

FIRST CLASS:

Module 3

Humanity: The Anthropological Mystery

Review of Module 2: THE EXISTENCE OF GOD AND CREATION: THE MYSTERY OF ORIGINS

Here is a summary of the main points of Module 2. If you have any questions and want to dialogue, please contact one of Trinity's pastors!

*God created everything that exists out of nothing, for He alone is eternal (without beginning or end). The Bible teaches that He accomplished this in a grand order and design, in six days. He did this by speaking His Word; at His Word things that did not exist came into existence out of nothing.

*The origins of human life is described in different terms than plant and animal life. God commanded earth and water to 'produce,' 'sprout,' 'bring forth,' 'swarm/teem' with an explosion of life and species in the plant and animal kingdom, and the earth and water obeyed. Had we had a video, we would witness this amazing production of living creatures--plant and animal life. But for humans God does not command the ground or produce a number of people. "Let us make man in Our own image." He fashions Adam's physical body and then creates the soul by giving Adam His own Spirit (in Hebrew, the *Ruah*). From flesh and blood in Adam's side, God creates Eve. Two people, period. One man, one woman. God marries them to become husband and wife.

*In Genesis 2:25 we learned the original intention, design, and actual creation of God was a humanity that was without sin, guilt, and shame. Adam and Eve lived in perfect harmony and complete holiness with God, with each other, and with nature as well. And all of nature and the creation was also in such perfect harmony and balance. This is why it was called Paradise.

Here is an optional reading for your perusal and discussion with the Trinity pastors if you are interested regarding the mystery of origins, and what is presented in our secular culture as the answer. Studying contemporary sciences or enjoying the arts is a blessing from God, and Christians with those interests and gifts should use them in the exercise of human reason. But as we will consider later in this course, it is God's Word that informs us of absolute truth. Where our reason and science come into direct contradiction with a truth in God's Word, then we must listen to the Word and believe it with the faith God has given to us.

This article is a recent insight by one of the world's most well known scientific thinkers in our time. His disciples often describe him as the "contemporary Einstein."

If you are not interested then proceed to page 2 for this Module's lesson.

Addendum-1a

It's the biggest question in the universe. What happened before the Big Bang? Now world-famous physicist Stephen Hawking says he has an answer. "The boundary condition of the universe ... is that it has no boundary," Hawking tells the National Geographic's *Star Talk* show this weekend. In other words, there is no time before time began as time was always there. It was just different.

He tells physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson that amid the almost infinitely small quantum foam of the singularity before the Big Bang, time existed in a 'bent' state. It was distorted along another dimension — always getting fractionally closer to, but never becoming, nothing. So there never was a Big Bang that created something from nothing. It's just looks that way from our point of perspective.

"All the evidence seems to indicate, that the universe has not existed forever, but that it had a beginning, about 15 billion years ago," Hawking says in one of his lectures. "There must have been a beginning. Otherwise, the universe would be in a state of complete disorder by now, and everything would be at the same temperature. In an infinite and everlasting universe, every line of sight would end on the surface of a star. This would mean that the night sky would have been as bright as the surface of the Sun. The only way of avoiding this problem would be if, for some reason, the stars did not shine before a certain time."

But things were different at the Big Bang. "The density would have been infinite," Hawking says. "It would have been what is called, a singularity. At a singularity, all the laws of physics would have broken down. This means that the state of the universe, after the Big Bang, will not depend on anything that may have happened before, because the deterministic laws that govern the universe will break down in the Big Bang." This has long posed a serious problem for physics, he says.

"Since events before the Big Bang have no observational consequences, one may as well cut them out of the theory, and say that time began at the Big Bang. Events before the Big Bang, are simply not defined, because there's no way one could measure what happened at them."

But there are ways to figure out what came before, he says.

Addendum-1b

"Quantum theory introduces a new idea, that of imaginary time. Imaginary time may sound like science fiction, and it has been brought into *Doctor Who*. But nevertheless, it is a genuine scientific concept. One can picture it in the following way. One can think of ordinary, real, time as a horizontal line. On the left, one has the past, and on the right, the future. But there's another kind of time in the vertical direction. This is called imaginary time, because it is not the kind of time we normally experience. But in a sense, it is just as real as what we call real time."

This has enormous implications when it comes to the Big Bang.

"James Hartle of the University of California Santa Barbara, and I have proposed that space and imaginary time together, are indeed finite in extent, but without boundary. They would be like the surface of the Earth, but with two more dimensions. The surface of the Earth is finite in extent, but it doesn't have any boundaries or edges. I have been around the world, and I didn't fall off. "

There's no raw physics that supports his idea. Yet. But Hawking's insight has proven right before. What we do know is that when it comes to the Big Bang — and black holes — our understanding of physics breaks down. The only certainty about the infinitesimally small quantum building blocks of our universe is that they are uncertain. Simply observing them can cause them to change. They can be in two places — or two states — at once. They seem to be a physical embodiment of probability and potential: elements of reality that haven't quite yet decided what they're going to do. While it dictates our lives, we still don't know what time is. Or exactly where it comes from. We know how it works. We know its effects. It's like gravity.

It doesn't entirely seem to fit in the 'big' world of the physics we experience, nor the 'weird' world of the subatomic. But, like the strange behavior of quantum physics, perhaps time has a lot more left to tell.

This story originally appeared in news.com.au.

2

Read again Genesis 1:26-31 and note the following details:

+The singular and the plural is used for God; however, as most Hebrew scholars contend, the plural in Genesis 1 is a grammatical device— a majestic plural. The oneness of God is set forth by assumption and by language in these first chapters of Genesis. God does not offer a proof of His existence. He is there! He is the “always has been there!” He exists in eternity. He calls forth “the beginning,” space and time, and begins to create out of nothing all that will come to exist. This is the GOD of Genesis 1:26-31 who—
*says on the sixth day, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . .” So He Himself calls forth the plural within the singular! Within Him “One” is the “Us.” God is both One and Us! Hmmm. . .

*and then He does what He said He was going to do: He creates M _____ in His own i _____

+Now the text moves to anthropological (human) truths and revelations.

*In chapter one, verse twenty-seven, man, too, has both a singular and a plural (dual) context: man is a him and man is a them, that is, m _____ and f _____

*Man as him and also as them is blessed: blessed to be f _____ and to m _____ (as were the plants and animals commanded and blessed to multiply their *kin* [Hebrew], or

species). But then God gives to man something above and beyond what was given to plants and animals; man (him and them) are to have d_____ over the earth and all the created living creatures.

How has this aspect of the human kingdom become less than popular in our contemporary culture, yet no less necessary for survival not only of human but of plant and animal life?

***In verses 29-30 God cares for all His living creatures by providing food and nutrition. In the original design and creation, the diet of both human and animal kingdoms did not include other living beings. . .**

***How does verse 31 summarize the entire divine creation?**

3

Read again Genesis 2:8-17 to complete these anthropological revelations of human life before corruption and sin. . .

+God provides Adam a home, not a mythological but a definite, geographical location called E _____. According to 2:10-14 where was this first home of humanity?

In the land of E _____, God Himself plants a garden for Adam, according to 2:8-9. In the middle of this garden are two trees we discover are named, special trees. What are the names of the two trees, and which tree is restricted?

+Adam is given vocation and work as he begins to fulfill his task of care, management, and stewardship of planet earth. According to 2:15 what seems to be his occupation?

And in 2:19-20, Adam is given a special task as part of his being entrusted to manage creation; he is asked to do what?

+As Adam lives out his initial days on earth he discovers he is alone.

+What is Adam's reaction when He receives from God the gift of woman?

+In 2:24, the creation of the first Man (Adam) and Woman is also the introduction of the divine institution of marriage, for the Woman is called his w_____. Did the Woman have a Father to give her to her husband? Who performed the first wedding?

This initial marriage defines the future of human society. In verse 24, marriage is defined in verbs, actions:

- *the married will leave their parents' households
- *the married will hold fast to each other, the Man to his wife
- *they shall become one flesh [in Hebrew, a physical term describing the oneness of sexual intercourse]

4

Again, it is in 2:25 the holiness, perfection, and original goodness of God's design, humanity in His image is described by how the man and his wife see each other and treat each other. . .and this state is?

Genesis Chapter Three is the historical narrative neither God nor we wish had ever been written. But the events of this chapter did happen, and God's original design and intention for earth and His human race were radically altered for the worst. Again the grammar of this chapter is narrative non-fiction; whether people choose to believe it is historical fact or myth does not affect the grammar and the text. It claims to be the record of what actually happened at the beginning of earth's and human history. Christians believe this is historical fact, and a most significant event in all of human history.

Our first parents made a choice while they were still holy, bearing the image of God their Creator. They were not naïve about what they were doing, although they were up against a formidable foe who cultivated vulnerability in them and went for the jugular. Their act of rebellion against God and His clear commandment to not worship and eat at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil clearly signaled their desire to not be limited by their "creaturely-ness." The temptation was that by this single action they would acquire equality with God, perhaps advance in some way from creatures to creators themselves, and take charge of their own lives. Read the entire chapter and write your observations and questions below:

Who in the world is the serpent? (Let the rest of Scriptural revelation inform you and define this personal being known to us as the devil or Satan. . .)

**The last book in your Bible is Revelation. Look up Revelation 12:9
Here the identity of this ancient ‘serpent’ is fully revealed at
the time of the Ascension of Jesus of Nazareth into heaven; he
appears here as a d_____, and here is also named him as the
ancient s_____, who is called the d_____ and S_____.
So we know from God exactly who the serpent in Genesis chapter
three verse one. . .is!**

5

**Back to the Old Testament in your Bible. Look up Job 1:6-12:
The Book of Job is the story of a righteous man of faith, Job,
who is blessed by God to be His prophet. Job is also blessed in
earthly and material ways with wife, family, wealth, status, and a
good reputation. As if out of nowhere he begins to suffer loss like no
other man. What is never revealed to Job, but to the reader of the
narrative, is that Satan has challenged God, charging him that the gift
of faith is only as strong as the glory in which a man lives. God
allows His servant Job to suffer horrific losses and personal suffering
in this battle between Himself and the Prince of Darkness and Evil.
Again the grammar is narrative non-fiction; this really happened!
Write down any question you might have after reading this passage.**

Now we head back to the New Testament to the first four books:

**Mark 1:23-24 After Jesus’ Baptism, the Holy Spirit of God “drove”
Jesus to the wilderness (certainly the opposite landscape from the
Garden in Eden!) to meet Satan, the old enemy, head to head.
Read Matthew 4:1-11 to see how much better Jesus fared than Adam
and Eve had.**

Luke 8:12 One of the destructive acts of the devil is to _____

John 8:42-44 Here Jesus, who knows Satan as well as anyone, describes him in the purity of his evil. Of what does Jesus accuse him?

John 13:2, 21-30 What was Satan's personal relationship to one of Jesus' own student-disciples, Judas Iscariot?

And let's survey a few more passages from New Testament books;

Ephesians 6:10-17 How is Satan the personal enemy of every Christian? How do we twenty first century believers contend against him?

1 Peter 5:8-9 How does Peter's description of the reality of the existence of the devil shape our taking this doctrine of Scripture seriously?

6

1 John 3:8 John calls the devil the original sinner, because he has been sinning from the beginning, the first to conceive of and practice rebellion against God and His commandments. This fallen angel used the gifts God gave him to conceive of everything opposite of God, an ingenious (and purely evil) mental act: God is good; Satan conceived of evil before it ever existed. God is life, Satan death. God is truth; Satan deception. God is spiritual light, Satan spiritual darkness and blindness. And so on. We are up against a formidable foe.

Jude 6 Is Satan alone living and prowling about in the darkness of evil and death? What were Satan and his demonic companions before they were devils?

And, finally, with this partial survey of the doctrine of Satan, return to the amazing summary of Satan's life, Revelation 12:3-17. Satan's strength and power are described, the scope of his initial rebellion amounted to perhaps a third of the total population of the created angels. Having failed to kill the Son of God, He must watch as the Son ascends back to heaven to be seated on the throne of all power, the place where Satan longed to sit. At Jesus' Ascension, the angel Michael declares a second war on Satan,

and Satan and his demons are thrown out of heaven forever. And so on. . .

Now back to Genesis 3. Read verses 1-7. Describe in detail the methodology of Satan's temptation of Eve and Adam:

List all of his promises and number how many of his promises the devil kept to Eve?

Describe the consequences of our First Parents' fall into sin: physical, mental and emotional, spiritual, and in their relationships to God, to each other, and with the world of nature?

7

Describe the punishments God meted out to:

Satan

The Woman

Adam

How do the following verses reveal that, although God's first two children in history have rejected Him and separated themselves from Him, He will choose not to abandon them!

Genesis 3:15

Genesis 3:20

Genesis 3:21

Genesis 3:22-24

Genesis 4:1

Return your answers on pages 2-7 of this module to

wmarler@trinitylutheranspf.org

or by fax 417-866-5629

**or by mail Trinity Lutheran Church
1415 South Holland
Springfield, Missouri 65807**

If you want to ask questions or enter into dialogue on any of the above questions or related issues, we'd love to engage in conversation with you:

wmarler@trinitylutheranspf.org

417-866-5878 (ask for one of our pastors)