

## SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

May 31, 2026

Exploring the Nature of God  
“God is Our Creator”  
Genesis 1  
Rev. Mike Fordham

Ronald Reagan was speaking at an event when he said with his usual wit, charisma, and sense of humor, “I have long been unable to understand the atheists in this world of so much beauty. And I’ve had an unholy desire to invite some atheists to dinner and then serve the most fabulous gourmet dinner that has ever been concocted.” Then he paused and said, “And after dinner ask them, ‘if they believed there was a cook.’” As we begin this 5-part sermon series on the nature of God, we go all the way to the very beginning of time as it is depicted in *Genesis 1*, where we are first introduced to God. There we learn that God is the Creator, the All-Mighty, Triune God who miraculously created everything with no materials, and took chaos and brought it into order. When we begin to grasp the magnitude that God truly is the All-Powerful, Triune Creator we cannot help but be in awe of God in worship.

### **GENESIS 1:1-2**

***18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.***

***19 And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. 20 I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.***

### **ALL-POWERFUL, TRIUNE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE**

We first learn from Genesis that God is the **All-Powerful, Triune Creator of the Universe**. In the very first verse of the Bible, we meet God. The Hebrew word used for God here is **elohim** which emphasizes God’s grand supremacy as the one and only all-powerful God. **elohim** is also a plural noun and yet the verbs used with it are usually singular. The entirety of the Bible depicts God as one God made up of three persons who are all equal and eternal, what we call the Trinity. This explains why God said in *Genesis 1:26* just before He made Adam, the first human, “*Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us.*” Here in *Genesis 1* at creation, **God the Father** is depicted as the Architect who initiates and speaks creation into existence. **God the Son**, we are told in *Colossians 1:15-16* is the Active Agent, the one through whom everything was

created *by* Him and *for* Him. We also see the **God the Holy Spirit** present at creation as the Life-Giver and Sustainer of all creation through whom God the Father breathed life into all creation.

When God first began the process of creation, God started by creating **time**, as it says God did all of this in the beginning. God created a beginning! There was no such thing as time until God created it. Next, God created **space** in which He placed all **matter**. How did God create it all? This is what is beyond comprehension. We are told God simply, with His unlimited power, spoke all of creation into existence, except for us humans, whom He molded from the ground and breathed His Spirit, His breath of life into us.

Only God was there and knows precisely what happened and what it looked like at that precise moment when God began creation, but physicists are beginning to get a clearer picture, as described by Bill Bryson, in his book, *A Short History of Nearly Everything*. Bill writes, "In a single blinding pulse, a moment of glory much too swift and expansive for any form of words, the [universe] assumes heavenly dimensions, space beyond conception. In the first lively second (a second that many cosmologists will devote careers to shaving into ever-finer wafers) is produced gravity and the other forces that govern physics. In less than a minute the universe is a million billion miles across and growing fast. There is a lot of heat now, 10 billion degrees of it, enough to begin the nuclear reactions that create the lighter elements, principally hydrogen and helium, with a dash (about one atom in a hundred million) of lithium. In 3 minutes, 98% of all the matter there is or will ever be has been produced. We have a universe. It is a place of the most wondrous and gratifying possibility, and beautiful, too. And it was done in about the time it takes to make a sandwich." Talk about a light show when God said, "Let there be light" and boom, the big bang occurred all because God spoke it into existence on that first day of time.

### **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING OUT OF NOTHING**

We also learn in *Genesis 1* that **God Created Everything Out of Nothing**. Before God began creation there was absolutely nothing, no resources that God could use with which to create. There wasn't a Lowe's or Home Depot to go to, to get supplies for God to build a universe. For us that is impossible! Everything we create comes from some existing material of some sort, but not for God. When the Bible says God created everything it means everything, even the beginning raw materials. That is what *Genesis 1* refers to when it says that when God started the process of creation it was all "*formless and void*". There was nothing and then all of sudden God began to make everything. Theologians call this **ex nihilo** which is Latin for "*from nothing*." *Hebrews 11:3* says, "*By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.*"

## **GOD BROUGHT ORDER OUT OF CHAOS**

In addition to God creating everything out of nothing we learn from *Genesis 1* that **God Brought Order Out of Chaos**. When in *Genesis* it talks about God beginning the process of creation and the earth being “*formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters,*” it not only is referring to the fact God had nothing to work with but then it seems to be referring to God creating materials in their unfinished state with which to begin creating the universe. God took meaningless, seemingly random, chaotic matter that He created and out of them God created a perfect masterpiece that we call the universe.

When I was in my last year of college, I had a part-time job working for a fellow student who had many years of experience as a remodeler. Dave had come back to college to earn a degree and then become a pastor. To pay for school, Dave had this small business that could work miracles of remodeling homes. Dave took me under his wing and hired me to be his laborer. Whenever Dave would finish a portion of the project or the entire remodel he would step and look over it and say about his work, “Good enough for me and perfect for them.” At the end of every day when God finished His work of creation for that day, *Genesis 1* says God stepped back and looked at what He did and said, “This is good!” That means, “This is absolutely perfect!” It is impossible to make it any better.

God didn't create just a bunch of random matter to go into time and space. God put the entire universe together in a perfect system designed to sustain itself for eternity without a hiccup. Several years ago, a scientist wrote an article entitled, *Seven Reasons Why I Believe in God*. He wrote in the article, “Consider the rotation of the earth. Our globe spins on its axis at the rate of 1,000 miles an hour. If it were just 100 miles an hour, our days and nights would be 10 times as long. The vegetation would freeze in the long night, or it would burn in the long day; and there could be no life.” He continued saying, “Consider the heat of the sun. 12,000 degrees at surface temperature, and we're just far enough away to be blessed by that terrific heat. If the sun gave off half its radiation, we would freeze to death. If it gave off one half more, we would all be crispy critters.” He further added to this saying, “Consider the slant of the earth.” I think he said 23 degrees. “If it were different than that, the vapors from the oceans would ice over the continents. There could be no life.” He also said, “Consider the moon. If the moon were 50,000 miles away rather than its present distance, twice each day giant tides would inundate every bit of land mass on this earth.” To add to all this he also said, “Think of the crust of the earth. Just a little bit thicker and there could be no life because there would be no oxygen. Or the thinness of the atmosphere. If our atmosphere was just a little thinner, the millions of meteors now burning themselves out in space would plummet this earth into oblivion.” He then concluded all of this to say, “These are reasons why I believe in God.” The Psalmist reflected on the marvel of God's created order and wrote in *Psalms 19:1-6*, “<sup>1</sup> *The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. <sup>2</sup> Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known. <sup>3</sup> They*

*speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. <sup>4</sup> Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world. God has made a home in the heavens for the sun. <sup>5</sup> It bursts forth like a radiant bridegroom after his wedding. It rejoices like a great athlete eager to run the race. <sup>6</sup> The sun rises at one end of the heavens and follows its course to the other end. Nothing can hide from its heat.”* God put this entire system of this seemingly infinite universe together and it worked perfectly until we came along and sinned and messed it up.

What is beautiful about God’s grace is that God today steps into this sinful, broken, chaotic world and brings order by His grace. It is by God’s grace and power, that God takes our disordered, chaotic, broken, hurting lives and fixes and heals us and makes us a new creation. *2 Corinthians 5:17* says, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”* The Holy Spirit is working within us, as He did in the chaos of the beginning of creation, healing and ordering our lives so that we can begin the process now in this life of becoming the new creation that God meant for us to be at the beginning of time. What is also so beautiful about God’s grace and creative work is that at the end of time when Jesus returns we are promised that God will make all of heaven, earth, and all of us living in it new creations for eternity. We will live together in the new created heaven and earth forever.

### ***GOD IS WORTHY OF ALL OUR WORSHIP***

With all this in mind of our Triune God being the All-Powerful, Infinite, Creator of the ends of the universe, we cannot help but respond by recognizing that ***God is Worthy of All Our Worship***. When we grasp who God is, it should lead us to humble ourselves before God as not only the Creator and Lord of all the Universe but also of our life. Our understanding of God being the Creator should lead us to turn our lives over to God’s leadership. God is worthy to not just be our consultant but the Lord, the Leader of our lives. As such, we now live our lives out of gratitude to God for who He is and all He is doing in our lives in making us new creations. When we catch a glimpse or even get a hint of how great God is, it leads us to humble ourselves and worship God. *Revelation 4:11* puts it this way, *“You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.”*

I promise to not talk too much about Missy and I’s recent vacation, but I just have to share about this section of Yosemite we visited and hiked called Mariposa Grove. You have to take a shuttle to this secluded section of Yosemite where there are hiking trails through a large grove of Sequoia trees high up at over 5,000 feet elevation. The day we went it was overcast, rainy, and at times I think we were hiking in the clouds. It was an unforgettable hike walking among these majestic, massive, ancient Sequoia trees. One of the most notable Sequoia trees in the grove is called The Grizzly Giant. Standing 209 feet tall, it is 28 feet in diameter and 96 feet in circumference at its base. It is estimated to be almost 3,000 years old. What makes this tree even more significant is that in May of 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt and naturalist John Muir embarked on a

legendary 3-day camping trip in Yosemite. Their first night was spent camping beneath the boughs of the Grizzly Giant. The trip so deeply influenced the President that it was instrumental in laying the foundation for the National Park system. When you walk among those giant trees, there are no words to adequately describe the awe that comes over you. It is no accident that these beautiful forests, mountains, quiet meadows, bubbling streams, and colorful sunsets take our breath away as they are reflecting the glory, power, majesty of God, our Triune, Almighty, Creator of the ends of the universe. What is even more amazing about all of creation is that God says we are the best part of it all.

There is a very simple oldie but goodie worship song from 1986 that I used to lead in worship when I volunteered as a worship leader in seminary. The song is called, "I Stand in Awe." It says to God, "You are beautiful beyond description, too marvelous for words. Too wonderful for comprehension, like nothing ever seen or heard. Who can grasp Your infinite wisdom. Who can fathom the depths of Your love. You are beautiful beyond description, majesty enthroned above. I stand I stand in awe of You. I stand I stand in awe of You. Holy God to whom all praise is due. I stand in awe of You." When we are truly in the presence of God, the Almighty, Triune, Creator of the Universe, we cannot help but be in awe and worship Him. I wonder if, at the end of time when all of us who know and love Jesus find ourselves in God's presence for the first time in that newly recreated heaven and earth, if being with God will take our breath away as we stand in awe of Him. I am sure we will be overwhelmed beyond imagination, beyond what words can adequately describe as we realize even the most powerful, vast, majestic beauty of this universe is absolutely nothing compared to God.

Let us now take time in God's presence to do just that, to stand before Him in awe and proclaim in worship "How Great is Our God!"

*Romans 11:33-36, "33 Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways! 34 For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice? 35 And who has given him so much that he needs to pay it back? 36 For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen."*

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES:** (Books marked with \* are available to be checked-out in the Asbury Discipleship Resource Center)

- *The Holy Bible* (Several FREE copies are available in the DRC)
- *The God Who Is There*, Francis Schaeffer
- *The Reason for God*, Tim Keller
- *Creation Regained*, Albert M. Wolters

### Icebreaker Questions

1. What is one place in nature (mountains, beach, forest, etc.) where you have felt especially close to God or overwhelmed by His greatness?
2. If you could witness any moment of creation described in Genesis 1, which day would you choose and why?

### Sermon Discussion Questions

1. The sermon emphasizes that God created everything *ex nihilo* ("out of nothing"). How does believing that God created everything from nothing affect your trust in His ability to work in seemingly impossible situations in your life today?
2. Genesis 1 reveals God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit working together in creation. What does the doctrine of the Trinity teach us about God's nature and His relationship with His creation?
3. The sermon describes God as bringing order out of chaos. Where have you personally seen God bring order, healing, or restoration out of a difficult or chaotic season in your life?
4. Pastor Mike noted that creation itself points to the glory and majesty of God (Psalm 19). What aspects of creation most often cause you to stand in awe of God, and why do you think creation has such power to draw our attention toward Him?
5. If God is truly the Creator, Sustainer, and Lord of all things, what practical changes should that make in how we live, worship, make decisions, and steward the lives He has entrusted to us?
6. What impacted you most from the sermon? How might you apply this week's sermon to your life?
7. How might this group pray for you this week?