



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor
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GENESIS 1:1-5

Series: Understanding Your Roots

Welcome to Calvary Chapel. We are grateful that you're here today. Calvary Chapel is committed to three things to empower you in your spiritual life. Number one: We want to help you to grow spiritually. This service is designed to help you understand more about who God is and who you are and how God has a plan for your life. So we're going to look at God's word today in Genesis 1 and we're going to understand more about how to apply that to our lives today.

The second thing we want to do is help you connect. So we encourage you to connect with the Lord in your own personal relationship, but also connect with other people at Calvary Chapel Living Hope. I encourage you to make a comment in the comment section if you'd like to let us know that you are here. And certainly you can share a prayer request during this time so we can be praying for you. We want to enable you to connect with others here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope.

And thirdly, we want to allow you to serve the Lord. We want to encourage you to do that. You can do that at home from your own home, you can do it virtually. There's different ways that you can serve. Just let me know. I'd be happy to get you connected to ways that you can serve others right from your own home. Or maybe you're coming out to the Barn where of course we need a lot of help and you can serve the Lord there as you connect with others on Sunday mornings at 9:45.

I encourage you, if you'd like, you can donate to Calvary Chapel Living Hope. You can go to our website, which is takejesushome.com, click on the Donate button at the top to donate electronically or you can click on the Contact page to find out our address if you want to send in a check. Your gifts are so important to keep this ministry going and we're grateful for those who financially support Calvary Chapel Living Hope.

I want to say to you, congratulations for being a part of this. We want you to be able to enjoy God's word. We're studying Genesis 1 and as we do we trust that God's going to do some important things in your heart this morning. God speaks through His word. He also speaks to us through prayer. So would you take a moment with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we pause before you now to ask you to speak to us through your word. We know that your Holy Spirit illumines your word for us so that we can understand it and we can apply it to our lives. Father, we look at this story of creation and are amazed at the things you did and continue to do. We thank you for that. Lord, we realize that we are just specks on

this big globe and that we need you so much. We recognize that need, Father. We're just drawn to worship you and to experience you in a way that lifts us up out of our current circumstances. So Father, I ask that now as we study your word that you would teach us. Give us information so that we can know different things. But teach us, Lord, how to feel and how to do and how to live the life you've called us to live. So Lord, now speak to us through your word in Genesis 1. Amen.

Well today is an exciting day for us because we're starting a new study. This new study is in the book of Genesis. What I've tried to do in this study is I want us to go back to our roots. So if we understand the book of Genesis it can help us so much as we're moving through just the rest of the Bible.

You know when we look at the book of Genesis, especially Genesis 1 we're drawn to worship. Think for a minute. Why is worship so important in our lives? I know that many people during the COVID time are missing the ability to worship publicly. They just want to be with others to worship, but because of COVID they're not able to do so. There's that kind of worship where we worship in song, but there's also the worship we do before God just to come before Him and say, "God, you are great." When we worship the Lord, we surrender ourselves to God and we describe how great He is. When we worship God, we are reminded how humble we are, that we can't do this alone, that we need more than just ourselves to accomplish our lives. We surrender ourselves to God. We celebrate His greatness when we worship the Lord. And what a great way to worship the Lord is when we come to creation and see what God has done through creation.

I want to increase your worship capacity today. I want to energize your personal worship experience. I think that's what's going to happen today as we look at Genesis 1. That your personal worship will grow and increase.

Let's look at Genesis 1:1-5. These are the verses we're going to look at today. It says in Genesis 1:1-5 – *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light, Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*

The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. We have the beginning of our whole world. We have the beginning of people. We have the beginning of sin. We have the beginning of sacrifices for sin. But most importantly we're going to see the beginning of God's intimate relationship with His people. With Adam and Eve we're going to see how God had an intimate close relationship with them and He transferred that to them so they could also have a close relationship with each other. We're going to learn about Abraham and how God had a close relationship, walked with Abraham. We're going to see how God had these close relationships with people. The reason we're going to do that is because we're going to see God wants to have a close relationship with you and with me.

So right off the bat I want to suggest to you, if you don't have a close relationship with God, stay tuned. We're going to learn more about what that looks like for each one of us. God has a plan for us. He's designed this world for us. But most importantly He's designed the relationship He

wants to have with you and me. He wants to bless us in a particular way. He wants that relationship to be close. We're going to learn what that looks like as we go through the book of Genesis, Genesis 1 to Genesis 50.

Now it's been said that you can't really understand the rest of the Bible unless you understand Genesis 1-12. Genesis 1-11 are all about God working with the nations. Genesis 12-50 is God working with a particular family, the Jewish people, the Israelites, the family of Abraham. So if we read chapter 12 down to chapter 1 and we understand that, we're going to have a greater understanding of the rest of the Bible. And when we get to Genesis 1 we're right there learning more about creation and how God created our world. As you look out your window and you see trees and sky and you see rain sometimes and you see grass and animals, when you see those things, something happens. Because God is communicating a message through creation and we worship the Lord when we see those things.

In fact there's a message being proclaimed through creation and I want to show you what Psalm 19:1-4 says. *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies the proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth; their words to the ends of the world.*

When you look out at creation there is a message being proclaimed and the message is this: "Worship me, worship me." That's the message that's being heard as you're looking at creation and you see what God has made. The message goes out "worship me, worship me." Unfortunately you hear the words going out, but you don't know exactly who you're worshipping. That's why we need the Bible to help us understand.

You see some people misunderstand the message and they end up worshipping the creation instead of worshipping the Creator. They end up worshipping the trees or they're out worshipping the dirt or they're out worshipping the sun heading to the beach. There are times when we get ourselves so connected to the world that we miss the spiritual, we miss what's behind it. The message is "worship me" and we're going to learn more about who we're going to worship this morning and as the book of Genesis unfolds.

The message of creation is a message that says "worship me" so that message goes out to the whole world, Psalm 118 says. Everyone is hearing that message "worship me." They know the message is out there. So when we come and we share the message of Jesus Christ there are many who are saying oh good. I have been waiting for this. I've heard the message "worship me." I have a need inside of my heart to worship and now I understand who I am worshipping. The message is "worship me" and God wants us to experience Him in all of His greatness.

The Bible says that *God created the heavens and the earth*. Now I really enjoy looking out at the stars at night. When I lived in Kenya it's very black at night. And when it's black at night the stars are so much brighter. It's just amazing. I have this app on my phone called SkyView Lite. I think you're going to want to get it. It's called SkyView Lite. Here's what I can do. I can take my phone and I can point it to any star that I see in the sky or any bright light (it might be a planet because that's what I'm often looking for) and when I see that it tells me what the planet

is or it tells me what the star is that I'm looking at or the constellation. It also tells me if I say where is Venus, I can type in "where is Venus" in there, and then it points an arrow and it guides my phone to move it around to where I can see Venus. SkyView Lite. You might want to get it.

This week I took a screenshot of my phone SkyView Lite so you can see what it looks like. Because I wanted you to see these planets. As many of you or some of you know who are interested in astronomy you know the moon, that's the one at the bottom past Jupiter and Saturn this week and it's in their paths. So they were lined up this week. The bottom one is the moon and then we have Jupiter and then we have Saturn. Of course this isn't what I can see from Earth, but these are what SkyView Lite puts up there in place of the bright light that I see so that I can experience it and I know what's going on and I can see what the planets are.

And then notice above there at the same time the Hubble Telescope was passing by. So it tells me what that little light is. If I were to look through a telescope, I would be able to see these things and I would be able to experience them.

I really enjoy looking out at creation. I enjoy looking at the stars and when I see them I am drawn to worship the Lord. I want to ask you a question for a moment. I want to ask you what part of God's creation prompts you to worship Him? So take a minute and add in the comments what prompts you to worship the Lord. What is it that you can see there? Jot it down there and let us know what it might be. I really appreciated the heavens and being able to see those. And so that's what my app was showing.

But for you, what is it that you appreciate? When you look out at creation, what is it that you enjoy in your own walk with the Lord? Jot it down in the comments. What is something that you appreciate about your worship experience? So when you look at this and you say wow, when I see green grass or maybe it's springtime, whatever it might be. Just jot it down in the comments that you're experiencing in your life that you see. There's that picture of that telescope and the things that are there.

So someone says mountains and trees. Bridget says butterflies. Plants and flowers. All of those things we're drawn to. Keep putting those things in the comments. Other people can see them even as I go forward. Beth Bonilla says honeybees. Oh Beth, that's great. Except this week I got stung by two bees and my leg is hurting and my arm is hurting, so I'm not so grateful for those bees at the moment. So thank you for putting them. The oceans and the rivers. Look at all those things that people are putting down there.

When you see those things they draw us to worship the Lord. Worshiping God through creation. We want to get past the creation to the God who created these things. That's what we're looking at today. Thank you for all of you who've posted those things and all of the beautiful things that God has made. Certainly he's made these great things. But do you know why God created the world? God created the world so that it could be a place where we live.

Let me show you another scripture here in Isaiah 45:18. It says this: *For this is what the Lord says – he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited—he says, "I am the Lord, and*

there is no other.” He formed the earth to be inhabited. That is remarkable. Because when we go and understand that God has made our earth for us, for people, it’s a beautiful thing. We’re just drawn to worship. As we look into the sky we worship the Lord.

Here’s a quote from Abraham Lincoln. He says this: “I never behold (the heavens filled with stars) that I do not feel I am looking in the face of God. I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.”

God has made the heavens for us so we can enjoy them. They become the cry, the shouting out, the words that say “worship me.” And so we come before the Lord and we worship Him because we see creation. But who do we worship? That’s why we come to Genesis 1. So that we can learn more about who this is that we’re worshipping.

It says there – *In the beginning, God.* The word *genesis* is taken from the first words *in the beginning*. Genesis means the beginning, so we have all of these beginnings that we already mentioned. But it says – *In the beginning, God.* Those first four words of the Bible set the stage for the rest of the Bible and certainly for creation. God is the center for that. Now the word *God* there (and you can put this in your notes) is the word Elohim, which means strong one. And we’re going to learn about different names that God has during our study. In Genesis 1 we learn about God or Elohim. The strong one. The one that we can rely on who is our creator God. In Genesis 2 we’re introduced to God’s personal name. His name is Yahweh. In Genesis 15 we’re introduced to the term Adonai, which means Lord. We’ll also talk about other compound names for God like God Almighty or Jehovah-jireh and other compound names for God so that we can understand God more. Each one of these names help reveal a little bit more about God Himself.

Now I want to suggest that each one of us needs to embrace this idea right from the beginning – *In the beginning, God.* Because if you do, then creation makes sense. Often there’s a competition I should say between evolution and creationism. But it’s not really a competition between evolution and creationism; it’s a competition between presuppositions. Because when a person comes to creation as a Christian and they accept the fact that God is God, then they’re able to embrace the idea of intelligent design, that there’s a creator behind the creation. That God designed it all and He created it and it makes sense. Scientists who are Christians understand that God is there and reveals these things through creation. They don’t have a problem with science when they come to it and see that God is the Creator. You can look through a telescope and you can see magnificent things about God as Creator. You can look through a microscope and look at amazing things about God as Creator. You can use a stethoscope to learn about God as Creator. However you’re going to do that as a scientist, if you come understanding that God is God, it just helps make creation more clear.

However, if you’re an atheist and you don’t believe in God, you have a problem. You’ve got to develop some theories and some ideas about how this world came to be. You’ve got to go from where we are, try to go backwards, and try to figure out theories and hypotheses that will explain how our Earth came to be and what takes place. Thus we have a theory like evolution which has so many holes in it. And it only has holes in it for the person who is a Christian who realizes that it’s got problems. The scientist who sees all those holes, keeps looking to plug those holes with

other theories because they don't believe in God. If you don't believe in God, you're handicapped when it comes to looking at science. So you have to come up with these elaborate theories.

Just yesterday in my newsfeed came this description of why the Earth now has water. As they're looking back now they have this theory that certain comets and asteroids and whatever hit the earth after it was this dry body of dust that had collected and was orbiting around the sun, and then when these asteroids hit it then water was able to be on the earth. I mean they've got a problem. They've got to figure out how do you get life on a planet. How do you get a planet itself if you're not a Christian. So these elaborate theories are developed.

It's about presuppositions. It's not a competition between creation and evolution. The competition exists between is there a God and is there not a God. The Bible starts with the words – *In the beginning, God*. And once we understand that the whole Bible is really about God it changes our perspective about life and about the Bible.

Some people look at the Bible simply as a wisdom book to get good ideas. Young people, if you're listening here, I want to tell you the Bible is a great place for you to learn all kinds of wisdom. But primarily the Bible is designed to help us get to know so that we can worship Him, so that we can understand who He is. So we're introduced to God in chapter 1 of Genesis. And when we're introduced to Him, He starts out by teaching us that He is also the Creator of the world. That God is the Creator. And He's not just the Creator of the world. God's creative work didn't end on day six and God rested on day seven and so God stopped creating. God delights in creating. He's a creative God. He continues to create.

Let me tell you a story. David in the Bible did pretty well following the Lord in his youth and He trusted God as he was running away from Saul. At one point in his life he decided to take his life into his own hands and decide what he was going to do with it. He decided to control his own life and get the happiness that he wanted. So he took Bathsheba and killed her husband, took Bathsheba as his wife. In the midst of that when his sin was found out he had so much regret. He realized that he had done the wrong thing, that he had sinned. His heart was so sad, so disappointed. When a person messes their life up, just so many regrets that they have. So David prayed these words to God using the same word *create* here. The word *bara*, to create, uses the same word in Psalm 51:10 when he comes to the Lord in the midst of this discouraged time in his life and he says – *Create in me a clean heart*.

God is in the business of doing that. He continues to create. He continues to do things in our lives. When you come to the place where you realize that you have messed up your life... Oh you might look good on the outside. No one would know that your life is messed up on the inside, but you know. And God wants to create something very special inside of you. He wants to do something new. He wants to use this word *bara* to create that newness inside of you. In fact the Bible uses the term *create* in the New Testament in the Greek word... We're in the Old Testament here, but when we get to the Greek and Paul is describing salvation he says that if you are in a Christ you have a new creation inside of you. Old things have passed away and the new has come. God has created something brand new inside of you. God's creative abilities and

creative talents weren't just demonstrated through creation in the Old Testament. They are demonstrated every day through the creation of new life and the hearts and the lives of people.

God created both the heavens and the earth. Now when it says He created the earth, the earth is this globe. It's just so amazing to think about all the things that God did when He created this globe, this Earth. For example, the Earth is on a rotation. Its rotation, its orbit is around the sun. And it is in a circular orbit at just the right distance so that water can be found as a liquid. If the orbit were further away, then the water would not be able to stay a liquid. We have to have water as a liquid on Earth in order for life to take place.

This water takes place in three different forms. It takes place as a solid in the form of ice, it takes place in a liquid as water, and it takes place as vapor that comes and completes the hydrological cycle to water the earth. In order for that to take place, there's a certain distance that it can be from the sun. This distance that it is from the sun creates what's called the Goldilocks zone. Circumstellar habitable zone is what it's called. What that means is that it's a certain distance that it has to be in order for life to be present. It must be at this exact place within a very short range and Earth orbits in that range. So if it were further away then it would be a problem. In fact if the Earth's orbit were elliptical and it went further and closer to the sun then the liquid would burn up if it were too close and if it was too far away everything would freeze, making Earth uninhabitable. The orbit of the sun is very important. Earth's orbit is strategic.

But it doesn't stop there. Do you know (and you already know this) that the Earth rotates. It rotates one time every solar day. It's not like the moon. See the moon does not spin. It stays the same, the same part of it faces the Earth as it continues around. We never get to see the dark side of the moon from Earth. What we see is only the front side of the moon.

If that were true with Earth, we would have a problem. The spinning on the axis of the Earth allows for the regulation of temperature. If you didn't have that regulation of temperature and you just had one side facing, it would be too hot to live and the other side would be too cold to live. So the Earth is spinning and the fact that it is spinning allows for it to be habitable.

It's also on an axis. This axis is strategic because it's on an axis, that means the sun is in the northern hemisphere during the summer months and then of course at the same time it's winter in the southern hemisphere. And then when the sun moves to the middle, it's the equinox in March and September, which is when the days and the nights are of equal length. So what we have is this very complex system of seasons that takes place. So summer then gives birth to autumn and the beautiful colors that change the trees and the grass and the other living things. That gives way to winter where many of the animals and the trees go into a hibernation phase. But then it explodes into spring with all kinds of life that takes place. These seasons are part of what make many life forms either animals or plants to be able to live.

Just looking at Earth is so powerful and strategic to see how God has created the world in a way that it makes it this place where he has designed for it to be habitable by people. God designed the Earth for us so that we could enjoy it. *God created the heavens and the earth.* There's this call out that says "worship me, worship me" as we start studying these things. Whatever kind of

science you study, you can come to the place where you hear that call “worship me, worship me,” and you have the opportunity to listen to that message.

Let’s go on to verse 2 where it says this: *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* What we see here is that God is in the beginning of creating all of these things and He’s got more work to do that we’re going to see unfold over the next few days of creation.

But I want to point out that the *Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* Do you remember a few weeks ago when we learned more about the Holy Spirit? We learned that the Holy Spirit is the personal part of the Godhead that touches us. In yours and my life He’s the one that convicts us of sin, who guides us into truth. It’s the Holy Spirit who confirms in our hearts that we’re children of God. He touches us personally and He’s personally involved in creation. He’s *hovering over the face of the waters.*

Let’s go to the next verse and look at day one. *And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light, Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*

The first thing I’d like to point out here is that the sun and the moon and stars have not yet been created. They will be created later in the creation week. However we have light created right away. Where is that light coming from if it’s not coming from the sun or the moon or the stars? It’s coming from God Himself. It’s God who is in essence light that fills the whole earth now with His presence and His glory. This is in the Old Testament in chapter 1 in the book of Genesis. If we go all the way to the second to last chapter of the Bible in Revelation we learn about the new heaven and the new earth. And the Bible says when He creates the new heaven and the new earth there is no sun and moon. It’s not necessary. Do you know why? Because the glory of God lights up heaven. That is amazing. The glory of God lights up heaven.

It's interesting to understand that because when we recognize it’s the glory of God then we realize when God comes into our lives He lightens our life. He’s the one who gives us the life that we need. He is that light inside of us. We are not dependent on the sun or the moon or the stars, that is the circumstances of life. When clouds block out the sun, when we can’t see the stars at night, we do not have to feel differently because we have the glory of God inside of us. We are containers that contain the God of the universe and He has given us this ability to experience Him and His glory. He lights us up. It is powerful to become a Christian and to experience that light. Because we are now moving around in a dark world and we become these lights for other people to see because we have the glory of God inside of us. God is doing something amazing inside of us.

God created light. It's interesting when He said in the verse there – *“Let there be light,” and there was light.* And then that’s the end of day one. So He goes back.... It’s like He goes into the room, turns on the light, and then leaves the room. When a person normally goes into a room they turn on the light in order to do something. They want to get something or accomplish a task. Not God. He comes in the room just to turn on the light. Why does He do that? Because He

wants to fill the earth with His glory. He wants the glory of God to be so present on the earth. And that's what He does in your heart and my heart, in our lives.

It's interesting that what God does is all reflected in John 1 where it says that Jesus came to be the light of the world. John 8 says that He is the light of life. When you accept Christ into your life He turns on the light inside of your heart. Instead of the darkness and confusion that exists there, now you experience something amazing inside of your heart. It's powerful what God does. We're drawn to worship Him because of what He'd done inside of our hearts. God wants us to worship Him and the creation is this cry to understand more about who He is and what He's done.

Now we are stuck here on earth at the moment under the sixty miles of atmosphere that surround the earth. So we can't often see what's going on. But because of the International Space Station, they look down and they can see what's happening. The International Space Station is a fascinating manmade creation that's orbiting the earth at amazing speed. It travels at over 15,000 miles an hour (4.75 miles per second) around the world. I have another app called the ISS Viewer and it tells me when the International Space Station is passing over where I can see it. The last time was this morning at 5:40 a.m. I wasn't up then, but that's when it was passing over at 17 degrees in the horizon so I could see it. You can watch the International Space Station go across the sky if you know what you're looking at. It just goes so quickly over the top of the sky so you can see what happens.

It's an amazing thing to look down on earth from the International Space Station. Let me show you this video. Watch this view from the International Space Station.

[Start of Video]

Astronauts look down at their planet every day from the International Space Station, a tinker toy dragonfly orbiting the earth 250 miles up. From here, the Earth is a world among other worlds, all executing a dance choreographed by gravity. The moon do-si-dos slowly behind the Earth's limb, squashed flat by the atmosphere. Sunrise comes as a sudden arc of light against black space. Solar panels shift to catch the bounty of energy. In orbit astronauts are no longer bound by the cycle of day and night. Some orbits might look up at a setting sun tracing a wheel in the sky or look down on the dark shadow of a solar eclipse. By day the Earth is alive. A single geological organism. You can see it breathe, belching gas from volcanoes and wrapped by whirling storms of rain and lightning. The oceans are Earth's glory, the source of its color and life as we know it. As the Station slips into night, the world's nervous system emerges. The lonely gulfs are lit up by constellations of oil drilling platforms, extracting the fossilized remains of ancient sun-fed life. The Station never crosses the poles, but it goes far enough north and south to see the wavering crowns of Aurora. Once we looked up at the heavens from earth, now we look down and out, an angel's view of a spinning ball under the fixed of stars.

[End of Video]

I just so appreciate the Earth. Getting those pictures I just love to see that. It is a call to us to worship the Lord.

One more passage of scripture before we close today. I just want to show you what Psalm 95 says. This is a call to worship in Psalm 95:3-6. It says – *O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.*

And here is the reason. Notice this. *For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. the sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneels before the Lord our maker.*

I'm just so impressed with what God is doing in His world. As He creates the world, He's designed it with a message that goes out that says "worship me, worship me." And every day we make a choice in our lives. Are we going to worship the creation or are we going to worship the Creator?

Our study of Genesis is not just about finding out about our roots, which is what we're going to do and how it all came into being. Our study of Genesis is so we can learn more about God so we're drawn to worship Him, so we can experience Him in all of His greatness.

I trust that as you ponder creation this week, you'll hear the words "worship me" and God will speak to you. You know who He is and you can thank Him. You know who He is in your life and that personal relationship He has with you. You can draw upon that and enjoy that before Him.

Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we do worship you now. You're so great. You are our Creator. You made us, you designed us, you designed this world. Lord, we enjoy it. Help us not to take it for granted. Teach us how to take care of it. And Lord, we ask that you would continually guide us to find you, to choose you, to worship you, surrender ourselves to you every day. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

Well I'm grateful that you were able to join with us. I want to encourage you to shoot me a message. Tell me about your experience today. You can put it down in the comments. But if you've made a decision to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today, would you please let me know? You can visit our contact page at takejesushome.com where you can sign up there for a Bible Study that I created that can guide you through your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I'd love to share that with you. Feel free to email me at scott@takejesushome.com. Let me know what's going on in your life. Let me know what prayer requests that you have. And we'll continue to study this book of the Bible together. We'll see you again next week.