

X. God's Blueprint in Biblical Perspective

Foundations from Genesis

"A Christian Worldview"

Genesis 1–2

Dr. Harry L. Reeder III

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The reason we are doing this series is because I believe we are living in a challenging moment in the culture, with the cultural revolutions that are going on and even in the evangelical church as the culture's tentacles of challenge are working into denominations that I serve alongside of my own. It was no accident why we did the series on I Peter. I believe Peter gives the paradigm of how God's people live for Him on mission, on message and in ministry in a pagan world – what to expect and how to respond. Then I felt it crucial to understand Christianity 101 so I did a series on the Apostles' Creed which contain the foundational doctrines of the faith. That is what led us to the capstone epistle and foundational epistle – the book of Romans and the exposition of the primary doctrine which is the Gospel of our God. We need not be ashamed of it, eager to preach it and need to know it in terms of life and how to bring life to others. These come from the heart of a pastor because of the challenging days we are living in that are rapidly going to get more challenging.

What is crucial is, how you view what comes to you. I remember as a kid when I was facing a possible surgery and how frightened I was until my mom and dad told me why I would have the surgery, what would happen during the surgery and how they would be there with me as I went through it. I think the same thing is true in life. We know the challenges are there and we get the sense of the raging Satan against the bride of Christ, the woman of God, His bride, His covenant people. We see what happens in the surrounding culture and the Bible tells us not to fear but to have peace. Part of that comes from the dynamic of our relationship with Jesus Christ. We have the peace of God and with God through the Gospel of peace and Christ the Prince of Peace, but it's also because Christ helps us understand what we are facing and how we are to respond. He gives us a world and life view that shows us how to see what's coming. To see it rightly I want a Biblical, Christian world and life view.

To start this study, I'm going to take us back to the first study in this series where our life view is fed by our life love and when your life love propels you and compels you to embrace a Biblical life view that will issue in a Christ exalting lifestyle. The lifestyle is directed by the life view. The life view is embraced out of a love to Christ. I can preach on any book of the Bible, but if someone is not compelled by the love of Christ, then it is dismissed. I remember a particular hymn that had such a profound impact on me that I heard at the first chapel I attended in college and it was *All For Jesus*. As I heard it I sensed the Lord saying to me that if what they are teaching in the classroom matches this hymn then this is where I needed to be – all for Jesus. The first verse of that hymn says;

All for Jesus! All for Jesus!

All my being's ransomed pow'rs,

All my thoughts and words and doings,

All my days and all my hours.

This is a lifestyle from a life view that is all from Jesus, all about Jesus and all for Jesus.

The day of living in this culture and adding a little Christian religion and a little Jesus and it becomes an asset, is fleeting and is really already gone. To live for Jesus will require

conviction, courage and compassion and you can't do it without knowing life through the lenses of God's Word. If I were to put on a pair of red lensed glasses and look out on everyone, they would look like they had red skin. Whatever glasses I'm looking through is the way I'm going to respond and think of reality. It may or may not be accurate for it depends on the glasses. In a Christian world and life view, what we are attempting to do, by God's grace, is to put the glasses of life on – glasses that have a Christ-centered focus on all things. It is Biblically framed where everything in life is framed by God's Word and if Christ centered it will be Spirit empowered. So, we want Biblically framed, Christ centered prescription glasses with a Spirit empowered response to what we see and a God glorifying perspective in life.

Basically, there are two world views. One is the self-centered world view whereby we develop a culture of self – the promotion, absorption and reliance of and on self. The second is a God centered world view that is Christ focused, Biblically framed, Spirit empowered and God glorifying. The self-centered world and life view comes with all kinds of -isms – materialism, progressivism, scientism, secularism, humanism – and all the -isms have in common is that everything is viewed in terms of 'me,' terms of the self. One Baptist pastor said 'there is no accident that 'I' is the middle letter of sin.' This view is all about us and that's the way we would look at things.

When you get saved and get a new heart, now the love of Christ compels you and that becomes the life love. That gives you a hunger for God's Word. So a preacher just needs to preach faithful sermons because they are hungry for it. Discipleship is also embraced because you not only want a life love and a life view, but you want to download it into a lifestyle. You get a life love from a new heart, a life view from the Word of God by the Spirit of God, but you want a lifestyle that gives glory to God that you might enjoy Him.

So, the reason we are going back to Genesis is because it gives framing pieces for your life view. When my wife and I were in Charlotte, we had the opportunity to buy a piece of property that was so conducive for ministry due to it being so near the church and so we wanted to build a house on this property. To create the form of our house we asked the question, what is the purpose of our house for us, our marriage and our ministry? We laid out five things and then we went to an architect. We told him the things we liked and how it was to function so then we talked about the form. That is exactly the way I think we are to approach life. Then I saw this wonderful moment where they had the foundation laid and had started putting up the framing studs. The house began to take shape.

Many of us don't want to take the time to put the framing pieces in place. Use people that teach, who disciple and all of that but use them for you to dig into the Word to put the framing pieces in so that when you encounter something you know how view it so that you will know how to respond to it. Let's look at the text for this study found in Genesis 1.

Genesis 1:1-2 says *[1] In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. [2] 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.*

From this text we know we have a Trinitarian God where the Father authors creations, the Son accomplishes it and the Spirit of God hovers over it to bring order to it. But there is something here that automatically begins to speak to us about a world and life view. Notice that the Bible does not explain the origin of God or defend the reality of God – it reveals it and proclaims it. The Bible gives you the origin of space, time, matter, marriage, life, children, family, gender and all those things.

The book of Genesis is really ten books. Each book in Genesis starts with a phrase that goes something like this; ‘in the generation of...’ Genesis is made up of ten books explaining the origins of something in those ten books. It opens with the origins of the heavens and the earth starting in Genesis 2:4 after this preamble on the creation in Genesis 1:1 to Genesis 2:3. God affirms Himself and then begins to explain where everything else comes from, why it’s here and what is crucial about it.

In the previous studies on God’s Blueprint through Genesis we have looked at five framing pieces. First, we looked at the importance of the sanctity of Divine revelation. God has revealed Himself in creation and in His Word. You start with God’s Divine revelation because you can’t know God unless you know what God has given to reveal Himself – who He is and what He does as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Both creation and His Word are infallible but we are not infallible in our interpretation of them. The last rule of faith and practice is the Scripture whereby we know who God is and what He does. This made us ready for the second framing piece.

The second framing piece we studied was the sanctity of God. The Word of God reveals the God of the Word. The third framing piece we studied was the sanctity of creation and why the week of creation is so important in a Christian world and life view, which explains why it is so attacked in our world. The fourth framing piece we studied was the sanctity of man made in the image of God and His creation mandate to man which is to subdue the earth, rule over the earth and multiply.

The fifth framing piece we started into in this study was the sanctity of gender. I have already done nine studies that develop these five sanctities and we will go to a sixth one in our next study. This study will be on the sanctity of life which includes the confessing of our sin on the homicidal assault on the unborn in our nation. After that study we will come back to the sanctity of gender and look at what the Bible says about Biblical masculinity and femininity. Biblical femininity is being distorted and Biblical masculinity is being assaulted.

I want to demonstrate to you as a pastor why this is so important to pulling the trigger on discipleship and evangelizing others in this series of sermons. I want to do this by going to two exhibits that will show you why life view is so important when you meet challenges in life as a Christian. We will look at two events in the life of Christ as He is approaching Calvary. Let’s start by looking at Matthew 22. There were a couple of groups that took aim at Jesus. One group were the pragmatists who were known as the Pharisees and another were the days liberals who were known as the Sadducees. There were also the Herodians who were the sell-outs. Let’s look at what the Pharisees did in this text.

Matthew 22:15-22 says *[15] Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his words. [16] And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and You do not care about anyone’s opinion, for You are not swayed by appearances. [17] Tell us, then, what You think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” [18] But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, “Why put Me to the test, you hypocrites? [19] Show Me the coin for the tax.” And they brought Him a denarius. [20] And Jesus said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” [21] They said, “Caesar’s.” Then He said to them, “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” [22] When they heard it, they marveled. And they left Him and went away.*

Jesus responds as the Son of Man and we see, number one, that He is aware of their nature. He knows their intention so He knows how to respond to them. This is not those who are

His disciples looking for information about how to be in the kingdom of man and how to be in the Kingdom of God at the same time. No, they had malice as aforethought. Jesus uses a coin to show them that God has ordained government, the taxes they issue and the context of this sphere of authority. Then they marveled and it is my opinion that Jesus shows them the value of a Christian world and life view and the doctrine of creation and the sanctity of government right, because when He answers them, He says that if Caesar's image is on it then God has ordained that you respond in what is an appropriate tax, you pay it.

He is not only looking at sphere sovereignty from a Biblical world and life view when He says as Caesar's image is on it that you render it to him in God's sovereign plan – render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and render to God the things that are God's. He gives them why they pay taxes to governments in God's sovereign plan but they need to learn to respond in obedience when the image is upon the money and then give to God the things that are God's. Who bears God's image? The Christian does – you. He is telling them to surrender to God for they bear His image since they are made in His image and that is how and why you ought to respond to Him. They marveled and left Him so now let's take a look at some other group that was hanging around – the Sadducees.

Matthew 22:23-33 says [23] *The same day Sadducees came to Him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked Him a question, [24] saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.' [25] Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. [26] So too the second and third, down to the seventh. [27] After them all, the woman died. [28] In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."*

[29] *But Jesus answered them, "**You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.** [30] For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. [31] And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: [32] '**I am** the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." [33] And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at His teaching.*

The way Jesus answers them is why I am doing this series. They also start marveling at His response. Jesus tells them they are wrong with their illustration and they are wrong about the resurrection and the reason they are wrong is why so many Christians are letting the world make them frightened right now. It because they don't know the Scriptures or the power of God. They are being catechized by cable news and social media more than the Word of God. Therefore, you don't know the Scriptures or how to respond or the power of God.

Jesus tells them when we get to heaven this whole thing of marriage will be subsumed by the power of God and will neither be marriage nor giving in marriage and that's not less than what you enjoy in your marriage now. I don't know how He will work it out for I'll have to get there to see it but I know it will be even better than what we have now in how that is worked out.

Do you believe the Bible is inspired, inerrant, infallible and sufficient? Do you believe every single Word of the Bible by the original authors in the original manuscripts of the original languages, is inspired, inerrant and infallible? If you're a Christian, I hope you said 'yes' to both of these. Jesus tells them they are wrong because of one very small word. Notice Jesus says in Matthew 22:32, 'I am' for He is not the God of the dead but of the living. Was Abraham dead at this time? Yes, but though he dies yet he lives. Jesus says in John 11:25-26, [25] *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall*

he live, [26] and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" Jesus answers their questions and destroys their entire foundational doctrine of being as Sadducees with one word – Am – from one text. He doesn't say 'I was the God of Abraham and then he died.' He is not the God of the dead which tells us that Abraham lives. That's the resurrection. It is just knowing the Word and we begin to see the value of that Christian world and life view.

Now let's look at Acts 17:16-21 says [16] *Now while Paul was waiting for them (his team) at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. [17] So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace (the Gentiles) every day with those who happened to be there. [18] Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because **he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.** [19] And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? [20] For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean." [21] Now all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there would spend their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new.*

We see Paul here reasons with the Jews and Gentiles with the truth of the Scriptures about idols, not the anger of man. God's Word does not return void. There was nothing more distasteful than the resurrection to the Greek culture for they were students of philosophers especially Plato where the spiritual is good and the physical is evil so the whole point was to escape from the body, not get it resurrected.

When I take people on the trip called 'Following the steps of Paul' we go to Athens and see the Parthenon up on the hill and then right down on another hill, below the Parthenon is the place where the philosophers would gather known as the Areopagus or the Hill of the god Mars. That is where the philosophers would debate and hear new philosophers. Some of the philosophers had heard Paul in the synagogue and the market place and invited him to come to this place to debate with them. Here is what the Spirit of God does with Paul at the Areopagus.

Acts 17-22-34 says [22] *So Paul, **standing in the midst** (means they don't respect Paul for in those days the teacher sat and the people stood, but Paul showed respect to them by what he says to them) of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. [23] For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. [24] The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, [25] nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. [26] And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined (predestined or ordained) allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, [27] that they should seek God (that was their duty, to seek God), and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, [28] for (Paul gives two quotes from the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers)*

"In Him we live and move and have our being";

as even some of your own poets have said,

"For we are indeed his offspring."

[29] Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. [30] The times of

ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, [31] because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead."

[32] Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." [33] So Paul went out from their midst. [34] But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

In this passage, there is a laundry list of what I'm trying to do in the book of Genesis. Paul, from the book of Genesis, at this event brought a Biblical world and life view, affirmed the sanctity of Divine revelation (one doesn't know God by human imagination but by Divine revelation), affirmed the sanctity of God and in his affirmation of the sanctity of God he made clear that God was a Spirit and that God is sovereign, holy, Creator, Redeemer and Judge. As Paul responds in this moment it is a Biblical world and life view that frames his entire response. Paul then affirms the sanctity of man – made in the image of God and accountable to God. Paul brings them before the Judgment Seat of God having revealed to them the God who came to bear their judgment for them and rose victorious. He also brings to them the sanctity of Divine Providence for in Him you live, move and have your being. Paul brings to them the sanctity of worship, the sanctity of mercy, the sanctity of justice, the sanctity of grace and the sanctity of the final Judgment.

Paul brings to them most of all the sanctity of the Gospel where they can be saved and some are. Paul also brings to them the sanctity of common grace for he points out to them that even their own poets say this and get it right from time to time. Paul is also affirming the doctrine of total depravity but he makes clear in the mercy and grace of God that total depravity hasn't become absolute depravity, for they even now get some things right as God upholds them because in Him they live, move and have their being.

What do we see when we see what the Apostle Paul has done here? From the Word of God Paul deals in this situation with seven things. Number one is that everybody you meet is a worshipper. The question isn't whether they will worship but what and how will they worship? Is it true worship or false worship?

Secondly, everyone you meet is religious. Paul told them they were very religious. It could be the religion of sports, money, but there is something that claims religiously in your life your affections, adoration and allegiance.

Thirdly, everyone is a believer. Atheists are believers and you probably wouldn't believe the intricacies of the faith system they have.

Number four is that 'it ain't working' using slang, for if it's working why do people keep trying to find something new all the time? The Gospel hasn't changed, yet there are others who try to make one up that fits them. Whatever a person is religiously attached to is not working, if it's not Jesus and that's why they are having to get something new all the time.

Number five, Paul has just demonstrated to us that God's Word is true. Paul diagnoses them from what God says.

Number six, Paul demonstrates that God's Word is sufficient to equip us for everything and every moment.

Number seven, Paul demonstrates to us, just like the book of Genesis does, when we serve Jesus and live with a Biblical world and life view, motivated by a life love, proclaiming the prominence and preeminence of Christ, there will always be a mixed response to you. In Paul's situation here some believed, some mocked and some said 'we'd like to hear you again.' Be

ready for those who want a follow up appointment with you and this is why I'm doing the framing pieces from the book of Genesis. We just saw Paul use them in this Acts 17 text. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for the privilege to serve You, love You and follow You. Keep those who are reading this safe and please help us as we walk with journey of developing a Biblical world and life view with the foundation and framing pieces that are given to us in the book of Genesis with these creation mandates and sanctities. Then Father, give us a love for Christ that is manifested in our life, and a hunger for Your Word that is seen by obedience, not because we think it earns our salvation but because we want to love our Savior and I pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.