

The Certainty of God's Word

Genesis 1:1–5

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Call to Worship: Psalm 19

Open your Bibles this evening to Genesis 1:1–5. Tonight we will be looking at the first few verses of the book of Genesis. Here at the beginning of the Bible, we are reminded of a simple yet foundational truth. This is a truth so basic to our theology, so obvious throughout the pages of Scripture, that I am afraid we often overlook it or take it for granted. It's a truth we need to return to and rehearse often.

It is a truth we need, especially when troubles and temptations come our way. In difficult times, trials can easily overwhelm us and cloud our thinking. We need to prepare for such times by becoming grounded in and saturated with the Word of God. We need to know what God's Word teaches—what it says, what it means, what it commands, what it promises; we need to know and act upon our theology.

The truth we need to remember from the opening verses of Genesis is this:

Everything God has said in His Word will most certainly come to pass!

This is an axiom, a truth upon which you can trust your soul. **What God says will happen.**

This is an anchor for your soul when your life gets stirred up and clouded by things you were not expecting.

Yet too often, *(I know I find this true of myself)* when temptations come and they whisper their enticing promises, I am prone to hear and pursue the false promises, rather than resting in the sure and proven promises of Scripture. When troubles come, I am too quick to be fearful, when I should be trusting; too quick to doubt, when I should cling to truth.

I have often wondered in the midst of my own struggles with doubt and sin, in the times when I am reeling in my own failures and capriciousness, . . . I have often wondered how much sin and misery I could avoid if I would just simply learn to take God at His Word.

The Word of God is **abundant with promises**. It teaches us, reproves us, corrects us, and instructs us in the path of righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

No matter what situation we may find ourselves in, God's Word is an ever-present help and guide.

- If we are **tempted to sin**, God teaches us in His Word: "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- If we are **lonely**, He promises: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).
- If we are **weak**, He tells us: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in your weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- When we are **enticed to sin**, He warns us: "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
- If we **fall into sin**, He tells us: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).
- When we **need wisdom**, we are told: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given him" (James 1:5).

This list could go on and on as we think through the rich and abundant pages of Scripture.

And *all* God says in every verse is true and sure. We can believe it. We can trust in it. We can treasure it in our hearts and count on it.

This evening I want to consider together the **certainty of God's Word** and how **knowing this certainty should affect our lives**.

- Do we really believe what God has revealed to us in Scripture?
- How much does it affect our decisions and choices?
- How often during the day do the words of Scripture come to mind, to guide us, comfort us, give us encouragement, and strengthen us?

Have you ever considered how much light we have in Scripture? Just how vast and abundant the truth that God has chosen to reveal to us really is! Yet we often fail to pursue this light as we should. We become content with knowing a little. And even the little that we do grasp and understand, we struggle to live consistently in its light.

Consider how much light is in just the first 5 verses of Genesis! Listen as I read the account from the first day of creation. As I read the passage think about these questions:

- How much truth does this short passage reveal?
- How much responsibility does it demand of us?

During our time this evening, we will examine briefly some of the truths revealed in this passage and consider how we should walk in light of these truths.

Hear the Word of God.

Genesis 1:1–5 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then 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. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

I. What does God teach us in Genesis 1:1–5?

Look first at the opening words of this passage:

1. In the Beginning God . . .

We need look no further than the opening words of Scripture to find the reason for our existence and the existence of all creation. Here is where we find the true meaning of life. Life is from God. It is by His power and for His glory. He is preeminent. He is at the center of existence—**Him not us.**

God is first and we are here only because He has willed it to be so.

This is a truth we desperately need to return to in our day. We live in a culture that believes that everything exists for **ME**. The universe does not have meaning or purpose unless *I* give it one.

We have a religious ideology today that comes in the guise of evangelical Christianity that wants us to believe that all things, including God Himself, exist only for the good and benefit of mankind. God's Word, however, dismantles that false way of thinking and declares God and His glory to be primary.

In the beginning God!

The opening of the gospels in the New Testament echoes this truth, speaking of Christ.

John 1:1–5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him; and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Jesus is the Word who spoke light and life into existence at creation. And He is the source of life and the light of men coming into the world at His incarnation.

Genesis 1:1 continues:

2. In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God is not only the preeminent One, He is the Creator. All creation declares His glory (Psalm 19:1). He made all things and rightly owns all things. *Everything*, including us, belongs to Him.

All things are created *through* and *for* Christ Jesus. Paul tells us in—

Colossians 1:15–18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” We have only read one sentence of the Bible, just the first verse in Genesis—a verse of only 10 words in our English Bible; 7 words in the Hebrew.

How far would we be in our sanctification if we could but live in light of this one little verse. If we could remember at all times that God is first and all we have belongs to Him. We own nothing that He has not given us: not our homes, not our positions, not our children, not even our own souls.

But so often the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, and the lust of the flesh begin to cloud this simple truth and we start to act as if what we have is actually our own. We worry and become anxious. Our possessions then become much too precious and demanding of our attention; and we sin by forgetting God. We forget to be thankful to a God who has abundantly supplied our needs. We forget that God is at the center of all things.

Worry and anxiety are always the fruits of being preoccupied with something or someone other than God.

When worries begin to arise, we need to turn our thoughts back to God and His truth.

Everything we have should remind us of Him and point us to Him. God is good and caring and able to meet our every need. We are but stewards to all that we have; only God owns all things.

Look now at verses 2 and 3 in Genesis 1.

Genesis 1:2–3 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

God begins by creating the earth “without form and void,” as a painter prepares his canvas or a potter his lump of clay. As the Spirit of God readies His power in the darkness, we hear God’s Word.

3. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

Here is the witness of Scripture that what God says most certainly comes to pass. In the midst of darkness God commanded it to be light, **and it was light!**

Even today, thousands of years after the Lord spoke this command, creation continues to obey the Word of God. The sun has not ceased to give light. Its faithfulness and obedience to God’s Word has

continued to this day, to such a degree that even today, on a sunny day, no one can look directly at it up in the sky. And even when the day is clouded (from our perspective) the sun still shines in its place, obedient to God's Word.

The moon also has not ceased to reflect the light provided by the sun. Each morning when you awake and look outside to see the light of morning, or look up into the sky at night and see the light of the moon, you can remember and give thanks to God. Creation is testifying to the truth that God's Word is sure. Creation is proclaiming a message about God!

All God says will surely come to pass.

Children, have you been listening? Do you know why the sun shines in the heavens? It shines because God told it to. **And what God says happens!**

God's Word accomplishes all that He intends for it to accomplish. History abounds with examples of the faithfulness of God's Word.

At Creation God spoke *and the world came into existence*.

His Word came to Noah to warn of the coming Flood, *and the Flood came*.

The Word came to His prophets declaring the coming of Jesus, *and Jesus did come*.

But there are some that still scoff and mock God's Word. Peter speaks of these in 2 Peter 3:

2 Peter 3:1–9 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:10–13 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

All the promises, all the warnings, all the blessings, as well as the curses contained in God's Word will certainly be fulfilled. Just as surely as the sun brought forth light at God's command, and continues to bring forth light; just as surely as the rains fell for 40 days and nights covering the earth with water, just as surely as Jesus Christ came to die upon a cross and rise again in three days, **God's Word will be fulfilled!**

The day of the Lord will come, as Peter has said in his epistle. And in light of what God has said, Peter asks: What manner of people should we be, in holy conduct and godliness?

II. How then are we to live in light of this truth?

I have two simple applications.

First, we must know God's Word. We must read it, hear it, and study it. It is essential that we find out what God has said and give it our most serious thoughts. Your study of this book will be the most important endeavor of your whole life.

We need to know God's Word so we can walk in its light. We need it to saturate our thinking and direct our actions. We need it to guide our decisions, choices, plans, directions, reactions, and responses. Read the Bible. And pray as you do so that God will, by the power of His Spirit, give you understanding and write it upon your heart.

Second, once we know God's Word, we need to believe it. We need to learn to trust God. He is who He says He is! And He will do all He says He will do.

We need to trust God and believe His Word if we are to walk in its light.

His promises are sure! What God has said will come to pass!

Even when difficulties come our way—when we are assailed with troubles and weighed down with trials—we must take God at His Word and stay anchored in His promises.

Proverbs 3:5–8 offers helpful instruction for navigating life, even in trying times. What are we to do when we are dismayed, confused, and uncertain about the future? God's Word tells us:

Proverbs 3:5–8 Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
 And lean not on your own understanding;
 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
 And He shall direct your paths.
 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
 Fear the Lord and depart from evil.
 It will be health to your flesh,
 And strength to your bones.

In verses 5–6 we are given three instructions to follow and a promise to believe:

1. We must trust the Lord with our whole heart. He is trustworthy!

2. We are not to trust ourselves or “lean on our own understanding.” Often we will experience circumstances and situations that we don’t understand. We will face dilemmas for which we have no satisfactory solution—but that’s all right. It’s not necessary that we understand all things or solve every issue that puzzles us. God understands all things. We need to trust Him. He is working all things together for our good and His glory (Romans 8:28). We are not to lean on our own understanding, but look to Him.
3. We are to acknowledge Him in all our ways. We must realize that God is the One orchestrating all events. He is crafting the present to create the future He intends. He has good purposes even in things that seem to us to be tragic and terrible—just look at the cross! It was terrible when the “Son of Man” was “delivered into the hands of sinful men” to be crucified (Luke 24:7). But it was through the cross that God has accomplished our salvation!

As we trust God and acknowledge Him, His Word promises that He will direct our paths.

Verses 7 and 8 continue with three more instructions and another promise to believe.

1. We are not to be wise in our own eyes. We are not to think that we know best what to do. We are not to set our opinions and preferences above God’s Word.
2. We must fear the Lord. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10). We need a humble reverence for God. We need to walk in godly fear.
3. We need to depart from evil. We need to turn away from sin and live in repentance and faith. Included in fearing the Lord is forsaking sin and pursuing righteousness.

As we fear the Lord and depart from evil, we will be strengthened and preserved. It will be health to our flesh and strength to our bones.

These are but a few of the many precious promises in God’s Word. And they are all certain and true! **Everything God says in His Word will most certainly come to pass.** All of history will happen just as God has said in His Word. We must believe His Word and set our faith fully upon the hope that everything God speaks in His Word will be fulfilled.

Let us pray.

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