

“Let There Be Light”

Sermon Notes

- **“Light may seem at times to be an impertinent intruder, but it is always beneficial in the end.”**

-J. Gresham Machen (1923)

**The creation of light on day one makes plain...*

1. ...the power of God (v.3)

2. ...the goodness of God (v.4a)

3. ...the holiness of God (v.4b)

4. ...the sovereignty of God (v.5)

Next Week: Genesis 1:6-8 - “Let There Be Skies”

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the week of May 25th-31st

Getting Started

1. Are you a morning person, a night person, or perhaps a bit of both? If you have a clear answer to this question, why do you suspect that you are that way?

Digging Deeper

2. In the introduction to his classic work titled *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923), J. Gresham Machen wrote that: “Light may seem at times to be an impertinent intruder, but it is always beneficial in the end.” Machen is on to something here. Whether we’re talking about the sunrise in the morning hours or when someone is able to ‘shed further light on the subject’, in what ways have you experienced this to be the case?

Open Your Bible to Genesis 1:3...

3. Most Bible translations provide a paragraph break between Genesis 1:2 and 1:3. Does the one that you’re reading do this? If so, does it have any effect on how you interpret the relationship between the first two verses and the next three verses? Another way to ask this question is, do you believe that day one of creation properly begins in verse 1 or verse 3? Does our answer to this question have any possible interpretive implications either way? Explain.

4. In last week's sermon, we explored how creation itself is the product of the work of all three persons of our eternal triune God¹. What indication do we have in verses 1 and 2 that gesture in this direction? How do statements like the ones made in John 1:1-3, 10; Colossians 1:16 and Hebrews 1:1-2 help to further clarify this truth? Consider the use of the second person personal pronoun in 1:26 as well. Why does it matter that the Son and the Spirit are involved in the creation of the universe (not merely the Father)?

5. Historic Christian orthodoxy teaches that God created the universe *ex nihilo* (out of nothing). While Genesis 1:1-5 assumes this, how do passages such as Psalm 33:6; Romans 4:17; 11:36 and Hebrews 11:3 add further support to this doctrine? What is the significance of God creating all things out of nothing? What changes if God created *ex materia* (out of pre-existing material)?

6. What does the Apostle Paul say in Romans 1:19-20 that's absolutely critical to our understanding of Genesis 1, as well as our understanding of the created order all around us? How many key truths can you draw out of these two verses that assist us in our appreciation of the creation narrative in Genesis?

¹ This is the doctrine of inseparable operations which we've had the opportunity to study together in the past as a church family. Theologian Adonis Vidu explains that: "The doctrine [of inseparable operations] teaches that all three persons of the Holy Trinity are at work in every action outside of the Trinity's life." For further explanation of this important doctrine, please see Vidu's excellent article: "How the Doctrine of Inseparable Operations Unlocks the Gospel":

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/doctrine-inseparable-operations/>

7. As you read through Genesis 1, a certain pattern emerges within the days of creation. Day 1 (verses 3 to 5) contains the fullest description of the pattern, including: God's creation by his word (v.3), God's approval (v.4a), the separation various elements (v.4b), the naming of each element (v.5a), and then finally the evening / morning pattern followed by the number of the day in creation (v.5b). Which portion of this pattern is most intriguing to you? Why? Please share with the group.

8. In this week's sermon, we explored how *The creation of light on day one makes plain...* the power of God (v.3)...the goodness of God (v.4a)...the holiness of God (v.4b) and...the sovereignty of God (v.5). Which attribute of God strikes you in particular as you ponder day one of creation? Why? Please share with the group.