

## **First Southern Baptist Church - 4-24-19**

### **Genesis - Beginnings**

#### **Introduction**

1. I come to this from a skeptical background - testimony
2. Personal frustration with Christian schools, universities, denominations
3. Epistemology - a philosophy of "truth"
  - science is limited
4. Issues flood us:
  - Cain's wives
  - old earth, new earth
  - flood global
  - dinosaurs
  - races formed
  - real people?
5. Three views of creation:
  - Evolution - without God
  - Theistic evolution - with God
  - Creationist - 6 days, 24 hours
6. A puzzle

#### **I. As We Approach the Bible**

1. We bring our own views to the table - do not approach this study without a perspective
  - kick out anything that goes against our education?
  - anti-miracle agenda
  - anti-God agenda
  - anti-moral agenda
2. Bias for or against - before you ever open your Bible, you have an opinion, attitude
3. Strictly Scientific standpoint
  - no miracles
  - no God
  - assume that the world has not changed
    - example- gravity still pulls today, in the same way that it did when the world began (at the same rate/ strength)
    - example - ozone layer is the same??? -trace minerals are the same???
    - example - the North Pole is the same today as then
    - assume that there has been no interruption - a closed system?
  - \*We would have had to have been there to know for sure -and test things
  - Science uses:
    - 1) Physical evidence
    - 2) Logic/ common sense
    - 3) Probability
    - 4) Theories - test against evidences
4. Is the supernatural possible? - if not, then God is not, and evolution is inevitable
  - God is and God can
  - "Real" world - supernatural defines our "real world"

## II. Raises the issue - “what is truth?” anyway?

Epistemology - the study of knowledge, how do we know what we know?

1. Is it “studies” that show?
2. Science? - touchable, observable, testable
  - “thoughts” - are they real? - yes, are they touchable? - no
  - “conscience” - is it real? - yes, is it touchable? Is it provable? - no
  - “fears” - is it real? - yes, is it touchable? -no
  - “love” - is it real? Yes, is it touchable? - no
  - spirit of man - is it real? Yes, is it touchable? - no
  - emotional side of man - is it real? Yes, is it touchable? - no
  - self-conscious - is that true? Yes, is it touchable - no
3. Thoughts are real - yes, we have experienced them  
Is God real - yes, we have experienced Him
4. If truth is what is touchable, testable, etc
  - that rules out miracles
  - that rules out God
  - but... that also rules out past history. Just because you have a document that says that Washington had an affair, does not mean that Washington had an affair.
5. Is truth “logical” - common sense?
  - not all of life is logical
6. Example, what is man?
  - he is self-conscious
  - he is creative
  - he is of higher intelligence - concepts
  - he has language skills
  - he has a spirit
  - he was made for relationships/ fellowship
  - he has a moral component (world-wide)
  - he has a religious penchant (world-wide)
  - able to love
  - \*all the evidence tells us that he is more than “flesh and blood” -made for more than animal existence
7. Truth is probable/ probability
8. Hard science/ soft science
  - Medical science
  - Psychological science
9. Invisible, untouchable, illogical scientific truth
  - light - visible, but untouchable
  - atoms are invisible, - but true
  - “feelings” are illogical
  - truth is narrow - H<sub>2</sub>O
  - truth contains concepts - like love, and sin, and the Trinity
  - do people have free will, or is everything determined by cause and effect?
10. Do I begin with science and harmonize the Bible, or do I begin with the Bible and harmonize science - a world of difference

### **III. Truth - conveyors** - in the Bible, in life

Witnesses

Writings

Narratives - history

Allegory - truth that is not touchable, wisdom

Paradox

-Works or Faith? - both/ balance

-God's Will or Free Will - both/ balance

Hyperbole

-eye offends, pluck it out

-to follow Jesus must "hate mom and dad"

\*a figure of speech

Metaphor

-“land flowing with milk and honey” - not literal

Idiomatic phrases

Similes

Colloquialisms - cultural phrase like “yall”

Parables - true or not

Parallelisms

Euphemisms - like about money

Studies:

-\*absent from the Bible

-dueling studies between universities

-standards in medicine/ science change

-studies, not politically correct

...sit on those studies, not acceptable

-Phillip Morris produced studies to show that smoking is okay

-it has not been that long ago that medical science recommended pre-frontal lobotomies on patients with mental disorders - what about shock treatment?

Science/ history/ psychology/ etc

### **IV. Bible Truth**

-vs Buddhism truth

-vs Confucius truth

-vs truth of fables (wisdom)

-vs other creation stories (violence and sex - vs the Word of God)

-vs other gods

-vs Babylonian creation story

### **V. Applying all this:**

1. Seven days or symbolic? - what is the truth?

-if you disregard the seven day theory... take the seven days as symbol:

A. Now you must decide - what does it symbolize?

B. Now you must decide - do you take the other parts of the creation story symbolically as well

-for example, the tree, - was there no literal tree

- okay, then was there a literal man and woman?
- okay, was there a literal serpent?
- okay, is there a literal Satan?
- okay, is there a literal sin?
- if all that is “symbolic” then, is there a literal God?

C. Are other passages symbolic?

For example, - Noah, a real flood

-a global flood? Or a local one?

Do I take the story of the Tower of Babel the same way?

Broader - do I take the raising of the dead, the same way?

2. Most importantly - do I take Adam the same way?

-by one man sin came into the world

-by one man sin was dealt with

The supernatural is possible, therefore

God is

God can