

# Genesis: Foundations of our Faith

## “Who is God?” (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

“I believe.” The Apostles’ Creed begins with those words. That’s what a creed is coming from the Latin word “Credo” which means “I believe”. The “I” reminds you that when you speak these words, you are confessing what you personally believe. And when you confess that you “believe” in God, you are saying more than simply you believe God exists. You are confessing that you trust in God. You trust all that the Bible says about God is true. You trust that all of God’s promises will be fulfilled.

Many people, probably the majority of people, believe that there is a higher power, an intelligent designer - a god. They know this simply by looking around and seeing the wondrously intricate, beautiful, and complex world that they live in. Certainly the heavens declare the glory of God and the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Relying only on what people see, they only get a glimpse of who the true God is. So many fashion this god they correctly perceive to suit their own personal beliefs. Because salvation is found in no other God, we want to learn what the Bible tells us about the only true God. So today as we begin our look at the first few chapters of the Bible seeing not only the foundations of the world, but also foundations of the Christian faith we first answer the question: Who is God?

The Bible simply opens its very first words with a statement of fact about who created everything around us. We’ll talk about that creating work in a little bit. But there’s another fact for us. If God made everything then he had to have been there before the world was made. God is eternal. He has no beginning and no end, but on this Trinity Sunday we focus on this truth of Scripture: God is one God and yet he is three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here in Genesis it doesn’t explicitly say that to us. In the Gospel reading from Matthew the Triune God is clearly declared. Yet in the account of creation, we see that even though there is one God, there are distinct persons that are present creating.

Even though Scripture often speaks of the Father as the Creator, we can’t say that it was exclusively the Father’s work. Those three persons worked together as one to create the world. The Gospel of John opens pointing to the beginning and the presence of God the Son - the Word who came in flesh to us to save us. **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him everything was made.” (1:1-3)** Now when we go back to Genesis and the second verse of Scripture. Moses, the writer of Genesis makes this statement. **“The earth was undeveloped and empty. Darkness covered the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” (1:2)** All three persons are mentioned in Scripture as being present and we do hear the Trinity speak in divine consultation concerning the creation of man. **“God said, “Let US make man in OUR image, according to OUR likeness.” (1:26)** Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were engaged in mutual, joyful consultation working together as one God in complete harmony and cooperation to create the world.

The Triune God was there in the beginning. He is one God in three distinct persons. Sometimes we see that symbolized with a triangle - three distinct points, yet only one triangle. No matter how we illustrate it to help us understand this truth about God, we can’t fully understand how this is possible. It is beyond our comprehension. Yet like many truths of Scripture, It is something we can only accept to be true on the basis of faith. It is this same principle of faith which applies to accepting the truth of the world’s creation made by that same Triune God.

When God created the heavens and the earth, for all of creation (except mankind) he simply spoke everything into being with the almighty power and authority of his spoken word. “Let there be light,” and there was light. In six, 24-hour time frames of evening and morning the Triune God created the world and all that is

in it simply by speaking it into existence. Certainly he could have created everything in just one day with just one spoken word, but by doing it the way he did over the span of six days, we are given more reason to marvel at his creating work. Like a painter creating a work of art adding more depth with each brush stroke, so we see God taking the brush stroke of his powerful word and adding depth, order, and completeness to his wondrous creation.

When we take a closer look at each day and consider what he made with those spoken words, we see his wisdom. There is planning on display in what he made and when he made it. Look at how God wisely paints with the brush of his powerful spoken Word. The first day he created light separating light from darkness. The second day he created the sky separating it from the sea. The third day he created the ground that we live on along with all the plants and trees that grow. The fourth day he created the sun, moon, and stars bringing the light he made to shine from those heavenly bodies. Those same bodies which somehow give light to the world also indicate the passage of time - seasons, days, and years. The fifth day he created all the birds of the air and the fish of the seas in all their vast array. How many different creatures live in the sea or fly in the air throughout the world? Too many to count. Then on the sixth day, he created all the land animals in all their vast array? Can you count them too? Maybe so but it isn't easy.

The world was prepared one brush stroke at a time. All that God spoke into existence was like the background to the painting prepared for what he would put in the forefront as the most important feature - people. Before the end of the sixth day, God made the first person in a special way and in his image consulting as three persons and yet one God. We will talk about that image next week and how he made the first man the week after, but today we marvel not only that our God is three persons in one God, but also that he is the creator of everything who made one final evaluation of all that he had made. **“God saw everything he had made, and indeed, it was very good.” (1:31)** The world was more than just okay. Everything the Holy Trinity had made was perfect.

Having finished his work of creating, God then rested. That doesn't mean he stopped taking care of his world or that he left its preservation up to the world's own devices or that he lost interest in the world. There simply was nothing more he needed to create in laying the foundation of his world. That seventh day God rested from his creative work finding joy and satisfaction in all that he had made. So man likewise was to rest marveling at God's created work and in the gracious hand who had made it all for him. With joy and delight we are to set aside the time to praise and give thanks to God for all that he created for us and how his creating acts include you and I.

If God has made everything then each one of us can say this too: He has made me. We are not some random convergence of cells that were brought together by chance and accident. God who created the world has created you and he has created me. King David confessed that as he wrote the words of Psalm 139. **“For you created my inner organs. You wove me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and my soul knows that very well. My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.” (vs. 13-15)** You and I exist and have life now because the Triune God created us in a way that is no less spectacular and wondrous. When you stop and think about your life and how every life begins, we can't help but marvel even more at his power and wisdom.

I remember the first time this especially hit home for me. I believed that God made me and all that exists. I know this because the Bible tells me so, but the wonders of that creating work were magnified when I heard the little tiny heart of my unborn children. What an amazing sound! I can still hear it in my mind. Maybe you can too. “Thump...thump...thump...”. And then to see their little arms and legs move in the ultrasound and

to feel their little kicks on my wife's belly, how can I not respond like David? That was once me and it was you. "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made!"

We asked the question today, "Who is God?" God is triune, three persons in one God, existing in eternity before the world began. He is the Creator working together in common, complete harmony and cooperation creating everything that we observe in the world around us including you and I, a world and people he continues to preserve and care for every day.

Looking around observing the world and even ourselves, we can see that too. The world turns from day to night back to day again. Plants and trees still grow. The sun still shines providing light and warmth to the earth. The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the animals on the land are given what is needed to live. If he has done that then how much more will he do the same for the crown jewel of his creation, people like you and I, in natural ways through what he has made. The Triune God's care and preservation is not because any one of us has earned or deserve it. It is only because he is our good and merciful God. That is the God shown to us in Holy Scripture, the same God who alone ought to receive our thanks and praise, our serving and obeying as we live our life in his world that he has created for us. Amen

