



GENESIS

the WISDOM JOURNEY LESSON 1

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Genesis 1:1

The Bible begins, not with an argument for God’s existence, but with a simple statement that God is the Creator of the universe. This simple declaration sets the stage for the rest of God’s inspired revelation in the Bible, the source of true wisdom from above.

We’re calling our study of the Bible “The Wisdom Journey,” not just because we’re going from Genesis to Revelation, but because this is a journey of wisdom. This isn’t my wisdom. These aren’t my ideas or opinions. We’re going to get into the Word of God.

The Bible has been given to us in sixty-six inspired and infallible books. Paul wrote that God’s Word is literally, “breathed out” by God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16). And that means if we do this journey correctly, if we go from port to port successfully as we sail together through this Book, we won’t just learn more about the Bible; we’ll learn more about the Author—God Himself. This book is the revelation of God.

Now each of our daily studies will take only fifteen minutes or less, so my prayer is that they will whet your appetite to study more so you can know Christ better and how to talk to Him and talk about Him to others. Listen, I have to tell you that when you begin a wisdom journey through God’s Word, it’s going to be hard to keep quiet about the Lord.

God’s Word might be new to you, but I’m praying God will give you the opportunity and the courage and the knowledge and ability to represent Him well in front of your family, coworkers, people in your neighborhood, people in the traffic pattern of your life.

I’m praying you will have a hard time keeping quiet about God and His Word.

Imagine finding an old metal box that has been covered up for a century—somehow it ended up in your great-grandparents’ basement. You open that box and find inside a diary—and it’s signed *Abraham Lincoln*. You take it to an antique specialist and eventually to historical experts, and they confirm you have indeed found the private diary of Abraham Lincoln.

What would you do? Well, we know what the historical society and all the scholars and all the experts would do. They would dig into this diary and study every word. It wouldn’t be so much to know what he wrote about or what life was like during his presidency. They would want to discover more about *him*.

What does this diary reveal to us about Abraham Lincoln—the way *he* thought, the things *he* loved, the decisions *he* made—and *why* he made them.

How are you seeking to know God more deeply?

Along this wisdom journey, we’re going to make a lot of interesting discoveries, but the greatest discoveries will be what we learn about our Lord and

Savior—our shelter and refuge, our Creator and confidant, our Good Shepherd, and the Chief Shepherd of the church today.

Now let me invite you to open your Bible, if you can, to the first page of inspired Scripture, the book of Genesis and chapter 1. You'll notice that the opening line just happens to introduce its Author.

Verse 1 says, "In the beginning, God . . ."

The name for God used here is *Elohim*. It stresses the power, majesty, and sovereignty of God above all gods. *Elohim* is actually a plural Hebrew noun, which certainly implies the Trinity. In fact, the very next verse tells us that the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Add to that the fact that the apostle Paul writes this in Colossians chapter 1: "By him [Jesus Christ] all things were created, in heaven and on earth . . . all things were created through him" (verse 16).

Jesus Christ, God the Son, was the actual Agent speaking the creative words in Genesis 1: "Let there be light," and so on. So, all three persons of the Godhead are involved in creation.

Now notice that the Bible doesn't begin here by saying, "In the beginning, there were ten good proofs for the existence of God." It begins simply, "In the beginning, God." It says, "Here He is. Whether you believe it or not, He exists."

God tells Moses, the human writer of Genesis, to write down what happened, what God did in the beginning. Verse 1 goes on to tell us, "In the beginning, God *created*." The verb here is describing creation out of nothing.

The writer of Hebrews put it this way: "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God" (Hebrews 11:3).

As humans, we can do a lot of amazingly creative things with stuff that already exists. But God created everything from nothing!

"God created the heavens and the earth," verse 1 says. Again, we're not given three reasons why God did it, or four ways you can prove He did it, or five

reasons why He even wanted to do it. We're just told He did it.

How does knowing God is the Creator of all things affect your priorities in life?

Now this statement, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," doesn't mean that the heavens and the earth are as old as God. Other passages inform us that God always was. In fact, God's name Yahweh (translated "LORD") literally means, "I AM."

The psalmist wrote in Psalm 90:2:

*Before the mountains were
brought forth, or ever you had
formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you
are God.*

So, when we're told here that God created the heavens and earth "in the beginning," that means, in the beginning of time as we know it. Or you could put it this way, "Here's how everything got started."

Maybe you're having an incredibly difficult time in life right now. Perhaps your life is filled with grief or trouble. Maybe you're trying to love a child or a spouse who never seems to see your good side. Maybe you're facing illness or financial shortfalls, and it seems like it's going to send you over the edge. Maybe you're enduring the pain of betrayal from a business partner or friend. Maybe after a long day, you're dreading driving home to an empty apartment or house.

Somebody said to me recently that grief is love with nowhere to go. You've experienced grief and loss, and it's like you've got nowhere to go with your sorrow.

Well, let me tell you something: you can take it to the powerful, sovereign, creator God who loved you enough to plan for you to be alive today. He loved you enough to send His Son to die for you so that you could be forgiven and have a future life that will never end. He loves you enough to tell you to cast all your burdens on Him, because He cares about you (1 Peter 5:7).

That grief, that trouble, that loss—you have somewhere to take it. Take it to God. If He's big enough to create the universe, He's big enough to direct your life and mine.

Why is it so critical to acknowledge that God is all-powerful?

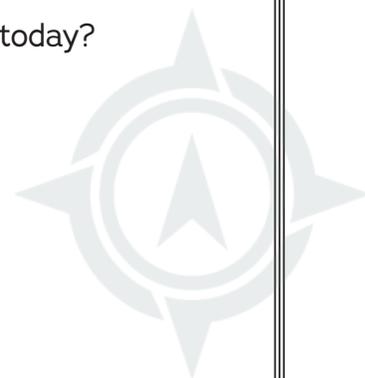
As we take this journey together through God's Word, you're going to discover a living, loving, powerful, wise God. That's why we're calling this program "The Wisdom Journey."

There are 31,102 verses in the Bible, and I truly believe this first verse is the most important one. If you can believe this first verse, that "in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth"—if you can believe that by faith—you can believe the rest of the Bible.

Now my prayer for you is the same prayer the apostle Paul prayed for believers living in the first-century city of Corinth: May "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Plot your Wisdom Journey.

How would the Lord have you respond to what you've learned today?



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