

For this morning’s sermon I would like to offer a retelling of Genesis’ account of creation.

My hope for this sermon is that we may be able to integrate our theology of the Bible with our wonder of science, and imagine how God’s Word effects your daily living, your view of stewardship and being a steward for Christ, and perhaps even your politics.

Prayer

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts reflect Your will for creation. Amen.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

Before time was called time and before we separated the day from night,
before the beginning of all that we could imagine,
before the earth and the stars and all of space, there was God.

And then it happened, at the beginning of this thing we call time,
Perhaps 15 billion years ago, God said: “Let there be light”
and as the infant universe was about to be born,
in the birth pangs of creation
the entire universe that stretches across billions and billions of light years
was reduced for a brief moment into what could have been the palm of a
child,¹
and God said: “Let there be light.”

And into the universe without eyes
came a blinding light,
so brilliant it destroyed everything in its path and made room for life all at
once.
As the light expanded, galaxy upon galaxy was born.
Scorched space gave way to luminescent balls of hydrogen and helium
Spheres of fire attracted molten rock and solar systems were born.
As planets found their courses moving around their suns they began to spin.

¹ Weinberg, Steven, The First Three Minutes.

When they faced the sun, all was light, when they turned away, the light was gone.

God named the light “Day” and the darkness, “Night.”
Evening passed, morning came-and that was God’s first day.

Then God said: “Let there be a Dome between the waters,
A space between everything that is out there and everything down here.
Let us make a place to breath around this spinning planet.”
And this spinning ball of Magma cooled and the crust hardened,
Volcanoes poured forth steam and gas, and next to the skin of the planet
God placed air.
God named the air, “Sky.”
Time melted into time,
Evening passed, morning came-and that was God’s second day.

Then God said: “Let the waters under the sky be gathered in one place,
and let the dry land appear.”
Element bumped into element, vapor turned to rain, water met water,
puddles became rivers, rivers bays, and oceans were formed.
God called the dry land earth, and the waters that collected “Seas.”

Then God said:
“Let there be life!”
And life was born from a single cell, so small it is not visible to the human
eye, but life nonetheless.
Single cells gave way to plants in the sea and creatures with shells.
Precambrian bowed to Cambrian, flora emerged.

500 million years ago, God beheld creation and saw that it was good.

Evening passed, morning came-and that was God’s third day.

God lit the day by sun and the night by moon,
Evening passed, the moon hung in the night sky, and the sun rose- that was
God’s fourth day.

And on the fifth day, God said:
“Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind.”

Life beget life; flora was joined by fauna,
the dry places were soon covered with every kind of plant and animal.
God said:
“Let there be life and the once lifeless planet was now teeming with birds of
the air
and animals below.”
500 million years unfolded,
evening passed, morning came-and that was God’s fifth day.

40,000 years ago
God said:
“Let us make humankind in our image.”
As God’s Holy breath entered our lungs we were given eyes to bless, hands
to serve, minds to think, and hearts to love.
And God said:
“Let my newest creation have dominion over the birds of the air and every
other living thing.”
15 billion years had passed since God spoke into the darkness.

If the time of all creation was measured in a day,
humanity’s time on earth would be less than one second of a 24 hour day.

God beheld everything, and indeed, it was very good.
evening passed, morning came-and that was God’s sixth day.

On the seventh day, God beheld the glory of the heavens and the earth,
and rested. Evening passed, morning came-the seventh day was done.

On the eighth day, the children created in God’s image discovered the ability
to create,
and with a new found ability to fight disease and famine,
the frail reflection of God discovered a new ability to be fruitful and
multiply.

The Industrial Revolution was born and our ability to produce was radically
changed forever.
Coal was harnessed to make steam and electricity.
Steam engines gave way to diesel.
The infinitesimally small atom was split.

Power, communication, transportation and medical miracles abounded. Vaccines, and vaccinations, penicillin, antibiotics and anesthesia. Manufacturing miracles were accompanied by marvels of medicine and life after life was saved.

*At the birth of Christ, 300 million people inhabited the Earth,
less than the United States population today.
1000 years passed, and there were still only 310 million people on earth.
Enter the Industrial Revolution,
in 1800, the world's population was one billion.
In 1940, two billion.
In 1960, three billion.
1975, four billion.
1987, five billion.
2000, six billion.²*

It can only be described as a miracle, however there is a dark side to our ability to be fruitful and multiply.

On the eve of the eighth day, our ability to be fruitful and multiply has its consequences.

Out of 928 studies on "the earth," 98% of the studies show consistent patterns of global warming.³

As the planet continues to warm, glaciers recede, diversity is lost,⁴ and coastlands are swallowed by the sea.

Some studies predict the sea level rising by 20 feet within 100 years.

Do you know how much of Florida is below that line?

Or Boston, or New York?

As the eighth day of creation draws to a close, the big question is this, "Can we, as stewards of God's creation, effect global warming?"

Many of you know that before I went to seminary, my only employer in my first career was Mobil Oil Corporation, now ExxonMobil.

My former employer would like for you to believe that there is nothing we can do.

² Wikipedia.

³ Gore, Al, "An Inconvenient Truth."

⁴ Wilson, E.O., The Creation.

But the overwhelming majority of scientists show a direct link between levels of Carbon Dioxide and the earth's temperature.

Coal burning electrical plants, forest burning, and Petroleum consumption directly impact out planet's temperature.

As CO2 emissions have gone up, up, up, global temperature has gone up, up, up.⁵ One mirrors the other.

2006 draws to a close,
evening passes, the morning came-the eighth day fades.

As the ninth day of creation dawns,
how will we be stewards of God's creation?

Some would have us believe that there is nothing we can do.
Some would have us believe that we can not change our old habits.

But here is the spiritual reality.
Christ is continually inviting us foreword.

Christ is always saying, "Come to me, Just as you are."
And then inviting us to "live a new way."

In Patmos, the author of Revelation wrote from a prison cell.
And said:
"I see a new heaven and a new earth."

As stewards of creation, we are invited to shape that new earth.

Some things we can do are small, and some are large.

Spend \$5 to \$10 more a month on your electric bill and choose clean power sources.

Pray for God's creation.

⁵ Based on ice core samples that reflect CO2 levels and the earth's temperature as presented in "An Inconvenient Truth."

Find a car that is fuel efficient, better yet, walk.

Conduct an energy audit at your home.
Insulate!

Plant a tree. Save a forest!

Conduct an energy audit at your church, again.

Vote for someone who cares about the environment.
If you can't find someone who cares about the environment,
run yourself.

The sun has not set on the ninth day.
It unfolds before us.

As stewards of God's creation, what will we do?
"On the ninth day..."

Amen