Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

If you were to survey Christians about which book of the Bible they find hardest to understand, the answer of most would be? Revelation. Well, I once read about a Bible teacher who was encouraging children to read the Book of Revelation or to get their parents to read it out loud. And he said to the children, “You can understand it. In fact, you may understand it better than your parents.” And soon after that, a twelve-year-old boy came up to him and reported that he had read it and he understood it. The boy said, “It’s like a fantasy, except it’s true. And Jesus is going to win!” Well, years later, when the Bible teacher shared this account at a seminary, and one student said that he could remember reading Revelation at twelve and understanding it too. But the student said, “**I have been understanding it less and less ever since**.”

And I have shared this with you because I believe that this it is similar with Genesis 1. Genesis 1 is *so* simple! But as people get older and start hearing claims about ‘scientific evidence,’ or alternative explanations of Genesis 1, they can lose sight of its wonderful simplicity. So, we will continue, today, to enjoy the wonderful simplicity of this account, as we consider the rest of day one of creation. But as we saw with the first two verses, there are also many wonderful gospel truthes in Genesis 1. But we will have to do a bit of Bible study to see that. And hopefully that will help us see **how** **the rest of Day one sets Christ before us as the word and the light**. And we will do this as we begin with a few comments about the pattern of *each* day of creation, and then we will look more closely at the parts of day one.

1. Let’s begin then with **the Pattern of Each Day of creation**.
   1. And each of the days is described using the same pattern or formula or series of elements. And in our text, which describes the rest of day one, we get each of them in their simplest form. First, there is the **announcement**: “*and God said*.” And then there is a **command**: “*let there be light*.” And then there is the **result**: “*and there was light,*” which on the other days is often expressed as “*and it was so*,” in relation to whatever it was that God had just commanded. And we also see the **activity** of God, which on day one is God separating light from darkness. And there is the **approval** of God, which is God seeing that what He has just made is “*good*” or “*very good*.” And there is also a **declaration** of God, which on day one is God calling light day and darkness night. And finally, there is the **numbering formula** – evening and morning, and the number of the day. So, you count the elements of this pattern as I list them, OK: announcement, command, result, activity, approval, declaration, and number formula. How many elements is that? Seven. And seven is the number of perfection in the Bible.
      1. Now, for the sake of being thorough, and because I know at least one of you will point this out to me if I do not mention it, on day 2, there was no approval; no “*and God saw that it was good*.” But that is probably because the separation of the waters on day 2 continued on day 3 with the water being gathered together in one place, so that dry land appeared. So, day 3 kind of completed what had begun on day 2. And *then* “*God saw that it was good*.”
      2. But we are meant to note these wonderful, God exalting patterns. They are another demonstration of the connectedness and God-designed-ness of Scripture. And they should prompt us to praise our amazing God!

* 1. But as we continue to consider these wonderful patterns, the first part of the pattern for each day is the announcement phrase: “***And God said***.” And earlier in the sermon series, we referred to the verses in **Psalm 33** that exalt God for just speaking things into existence. So, this phrase, “*and God said*” really is the heart of creation. And here in verse 3, it is how God begins to form and fill the earth that He has just created. And the phrase, “*and God said*,” will begin each of the next 5 days of creation. In fact, as the days of creation week unfold, this phrase is repeated 9 more times, meaning that it occurs a total of 10 times in chapter 1. So, 10 times we read “*and God said*.” Now, think about that for a moment: in this foundational week of the history of the world, God speaks 10 times. Can you think of somewhere else in the Bible where God speaks 10 times? That’s right. When it comes time for God to summarize His law for all humanity, He gives 10 Commandments. And remember, the first time that God gave those commandments, He spoke them to the people of Israel from the top of Mt Sinai. So, that is another noteworthy and significant pattern.
     1. And I have already mentioned that seven is the number of perfection in the Bible. Well, God described what He had just spoken into existence as “***good***” or “*very good*” seven times in creation week. And how is God’s law often described in the Bible? **Psalm 119:39**: “*Your rules are good*.” **Romans 7:12**: “*So the law is … good*.”
     2. And the first creative word of God brought **light** into existence. And we are told that “*God saw that the light was good*.” Well, **Psalm 18:28** says of God, “*The LORD my God lightens my darkness*.” And how does He do this? Well, **Psalm 119** is one long celebration of the commandments of God. And in that Psalm, we read, “*The unfolding of your words gives light*,” and “*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*.” So, the law of God is good and it gives light.
     3. But, and this is important, in the New Testament we see that no one can be saved by trying to keep the law. The law can only reveal our sin and our need for a salvation outside of ourselves. So, what we need is another word of God; a word that is good and a word that *is* light and *gives* light. And **how was the Lord Jesus described in our earlier reading in John 1**? He is called “*the Word of God*.” And Hebrews 1 describes Jesus as the *last* and *best* word of God. And Jesus described Himself as the Good Shepherd. And John also describes Jesus as “*the* ***light*** *of men. The light that shines in the darkness*.”
     4. Now, we will have more to say about this in our next point, but we are already beginning to see how the rest of Day One sets Christ before us as the Word of God, and the true light, who is good. He is the Saviour whom we sinners need. He is the way out of the darkness of sin and misery.
     5. And yes, we need the rest of the Bible and the Holy Spirit to make these connections between Genesis 1 and the Lord Jesus. But they are gospel connections that we are meant to make! And they should lead us to worship and adore Him!

1. Well, that is a few gospel thoughts from the ***patterns*** of each day. But let’s look more closely at each of these elements in our text as we consider **The Parts of Day One**.
   1. We described the first element or part of the pattern for each day as the announcement. And an **announcement** is someone speaking or declaring or proclaiming. In verse 3 it is “*and God said*.” And the content of the announcement on day one was the **command**: “*Let there be light*.” And then, the **result** of the command was “*and there was light*.” And because the focus of the chapter 1 is the earth, this must be a light for the earth. Where there previously was only an inky blackness, now there was glorious light! And I hope that your response is wonder and amazement, but also simple faith. God spoke light into existence! Hallelujah! And we could leave it there. That is good and right. But what we are going to do is to meditate on what we have just read. And to meditate is to start making Bible connections. What is the significance of what we read here in terms of the message of Scripture? And this is not about us inventing connections but exploring the connections that God wants us to see in His Word. And in the Lord’s providence, I was listening to a sermon very recently where the preacher was doing this. So I am happy to borrow some of that sermon. So, we will start with what is called **biblical theology**, which is how the whole Bible unfolds or explains the significance of something. And once we have done that, we will be ready for the **application** of this point, which is what it means for us or what we must do in response.
      1. So, we start with the biblical theology:
         1. We have already noted that the God who existed before the creation of the world is **one God in three persons**. And creation was the result of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit wanting to share the indescribable joy their communion or fellowship or relationship with others. And at the heart of their communion is communication. And I won’t give you all the Scripture references for this now, but they spoke to each other a plan to create the world, to permit the Fall, and to save a people from out of the mass of sinful humanity, whom the Father would present to the Son, at the end of time, that they might dwell together in the new heavens and new earth. And the Son spoke of His willingness to leave heaven behind and to be born of a woman and to die on the cross for the forgiveness of all those whom the Father had chosen. And the Spirit spoke of His willingness to live in the hearts of all the chosen ones to bring them to faith, to work in them all the blessings of salvation, and to preserve them in faith. So, behind or underlying creation is the communication of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And unsurprisingly, God speaking is the very heart of creation: “*And God said*...”
         2. In fact, **turn over to Genesis 3:8**. This is after the Fall. Look at what we read there: “*And they (meaning Adam and Eve) heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden*.” Does anyone here have the King James version? What word is used instead of sound? “*Voice*.” And you can translate the Hebrew word there either as ‘sound’ or ‘voice.’ So, the emphasis there is not on them *seeing* God but on them *hearing* Him. Again, God speaking is emphasized.
         3. And think also of the creation of humanity. We are told that we were created in the image of God. And we have much in common with animals. But **what is one thing that we can do that animals and fish and birds cannot? We talk**. We use words. We write poems, we compose songs, and we dictionaries about the meanings of words. And in this way, we are like God, who speaks.
         4. And God speaking is a key part of the Bible and the story of salvation. We find Him speaking to Noah, and to Abraham, and to Moses, and to Israel. And He sent prophets to speak His word to His people. And from Moses and the prophets we get the Old Testament – the Word of God. And then, as we noted a few moments ago, He sent Jesus, His Son, as His last and best Word. And when Jesus was transfigured, the Father said, from heaven, “*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him*.” So, what Jesus said is of the utmost importance. But Jesus is no longer with us. But He called 12 disciples and made them His apostles or messengers. And they wrote down His words and their sermons and teaching in the Gospels and Acts and the letters of the New Testament, so that we might have the complete Word of God. And so, perhaps you have heard this before, but if you want to hear God speak, read your Bible. And if you want to hear Him speak audibly, read your Bible out loud!
         5. But the key point here is that that short phrase “*and God said*” is massively important to our understanding of God and Scripture and salvation.
      2. So, with the biblical theology of “*and God said*” in view, we can now consider an **application** of this most important biblical concept.
         1. Earlier in the service, we read **2 Corinthians 4:5-6**. And there Paul is speaking about the **preaching of the apostles**. And he wanted his readers to understand that God uses the preaching of Jesus Christ to bring people to salvation. And he likened this to God creating light. Listen to the words again: “*For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord … For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*.” So, how do people come out of spiritual darkness into the light of salvation? Through the preaching of Christ!
         2. And this highlights the importance of preaching. Listen to **Romans 10:13-14**: “*For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ But how are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*” Jesus speaks to people, today, through preaching.
         3. And this is why **when Paul wanted Timothy, a young minister, to know what the focus of his ministry should be**, he didn’t say, make movies, or have lots of new songs and responsive readings in your services, or organize a ten-pin bowling league, he said, “*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching*.” He said, “*Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching … Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers*.”
         4. And recent events will make this tough for us to hear, but this is why we need ministers of the word. Pray that the Lord would raise up ministers. And pray for seminaries and student deputies and presbyteries and everyone who has a part to play in the training of ministers. And pray for preachers that they may faithfully proclaim the full counsel of God. And love to sit under preaching. Ask your elder to recommend books on how to listen to preaching in a godly way, and how to teach your children to listen to preaching in a godly way. And remember that listening to preaching is not only about hearing but doing. But all this is the right and proper biblical application of “*and God said*.”
   2. Well, we don’t have time to go into this level of detail with the three remaining parts of Day One, so just a few comments about each of them:
      1. The next parts are the **activity** of God, He “*separated the light from the darkness,*” and the **approval** of God, He “*saw that the light was good*.”
         1. One of the doctrines that many professing Christians despise is **the doctrine of election**, which is the teaching of the Bible that God chooses some for salvation. Well, you find the seed of that doctrine here already as God separates light from darkness and calls the light good. For if we followed the logic of those who dislike election, this would seem unfair on the darkness? Right? Why can’t the darkness be called good?
            1. But this is how it will be in the rest of Scripture – God chooses the seed of the woman, not the seed of the serpent. God chooses Noah. God chooses Abraham. God chooses Israel. And in **Ephesians 1:4**, the elect were chosen by God before the foundation of the world. And this is not because those whom God chose are in any way more deserving than others; it is all about God. And we can see this in the activity and approval of God on Day One of creation.
         2. But where else would the Bible take us if we were to think a little more about God separating light from darkness and calling light good? **Ephesians 5:8-11** says of believers: “*You are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness*.” So, the call to **holiness** also has its origins in Day One of creation.
            1. Now, holiness, ultimately, is about being united with Jesus Christ, through faith. It is His perfect obedience and His perfect sacrifice that are the grounds of our salvation. But we express our thankfulness for salvation in our efforts to walk as children of the light.
      2. So, that’s some gospel lessons from the **activity** and **approval** parts of Day One of creation. But the next part is the **declaration** of God: He“*called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night*.”
         1. Now, the ability to name something demonstrates ownership. If you boys and girls made a model or a painting or some sort of machine, as the maker, you would get to name it. So, the fact that God called the light day and the darkness night, and that He calls or names all the things that He created during the week speaks of His sovereignty or ownership over all creation.
            1. And this was a key part of Paul’s sermon in Athens that is recorded in **Acts 17**. He said, “*Men of Athens … The God who made the world and everything in it [is] Lord of heaven and earth*.” So, as our Creator, we owe God our worship and obedience.
         2. But what we read in verse 5 is **not just about naming**. **Romans 4:17** isaboutAbraham believing in God. And it says of God that He “*gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist*.” So, faith is not something that we produce from within ourselves; it is something God calls into existence. We see this also in **1 Corinthians 1:9**: “*God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord*.” Again, we do not sovereignly and independently of God choose to believe in Jesus. If we believe in Jesus, it is because He has called us into fellowship. And that is why we sing beautiful hymns like:

*‘Tis not that I did choose Thee, for Lord that could not be.*

*This heart would still refuse Thee, hadst Thou not chosen me.*

*Thou from the sin that stained me hast cleansed and set me free;*

*of old Thou hast ordained me, that I should live to Thee.*

* + - 1. And how does God call people into fellowship with Christ? It is through the preaching of Jesus Christ, as we saw above. But this is a gospel lesson from the declaration in verse 5: “*And God called the light day*…”
    1. And that brings us, finally, to **the numbering formula**: “*And there was evening and morning, the first day*.” Now, if we were to translate this sentence literally, it would not be “the first day,” but “one day,” which is how it is rightly translated in the New American version. With the rest of the days, it is the second day and the third day, etc. And people have tried to seize on this difference to support their theories about a day not being 24 hours long, but we can keep this real simple:
       1. If I gave you an apple, you would have one apple. But if I then gave you another apple, the one you already had would now be the first apple and the one I just gave you would be the second apple. It is that simple! And so, at the end of day one, there were not yet any other days. So, it didn’t become the first day until there was a second day. What it was at this moment in time was one day.
       2. And this lends weight to the fact that God wants us to see these days as ordinary days. And this is further reinforced by the reference to an evening and a morning. For there is no simpler way to describe a day! There is a darkness (night) and light (day) cycle, “*there was evening and there was morning, one day*.” One rotation of the earth equals one day.
          1. If you were to **setup a globe in a dark room** and shine the torch on that globe and spin it, by the time you rotated the globe fully, every part of it would have spent half the time in darkness and half the time in light. That is what a day is! And that is exactly what God describes here!
          2. And when there had been another full rotation of earth, another evening and morning cycle, that was the *second* day, and then the *third*, etc.
       3. And so, if you ever hear someone say that the Bible says that with God a day is a thousand years… I feel like saying, lovingly and very gently, smack them :-) But I can’t say that. So, just block your ears. Yes, God’s relationship to time is different than ours. That is the point of that verse in Psalm 90. But God is telling us here what a day is – a cycle of darkness and light. End … of … story!

Well, we have done a lot of Bible study today. But I trust that at the end of it you can see that the account of creation is very simple. Glorious! Yes. Miraculous! Yes. But simple. And we have also seen how **the rest of Day one sets Christ before us as the word and the light**. So, let us praise God for His creation majesty and for salvation in Christ. Amen.