

# **PASTOR RAY'S BIBLE SCHOOL 201**

## **THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS**

(How To Apply The Prophetic View Of Scripture To The Book Of Genesis)

### **Session One**

#### **“Christ And Creation”**

##### **I. Introduction To The Course**

###### **A. Our Goal: Obtaining A “Prophetic View” Of Scripture**

1. All PRBS courses have one over-arching goal...one “telic” purpose...to equip the saints with skill and ability to understand and interpret scripture from a “big picture” perspective we call the “prophetic view”\*

2. We must always qualify the term “prophetic”. We refer to the definition of the prophet from 1 Samuel 1:9:

(In those days if people wanted a message from God, they would say, " Let's go and ask the seer, " for prophets used to be called seers.)

3. People need a message from God today...and they ought to be able to go to God's people to get it! God intends His church to be a “prophetic” people who can bring His message to others because they can “see” what others can't.

4. The term “seer”, to us, means that we have a PERSPECTIVE or a VIEW of what God's word says because we see as God sees...CONTEXTUALLY.

###### **B. Contextual Revelation**

1. We can learn how to “see” every “piece” (verse, chapter, book of the Bible, etc.) as part of a greater “whole”.

- We can “climb a tree” and see the “forest”-we know how to interpret our present position in relation to a larger perspective
- We assemble the “jigsaw puzzle” of “pieces” of scripture by continually looking at the completed picture on the lid of the box

2. Relating this approach to scripture, we see the Bible as ONE COMPLETE STORY...having a beginning, a middle and an end.

3. Everything in scripture fits into this complete “story”-and unless we view the details in this way, we can’t hope to understand those details.

### **C. Our 201 Bible Course Will Focus on Genesis: “The Book Of Beginnings”**

1. As we study the Book of Genesis, we’ll approach it as HOW THE STORY BEGINS.

2. We believe that unless we understand the “beginning” of God’s story, we cannot possibly hope to properly understand the rest of it!

- No one buys a book and starts reading in the middle!
- No one wants to go to a movie that’s already been running 30 minutes...

### **BUT THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT GOD’S PEOPLE DO WITH THE BIBLE!**

3. We have to read the “beginning” of God’s story, the Book of Genesis, if we possibly hope to understand the rest of the Book.

4. The Book of Genesis is the beginning of God’s “movie”, the book title itself formed from the same root word as we derive the terms “genes”, “genetics” and “generation”.

a. We study “generational” things such as the ethnic background and health histories of our ancestors as a help to understanding how we are made...

5. The Book of Genesis is literally the “Book of Beginnings”.

### **D. The “Seed Plot” Of The Bible**

1. Genesis has been called the ‘seed plot’ of the Bible because every major subject and doctrine in scripture is found in Genesis in its “seed form”.

a. A package of seeds features the color picture of the full-grown plant on the front...which looks absolutely nothing like the little seeds in the package...the full-grown plant is there...it’s just in ‘seed form’. And so it is with Genesis.

2. Our 201 Course will equip you to “see” the CONTINUITY between the Old Testament and the New Testament; to have a perspective that can contextualize the revelations of the Book of Genesis with the “full-grown” revelation of the New Testament.

3. We are convinced this course will revolutionize your grasp of God’s word in ways that will surprise you!

## **II. The Story Begins**

### **A. The Most Important Verse In The Bible**

1. We believe the most important verse in the Bible is Genesis 1:1:

**“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”.**

2. Why do we say this? Because *IF THIS VERSE IS NOT TRUE, NONE OF THE REST OF THE BIBLE REALLY MATTERS!*

- Genesis 1:1 presupposes GOD-an omnipotent Being who preexists Creation
- Genesis 1:1 presupposes an epistemology (the study of knowledge or how we know what we know) of *revelation*-since no human being is present at the Creation but God, then what the Bible says is not of man-and we can only know it because God has “revealed it”\*

*\*This same thing is true of “knowing” how Jesus Christ really is...when Peter correctly identifies Him as the Son of God in Matthew 16, Jesus says to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. So immediately we are faced with the issue of faith...no man can know what happened at Creation for sure because no man was there...what is stated about Creation in Genesis 1 is revealed by God, and is to be believed or disbelieved as revelation of truth.*

3. On the other hand, *IF THIS VERSE IS TRUE, THEN WE MUST ALSO BELIEVE THAT EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE BIBLE IS REAL, AND TRUSTWORTHY, AND TRUE!*

If we accept Genesis 1:1 as true:

- There is a God
- He pre-existed all things (He was there before the ‘beginning’)
- All things that are made are made by Him

4. This is a huge presupposition, requiring *faith* on our part. If we can believe Genesis 1:1, we can believe all the rest. If we cannot believe Genesis 1:1, we will struggle with having faith in all the rest.\*

*\*Our friend and mentor Dennis Peacocke has said that the most important question a Christian can ask of an unbeliever, a “seeker”, a skeptic or a scoffer is: “DO YOU BELIEVE IN A CREATED UNIVERSE?” If the answer is “yes”, there is hope we can show them Christ. If they say “no”, discussion and debate is useless. We have found this to be true.*

5. The most “attacked” Book of the Bible, (by unbelievers, scoffers, skeptics and so-called “scientists”), is the Book of Genesis.

a. The statements of Genesis regarding Creation are so authoritative that they immediately require belief or disbelief.

6. The Christian position is:

- The scriptures are Divinely inspired and infallible as delivered to us in their original form (not all “translations” are accurate)

- Everything in scripture is true and non-contradictory
- There is “truth” that can be obtained by other means, (scientific, empirical, rational truths), but nothing that contradicts scripture can possibly be true

## II. Implications Of Creation

### A. The Aseity of God

1. Theologians speak of the “aseity” of God, a term that refers to the fact that the basis of God’s life and being is within Himself; it is not caused by anything external. (Baker’s Concise Dictionary Of Christian Theology)

2. The Bible implications regarding Creation tell us that God exists as an eternal, ever-present Being, Who needs nothing outside of Himself to exist.

3. The idea that God needed to create anything, or that He somehow needs man or what man can do for Him, is erroneous.

### B. The Sovereignty Of God

1. From the beginning, the Bible teaches the absolute sovereignty of God over all His creation.

2. The “sovereignty of God” is a theological term referring to ***“God’s supremacy and control of all things that occur.”*** (Baker’s Concise Dictionary Of Christian Theology)

3. Since God is sovereign, there is a very real sense in which everything that happens is His will, but only in the sense that nothing that happens could happen if He determined to prevent it.

**“God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordained whatever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby God is neither the Author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of His creatures, no is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather, established.”**

*Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Article 1*

**“Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions, yet He has not done anything because He foreknew it as future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions.”**

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 3, Article 2

3. This is a revelation of one of God's perfection that most challenges our minds; and yet if we believe the Bible revelation, no other rational option is possible.\*

\*Our minds struggle with the doctrine of the Sovereign Will Of God because of the woeful lack of teaching on the subject. The will of God is expressed in scripture at least 7 different ways and we devote an entire class session to the subject in our PRBS 101 Course. **Here's a quote from that material:**

I know of no other doctrine in scripture that challenges our human understanding more deeply than the sovereignty of God. You should never feel guilty, defective or faithless as you wrestle with it. Anyone who tells **you the teaching of God's sovereignty isn't a tough piece of** theology to understand and accept is either a few fries short of a happy meal or simply not telling you the truth. This doctrine challenged me at the deepest levels of my being. However, I can tell you that once the mind ceases to resist this revelation, a sweet peace **will flood your soul. No other revelation you'll ever receive will fill you with a sense of awe, amazement and** worship like this one: a deep, abiding confidence that God is absolutely sovereign and that not one atom in all creation is out of His control.

4. The doctrine does not state that everything that happens pleases God but that nothing that happens is out of God's control or indeed can happen unless it allowed by God.

**"If there is one renegade molecule in the universe, one loose atom in Creation that is not under God's absolute control, God is not sovereign."**

R.C. Sproul

### C. The Mystery Of The Godhead

1. God created the heavens and the earth and the doctrine of God begins in Genesis 1:1.

2. And even in the first verse, we will find the doctrine of the Trinity in 'seed form'!

3. The English word "God" translates the Hebrew term "Elohim". When we pluralize nouns in English, we add an "s". But when terms are pluralized in the Hebrew language, the words end with "im". The term "God" in English is the singular translation of a term that is plural in Hebrew! So we find the mystery of the Godhead, "one God in three Persons", right here in the first verse of the Bible.

4. The same thing is found in the Creation of man:

**"Let us make man in our own image, after *our* likeness..."**

Genesis 1:26

a. God is one God in 3 persons, Father/Son/Holy Spirit

5. Orthodox Christianity holds to the Doctrine of the Trinitarian nature of God. While the fuller revelation of this mystery is found in the New Testament, the "seed form" of the Doctrine is found in the first verse of the Bible!

### III. Christ And Creation:

## A. Christ In The Creation

1. Many Christ-followers have a mental image of God (the Father) creating the heavens and the earth and relegate the ministry and activity of Jesus to His earthly ministry. This is not the case.

2. The work of Creation is the work of the Godhead; all 3 Persons are active in Creation.

**“In the Beginning, God (the Father) created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of deep. And the Spirit of God (God the Holys Spirit) moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God (God the Son, the “Word of God”) said, Let there be light: and there was light.**

KJV

3. The central figure in the Creation is the Son of God. He is in the *middle* of the Creation account, a pre-figuring or seed-form of what later is fully revealed in Scripture. Just take ONE New Testament passage of scripture and “connect the dots” with Creation:

### Christ, The Creator Of All Things

6 For by Him (Christ) all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created by Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything. 19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him.

Col 1:16-19 NASB

- a. All things were created by Christ
- b. All things were created for Christ
- c. He existed before anything else
- d. He is “holding together” all of His Creation at this very moment!
- e. He is to have “first place in everything”

f. And all this was the Father’s will, that all “fulness” would “dwell” in Him! (See Colossians 2:9 as well)

## B. Connecting The Dots: It’s Always, Always About Jesus Christ

1. In this course, we’ll study Genesis, the “Book of Beginnings”, tying everything back to the central purpose of the Bible, the revelation of the Son of God in Jesus Christ.

2. Jesus tried to get this across to the “Christians” of His day, speaking to the religious leaders:

" You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! 40  
Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.

John 5:39-40 NLT

- a. The term “the scriptures” referred to the OLD TESTAMENT.
  - b. His claim is that ALL scripture points to Himself!
  - c. The point is that we must re-read the Bible with the understanding that EVERYTHING in it refers to the BIG PICTURE, which is Jesus!
3. After the resurrection, Jesus appears to two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus and says the same thing:

Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:25-27 KJV

- a. From the “beginning” refers to Genesis; “Moses and the prophets” refers to the Pentateuch, the first five Books of the Bible written by Moses; “the prophets” refers to the rest of the Old Testament!
- b. What would Jesus say to us today when we can’t “connect” Jesus to the Book of Genesis and the Old Testament? Would He not say we are “fools” who are “slow to believe” all scripture refers to Him?

4. Welcome to Genesis, the “Book of Beginnings” and our 201 course, where we’ll learn to apply the “prophetic view” of scripture to the first Book of the Bible!