



THE BEGINNINGS!

The Book of Genesis

A Beautiful Beginning!

Genesis 2:1-17

Message #2 of 50 – S899

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Sunday Morning Service

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A Beautiful Beginning!

Genesis 2:1-17

Opening Comments

- Good morning – turn to **Genesis 2**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- The book of Genesis began with the creation of everything that exists
- It culminated with the creation of Adam, God's highest creation
- God looked upon what he had done and described it as very good
- I enjoy making things – unfortunately I am not very handy
- Regularly when I make something – my self-evaluation is – that is not very good! Occasionally there will be a 'that's good'. But every now and then I will look at what I have made and say, that is very good!
- It might not be as good as what someone else could do, but for me and my ability, it is very good
- God is perfect, so when He says something is very good, it is perfect
- But here in the next chapter we see God saying that something is not good – and then what God does about it
- There is a powerful message of hope for anyone who can look into their life and see something that is 'not good'
- God will take the 'not good' and make something beautiful
- What beautiful thing might God be creating for your 'not good' thing?
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Beautiful Beginning!**
- When Moses penned these words, there were no chapter breaks or verse numbers
- Chapter breaks were added to the Bible by the sixteenth-century printer-scholar Stephanus.

- They are not inspired. Verses 1-3 of chapter 2 should have been in chapter 1.
- They fit better with the six days of creation account
- **Genesis 2:1-3**
- After six 24-hour days creating all of the universe and everything in it, God rested
- Rested can also be translated as ‘ceased’ – His work of creation was finished, completed
- So good was the finished work of creation that God memorialized it by making the seventh day holy
- Later the seventh day was given to the Jews as the Sabbath **Exodus 31:16-17**

Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.

- It was meant to be a day of reflection upon God who created everything
- It was also to remind them that there is more to life than work
- As Christians we don’t find our rest in a day but in the Person of Jesus Christ **Matthew 11:28**

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

- Verse 4 begins another description of the creation account
- The rest of the chapter will focus on God’s creation of man
- **Genesis 2:4-6**
- When God first created the world, it was radically different than what we see today
- In the next chapter we will see that the consequences of the Fall affected the whole of creation
- It hadn’t rained – God watered the earth with a mist that came up out of the ground – some interpret this as springs of water – maybe
- In chapter one we were told that God created man in His own image and likeness
- Now we are told how He did it
- **Genesis 2:7**

- Anytime we get too full of ourselves we need to be reminded of this verse
- Our entire species started out as dust
- And no matter great you are today, someday you are going back to dust **Ecclesiastes 3:20**

All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust.

- ‘formed’ = squeezing into shape, to mold into a form
- I would love to see how that happened
- In Ezekiel 37 there is a prophesy – the valley of dry bones
- The Lord God breathed into his nostrils – God didn’t just speak and it was so, He formed man with His own hands and breathed life into His with His own breath
- God created man to be in an intimate, communion fellowship relationship with Almighty, Creator God
- Created in the image and likeness of God so that God could express His love to them and so that they could express love back to Him in worship
- All of God’s creation was beautiful, probably with a beauty that was lost in the Fall
- After God gave Adam life, He put Him into a **Beautiful Place**
- **Genesis 2:8**
- There is much speculation about the location of the Garden of Eden
- There is a clue here in this verse – ‘eastward’ – probably from where Moses was when he was inspired to write Genesis
- Another clue later
- God planted a garden – try to imagine how beautiful that garden was
- My son, Philip, planted a garden in the back yard – and it is doing really well
- I’m guessing that in God’s garden before the Fall gophers were not the evil, destructive creatures they are today
- **Genesis 2:9a**
- Not only was this place beautiful, it also provided an abundance of food – everyone are vegetarians at this point
- Trees were ‘pleasant to the sight and good for food’
- Remember that phrase, it shows up again in the next chapter

- Then two very specific trees
- **Genesis 2:9b**
- The tree of life imparted life in some way that is not understood
- If you had access to the Tree of Life you wouldn't die
- As it was the first several generations of humans lived for a very long time – almost 1,000 years
- It would have been longer if they hadn't been driven out of the Garden of Eden
- Likely, rather than dying, they would have been caught up to heaven like Enoch when God wanted them to
- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was there too
- Eating of that tree opened their eyes in a way that was infinitely harmful
- At the end of chapter one, they were naked and unashamed
- There was nothing wrong with being naked in public
- After eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they were ashamed of their nakedness and tried to cover themselves
- God will give Adam clear instruction regarding the trees in the garden later
- But first, a little geography
- **Genesis 2:10-14**
- Two of these rivers still exist, but do not have a common source and the other two are lost to time
- Does the Garden of Eden this exist somewhere in the world? I doubt it! Even if it did, God wouldn't let us find it.
- As Christians we are not looking for a garden, we are looking for a city – the New Jerusalem where we will live with Jesus forever
- God formed man out of the dust of the earth and then placed him in a beautiful place
- He then gave His highest creation a **Beautiful Purpose**
- **Genesis 2:15**
- God created the beautiful place for Adam and then gave him a purpose – to tend - to work it and to keep it – guard it, attend to it

- Work is not a curse – God worked for six days creating everything – Jesus says He is still working exercising His sovereign will over the universe
- The Bible has nothing good to say about the person who could work but doesn't **Proverbs 21:25-26**

The desire of the lazy *man* kills him, for his hands refuse to labor. He covets greedily all day long, but the righteous gives and does not spare.

- Paul would later exhort the **2 Thessalonians 3:10-12**
For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.
- Adam, created by God in a manner that was intimate, God's very life breathed into him
- Placed in this beautiful place and then given a beautiful purpose
- It was paradise
- And Adam wasn't doing it without reward
- **Genesis 2:16**
- 'you may freely eat' – in the Hebrew is 'eat – eat'
- The idea is eat all you want from any tree until you are satisfied
- That includes the Tree of Life
- What Adam had was a perfect life, in a perfect place, with a superabundance of food
- There was only one prohibition
- **Genesis 2:17**
- 'you shall surely die' = die, die = certainty of death
- Adam was made in the image of God, God is a moral being, therefore Adam had to be a moral being
- And so, God gave Adam a choice
- Once we get to chapter three, we will see that the choice was between moral autonomy and divine dependence
- Adam is in a beautiful, intimate relationship with God
- He is in a beautiful place and has been given a beautiful purpose
- Next week we will see that there is one more thing that Adam needs
- The he will be living in Paradise and will be complete
- We are not living in the same world that Adam was

- There is little of the perfection that was in the creation that Adam walked in
- I would like to leave you with three quick things
- First – **You are a beautiful creation of God!**
- God may not have formed you out of the dust, but your existence is a miracle none the less
- He breathed life into you so that you can walk with Him in beautiful, intimate, communion fellowship
- Second – **Find a beautiful place!**
- There is a lot of ugliness in this world, but there is still a lot of the beauty of God’s creation
- Take your eyes off the ugliness and look for the beauty – it is all around us
- The owls that are nesting on our property have started hatching babies again – it is amazing and beautiful to watch them
- There is beauty around you – you were made for it – find it
- Third and finally – **You have a beautiful purpose!**
- Your existence was not a mistake – you were ‘fearfully and wonderfully made’
- No matter what the rest of the world says, you are here for a reason – a beautiful purpose
- Just as Adam had access to the superabundance of the garden to satisfy his every need
- You also will find superabundance as you discover why God put you here and surrender yourself to His perfect will
- This world is not a paradise, but we are headed to Paradise
- Let’s live like we are excited about going there!
- **Pray!**