anything...

...He has not lost one ounce of glory in doing it.

A God who patiently builds a cosmos over thirteen billion years is not a smaller God.

He might, in fact, be a more patient one than we are comfortable with. So, hear me plainly. The age of the earth is not the gospel.

No one has ever been saved by holding the correct opinion about the length of the days in Genesis 1, and no one has ever been cut off from the Kingdom of Heaven for holding the wrong one.

The gospel is Christ crucified for sinners and raised bodily on the third day.

That is the hill we stand on. That is the only hill.

If we ever get to a place in this church where a young believer feels he has to reconcile geology with God's Word, before he can come to the Lord's Table, we have committed pastoral malpractice and I will repent of it publicly.

But here is the thing I want to press on you, gently.

Some of us did not arrive at the long ages conclusion by reading the scriptures.

We arrived there because we were told by the world that the alternative was impossible.

That is a very different road to that conclusion.

And if that is how you got there, if what actually happened, is that somewhere around the ninth grade you quietly decided that the plain truth of Genesis was off the table because science had ruled it out...

then I want you to notice who is standing in the courtyard at a wedding at Cana with the other guests with a cup of the best wine in His hand.

Jesus is looking at you and saying: impossible is not the word you want.

Now I could end there but I just want to point out one small piece of scripture that many people miss that's in this story.

It's easy to miss because it's in parentheses.

Let's look at it again...

John 2:9 - When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom

The master of the feast was calling the bridegroom to congratulate him on his great wine cellar and choice of wine, but he was congratulating the wrong man as we know...

In parentheses we see who the true witnesses were. The ones who knew the truth.

They were the servants who poured the water into the heavy stone pots up to the brim at Jesus' word.

If the master of the feast had asked the servants where the wine came from, they would have been able to tell him what Jesus had done but no one asked them because they were only servants.

I have learned not to make that mistake. The servants always know.

Beloved, God has not left the world with the external evidence alone. He gave us eyewitnesses.

He gave us the servants who drew the water.

He gave us Moses. He gave us the prophets.

He gave us a Son who stood up alive from a garden tomb.

He gave us apostles who put their hands in the wounds.

The testimony is not missing.

It has been published in every language on earth and if you are reading with me today it is sitting right in front of you.

HEBREWS 11:3 - By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Let's read that again.

The things which are seen were not made out of the things which are visible.

That is the whole doctrine of creation in one line, and it is telling you in advance that you will not be able to reason your way back to the origin by examining the product.

The products will not tell you. The Word will tell you.

And note the honesty of the verse... it says 'by faith we understand'.

Not by faith we ignore, not by faith we pretend... by faith we understand.

There is a category of knowing that begins with testimony rather than with measurement, and it is not a lesser kind of knowing. It only comes by experience.

That's why the servants know.

**Psalms 34:8 - Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good;
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

Taste and see. You have to taste God's goodness in order to experience the world as He made it to be.

ROMANS 1:20 - For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

The creation testifies truly of itself.

It shouts of power and order and beauty and design.

What it does not do... what it cannot do... What God will not do...is hand you the timestamp.

For that you need the servants who drew the water.

So, whether you believe that God created the universe in six literal days, or through vast ages of time, let us agree on this:

There was a beginning. There is a Creator.

Creation belongs to Him. Time belongs to Him.

History belongs to Him. And you belong to Him.

That the One who said, “Let there be light,” is still speaking.

The question is no longer merely: “How old is the universe?”

The greater question is: “Have I trusted the Creator of the universe with my life?”

Because the greatest miracle of all is not that Jesus made water into wine.

It is that the God who made everything can take a sinner,

a skeptic, a broken person, a lost person—

a person who has spent years running from Him—

and say: “Come to Me.”

And when that person comes to Him and kisses the Son,
God doesn't merely repair the old life.
He makes them a new creation.

Let's pray.