

## **In the Beginning**

Call to Worship: Psalm 19:1-6

1st Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-3

2nd Scripture: Genesis 1:1-3

Hymn #5 (supp)- *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

Hymn Insert- *Every Promise of Your Word*

Hymn #109- *This is My Father's World*

### **Introduction:**

After spending a few hundred years in the pagan land of Egypt, where there was virtually a different god, who reigned over every different facet of this world, it is no wonder then, that the Israelites assimilated to some extent, embracing the pagan practices of the Egyptians. Their designing and worshiping of the golden calf, under the influence of Aaron, confirmed this reality.

And so, when the Lord God took the Israelites out of Egypt and sought to make them His own people, He needed to reeducate them about their roots in Abraham, ultimately taking them back to the beginning, past Noah, before Adam and to the very point when God first created the heavens and the earth. When Moses went up on Mount Sinai, where he received the Moral Law (the Ten Commandments), with the accompaniment of thunder, lightning, fire and smoke, the Lord began to re-instill the truth about Himself and about man's relationship (or better yet, "broken relationship") to God, into the community of His people. That is why you have the constant phrase being repeated by God, through Moses, "I am the God, who brought you up, out of the land of Egypt." The miraculous and mighty deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt, was the reference point, which God used to command the attention and obedience of His people, as He sought to re-instruct them about Himself. While the people had lost much in their time of exile, the exodus was a God-directed event that provided an unmistakable reference point, for God to use in the instructing and commanding of His people.

And so, when Moses began to write down all that God would have his people know, learn and cherish, in the Pentateuch (the first 5 Books of the Old Testament or the Books of the Law), he opened with these profound and powerful words, "In the beginning God...." "Before anything existed; before the first stone of anything created was laid, as it were, God was already there, and it was God who created the heavens and the earth."

And so, establishing this fact, namely that God "was" in the beginning, and that God is the Creator and Designer with a purpose for everything that exists, was a critical foundation to be laid, for the chosen people of God, if He were to be their God and they were to be His people. And brethren, I want to suggest to you that this same reality is a critical foundation for us, especially if we are to find ourselves faithfully walking with our God, in the midst of a dark, wicked, rebellious and ungodly world.

### **I. In the Beginning**

Now, what's interesting in all of this is that as hard-hearted, corrupt and ungodly as the Egyptians were (and every other pagan nation existing at that time, for that matter), there is no evidence that any one of them would have denied the existence and reality of at least a god or gods. But, we live in a time, albeit without denying the fact that the truth of God is installed in every human being (in accordance with Romans 1); we live in a time when there is a major onslaught against God, which is built into the very fabric of our culture, and which denies the very existence of God, altogether!

As absurd as the pagan nations of old were, in creating false deities and idols, and in worshiping and sacrificing to those false deities, it seems that the utter arrogance of our technologically advanced age, which has designed some of the most amazing things (airplanes, iPhones, the Internet, the ability to print three dimensional objects... etc), has fostered even a deeper level of foolishness to accompany our higher level of accomplishment. To make entry into this existence with such an incomprehensibly, fascinating design; DNA, moving parts, organs, brains, memory, knowledge, love, intelligent communication... etc, all surrounded by a world and galaxy and universe full of such glory wonder and splendor, and to live this life as if there is no creative power or divine source behind it, is something that even the far less advanced pagans of old would scoff at as insane. And, we can see so much more under our microscopes and through our telescopes and through the advancement of all technology.

And what does all of this only serve to prove? That, as in the case of all generations, to deny the existence of the true and living God, in any sense (be it through embracing man-made idols or false deities or atheistic evolution as a whole) is to prove that such false beliefs all have

their root in the moral collapse of mankind, through the rejection of and rebellion against his Creator. In other words, friends, the denial of the existence of God, along with the denial of the existence of the One true and living God, YHWH, has very little to do with knowledge, and almost everything to do with moral degradation. The short form: Mankind loves his sin, and he will do anything to keep his sin, even if it means denying the very existence of his holy Creator. But, at the very least, he will recreate a god, who will permit him to continue on in his sin.

In John Chapter 1, we are told that, in Jesus Himself is life, and that life which He has deposited in us, is in itself light, which points us to the Creator Jesus Himself. In other words, the very fabric of our existence; the DNA of our souls as it were, has the autograph of Christ etched upon it; indeed it migrates toward Christ, like a paper clip does to a powerful magnet. And yet, so tragic is the affect of sin on our nature; so powerful is the deception and influence of satan, upon our fallen psyche, that we cannot even recognize and come to the very life and source of our being. We are, in fact, inclined toward the very opposite direction! The very darkness of our sinful condition blocks us from properly seeing and grasping after the Truth.

Pastor Doug, in the Call to Worship, read of God's very clear and obvious revelation of Himself even in the things which He has created. So clear is the reality of God's signature on the things that were made, that it is said in Psalm 19, that nature itself, as it were, speaks quite loudly about God Himself. And you cannot get away from it, no matter where you travel on this globe. You look up and you look around you, and you see the birds and the trees and the oceans and the fish and the stars and the sun and the moon and all of the animal life... and on and on and on, and all of these things, without speaking a legible tongue, by their very existence and order, cry aloud, "Behold the glory of your God! Behold the glory of your God!"

So obvious is the hand of God in this creation, that the Scriptures nowhere attempt to prove God's existence. They just assume the reality as beyond obvious, and state without apology that, "The fool has said in his heart that there is no God." The fool lives as if God doesn't exist, and as if, there is no account to be given, for how we live these lives, which were so freely and graciously given to us.

And so, sadly, like the unformed earth in our text, although the truth of God is beyond obvious in every direction, we are spiritually void and in desperate need of the Holy Spirit to

hover about and in us, heeding the words of Christ, "Let there be light!" We need divine intervention to intrude upon and remove our present darkness. The Apostle Paul plays on this connection, when, regarding the now regenerate Christian, he states in 2 Corinthians 4:6, "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The same God, who created light to separate the darkness from the unformed creation, must create light in us, to separate the darkness from our naturally, desperately deceived hearts, if we are to see Him in truth, as revealed in Christ Jesus, so that we might come to Him and have eternal life!

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." What do these words entail? Why are they used as the opening words of God's Holy Scriptures? Well, simply stated, not only do they inform us intelligently of who the Creator of all things is, but furthermore, they secure a right over the entirety of our very lives, do they not? If God is indeed the One who created all things, and we presently exist among the "all things" that were created, then the clear implication is that we belong to Him. We are not our own. Although, we are born with various levels of freedom in this world, there is a cosmic dominion, which overrules all else, and calls for our attention, compelling us to learn and understand and obey the will of the Creator who designed us. Again, especially when we consider the orderliness of creation, we ought to presume that the Creator has a will and purpose for all that exists, including us, forbidding us to just live and do as we please. And so, these opening words shout aloud with neon lights flashing around them, "Look here, and heed all that follows, for the One who stood at the beginning and Created all things, speaks, and He calls you to listen, and to listen intently. [Ex: Friend, Jimmy, who immediately left when he heard his father's whistle]

Now, when we move on and learn of the character and will of this Creator; when we learn of the major infection which has defiled His creation (called sin), and how we are contaminated by that very infection; when we see the very evidences of that contamination in us, by holding our own hearts and lives up to His Moral Law, and when we see the remedy He has provided for us in Christ, again, that first statement presents us with the authority, which upholds and supports all else. "In the beginning God," confirms that an all-knowing, infinite and holy God is calling us to, "Trust in Him with all of our hearts and to lean not on our own understanding." He calls us

to abandon our own reasoning, recognizing that it is defiled; that our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked, only exposed to us, when we bring ourselves into the mirror of His Word.

However, we are so deceived and so hardened by our sin; we are so naturally shortsighted that apart from a miraculous, regenerative work of grace, we cannot see the truth, even though it slaps us right in the face! Even though everything around us and in us, shouts aloud that Genesis 1:1 is true; indeed, our own heartbeats proclaim it over and over again: our DNA spells it, yet, we suppress the truth in unrighteousness and rather embrace the lie. Again, in short, we want our sin. And so, we deceive ourselves and keep being deceived like the person who loses hundreds of dollars, convinced that he can actually follow the right card in "Three Card Monty." But because our deception is welcomed; because it is intentional even, we are not without guilt in our rejection of the truth. Indeed, we are accountable to God for all of it. We can deny God and form an entire system around this denial, but no excuse will fly on the Day of Judgment.

And so, if you are not a Christian this morning; if you are still living in your sin, convinced that selling your never dying soul out, for such short lived, ungodly passions and desires is worth it, then you must understand that you are absolutely without excuse, when you stand condemned before the Judgment seat of Christ. All the more, you are here now; there is light in this Word right here and now; and so, all the more you are doubly accountable, if you walk away yet again, unmoved, with no desire to repent of your sin and turn to Christ for His free salvation, purchased by His shed blood for desperately lost sinners! "In the beginning God..." He created, He designed... All of this for His own glory! And if you are outside of Jesus Christ, then you are falling short of His glory. The consequences for such cosmic treason against a holy, pure, righteous and eternal God are eternal in duration. Do you recognize that? Don't die in your sin! Don't seal your curse for eternity! We are given this Word, here and now. It is God's ordained means of saving and redeeming, lost, ungodly sinners.

And brethren; you who have been given eyes to see, and a solid faith to believe that God has formed all of this for His glory; that His power is so great, that He created material out of immaterial; and that He has rightful and proper ownership of your lives, let these words be a reminder and an encouragement to you, this morning! You see, what is our confidence in this

life of suffering, where we are barraged with many sorrows and trials? Is it not the hope that He who began a good work in us, will complete that work? Is it not the hope that the Creator, who was at the beginning creating, and still, thousands of years later, sustains, will sovereignly complete all that He has planned before time? And in time, in the year 19xx or 20xx, He has poured out His Spirit on you; indeed, He has taken up residence in you, so that you might see what really is, in a world that is smothered by a blanket of deception! Our confidence and hope in the day of trial is that the One, who stood at the beginning, glorified and well pleased, will stand at the end glorified and well pleased, and you will be another glorious redeemed trophy, put on the shelf of His grace! "In the beginning God acted; God spoke and this all came about! And in the fullness of the time, He sent, and Christ accomplished and secured your redemption. And in due time, He called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light! And when you leave this earth and this body, He will usher you home into His glorious presence, where there is fulness of joy, forever and ever and ever!

Amen!!!

Benediction: Jude 1:24-25