



Message **Transcript**

An Introduction

Jeff Schwarzentraub

- Well, thank you so much for choosing to worship with us. Everybody, keep your hands together to welcome all of our online platforms. And our Broomfield campus is worshipping with us. So glad to have you. Also wanna let you know about a couple of things. On September 26, it's a Saturday. We're really calling it a national day of prayer and repentance and joining with some other ministries that are doing that. We wanna be a part of that here at BRAVE Church, so what we're gonna do is we're gonna have 24 hours of prayer scheduled from Friday night at midnight until Saturday night at midnight. Just encourage you, pick an hour and come, pray, and seek the Lord. Let's just get before him, let's repent, and let's call it a day of humiliation. Let's get right with our God. So that'd be a great time to do that, on September 26. Hope that all of you will be willing to participate in that. You can learn more about that at our website, bravechurch.online, or if you're attending here, you can just go to one of the QR codes right in front of you, pull it up on your cell phone. There you can also get sermon notes, you can know how to give to the church, and we're just so glad that you're here.

- [Parishioner] Amen!

- Secondly, I wanna let you know this: it's a super exciting day for us. Did you know why? Kids and students have opened up now. Amen? I'm super excited about that. And I hope that you'll cheer for this 'cause this is something that we're about. We are about planting churches. That's what we're about. We're about seeing the kingdom of God grow through his church all over the place, and today in South Indianapolis, Joe Cotroneo and his wife, Becca, launched Doxa Church. They had just under 400 people

there today. Can we give God praise for that? So our prayer, our desire, our hope is we'll see more and more churches planted to the glory of God. And with that, I'm thrilled about our new series that we're gonna be in, so let's go before our Father, and let's pray and seek his face and ask him to be helpful to us today. Would you pray with me? Lord Jesus, we give you all the praise, glory, and honor for who you are. Lord, we thank you that you're a God who makes himself known. And we thank you that every time your word is open and accurately proclaimed, Lord, that you have a way of speaking directly to us. So, Lord, our desire is that we would hear you. Lord, clear our hearts and minds of any distractions, and, Lord, if there's any known sin in our life that we need to repent of, that we do that now, knowing that when we confess our sin, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Lord, be helpful to us as we begin this new series. Be helpful to me as I preach it and prepare these messages. Lord, help us get a greater awareness and understanding of who you are, of all you're doing, and, Lord, for what you're gonna do, we give you all the glory, honor, and praise. And now for all God's people gathered who wanna hear his word, believe what he says, and by faith put into practice what he shows you, would you agree with me very loudly this morning by saying the word amen?

- Amen.

- Amen. I love being around engaged couples and people that have just given birth to one of their children because their view of time is so different than anybody else. If you ask an engaged couple, "How long till you get married?" and they're a

month or two or three out, they won't say, "A month or two." You know what they'll tell you? How long till you get married? "43 days, four o'clock in the afternoon." How long till you get married? "32 days." Right? If you ask people that have just had kids and given birth, like, "How old's your child?" It's not one, not two. 12 months, 13 months, eight months, because every bit of that time period is so exciting that we wanna capture it, and we wanna understand exactly what that timeframe looks like. I wanna let you know about the series that we're just getting ready to start called the Alpha/Omega series. I have been anticipating this series for about a year and a half. I feel that way, 18 months. And I'm excited to be able to dive in to the book of Genesis. We're gonna be taking a look at the first 11 chapters of God's word and the last 22 chapters of God's word. The alpha and omega. The series really comes out of Revelation 22:13, where Jesus says, he calls himself. He says, "I am the alpha and omega. I am the first and the last. I am the beginning and the end." The Greek alphabet has 24 letters: alpha's the first letter; omega is the last. Jesus is not saying, "I'm one at the beginning, and I'll be there at the end." He says, "I am; this is who I am. I've always been. I will always be. I was the first; I'm the last." That's who he is, and so what we're gonna take a look at is the beginning of time and how everything got established, and then we're gonna take a look at how everything's going to culminate. Now before we start this series, I need to make a couple observations, and I need to make a couple of comments so that you understand just a few things. We here at BRAVE Church believe that all scripture is centered on the person and work of Jesus Christ, which means that, so the greatest story that's ever been told is that God the

Father sent his son to be the savior of the world, that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, incarnated himself by putting on flesh, living a perfect life, fulfilling the law, dying on the cross, being buried, and was raised from the dead so that all who would repent of their sins and trust Christ would have life in his name forever more.

Amen?

- Amen.

- That's the Gospel. But there's more to the Gospel than just the Gospel. That's why God gave us 66 books. He wants us to understand more about his character, and who he is, and what he's doing, so I wanna be really clear from the onset that this doesn't take away from the Gospel. The only thing this will do in this series is strengthen your understanding of the Gospel ministry of who Jesus Christ is. A second comment I need to make is this: oftentimes when we talk about topics that not everybody in the church agrees on, whether it be creation or how everything's gonna work itself out in the end, there's oftentimes where people come to church, and they sit there with this idea. "I wonder if I'm gonna agree with what Pastor Jeff says on everything." You won't, and I don't care. And more importantly, God doesn't care. I am not an authority on the word of God. God is an authority on the word of God. So in this series, here's what I'm asking you to do. If there are things that you hear that say, "It doesn't sound right," just please go back to scripture. If God shows you something than what I'm saying, as I've said for the last 10 years, always believe what the word of God says. The word of God is tried; the word of God is true. But I wanna talk to you today about, why study Genesis 1-11? Well, why even go there? Because for

many Christians, I think they say things like this: "Well, all Christians disagree on this stuff. It really doesn't make that much different anyway. A lot of people that love Jesus have a lot of different views. Why start there?" And so I wanna answer that question. I wanna give you three reasons that we're gonna study the book of Genesis, and then we're gonna take a look at Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." That's our one verse we're gonna look at today, and we're gonna say, "How does God introduce himself to the world?" And I'm gonna give you five ways that God introduces himself to the world. So first is this: why would we even study Genesis chapter one through 11? And the first is this: it answers many of life's greatest questions. Genesis chapter one, or chapters one through 11, answer many of life's greatest questions, okay? So Genesis is a book that's 50 chapters long, we're not gonna go through all 50 chapters, but the first 11 chapters show how God put the entire universe together and establishes events for how God responds to different things. Starting in chapter 12, he calls Abram, who becomes Abraham, and he begins working through people. That's what we see. We're gonna take a look at the first 11 chapters. Now why is it important? Because it answers many of life's greatest questions. Think about some of these questions. See if you've ever asked these questions. Who am I? Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Why are there so many problems in the world? Is there any solution? Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do good things happen to bad people? Are we physical or are we spiritual? How was the world really created? Does God have a purpose for human beings? Why haven't things worked out so well for me? How does

God respond when we sin? Where did gender come from? How many are there? Who created them? For what purpose? Why are there so many different languages in the world? Why do people have different skin colors? Why does God sometimes feel so different? Did dinosaurs really exist? Is there any hope? Genesis chapter one through 11 is gonna answer all those questions. So if you say, "Well, it's not really relevant because it's the oldest book in the Bible," it may be, as all scripture is, one of the most relevant pieces of information that we can look at because it's gonna answer those questions. Just by show of hands, anybody ever asked any of those questions before? We all do, right? That's why we're going there. Secondly is this: why teach Genesis one through 11? It does this: it establishes the foundation of our faith. It establishes the foundation of our faith. You can really sum up the entire Bible in four words: creation, fall redemption, and restoration. That's really the story from Genesis through Revelation. God created the world. Man fell on his sin. God's been working out a plan to redeem the world and buy back people, and, ultimately, he's gonna restore the world to his creative order. Now why is this important that we study Genesis one to 11? Because if we can understand what God was trying to establish from the beginning, then when we get to the book of Revelation, we'll understand what he's going to bring back together and how he's going to culminate it. It's going to be an exciting time to go through both of these books. I think many people get excited. "Oh, you're teaching Revelations. Revelations is my favorite book. I love Revelations." Well, when I hear somebody say that, I know they've never even read the book because the very first sentence of the book of Revelation talks about the revelation of Jesus Christ.

There's only one revelation: he's unpacking Jesus and what Jesus is going to do at the end, and we're gonna take a look at that. And if we can believe at the beginning what God is doing, then we can also believe at the end what he is going to culminate and bring back together. So it's really important because the more we understand about Genesis chapters one through 11, the more we're gonna have our understanding of a doctrine of God. Who is God? How does God relate to his people? How does God respond to his people? What is God doing in the world today? Where is he at? Why does he do what he does? Does God really punish sin? Why would God punish sin? How does God feel about the family? We're gonna get our doctrine of God. We're gonna get a better doctrine of man or anthropology. Why are we the way that we are? Why do we respond the way we do? Why do we have the problems that we have? We're gonna get a better understanding of that. You're gonna get a doctrine of demons and angels. You're gonna understand that there's a created being called Satan who's real, who is alive. What is his intention? What does he do? How does he work? As we navigate through these first 11 chapters, you're gonna see all sorts of things about God that often get left undiscussed and not talked about because, for many people, they're afraid to preach the entirety of God's word. And here at BRAVE Church, we believe that all scripture belongs to God, and so we're gonna preach it. I believe that the more you study this book, and the more you read this book, and ask yourself do you believe what God's actually saying, this will strengthen your faith unlike any other study that we've done here at BRAVE Church. So it answers many of life's greatest questions, it establishes the foundation for our faith, and third is this. Genesis

chapters one through 11 are scriptural, and, therefore, completely trustworthy. You need to understand that. We're not talking about man's opinion about what we think about God. We're gonna discuss what God says about who God is and how everything got here, right? We believe that the scripture is true. So if you've been with us before, I'm gonna walk through this really quickly so that you understand, 'cause I know if you're visiting with us, I wanna give you a foundation for why we say this is true. So you can write these verses down. I'm gonna go through them very fast. But you need to understand something about the scripture. When it comes to the scripture, God used human authors to pen his word, nearly 40 authors over a period of time to get God's word. And here's what we know about God's word. Number one, it's eternal. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our Lord stands forever." So here's what you can know about this book. Everything written in this book will always be here, and will always be right, and will always be true.

Secondly, according to 2 Timothy 3:16, it says this: "All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, and correcting, and training, and righteousness so the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." So it means that the word of God is inspired. Inspired doesn't mean when I read it, I feel really good and all jazzed up on the inside. Inspired means any time and any place that you open God's word, this is God's word speaking directly to you. This is God talking. Whether we're saying, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," that's God speaking to you about creation. Whether we read John 3:16, "For God so loved the world so much that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him should not

perish, but should have eternal life," that's God speaking. It's God inspired. This is God's words, not man's words. You say, "How do you know that?" 'Cause 2 Peter chapter one verses 22, or I'm sorry, verses 20 and 21 says this, "But know this, first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy spirit spoke from God." It means this: it's infallible. Well, I don't know that I believe that 'cause Moses wrote that. I don't know that I believe that 'cause John wrote that. Did Jesus really mean that when he said that? No, all scripture is God breathed, and you have to understand that everything you read is not man's interpretation about what they think about God. It was God using his Holy Spirit to speak through men, so when you see the word of God, it's God. It's his word. It's him speaking. So God's word is eternal. It's inspired. It's infallible. That means it's trustworthy, and here's why, because it's inerrant. It's inerrant. John 17:7 says, "Sanctify them in the truth. Thy word is truth." Everything in this book is trustworthy and reliable. Whether we're talking about history, whether we're talking about science, whether we're talking about physics, this book is true. If there's one error in this book, there may as well be a million, and if it did, it didn't come from the God of truth. This book is true, meaning everywhere you go, what you read, you're reading truth. There's no error in here, okay? So the word of God is eternal, it's inspired, it's infallible, inerrant, and, ultimately, is this: because of those things, it's authoritative. It's authoritative. When Jesus finished preaching the greatest sermon of all time, the Sermon on the Mount, and finished teaching, and says this in Matthew 7:28 and 29: "When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were

amazed at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one having authority and not one of the scribes." The word of God has authority. Authority means in charge. So when you hear God's word that's true, and inspired, and inerrant, and infallible, God's saying, "This is true, and this is what I'm saying, so do what I'm telling you to do." It means when we read God's word, we're not really reading it just to say, "What do I think about this?" We're reading God's word to understand that the God that penned the words of these books said, this book said, "This is true, and you need to submit your life to everything I'm telling you about this. If I'm talking about marriage, it's true. Submit to it. If I'm talking about raising kids, it's true. Submit to it. If I'm talking about for how to handle your money, submit to it; it's true. If I'm talking about creation, it's true." Okay, that's true of all scripture. All scripture is breathed by God, from Genesis 1:11 through Revelation 22:21. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," all the way to the end where he's telling us, "Come Lord Jesus," all right? But let's just talk about this. Do we see anywhere in the Bible where anybody else would believe that Genesis is literal history that's really true? I wanna give you some scriptures today from God's word so that you can see the evidence as to why Genesis is true because I could stand up here and tell you what scholars say, but the more I read different scholars, the more I thought to myself, "Who cares? They're just people, like me." So that's not authoritative. I wanna know what God's word says about Genesis. So follow me, if you will, to 1 Corinthians. I'm gonna read these verses very fast. You need to write them down. 1 Corinthians 15:22. This is the apostle Paul talking, these next three verses. "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made

alive." What does that tell you about the apostle Paul? He believed in a literal Adam that was created by God, the first man. He didn't believe Adam was just assigned for creation of all humankind. In the same way Adam was a real man, so Jesus Christ put on flesh as the God man and was just as real as he was. Romans 5:12-14 says, "Therefore just as through one man, sin entered the world." Well, how did we get sin, Adam, the real man that didn't do what God told him to do? Verse 14, "Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses." God said, "If you eat off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the day you eat it, you will certainly die." God said, "You're gonna die." Paul said, "Adam's dead." The real man really sinned and really died, and because he died, we needed a second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, to make us alive. How about when the apostle Paul talks about marriage? Ephesians chapter five talks about submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ, and in this oneness that wives would submit to their husbands in everything, and that husbands would love their wives like Christ loved the church. And sums up by saying, wives, love your husbands or wives, respect your husbands, and husbands, love your wives. Where does Paul get this information? From Genesis 2:24. In Ephesians 5:31, he quotes it. He says, "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." How is Paul getting this? He's getting it from the Old Testament. When you read through the New Testament, you're going through the book of Acts, and you're saying, "Paul reasoned with them from the scriptures." Where is he going? He's starting all the way back in Genesis, and he's sharing the Gospel of Jesus from Genesis. Do you know why? 'Cause he can't flip out

his New Testament from Philipians 'cause he hasn't written it yet. So he's using all the Old Testament scriptures to lead people to Christ because all the Old Testament scriptures are about Christ. But even better than that, I wanna tell you what Jesus said because there's a lot of people that will say, "I don't really care about Genesis. Who really cares. I just believe Jesus and that's enough." So wouldn't it be good to know what Jesus thought about Genesis? May be important if Jesus had an opinion on what Genesis said that we would believe what he says. And if you look in the New Testament, when it comes to divorce and remarriage and marriage and how it's supposed to be, in Matthew chapter 19, in Mark 10, Jesus affirms marriage, he affirms two different genders as male and female, and he affirms that they were Adam and Eve. He said, "From the beginning, it was not this way." And he quotes Genesis 2:24 the same way Paul did, "For from the beginning, it was not this way, For a man will leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." So Jesus believed Genesis 2 was literal history, and Jesus is saying from the beginning it wasn't that way, and Jesus is saying that not only because he penned the book but because he was there at that time. Or how about after Jesus rose from the dead? When Jesus rose from the dead, there's a story we read about him walking with two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus. We call it the walk to Emmaus. It's a great scripture in Luke chapter 24. And in Luke chapter 24, how did Jesus feel about Genesis? Did he really believe that Moses was the author? Notice what he says in Luke 24:27. It says, "Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, he explained to them the things concerning himself in all the scriptures." So where does

Jesus go to describe that he is the Lord who's been raised from the dead? All the way back to Moses. What did Moses write? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Where does Jesus start to show that he's the Christ? All the way back in Genesis, believing Moses was the one that authored it. Why would you just believe that? Because he was there watching Moses write down what the Holy Spirit instructed him to do so that God's word would be penned. He goes on in that same section in Luke chapter 24 and verse 44, he spoke to him and said, "These are my words, which I spoke to you while I was with you, that all things which are written about me in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." What was Jesus saying? "There's all sorts of things written in Genesis about me. There's all sorts of things written in the Psalms about me. There's all sorts of things written in the prophets about me." So Jesus using his entire Old Testament, believing Moses wrote the first five books, saying, "If I'm gonna tell you who I am, I'm gonna start all the way back in Genesis." That's Jesus talking in Luke chapter 11. He mentions that Abel was the first prophet that was killed. He believed Abel was a real man that was killed. Or in Luke chapter 17, when Jesus is discussing the end, he affirms Noah being a real man, entering a real ark, and having a real global flood. He mentions Sodom and Gomorrah as a real place where fire rained down with a real man named Lot that escaped with a real wife that turned into a real pillar of salt. That's Jesus talking. He affirms the Old Testament as literal history. And what he's doing in that text on the Olivet discourse, he's saying in the same way that judgment came just that fast with Noah and with Lot, so will it be when the son of man comes. So Jesus

said, "If you wanna know what's gonna happen in the future, you better know what's happened in the past." Now that wasn't enough for Jesus. Notice some of these other startling comments that he makes. When he's talking to the religious leaders of the day in John chapter eight, starting in verse 56, he says this to the religious leaders of the day: "Jews know that Abram was called by God, who became Abraham, who birthed the nation of Israel, so he's the father of the nation. That's who they look to for everything." Jesus says to them, "Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." So who know what the Jews say to him? "You're not yet 50 years old, and you've seen Abraham?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you before Abraham was born, I am." They picked up stones to stone him at that point in time. What was he saying? He's like, "I know all about Abraham. I've known him before he was created, I know him now, and he rejoiced to see my day." And they're like, "You're only 50 years, you're not even 50, and you know Abraham?" He's like, "Hey, before Abraham was, I always have been. I'm the God of the universe standing right in front of you." He tells him in John chapter five, "You diligently study the scriptures because you think that in them you have life, yet these are the very scriptures, the Old Testament scriptures starting in Genesis, that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life." Understand this, you can say, "I don't care what Genesis says," but Jesus says, "Genesis begins the revelation of who I am, and I believe Genesis, and I believe what Genesis says about me." So it's important if Jesus and Paul all believed that Genesis started establishing who we are and what we should believe in our faith, that it would be really important. How about even one more? When it comes to

creation, where was Jesus? Well, if you know the first verse in your Bible, it says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," John, the apostle, picks up on that language to start his gospel. You know what he says? "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." Well, who's this word that was with God. He tells us in verse 14, "And the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." What does that tell us? That this one that was incarnate, this one that was the God man, this one that came to Earth for our sins was the one that was alive in Genesis chapter one that was making everything happen through his voice. That's what he's saying. Do we think it's important that we better understand who this Jesus is? Jesus is eternal. He didn't come alive 2,000 years ago. He's always existed. And what we get to see a picture of in Genesis chapter one and following is who Jesus is eternally and what he's been doing in our world. So you could say, I mean, there's only two ways that you can conclude when it comes to Jesus' understanding of Genesis. Either, A, Jesus is really dumb and doesn't know what he's talking about or Jesus is God and he's taking us back to the scriptures to understand that if we study Genesis one through 11, we're going to have a greater revelation about who our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is, amen. Now I want to tell you something else from the outset in this series. When I preach the Gospel, and I know I'm talking to different people, and some people haven't yet trusted Christ, or don't wanna trust Christ, or hostile to Christ, I know what my scripture tells me in 1 Corinthians 1:18, that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. That, Jeff, you'd have to be an idiot to believe there's only one God and only through Jesus can you have

eternal life? But to those of us who are being saved, it's become the power of God. I think the Gospel is the power of God. When it comes to studying Genesis, because I believe all scripture is God breathed, I believe when I'm studying Genesis, I'm studying the word of God. I believe God's speaking, speaking authoritatively, speaking inerrantly, speaking in an inspired way, and he has something to say to us. And for those of you say, "Well, that's just kind of silly. That's kind of stupid," I get what you're saying, I know what you're saying, but listen to this. In 1 Corinthians chapter one, just drop down a few verses to verse 25 and hear what the Lord has to say. Here's what he says about his word. He says, "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." God says, "I'm more powerful than your strongest one, and I'm wiser than your smartest one." So when we study Genesis, we're putting God on display because faith comes through hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. Now during this series, for those of you that are scientists, for those of you that like studying math, we'll touch on some of those topics, we'll do that, but I'm not here to debate God's word. I'm here to proclaim it.

- [Parishioner] Amen.

- I don't know who to give this credit to, I've looked online to figure out who actually said it, they give credit to different people that have said it, but here's the truth of the word: the word of God is like a lion; if you let it out of its cage, it's able to fend for itself. I'm here to herald the words starting in Genesis 1:11, and if in any way you don't believe what I'm saying, I'm asking you to go back and say what in the word don't you believe. Go back and study the word. Go back and look at the word. Now here's

why this is important. I want you to understand this. When we get to the book of Revelation, you're gonna discover when we talk about the rapture and the second coming, different people that are godly Christian men and women have different understandings. You may have a different understanding than I do, but here's what you'll discover. Some people think it's all in one event. Some people think they're separated. The timing of it. Some people think it's different. That's okay, but when you talk to people about end time theology, everybody's going back to the scripture to make their point. Here's why I believe what I believe because of the scripture. Listen to me, when it comes to Genesis chapter one, this is not an issue of interpretation; this is an issue of what God said. And everyone that I've listened to that doesn't believe exactly what God said has something else that's become authoritative for them, something other than God's word. Because if you just read God's word, you'll see what God says. About to get fired up. Listen, kids, you do not need three PhDs. You do not need an astrophysics degree, a microbiology degree, and a theology degree to read God's word. If you read God's word and just believe what he says, he'll show you what he did. That's where we're coming from. Now we'll talk about fossils. We'll talk about dinosaurs. We'll talk about could there have been a fall. We'll talk about all that scientifically, but what you will find in science, if it's good science, it will only affirm what God said because God's word is true. So I'm not here to debate you. I'm just here to preach what God says and for you to hear that. So here we go. How does God introduce himself? Now think about introductions for a second. Have you ever been to a sporting event and how they introduce people? It's not just like, "Okay,

here's a sheet with people that are gonna be starting tonight." That's not what they do. That's not what they do at Mile High Stadium. That's not what they do at a basketball game. Usually the lights are dimmed, spotlights start flashing, bass starts pumping, a song comes on, and now, and here we go. I mean, if you grew up in the nineties like I did and watched the Chicago Bulls win six titles, there was a way in which they introduced everybody, all the way down to Michael Jordan, and your heart started racing. If you've been to Mile High Stadium, they introduce people, and those that have the greatest impact get the greatest cheers. They make a pageantry of the thing. Even in weddings, if you go to a wedding and after the ceremony you have a reception, and they invite people back, what do they do when they bring the bride and the groom in? For the first time Mr. and Mrs., and they got all this stuff doing. And then you millennials, you take it like 10 steps further, 'cause now you gotta introduce the whole bridal party, and y'all come out dancing together, and you do your own thing. It's crazy. It's like starting lineups for the wedding party, even though they'll never see each other again, just saying, so. But how you get introduced is super important, and what we're seeing here, if the word of God had music to it, that's what you be experiencing here, 'cause here's what he says: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Most controversial passage in the entire Bible, in my opinion. I get that nonbelievers don't believe it, but there's so many who love the Lord Jesus, who believed that he died on the cross for our sins, who are going to heaven 'cause you can go to heaven even if you don't believe what God's word says in Genesis 1. You go to heaven by believing Jesus Christ has died for you, rose for you, and that's it. There's nothing else

to it. But, listen to me, how is God introduced? Let me tell you how he's introduced. He's introduced as the eternal self-existent God living outside of space and time. In the beginning, God. Well, where did he come from? Where's he been? In case you want to put it on your resume that you're trying to be God or you wanna apply for God, it means that you need to be eternal. Now think about this, eternal means this: you've always existed. You've always existed, and you're self-existent. You're not dependent upon anyone for anything. You don't need food. You don't need shelter. You don't need clothing. You don't need anybody else. That's who God is. That's how he's being revealed. He's being revealed as a being that's unlike any other being that's ever been. And he stands outside of time and space because what is the first creative act that he does? In the beginning, what does God create? The heavens and the earth. It's his canvas. God stands outside of all space. God stands outside of all time. There wasn't space. He doesn't take up space; he's Spirit. So God's creating a palette, and we can look and see that there's millions of galaxies around the world, and we don't even know how many there are, and wherever those end, God still is. He's that vast. He's that huge. He's being introduced to someone that's self-existent, self-sustaining, eternal, standing outside of space and time. And how about this one for time? Hmm, when we think about eternity or eternal life, what do we think about? We think about it's starting now and it goes forever. Here's what eternity looks like to God. There is no time. In the beginning, I created time. Before I created time, I was outside of time, so I was always in eternity past, I was always in eternity future, and I'm always present all the time, everywhere. And you say, "Well, how's that work?" He's God. We are so finite

compared to him, so how he's being introduced is greater than the heavyweight champion of the world. He's saying, "There's no one that's ever been like me, and there's no one that will ever be like me." I mean, we read that verse, we should be applauding what we see in God, not doubting it. We should be saying, "God created a landscape for everything he was about ready to put in his entire universe." What did the heaven and earth comprise? What are the heavens and the earth? It's everything in the universe. So at the start of time, this self-existent, eternal God that stood outside of time and space said, "My first creative act is creating space and time and a landscape to put everything in it, visible and invisible, for all people to know." I mean, that's worthy of praise. Amen. That's our God. That's who he is. And for many of us, we don't have a problem believing there's a God. I mean, there's different arguments that you can make. There's one called the cosmological argument for theology, which is the idea that everything has a cause. Things don't just happen. There has to be a cause for why they happen. If you have a child, there's a reason that you have a child. Something happened, right? So the idea, and there's all different types of theories. If you did a philosophy class, you'd learn more about this, but it's this point: whatever begins to exist has a cause. The universe began to exist; therefore, the universe has a cause. I mean, it's just that simple. I mean, think about a tree. Well, why does a tree exist? Well, there was a seed that fell into the ground and it grew. Well, where did the seed come from? Well, it came from the tree. Well, where did that tree come from? I mean, because we realize there weren't just trees all the time, it had to come from somewhere, we take that back and we realize there had to be a cause

to get the tree to be there. Or think about it like if you live in a house, or apartment, or a dorm room, or wherever you live, it hasn't always been there. There has to be a cause, like, somebody had to build that thing and then walk away from it. I mean, it wasn't always in existence. So as you think about God, there has to be a cause for why all these things happen. That's the cosmological argument, and some people say, "Yeah, there's gotta be a God out there. There's gotta be." That's a cosmological argument. There's one called the teleological argument. The teleological argument deals with purpose. So everything that comes into the universe has some sort of purpose. I mean, take the watch. If you wear a watch that you would have on your hand, you realize that if you wear a watch, somebody somewhere designed the watch, had the thoughts for the watch, engineered the parts of the watch, put them together at just the right time and just the right way so that it would appear in the store and you could buy it. I mean, nobody would think, "You know what? I don't know what happened. I think somebody just threw some stuff into a bag, and shook it for a while, and out came a watch." The teleological argument says, "If there's a design, there has to be a designer. There has to be something behind it. So in this world where I see all this order and all this amazement, there has to be a God behind that." And then there's this moral argument. The moral argument says, "Why do people have morals?" Why is it from the time that you're a young kid, you kinda know the difference between good and bad. Why is it when you step over the line that you have this conscience inside of you of you just evolved from nothing? How is it that in every culture that just walking up to somebody you don't know and pulling a gun and shooting them in the face is

considered wrong? Like, why is that? Where do you get those morals? There has to be a morality behind the reason that you have those. And so a lot of people say, "Yeah, for those reasons, I believe in a being. I believe there could be a God out there. I don't know." Many people in the intelligent design movement will use these as arguments to say, "We couldn't have evolved from nothing. There has to be God." But here's what I wanna tell you: I don't think that's enough. I don't think that's enough. I don't think that's taking the text far enough. I don't think that's believing what God says, 'cause notice this, not only is he is the eternal self-existing God living outside of time and space, but here's how God's introduced. He's introduced by his name, Elohim, which means strong, powerful God. It doesn't say, "In the beginning there was a force." It doesn't say, "In the beginning there was an energy." It doesn't say, "In the beginning, some things came together," or, "There was a God out there." He's given a name. "In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth." Elohim means strong, powerful God. The first way God gets introduced to us as the strongest, most powerful being ever, that's who he is, which means this: he's transcendent. He stands outside of space and time, but he comes into space and time. He creates trees, but he's not a tree. He creates stars, but he's not a star. He creates animals, but he's not an animal. He's the strong, powerful God. He's different than anybody else, but he comes into space and time. That's who our God is. Secondly, we know this: not only does he have a name, but he's personally engaged. I mean, look at what he does, and everything that he does, he creates to show his incredible glory over the course of six days, and all the things that he creates are for our good. He's personally involved in the

creation story. It's not as if he just throws it out there and says, "You deal with it." He's personally engaged with making sure everything continues to go just the way he wants. And this is something else just to consider in his name. The word Elohim is in the plural. Now you would have no idea if you just read Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." And that's the Trinity being discussed. It's only through further biblical revelation that we realize that. It is interesting, down in Genesis 1:26, where he says, "Let us make man in our image." But you fast forward, and you realize in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, so Jesus was there. And in John chapter 14 through 16, you see that the Holy Spirit is gonna be dispensed. And in Matthew 28, when Jesus sends out his disciples, he tells him to baptize in whose name? The name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So while we wouldn't get full revelation of the Trinity from Genesis one alone, it doesn't prohibit that, and what we're seeing in Genesis one is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit doing all the work. In the beginning, the Trinity God created the heavens and the earth. This personal God that stands outside of all time and space transcends human history to come in and do something that nobody else can do. So in case you're wondering, "Well, how did it all get here?" and, "Who did this?" Elohim did. God's saying, "I did." Yeah, we just don't know who did. God's saying, " Well, now you know because it was me. I want you to know how awesome I am. I'm God. You don't need to look any further." Well, I'm gonna study science for the next 30 years and figure it out. You don't need to! You can be seven years old, and just believe God's word, and know that God created everything in the universe. That's

who he is. He's the Trinity God, the one God in three distinct persons, is strong, awesome God. So he has a nature, he has a name. How else do we get to know him? How else is God introduced? Through his awesome creation of the universe. I'm using the word awesome in probably its truest form. You know what it's like. People go out to a meal. How was the dinner? Awesome. You know, I went to their house. Did you have a good time last night? Oh, it was awesome. That's kind of putting the word down from what it really is. When you read Genesis chapter one, it's awesome. In six literal days, God creates everything in the universe. That's awesome. I mean, that's amazing. I mean, we should be, our mouth should drop and be like, "No way." He spoke, he creates it, he names it. He says it's really, really good, and we're like, "Whoa!" And you did that in how long? A day. Not very hard. I mean, every time God finishes a day, he says, "And there was evening and morning." In verse five, "One day." Verse eight, "And there was evening and there was morning, a second day." In verse 13, "There was evening and morning, a third day." Verse 19, "And there was evening, there was morning, a fourth day." 23, "There was evening and morning, a fifth day." In verse 31, "God saw all that he had made and behold it was very good, and there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." Now next week we'll unpack that because as clear as that is, I mean, how many days was it? Six. As clear as that is, let me try it again. How many days was that?

- Six!

- Okay. As clear as that is, some people push back. "No, that doesn't mean that." We'll talk about that next week. Here's your assignment this week: read through

Genesis one, ask these questions. Who made the universe? How long did it take? Do I believe this? Just using the Bible. That's your assignment. Now next week we'll talk about people that don't use just the Bible, and we'll talk about a lot of theories that people have, and I will show you from God's word that if you hold onto one of those theories that doesn't believe in a six day literal creation, you've got a major problem in your doctrine with God. But I wanna spell that out over time so that you can see it, so that you can study it, so that you can see it for yourself. I mean, there's awesome creation. So what did he create? In Colossians 1:16 and 17, talking about Jesus' redemption and all that he created. Notice what he says, "For by him, Jesus, all things." Well, how much does that encompass? That's like everything. Well, what? "For by him, all things were created, both in the heavens and on the earth." You see that? Where's that come from? Genesis 1:1. So what did he create in Genesis 1:1? "All things in the heavens and the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things," there's those words again, "have been created through him and for him. He is before all things and in him holds all things together." So here's what the scripture says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Well, which things did he create? Everything and holds them all together. That's what Jesus does. It's not hard if you just believed the Bible. It's really hard if you believe something other than the Bible. Just holds it all together. What about Psalm 33, verses six and nine? What did the Psalm say about creation? This is just one, could have picked from several. Psalm 33:6, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made and by the breath of his mouth all their hosts." How are things made? My God

spoke. That's it. Verse nine, "For he spoke and it was done." He doesn't say, "For he spoke, and millions of years later, it was done." He spoke, and it was done. He commanded, and it stood fast. Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God." Now here's what you're gonna see. Now listen to me. Listen to me. If you do not believe in a six day literal creation, this is true 100% of the time for people that do not believe in a six day literal creation, 100% of the time, people that do not believe in a six day literal creation do not believe in a six day literal creation not because the Bible doesn't teach it, but because they take their authority from somewhere other than the Bible and try to press it in. And it happens all the time. We'll look at some of the theories next week as to what people do to claim that the world's 14.3 billion years old. I think that's the latest trend. I think the world's 6,000 years old. Now you say, "That's foolish." Of course it is 'cause it's God's word. No problem with that. Call me a fool. I don't care, right? But here's what, I want you to decide what you think. What is God actually saying? If the world's 6,000 years old, you don't need to twist any other scriptures to make that fit. If the world's 14.3 billion years old, you're gonna have to twist a lot of biblical texts. I'll show you what you're gonna have to do next week to get God to fit what your Bible says. It's not gonna work for you. I mean, just take God at his word. If he said he did it in six days, why are you having such a hard time doing it? 'Cause see, you say, "Well, Jeff, you just believe that by faith." Well, of course I do! By faith, I believe that God, who's the all powerful, self-existing God standing outside of time and space, the strong, powerful one, made everything we see out of nothing. By faith, I believe that. My Bible tells me that that's okay for me to do, by the way. In

Hebrews chapter 11 and verse three in the great Hall of Faith, it says this: "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible." So God says, "It's okay to believe by faith," 'cause the argument sometimes when you get into a scientific debate is, "You're just believing by faith." You're right. I believe that God's word is true, that he made everything out of nothing. That's what I'm believing. Well, we believe in science. Okay. We believe in evolution. Let me tell you about what your faith is: You believe that nothing collided with nothing and made everything. What takes more faith?

- Oh, boy. Yeah!

- Nothing existed, and it bumped into nothing, and everything's there 'cause we're so stinking smart. Understand this: evolution is not science. It's put in the science department. Evolution is not science. Evolution is a theology. Evolution is a theology that God doesn't exist because we hate God. If you didn't hate God, I could teach this in every public school in America, but I can't teach it in every public school in America because schools in America hate God. Now let me just say this: to all of you school teachers out there that are teaching in the public school because God's called you to be a light in a dark place, praise God for you. I mean, we love you. But I would say this. I was going to say it prophetically, but, as I prayed all week, I'm going to be more pastoral 'cause if I was prophetic, you'd hate me, and I don't want you to hate me. I just wanna love you. Parents, but think about this, why would you send your kid to a public school where for eight hours a day their main desire is to teach your kids to hate God? And what's your reason for that? And I'm not saying there's not an answer to

that. I'm not saying you're not a teacher, your kids going to your school. I'm not saying there's not Christians in your school. I'm not saying that you can't go to public school. Don't get me wrong. I'm saying why would you subcontract your children out to an organization that for eight hours a day are gonna teach your kids that God doesn't exist, and everything they're teaching your kids comes from that foundation of theology? Parents, that's garbage. You're gonna answer to God for that someday. Okay, that's a side note. Okay, we're going back. All right, he's created through his awesome acts. So you either get to believe that there's a God who has a name that created everything out of nothing or that nothing bumped into nothing and everything got here. You tell me which takes more faith. And God says in his word, "This is what I did, and I'm telling you my name, and I'm telling you what I did. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." You say, "Well, how can you say that?" Let me give you the fourth reason, fourth way God is introduced. God is introduced as the only eyewitness in the beginning. In the beginning, God. Who else was there? Well, nobody. Here's what God's saying: "I'm the only eyewitness to creation." So when you listen to somebody say, "Well, here's what I'm observing." There's nothing wrong with science. Science is observable fact that you measure, and then you calculate, and then you talk about. Nothing wrong with that. Science is good. But when you get to a place where you're guessing what happened, but you weren't there, that's no longer science 'cause you're not observing anything. Here's what God says about creation: "Y'all, there was nobody there but me. I'm telling you what happened, and anybody that tells you what happened different to me, they weren't there, so you shouldn't listen to them." There's

no other eyewitnesses. Darwin came out with the book "Origin of Species" in 1859. He wasn't there. He wasn't there. Study the life of Darwin, see if you want that life. He wasn't there. He made up what's called a theory. Scientific theories are theologies of people who hate God and want to explain how things got here without just taking the biblical text and saying, "God did it all. He just did it because my God so powerful and so strong and so mighty and so awesome." That's what he did. He was the only one there. God created everything out of nothing. Evolution is nothing created something out of nothing and that it oozed into everything. Crazy. And the fact that we teach this in schools as fact is garbage. Amen? So here's the point. Here's the point. The point is this: if God is being revealed as the eternal, self-existent God who stands outside of time and space, and he has a name, and he's the strong, powerful God, and through his awesome acts of creation in everything he does, which we're gonna look at next week, and it's gonna blow you away, you'll be like, "Amazing that he did." I mean, if we were watching the creation story, we would have stood there and just cheered for days on end, like, "This is awesome." We wouldn't have been there until day six, but we would have seen it on video, right? But if he's the only eyewitness, and this is actually true, and let me just tell you this, and I'll probably say this again next week, when I get to have... And I'm responsible for teaching the word of God. I'm responsible for preaching the word of God. I'm comfortable standing in a line when I stand before Jesus and say, "This is what your word said, and I was dumb enough to believe every part of it." And if God tells me, "Well, that's not what I meant." I'm like, "You're right, I'm so dumb. I didn't understand it." But I'm not gonna go to heaven, and stand before

the Lord and say, "I would have believed in a six day literal creation, I would have believed that the world was six to 10,000 years old, but I didn't want to because so-and-so told us," and God will say, "So-and-so who? He wasn't there. I was there." If God really did create the world like he said that he did, in six literal days and rested on the seventh, it's amazing what he did. And as you're reading Genesis 1, I'll give you one other verse that you can meditate on this week. Say, "Well, how do you know a day's a day?" We'll talk about that next week because it's important that we understand that. But in Exodus chapter 20 and talking about the Sabbath day, here's what he says. The same author, same God. "For in six days, the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and the sea and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day; therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." Well, what's that saying? Oh, it's saying that God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Did Israel have any trouble understanding what a day was? Did they keep the Sabbath day for millions of years? Did they keep it for long periods of time or did they understand a day was 24 hours? They kind of understood a day was 24 hours because there was evening and morning, a day. What's so hard about this is, I mean, I'm not teaching rocket science or physics. I'm teaching the word of God in a way that you can understand it. And if all of these things are true, let me tell you how God is introduced ultimately. He's introduced as the God who is worthy of all of your honor and praise. If this is who our God is, he deserves all of our glory, honor, and praise. I mean, oftentimes at Christmas when we talk about Jesus becoming incarnate and Mary holding him in his arms, and she was swaying him back and forth. â™ª Mary did

you know â™ª I mean, all these kinds of... Mary, did you know this, that the one that you're holding in your arms created the whole world in six days? Did you know that the one you're holding your arm punished sinners by flooding the entire globe? Did you know that the one that you're holding in your arms sent down fire from heaven? Did you know that the one that you're holding in your arms is gonna redeem all humanity? Do you know that the one that you're holding in your arms is gonna come back and establish his millennial reign and ultimately the new heavens and the new earth? Mary, did you know? That's who Jesus is. That's why this is important, 'cause if we start the story in John, it's like, "Okay, God came to us. That's cool. He's my friend." We're talking about the eternal God standing outside of all time and space, that would have nothing to do with us, but because of his love for us, came into the world, put on flesh for all eternity, died on the cross for our sins, restored glory to his Father, and offered life to anybody who would repent and trust in him alone. How awesome is that God? That's all from one verse. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Shouldn't be controversial. It should be something that we just say, "Glory to God." Now let me just say this. For some of you that are studying science in school or you're scientists, you're like, "Oh, I'm not listening to this garbage anymore. I'm never coming back," please come back. We'll talk about science. We'll talk about how science fits in the Bible. We'll talk about what this looks like because my goal is to preach the word of God for you so that you can know what you hold in you hand is more authoritative than any other source that you will ever have. Wrestle with it. So here's your assignment, remember it? Read

Genesis chapter one. Who created the world or where do we come from, how long did it take him to do it, and do I believe this? That's your assignment for this week, and next week we're gonna walk through the creative acts of God and what he did, and it will blow you away. And you'll get to Genesis 1:31, and you'll say with God, "God saw all that he made, and it was very good because we serve a very good God." Amen?

- Amen.

- [Jeff] Amen. Would you stand with me? Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory, honor, and praise for who you are. We believe that you created everything we see and don't see. We believe you did it in six days. We believe you rested on the seventh. We believe that you became incarnate flesh who died for our sins, who rose from the dead. We believe that you're coming again soon, and we place all our faith and trust in you, and we sing to you because you're the only one that can transform our lives. Lord, we give you all the glory, honor, and praise. In Jesus' name, amen and amen. Can we give God praise for his word this morning?