



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Genesis 1:1 - 2:3

“Divine Creation”

TRANSCRIPT

[Audio begins] And incidentally, Howard, that's not the first letter that we've received from Malawi, too. I didn't get a chance to check to see if it's the same individual, but we do have others.

About thirty-two or three years ago, a young man came to Dallas Seminary whose name was Ross Rainey, and I got very well acquainted with Ross because we attended the same local church, and I had known his uncle, who also went to Dallas Seminary and was a fellow student of mine. And then, I also knew Ross's father who is a man about eighty-seven years of age at the present time and still preaching the gospel himself. So, Ross is a graduate of Stony Brook, the prep school on Long Island, and has graduated, I believe, from Rollins College in Florida, and came to the seminary. And since he left the seminary about thirty years ago, he has been engaged in Bible teaching ministry located in St. Louis for a number of years and now in Plymouth, Michigan which is on the outskirts of Detroit.

Ross is also the editor of Focus Magazine, and that small magazine we occasional put out copies of back in the back on the tables, and I contribute to the magazine from time to time. And for a number of years Ross has engaged in Bible teaching ministry. And we are indeed glad that he is able to come and give us next Sunday and then Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday following. You can see I have not looked at the

Calendar of Concern this morning, for some reason I couldn't get my hand on one, but if the titles are mentioned in the Calendar of Concern, they are titles that have to do primarily with the Christian life and discipleship. And knowing Ross and knowing his family. Incidentally, his wife Lilian will be with him. Knowing him, knowing his family, and their Christian testimony, I'm sure that what he has to say on these topics will be very, very down-to-earth and useful for all of us. And so, we encourage you and exhort you to be present for as many of the meetings as you possibly can.

Now of course, we don't base our evaluation of your spirituality on how many of those meetings that you attend. But. I won't say anymore, Howard, I just, I don't know why that stray thought just randomly came into my mind at that moment. Seriously, we don't, and we realize that some of you may have something you have to do on one of those nights. But we'd like for you very much to attend as many of the meetings as you can and encourage him and encourage the elders, for those old men need encouragement, the elders. And so, remember the meetings next Sunday morning, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the nights following.

Now if you have your Bibles with you, turn with me to Genesis chapter 1, and while the Scripture reading is listed as Genesis 1:1 through 2:3, I'm going to take the liberty of reading just a few selected portions from both of the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis. So, let me read first Genesis 1:1 through 5, and then I'll point you to a few other places in these two chapters. In Genesis 1 verse 1 we read,

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. (Then in verse 26 after recording the creation of the

inanimate creation, we read) And 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 fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Now, will you drop your eyes down to the 7th verse of the 2nd chapter? And we read of the process by which God formed man.) And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Now verse 18) And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper corresponding to him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him (or a helper corresponding to him). And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. (And now Moses adds a comment.) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let's bow together in a moment of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful and thankful that Thou hast given us an inspired insight and reflection upon the creation of this universe, of man and of woman. And we thank Thee, Lord, for the marvelous truths that are found within these opening verses of the word of God. We thank Thee for the light that they throw upon our pathway, upon this creation of which we are a part. And of the relationships that we bear to one another in the most intimate relationships of life. We thank Thee, Lord, we are indeed grateful, for without them we could never hope to be pleasing and thoughtfully reflective and obedient to the word of God. We give Thee thanks and praise for the Lord Jesus Christ who loved us and gave himself for us and has made it possible for many of these ideals to be in measure at least realized in the lives of the saints. We thank Thee for the whole church of Jesus Christ down through the years, that believing body that Thou hast brought into being by sovereign grace.

We are indeed grateful and thankful, and we pray, Lord, that we may be submissive to the word of God in our day as well. May Thy hand be upon this assembly of believers, its elders and its deacons, its members and friends for spiritual good, in this community and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

We thank Thee, Lord, for these testimonies that we have just read in our bulletin representing so many scattered in many faraway places who nevertheless find blessing from the ministry of the word in Believers Chapel. It makes us very thankful, Lord, that Thou hast put Thy hand upon us for spiritual good. May it continue and increase and grow if it should please Thee. We thank Thee for our country, for our president, for others, Lord, in the government. We ask that Thou wilt minister to them and by Thy grace, speak to them in such a way that this country may to a greater degree reflect the truth of the word of God. We thank Thee for those names listed in our Calendar of Concern and for the concerns that are expressed there. Out of the greatness of Thy

mercy and grace and power and compassion minister to them, Lord. Bless now as we sing together, as we listen to the word. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] An interesting beginning to that tape. Historic occasion, that's the first time I've ever dropped the microphone. Old age is coming upon me. [Laughter]

Now the subject this morning is "Divine Creation." We are studying over a few Sundays the eight most important Christian truths, of course, that means as I see them. And as I've been thinking about these important truths, it's very difficult to exclude so many important things that the word of God has set forth. But surely, divine creation would be one of the important truths and in the list that anyone would draw up.

Last Sunday morning we considered divine revelation. And we tried to set out the fact that the Bible lays claim to being the revelation of God and is a justifiable claim. It's reasonable, if that be true, to think of the way in which the Scriptures unfold the plans and purposes of God as a result of his divinely ordained wisdom and decrees set out in the word of God. And then, thinking of those divinely ordained and designed decrees, to reflect upon the way in which they are carried out. And surely, thinking about the divine revelation in the Scriptures and the way in which God has informed us through his decrees as set out in the word of God, to look first to the execution of them in the creation. And so that's what we're doing. We're looking at God working in the midst of his creation according to his revelation, and we turn to divine creation.

One might ask the question: "Why study creation?" Well just from reading the Bible, we would have reason to think that this is one of the most important of the biblical truths. The Bible begins with the statement, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And then all through the Bible, the things that God does is so often related to the creation that he is responsible for.

In fact, even as late as the Book of Revelation, the last of the books of the Bible in our English version, we read in the 4th chapter of that magnificent revelation of the four

and twenty elders who are before the vision of the Lord God, and this is what they sing, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." So, even through to the end of Scripture, one of the great themes of the word of God is divine creation.

If we think of the faith of the Christian church, we think also of divine creation. Many of us grew up in churches in which the Apostle's Creed was repeated every Sunday morning by the congregation. And if your memory is strong, you'll remember that the very first article of the Apostle's Creed is, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth." So, fundamental to the theology of the church has been the doctrine of creation. And then in systematic theology itself, standing in the forefront of the divine teaching is the creation of God by the Lord God.

Now we must remember when we come to creation, our Christian presuppositions. We tried to point out last week that everyone who thinks has to think presuppositionally. We all come to everything that we talk about with certain fundamental laws of thought, and I set them forth last week for you and tried to support the idea that any kind of conversation at all depends on presuppositions.

What are our presuppositions when we talk about creation? Well first of all, we have the presupposition that the Scriptures are the word of God. That's our presupposition, one of them. We also have the presupposition that the Scriptures take precedence over science. We listen very carefully to what science has to say, and we listen also to what the interpreters of Scripture have to say, but we recognize that scientific knowledge is a mutable kind of knowledge, that is, it's constantly changing. Ask any thoughtful scientist and you will see that that is true.

And then when we think about the interpretation of Scripture, we know that interpretation of Scripture is a mutable thing, too. Interpreters of Scripture differ over the way in which Scripture should be interpreted. And over a period of time in the study of the Scriptures, some interpretations are shown to be wrong and are largely discarded.

This history of the Christian church is the history of the discarding of countless interpretations of the word of God.

One of the great benefits of reading the history of the church and the history of its doctrinal development is to learn the interpretations of Scripture that have been discarded. One of the greatest mistakes that a theological student can make is to study the Scripture without studying the history of theological interpretation. That's often done. People like to say, "Just use the Bible. If you just use the Bible, then you will come up with the truth that is freshest and the most original." That's a great mistake often made in our theological seminaries, often made in our evangelical theological seminaries, and the result is they repeat the errors of interpretation that have been made down through the centuries. There is an old saying which we all know from history that if we will not pay attention to history, we will repeat history.

Now of course, that's not altogether true, but nevertheless, it's generally true. And the same thing is true in the study of the Scriptures. If you don't listen to what the interpreters and commentators have said, you'll repeat their errors. And so, we pay attention to exegesis. We pay attention to science. But when it comes to precedence, we acknowledge that our presupposition rests upon this: The word of God takes precedence over science. But I say, we remember that science can be wrong; interpretation can be wrong. And so we look at this as a continuing discussion that goes on between science and scriptural or religious truth.

Another presupposition that we lean upon when we come to the Book of Genesis and the doctrine of creation is this: Genesis gives us history. It doesn't give us myth. It doesn't give us saga. Generally speaking, it gives us history. And so we regard these opening chapters of the Book of Genesis as history.

These are our presuppositions: The Bible contains the word of God. Scripture takes precedence over science. And thirdly, Genesis is history.

Now, it's not surprising that when we come to the word of God that we should come with and arrive at slightly different conclusions. It's not surprising that a scientist, for example, should have a slightly different idea of man from a student of the word of God who is not a scientist. For example, let me illustrate this in this way.

Let us suppose that on the platform we had a famous artist. And then, let us suppose that also on the platform we should have a famous scientist. And suppose we should say to this famous scientist who is an anatomist, "We would like for you to draw us a picture of man." And then we were say to the artist, "We would like for you to draw us a portrait of man."

Now, let's assume that both of these individuals are highly qualified and very skilled. The anatomist understands human anatomy insofar as science at this point enables him to understand human anatomy. So he constructs a diagram of human anatomy. Our artist, on the other hand, is an outstanding artist, and so he draws us a portrait of man.

Now if we looked at those two things, we would see the scientist's portrait or diagram and we would see the artist's portrait, and we would say, "How different they are." But let's just assume that they both are highly qualified, and therefore, what they have done is reliable and true. What you really would have then are two legitimate views of man: the view of the anatomist and the view of the artist.

Now when we come to the word of God, and we read things that a scientist says about the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis, sometimes it's simply because of the different way in which he looks at this, looking at it from the principles of science. And on the other hand, a student of Scripture, an exegete, and that's an art, he looks at the opening chapters according to his principles. So, we shouldn't be surprised that there are differences of opinion. Time will resolve most of them, and ultimately, when we come into the presence of the Lord, then we shall know.

Now, let's turn to these opening chapters of the Book of Genesis, and I'd like to say a few words about, first, the creation of the universe, then secondly, the creation of man. And then ladies, we will not leave out the women, and we'll say a few words about the creation of woman. All of these things are very, very important. Now obviously, if we're going to try to deal with the creation of the universe, the creation of man, the creation of woman, you'll have to pardon me for only emphasizing the salient points as I see them.

Now if you think about these opening verses, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," we could say this about the idea of creation as set out in Scripture: First of all, creation is the act of a free God. Or put another way, creation is a free act; that is, God did not necessarily have to create. He did this freely. It was something that he intended to do in order, the rest of the Bible makes plain, to further reveal himself to his creation. It was a free act, not a necessary act.

It was a temporal act, that is, it occurred in what we call time. In fact, as Moses puts it, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That always raises the question: What was he doing before he did this? Augustine, back in the fourth and fifth centuries had people who asked him that question. And when they asked him what was God doing before he did his creating work, Augustine said he was creating hell for people who asked questions like that. [Laughter] Well, Luther was a good student of Augustine, and so, when he was asked that same question, he said he was cutting switches to flog inquisitive questioners. So, the Scripture tells us that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It is a temporal act, "In the beginning."

Furthermore, it is a creation, so far as the Bible concerns, *ex nihilo*, that is, out of nothing. Now some have sought to make that the teaching of the Hebrew word *bara* which is the word translated created. There's some justification for that in that that verb

never has man as its subject. And furthermore, there is never any word that might be thought of as being an object of the verb. In other words, when creation takes place, it's not with some material. But there are certain things that are said about synonyms that make it probably unwise for us to say *bara*, create, means to create out of nothing. But it's very evident that the context indicates that this creation was that kind of creation. God created this creation out of nothing.

It was the act of a triune God. Now that's not spelled out in detail, but the rest of the Bible makes it plain. God created and yet we are told that the Spirit of God hovered above the face of the waters. And then in the New Testament, we are told quite plainly that through the Lord Jesus Christ all things were made. So, we can say this is a free act. It's a temporal act. It's a creation out of nothing performed by the triune God for his glory. These are all things I think that we can say about the idea of creation. It is an absolutely unique act. No one else creates. God creates, but man does not create.

There was a story that I read in some periodical a few years back in which Sloan Wilson was speaking and describing an experience that he had had. He had been in a class with a professor of philosophy, and the professor of philosophy had shouted at the class, "You have no imagination and you can create nothing!" Mr. Wilson said I thought him to be unkind and I hotly denied the charge in front of my class. And with a smile, the professor told me to go to the blackboard and draw an imaginary beast. And he said the beast I concocted had the head of the professor, the body of a pig, the wings of an eagle, the tail of a fish, and the legs of a deer. And he said the students giggled. But the professor regarded it with disdain. He said, "You see, you've imagined nothing. All you've done is to take parts you've observed and rearranged them." That's all anyone can do. Only God creates, man rearranges. So when we read "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," we're reading about something that is absolutely unique.

A few weeks ago I stood again in front of Rembrandt's great "The Night Watch" in the Reich's Museum in the city of Amsterdam. Looked at it, it was different from that

which I saw twenty-five years ago. Much brighter, actually, was more appealing. And then I discovered that it's been worked over several times since twenty-five years ago. A magnificent painting, everyone goes into Reich's Museum, and that's immediately where they want to go. And in fact, right in the beginning as you go in this large museum, it says "The Night Watch" is in such-and-such a room.

So you go there, and you look in front of this and you say, "My, Rembrandt was a creative painter." No, he wasn't. Why, he took his brush. He took his materials. He had his canvass. And he painted a great picture. But it wasn't a creation. Only God creates. And so when we call an individual a creative individual, what we really mean is he's original. There's something unique about him. But the one who is truly unique is the Lord God, and he is the creator of this universe.

Many theories have been devised about creation, some of them attempts to explain the meaning of the word of God and others seeking to dispute it. For example, dualistic theories have abounded among the pagans. But if we have the eternal matter, which dualistic theories generally postulate, then we have two infinite things. And two infinite things are an absurdity because the very meaning of the term infinite is unlimited. And so consequently, the Christian faith has always regarded as heresy dualistic theories of the origin of the universe. They were attempts to explain the presence of evil in the universe. But they're all false and contrary to the word of God.

Emanation theories have frequently been propounded by which it is contended that out of the eternal being and the infinite God came finite matter. And that in itself is an absurdity, too, for how can an infinite immutable being change his nature? So the very idea is contrary to Christian thinking.

Evolutionary theories have had their day in the past hundred years. Evolutionary theories are today not abandoned, but they are in shambles. And evolutionists are rethinking their theories. The idea that as a result of chance, the random movements of eternal matter, that man and this creation have originated does strain the thinking of most

of us. In fact, now many evolutionists recognize that their theories are built upon presuppositions which cannot be experimentally verified.

For example, Professor Kerkut of the Department of Physiology and Biochemistry at the University of South Hampton just a few years ago said that evolutionists, and he was one, write as though they have their views by some sort of revelation in spite of, what he says, many gaps and failures in their system. And further, it is taken on trust. This is an evolutionist speaking. He lists seven basic assumptions that are assumptions that cannot be proved: Nonliving things gave rise to living material things by spontaneous generation. Spontaneous generation occurred only once. Viruses, bacteria, plants and animals are all interrelated. The protozoa gave rise to the metazoa. Et cetera. He lists seven of them. He says these things are things that cannot be verified by experiment. They are taken as assumptions. And so evolutionists, like creationists, they begin with certain presuppositions.

When we come to the scriptural account, one feels a kind of relief in turning to it, to read that what we have in the word of God is the revelation of God and that what it says is that almighty God created ex nihilo this space, mass, time universe.

There're three transitions in this opening chapter signaled by the use of that term bara. We read in verse 1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," the material universe. Then in verse 21 we read, "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moved." And so we move from the material to the inorganic animals. And finally, in verse 27, " So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." There we move from the inorganic to the organic man.

What picture emerges? Well, the picture that emerges to me is that from the preexistent, and other texts tell us, eternal God there has emerged all history. All history that we know as history has come from the hand of the infinite God. He is a unique being. That's the way Moses presents him. Thirty-five times his name is mentioned in the first chapter. He's the sovereign creator. We are craftsmen. He is a creator. And the

difference between a craftsman who works with material that is provided for him and one who calls into existence by his word this creation is staggering. Staggering to think of the eternal God creating out of nothing this universe.

We also notice another thing about this. And that is that this God is not someone who, like Thomas Jefferson and others, a person who stood off and brought into existence this universe but then let it operate in accordance with the principles that he had determined that it should operate upon, that is, a deistic kind of God, the kind of deism reflected ultimately in the doctrine of the free-will of man actually, which is a deistic doctrine as well. But this God is a God who is imminent in his creation. He is one who is omnipresent and, therefore, in all of his creation, not as the pantheists teach, but one who is present everywhere in our universe, an imminent God.

That's evident from the second verse where we read, "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters." That's a verb that is used of a mother bird hovering over her young later on by Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy. And so the idea of a loving concerned God who has called this universe into existence, but nevertheless hovers over the chaos to bring it into the order that we now see, is the picture of a God who is here with us as well as there. And ultimately, I have to come from his hands. What a magnificent thought.

Now, secondly, we look at the creation of man. In chapter 2 in verse 7 we read, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Reinhold Niebuhr some years ago said, "Man is his own most vexing problem." Isn't it strange that in 1986 we can ignore God, but we find it very, very difficult, almost impossible, to ignore man. That's a strange thing, isn't it? But yet, it does seem to be true. We can. We can ignore God, but we still talk about man.

In one of our meetings, I don't remember whether it was Sunday, if it was, pardon me for repeating it, but if it was Wednesday night, it may have been then, I commented upon Dave Hart in Heartland. About two months ago in Heartland, one of the comic strips that I look at, Dave is, as you know, just a little boy, and he's in the presence of the family counselor. And so, the family counselor is speaking to him, and he says, "Dave, as you continue through this journey we call life on a collision course with adolescence." Then the next panel, he's more excited, the family counselor, "I think it's important that you begin to find yourself, to discover yourself." And then in the third panel, his voice rising and he's more into it. Now he says, "In essence, to find out who you are!."

You know evangelicals talk a lot about this. It always seems so foolish to me: to find out who you are. And then the final panel pictures little Dave looking off somewhat absent-mindedly saying, "Well heck, I thought I was Dave Hart, and I didn't realize I was lost." [Laughter]

Well, that's kind of the way I feel. The Scriptures make it so plain what I am, and I don't really have to find myself. I see what I am in the word of God. It tells me quite plainly what I am. So, everything up to this point is something of an overture in the Book of Genesis until we read, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

In the first chapter we have the story of the creation, and now begins the story of the history of this created world. And the process of the creation is in three acts. Let's say, first of all, the formation of his material being. "God formed man of the dust of the ground." He works as a skilled craftsman with material here. And in fact, when Moses says that God created man of the dust of the ground, he's letting us know right in the beginning that this man that he is forming has the possibility of death because he's formed out of this creation which is not infinite. And so, it's not surprising then when Adam has sinned, we read that God finally says to him, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

Then he speaks of the formation of his spiritual being. He says, "And he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Now that is warmly personal. In fact, the very Hebraic expression, connotes the idea of someone who draws near to someone else, almost face-to-face intimacy. In fact, someone has described it as the face-to-face intimacy of a kiss. He breathed into him the breath of life. He gave Adam something of himself as well as made him. And no wonder that men say that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. We are that.

And finally, the resultant person is described as "a living soul." That's startling because, you see, in chapter 1 verse 20 we read, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath soul" and in verse 24 the same thing. So that which a man is, these animate individuals or the animate creation has; in other words, there's something that identifies us with this creation.

But yet at the same time we're over it. So we are of it, and yet we are over it, for we are to rule it. The great dignity of the unfallen state of man is expressed by the way in which he is created. And yet at the same time, the lowliness of his origin from dust is set forth in order to create within us the sense of humility. The fact that we are dependent beings, distinct, made by God, but nevertheless dependent, let us never forget that. We are dependent beings.

If one were to draw just a conclusion or two from this, we would say that Adam is the unique work of God. He's created in his image. He's made the king of the creation with the authority to rule over it. And yet, he's to be covenantally submissive because notice verse 7 says, "And the LORD God." Yahweh elohiym, the covenant-keeping word used there. The relationship is the relationship of a man in covenant with God, spelled out in the remainder of this chapter incidentally. Adam is good, pronounced good by the Lord God which indicates that sin does not inhere in human nature.

Now of course, we should go on and say sin does inhere in fallen human nature. But sin is not a necessary part of human nature. That is evident because ultimately sin

shall be removed from redeemed human nature. So, he is good. And further, he's not the result of the random toss of molecular dice or of waves in the primeval seas. He is the result of the distinct counsel of the eternal God. Adam, we read, is the product of the words of God "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness." In other words, from the beginning we are the product of the decreed counsel of God. And everything that is said to man is part of God's design for us.

Now finally, we don't want to forget the women. And Adam, I'm sure, was puzzled a great deal by the fact that all of these creatures around him, and yet there was no one corresponding to him. So it's a natural question to ask: What about the creation of the woman? Did not Moses say in chapter 1 "male and female he created them."

In Genesis chapter 2 and verse 18 through verse 25 is the source of New Testament teaching on marriage and on the relationship between the sexes both in and outside marriage. It's rich in symbolic significance. And the Apostle Paul and others in the New Testament rely heavily upon what is said here, for they find in it the principles that are applicable to us in the age in which we live.

Now, Adam was the monarch among all of the animals, but there was no mate for him. We are told that he named the animals. And so, you can see the animals filing before him in pairs and Adam calling them the proper names. Oh, it'd be nice to be there to find out exactly what it was. I'd like to see a television replay of this. Lions, tigers, squirrels. Exterminate them quickly. [Laughter] Or whatever, you know. And then Adam, after all have filed before him, there is no helpmeet corresponding to me. And so, God supplies that which is lacking in the creation to this point. And so he is given a spiritual, mental and physical helper corresponding to him. Lovely description of the true original dignity of woman, a helper corresponding to him.

The method of the creation, incidentally, is the despair of theistic evolutionists. The act itself is very suggestive because it suggests the unity of the race. Adam, first created, but Eve taken out of Adam with bone and flesh, for that's the significance of the

Hebrew text, incidentally, at this point. So one gets the impression of a rib plus part of the flesh and its blood taken out of Adam when God applied the divine anesthesia, not as a member of the American Board of Surgery possessed of Diplomate from it, but nevertheless, as one who had the inherent power to bring a deep sleep upon Adam and to create Eve from him. So, the unity of the race suggested by the way in which Eve is formed, as well as the dignity of the woman, out of his side.

Now Scripture says that "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, he fashioned or built a woman, and brought her unto the man." That very expression "fashioned" suggests the Lord God acting as the master craftsman with the material and producing this lovely, comely creature called Eve.

And then that marvelous vivid portrayal of the Lord God bringing her to Adam. Now that's so suggestive. In fact, our marriage ceremonies when they're most conformable to the principles of the word of God express that, too. We have the groom who stands here waiting for the bride. We have the bride who makes her entrance on the arm of her father. And her father playing the part of the Lord God, the groom playing the part of Christ, the bride playing the part of the church meet together. And so, what could be more wonderful than the father playing the part of the Lord God bringing her, his daughter, to the man. So significant and so significant of the true way in which a marriage is to succeed. So he brought her to the man.

Now I must confess that I've always loved this statement that Adam makes. And it's too bad that it really is not expressed in the English text as it is in the original text because all we read in the English text of the Authorized Version is "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." But many commentators, and particularly some of the Hebrew commentators, have made a great point over that little word translated "now". It's a word that really can mean, and frequently does, something like "at last."

And so, one can catch some of the excitement and the thrill and the animation of Adam in the statement as Eve, this lovely creature, first man ever to look upon a beautiful woman. And so she comes before him, and he says something like "This". Notice incidentally he cannot talk to her personally, it's all this. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: This shall be called Woman, because this one was taken out of Man." In other words, it's almost as if he has a hard time pronouncing exactly what she is. And so, he says in effect, "This, at last, is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, " or as we say, "Wow." What a magnificent creature Adam looked upon. And Eve, as she looked upon Adam, she saw one of those rare sights, a true man of God.

So, that's God's account of the creation. And the harmony that existed is set out in the final verse, "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." No corruption of the use of the organs yet expressed by this.

Well, I said that the apostles make a great deal of this. They make many points from this incident that are very important. The sexes are complimentary. "We're fellow heirs of the grace of life," Peter says. Marriage before intercourse, that's the divine desire and the divine standard. Not intercourse then marriage, marriage before intercourse. The union, a monogamous union. He says, "For this cause shall a man cleave unto his wife," not his wives, but his wife. Heterosexual union, God created Adam and Eve and not a third sex. "Male and female created he them." A union of perfect oneness expressed in that last verse and perfect harmony. Priority on the part of the man but not superiority, submission of the woman but not inferiority.

I don't know why it is that in our day there seems to have been created the impression that submission means inferiority. That's contrary to Scripture. For example, the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11, as he reasons about this incident, he says Jesus Christ has as his head the Father, and he is our head. Now if there is one fundamental doctrine of Christianity, which I thought very seriously about making one of our eight most important doctrines, it's the doctrine of the trinity, of course, in which we have three

divine persons who subsist in one essence. They are coequal, co-eternal, co-infinite. And yet at the same time, our Lord takes the submissive place in order to carry out his redemptive and mediatorial activity. Submission is not necessarily inferiority and our Lord is the final conclusive illustration of that point. And so in the case of God's order in his creation, Adam has the priority and Eve is to be submissive, but they are coequal and coheirs of the grace of life.

And so the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:26 through 28 continues, and as someone has said, "Marriage may be the only bliss that has survived the fall."

You know, if you were to go to a moving picture, what would you do ordinarily? Well ordinarily, you just don't say let's go to the movies and you go down to the movie and you see what's on and go on in paying no attention at all to what's playing. The chances are you open up your newspapers. You look and see what's playing. And if possible, of course, you'd like to know something about the movie, and so you read reviews. And then you go. You know who the characters are. You know something about the plot. You think it's something that you would be interested in.

Life is to some extent very much like that; that is, there is a life to live. There is a plot to be followed out. There are characters who are going to play it. Don't you think that since you're going to have to play your life out in this particular world of which we're a part that it would be useful to you to know exactly what you are in this life and what is the plan and purpose for you? What's the plot, so to speak, and how it's to be carried out? How foolish to wind up at the end of your life and then to have the Lord God say to you, "You missed the whole point." You missed the whole point. You never even knew what you are as a man or as a woman or as a married couple, why you're here, and what is your ultimate goal in life, to glorify me. How terrible. May God deliver us from such fundamental failure in our life.

If you're here and you've never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, we remind you that the only way in which after the fall you can come into relationship to him is through

the blood sacrifice which he has offered. Just as Eve came to the experience of a relationship to the first Adam by the blood that was shed, so the Apostle Paul tells us that the church of Jesus Christ is related to its head through the blood shed of the shedding of the last Adam. May God help you to recognize him as the atoning savior who offered the sacrifice by which you may have eternal life. Come to Christ. Believe in him and by his grace, relying upon the Holy Spirit, glorify him in your life.

Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for this magnificent description of the way in which this creation of which we are a part has come into being. We thank Thee. We marvel. We worship Thee. Oh God, may we by Thy grace be enabled to realize the purpose for which we have been put here. For Jesus' sake. Amen.