



In Caique's sermon last week, the subtitle was "Creation is Formed by the Word of God." Today, you might notice the subtitle is "Creation is Filled by the Word of God." As Caique mentioned last week, **the first three days of creation correspond with days 4-6.** The first day is separating light and darkness. The third day is space, planet and stars so that light and darkness can be expressed through them. Day 2 is creating an expanse in the sky, separating land and sky. Day 5 is animals to fill those areas. Day 3 is vegetation on the land. Then day 6, God fills the land with life to live off the ground.

As I think of this, I think of going to an orchestra or choir concert. Let's say you enter into the concert hall and you look at the platform and see an arrangement of chairs with music stands. Or, you see an arrangement to the risers. You look behind and there are sound boards placed in particular order. You notice the building itself is designed for sound to move *just right*. You glance down at your tickets and it says the concert will begin at 7. It's 6:50. You look back at all this stuff and say to yourself, "That's all dumb. Who cares about music stands. Who cares about people having seats. Who cares about sound boards and architecture. I just want to hear the orchestra!" If you know anything about music, you wouldn't say those things. You need the form in order to get to the function. But not only do you need the order for the function. You need it for the beauty that will be played and sung. All of this is put together in a specific way to maximize the experiential beauty.

Now, what does this have to do with Genesis 1? The first three days we see God forming, bringing order from chaos. And all of this matters because it sets the tone for the overall beauty of creation. The reason I use the word "beauty" is because, if you remember from last week, that's another way you can translate the word "good" in God's declaration in the days of creation. If you mark your Bibles, you might want to write that off to the side. God saw that it was *beautiful*.

As I say this, let's not forget the point of Moses writing all of this and to whom he's writing. He's writing to Israelites who are wandering in the wilderness after having been set free from Egyptian slavery. They're not experiencing beauty. While they've seen miracles, they've also experienced death, enslavement, poverty. They need to be reminded of who God is and how he is worthy of their trust; so, Moses takes them to the beginning to see who God is. I love how one commentator wrote of Moses' intention in Genesis. He said, **"The battle [in writing Genesis] centered around the belief in one God who is himself uncreated, merciful, and sovereign versus the belief in multiple gods and demons who are capricious, unpredictable, and often immoral"** (Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, p. 133).

Can you relate to Israel? It's easy to read the creation account and be in awe of it and say it sounds so beautiful, but what does it have to do with our lives in a world that, while still possessing some beauty, has an immense amount of horror and sadness?

The creation account is written to show us who God is, and what kind of Being he is. Then, in knowing him, we discover who we, as humans, are. And, when we discover these realities, we can trust him in the brokenness of this world. But I have a question for you: Will you listen to the creation narrative today and submit yourself to God? I ask this question because in Romans 1, we're told that all creation is born valuing the creation above the Creator. We look to ourselves for wisdom and suppress the truth about God and embrace lies. Is that you today? If so, you're very much like the people in Moses' day, too. Actually, in this creation narrative, as God is revealing his glory and beauty, he's also confronting humanity's tendency to worship and value this creation above God. The way this narrative is written, it shares similarities to other ancient near eastern creation stories; however, this creation narrative makes shocking and startling claims about Elohim. As Moses shows how God *fills* creation, we see that anything we cling to is merely created and that God alone is worthy of our worship. All beauty and majesty comes from him and he deserves our worship.

With this backdrop, let me give you the main idea of the sermon today: **God beautifully fills creation to bring life and to uniquely display his worth and glory in creation, especially through mankind.** Let's break this sentence down and begin our trek through verses 14-31.

1. God beautifully fills creation to bring life.

As I've stated, the phrase "it was good" can be translated as, "it was beautiful." I want to encourage you all to take time to ponder creation sometime this week, if you haven't recently. Maybe you can simply read Genesis 1 and then go for a walk in silence. Notice all the beautiful and awe-inspiring things you see. Or, maybe you stay inside, but slowly read through each creation day. Close your eyes and imagine the awe-inspiring power causing bursts of life that then seem to fill what was formed. And say with God, "and it was beautiful."

Like the illustration I stated earlier with an orchestra, there is form in order to fill with life and beauty. So, let's say it's 6:50 and the concert starts at 7, but 7 rolls by and there's nothing. 7:10 comes and goes. Nobody comes out. You paid good money for this. You've been waiting. Then the lights turn out, heats turned off. You're left cold in the building. I think some of us tend to think this is what God's like, and there's nothing further from the truth.

God creates to give life, not death. As we learned in Genesis 1:2, God intended from the very beginning to show that he can bring life and order from darkness and seeming disorder. So, creation reveals the glory of God's beauty and his power in giving resplendent life. Hear this. God doesn't work in order to destroy. That's never his goal. Many of you right now might say, "Yep, I know," but I want you to think about your life right now. I remember years ago, after my dad had his stroke, I was talking with him, and he said something that surprised me, and even at the time somewhat angered me. He said that God has always been faithful to him. I think I was still dealing with frustration and anger towards God for allowing the stroke and taking away certain abilities from my dad. And inside of me I was thinking, "Really?! God has *always* been faithful?"

Have you ever felt that way? I'm sure that's what the Israelites are thinking in the wilderness. At various points in time, they doubt God's goodness and believe he's doing things to hurt them. Can you relate with Israel? But are those thoughts and feelings true? Absolutely not. God creates to give life, not death. Our life might look formless and void right now, but days 4, 5, and 6 reveal that abundant, teeming life is God's goal. How can I say that? Look at these verses with me: ¹⁴ **And God said, "Let there be lights in the**

expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night.¹ One light? No. Many lights! Look at the night sky and just try to count them! God creates to bring abundant life. Look at verse 20: **20 And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.”**² God just wants a few animals? No! He wants swarming life. And not only that. He wants more. You get to verse 22: **22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”**³ Then verse 24: **24 And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so.**⁴ Then God creates humanity, and says, **“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. . . .”**⁵

God creates to give life, not death. And after each of these days, God says it was beautiful. He beautifully fills creation to bring abundant life

2. . . .and to uniquely display his worth and glory. . . .

God is worthy of all honor and praise and adoration we can give to him because he is all-glorious. But why does this matter? What you value, you worship. The word “worship” is simply “worth-ship.” The more you value something, the greater you treat it. I remember listening to a comedian once who said he was at a zoo and saw a child’s crying because their balloon went up to the sky. The parents responded by simply telling the kid to stop crying because it’s just a balloon. But the comedian went on to say that he’d like to see what would happen if the parent’s wallet just starting floating up in the sky. What’s the comedian highlighting? The child valued the balloon. We value our money. Our emotions are attached to what we value. And, as a result, we live our lives according to our values. So, **what you value most, you worship. What you worship dictates to you how you live.**

Think now about Israel in the wilderness. They’re coming from the land of Egypt that worshipped creation (like Romans 1), and they’re also going to a land where the people worship creation. As a result, these people groups live in all sorts of ways that are contrary to God because they don’t worship God. But God’s people are to be different. How are they going to live differently if they don’t see how God is different than how the culture is portraying him? This is what we see in the creation narrative: God is different than the gods of the cultures.

In Day 4 and the creation of the lights, we’re told their purpose: **And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so.**⁶ In other ancient cultures and religious writings, the Sun and Moon are actually gods. The stars are gods. These are beings that need to be appeased and worshipped so that we humans can live in peace. Yet here in the Genesis creation account, God makes them. And they’re made not for us to serve them, but they serve us.

Even in our day, people treat the cosmos with worship. Whether it may be atheistic scientists who communicate the glory of the galaxies in terms of worship or it’s people who practice astrology. People even today still embrace their astrological sign. Why? Because they are giving the stars more power than

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:14.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:20.

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:22.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:24.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:28.

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:14–15.

they have. The stars can dictate or tell us what's going to happen? No. They're given to reveal the faithfulness of God. Isn't that what we're told in Lamentations 3. The faithfulness of seasons shows the faithfulness of God, even in the midst of great sorrows. Day and night; winter, spring, summer, fall; years and decades point to a God who has filled his creation with billions of stars and galaxies to point to his great faithfulness to us who live on this little planet earth. So, people can choose to worship the stars, but in doing so, they suppress the truth about God who made them all!

But there's more. Look at Day 5. ²¹ **So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.**⁷ Think of the Egyptian gods. Head of a bird, body of a man. Or, look at the phrase "great sea creatures." In one ancient creation narrative that would have been contemporary with ancient Israel speaks of the god Marduk creating "the earth first by conquering and slaying the monster Tiamat and then cutting her corpse in half" (Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, p. 130). There's something similar in the story of Baal, where his wife destroys the great sea creature for Baal. These share some parallelism with the Hebrew word for the great sea creature. But notice here in the Genesis narrative, that the sea creature isn't a great power at the level of God's power. We're simply told that God created it. This would be jaw-dropping for the initial readers and extremely confrontation to the other nations. God is the God over all. He is the one worthy to be valued supremely by us because he is uniquely glorious!

Finally, in Day 6, we see all land animals (that again were objects of worship by Egypt and other cultures because they represented gods), and yet again we're told God creates them – not to be worshipped, but for humans to exercise dominion over them. We don't serve them. They serve us. And we are to treat them with the knowledge that God created it all beautiful. God has created it all to uniquely display his worth and glory! So, what about you? Who or what do you value supremely? Money? Animals? Stars and planets? Are you looking to other things to give you what only God can give? Do you trust that God is good and life-giving? Will you listen to creation's song that is pointing you to his worth and glory? I pray so because God beautifully fills creation to bring life and to uniquely display his worth and glory in creation,

3. . . .especially through mankind.

God fills creation with plants, vegetation, sky and sea animals, land animals. After all of this, he against says this is beautiful. But then we read verses 26-27: **Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.**⁸

Humanity is not a divine accident. Humanity wasn't created to be vindictive to other gods, like some narratives might allude to. No, humanity is created by the Word of God. God said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." There is utter uniqueness for human beings. "Let us" reveals that God is communal in himself. The word "make" is create. It's something only God does. And "man" is referencing mankind. The creation here is representative of the entire human race. How is man made? After God's image and likeness. Let your mind be blown! The God who created all of this teeming,

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:21.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ge 1:26–27.

abundant life from chaos is the God who then says, “I want one being to represent me and shine my character in this physical creation: humans.” What a privilege! That’s us!

What does it mean to image? Well, it doesn’t mean that we are exactly identical to God because God qualifies what image means for us. We are after his likeness. This word indicates we’re not exact replicas. In other words, humans are most like God in creation than anything else. So, let’s get back to the word “image.” The word here is the word from which we get our word “icon.” It’s a word that referred to idols that were representatives of gods. Or, it was used of Kings who would set up statues of themselves around the border of their territory. Those statues spoke to the ruler of the area. We humans are to rule under God’s rule. Human beings are to show *who* is the Ruler over all. And, Adam and Eve, being placed in the garden of Eden were to emphasize the necessity to all creation to worship God and protect that worship. That’s what Moses goes on to write. So, humans are to exercise dominion. And this dominion actually doesn’t speak of being despotic, but it’s a servant-like care. Later, in Leviticus 25, God tells his people what how rulers are to exercise their rule – with care and for the purpose of showing who the Supreme Ruler is. Humans are to show the glorious beauty and love of God, and we are to (with creation) call all to point to the supreme value of God. This is the privilege of man and woman. I truly believe only those of us who know and trust Jesus can truly rejoice in this. God’s glory is what we are made for. **To savor, rejoice in, revel in supreme Beauty and Majesty, and to shine his glory to all creation is our created privilege!**

And, just as God is communal in himself, his image is on display in creating mankind as male and female. I’m not going to take a lot of time on this in this sermon, but I hope to in chapter 2. But I need to emphasize this. We live in a society that increasingly twists the Scriptures and even says there are way more than two genders. Genesis 1 will not allow that viewpoint. “In the image of God, he created *them*.” Who’s the them? Mankind. Then he says “male and female, he created *them*.” After the Fall, from Noah’s day and also in Jesus’ teaching, we’re told that this description is to be applied even after the Fall. Jesus says people are still created in God’s image, as male and female. Oh Ventura, this matters because our culture today is diminishing the glory of God by saying even gender differences do not matter, but since God is Ruler over all and he says that his glory is on display through both men and woman coming together as mankind, then gender matters. Will you listen to the Ruler over all? Look at verse 31! Immediately after blessing mankind, we’re then told that creation now is *very beautiful*. There are representatives of God, ruling under his rule as male and female. If God says something is very beautiful, it can only be beyond our comprehension awesome!

Will you listen to the creation narrative? Or, will you suppress the truth about God and worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator? But maybe I should ask a different question. We all already have suppressed the truth about God and worshipped creation. The point of Paul in writing those things is to show that every human being, left to themselves, glory in their own glory – not Gods. We’re stuck in that pattern. But Paul goes on to write about the hope God has given this world so that we humans can be restored and rescued to live out the original design of glorying in God’s glory. How can this be? Through Jesus. He is a new Adam, a second Adam, who comes to live perfectly in this world and point people to God’s glory. We’re also told in Scripture that Jesus, while being human and created in God’s image, **He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.**⁹ Jesus isn’t just *like* God. He is God. And he came into this world to bring about *new creation*. Therefore, in Colossians 1, we read: ¹⁸ **And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.** ¹⁹ **For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,** ²⁰ **and through him to reconcile to himself all**

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 1:3.

things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister. ¹⁰

Terms like “head” and “firstborn” are not to be taken literally. They’re titles referring to preeminence. Mankind was to rule powerfully, and yet Adam and Eve brought sin into the world and we have become sinners. But Jesus came and has ruled perfectly, and continues his rule now! And through his rule, he’s calling people to see the Beauty and goodness and glory of God! Do you hear him? Have you heard him? Do you see the brokenness around you? Jesus came to bring the new creation. Jesus said, “¹⁰ **The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.**”¹¹ The life of new creation is to teem and grow! Because Jesus took the punishment our sins deserved, if you turn from your rebellion and turn to him for forgiveness, you are then made one with him, like being born again, you are made part of the new creation. You’re reconciled to him, and given abundant life!

And if you have turned to Christ already, this is good news to be reminded of. Paul calls the Colossians to continue in this faith, not shifting from this hope that Jesus is the preeminent One who is bringing the new creation and rules over this chaotic world! Listen, God has brought order from chaos in the original creation, he’s definitely going to do it with the new creation. He’s worthy of our trust! Will you continue to look to Christ? If you continue to look to Jesus, the Bible says we are transformed from one degree of glory to another until we see him face to face. Our image is being restored, beauty is being restored, our rule of pointing to God’s glory is being restored! And, we’re told in other places of Scripture that we get war against the demonic realm and trample the evil one. But there’s more. If you have trusted in Jesus, you have abundant life.

God beautifully fills creation to bring life and to uniquely display his worth and glory in creation, especially through mankind. And through Jesus, the God-Man, he is filling the new creation with transformed people who uniquely display his worth and glory in creation.

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Col 1:18–23.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Jn 10:9–10.