

Series: The Love of God Series: Level 1 – Session 1

Title: Love From the Very First Chapter

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Date: June 4th, 2018

Introduction

- I want to talk about our wonderful planet, its remarkable inhabitants, and their loving Creator.
- In 2007, Disney Nature released a beautiful new documentary called Earth. And just as the film begins, while viewing breathtaking satellite video imagery, the distinct and resounding voice of James Earl Jones begins his narration with these words: “While you’re looking at our planet...”
- “Of all the planets in our universe, we know of only one that can support life. It’s called Earth. Just the right distance from the sun, it’s a perfect climate. Earth rests at exactly, or at an angle of exactly 23.5 degrees to the sun. Without that crucial tilt, everything we know would be different.”
- That’s it. He’s exactly right. Earth is created so uniquely and placed in our solar system so precisely and even the tilt on its axis, makes this perfect atmosphere for what we might call: complex life (the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom, are not sustained on any other planet that we found).
- I want to talk about that and I want you to understand that from the very first chapter of the Bible, we’re not only finding a powerful God, an intelligent God, a creative God, but we also find a loving God.
- In their book “Rare Earth: Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe”, the geologist and paleontologist Peter Ward, and University of Washington astronomy professor, Donald Brownlee, present strong evidence to suggest that complex life on other planets cannot be common or even likely, as the science community has believed.
- And in the book “The Privileged Planet”, the astrophysicist Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay W. Richards, a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute affirmed Ward’s and Brownlee’s assertions arguing against the common presumption, which says that because there are billions of galaxies, then the likelihood of complex life on other planets must be high. Gonzalez and Richards, after identifying 20 undisputable factors, which are absolutely necessary for a planet to sustain complex life, attached a mathematical probability equation of 10% to each factor, which for the majority of factors was a noted overstatement. In other words, the likelihood of any of these factors existing elsewhere is actually much lower than 1 out of 10. “The Privileged Planet” video documentary based on the book elaborates on the calculations, showing that with the 1 in 10 equations for each of the 20 factors, the mathematical odds that there would be even one planet in the Milky Way galaxy, with all of the necessary factors to sustain complex life is 1 in 10^{15} , that is 1 in 1000000000000000 (15 zeros). The point is that because of the numerous and essential factors needed, the odds are considered a mathematical impossibility, that there could even be one planet like ours, let alone another. And not only does the planet need all 20 factors, but each of the factors must be sustained with proper ratios and balances respectively.

- So here's the question: "How did all of these factors come about for our planet?" and "How are they uniquely sustained balancing all of the necessary ratios, so that we can continue to live as we do?" And that brings us to Genesis, chapter 1.

God – The Loving Creator

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- Notice that it says: "In the beginning, God...". Have you ever stopped to think that it didn't say: "mom". Our world has a way of trying to get rid of God. So, instead of talking about God as the Creator, the Initiator, we want to talk about Mother Nature or Mother Earth, as a source, to replace God.
- But everything came into being with intentionality. It didn't just explode into being or evolve in this way. I like the story of the little boy that came home from school and he went to his mom and he said: Mom, where did we come from? And she said: Well, honey, God made us. So, he ran to his father and he said: "Dad, where did we come from?" And his dad said: "Aaaa, we came from monkeys." And so he ran back to his mother and said: Mom, dad said we came from monkeys. She said: "Look, I'll tell you about my side of the family and he can tell you about his."
- What I want you to see today is that from the very first chapter of the Bible, we find the Creator. And He's not just a powerful Creator, an intelligent Creator, a creative Creator, but I want you to see that He's a very loving Creator. And these intended creations, were very purposeful and they all point to you.

Genesis 1:3-5 (NKJV)

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

⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

- Isn't it interesting to you that our bodies function in a way that every 24 hours, we need a stretch of time to sleep? And if we don't get it, we don't function so well. We can turn on lamps and lights to go on, but eventually we become unhealthy.

- Isn't it interesting to you that the Earth is made up in such a way, that we have about half of it being darkness and about half of it being light? Is that chance? Or was it designed that way?

Genesis 1:6-8 (NKJV)

⁶ Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

⁷ Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so.

⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

- This is talking about the atmosphere around the Earth. God created the atmosphere 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen, and 1% carbon dioxide and other gases, so that we can breathe easily.
- Now, God could have created this atmosphere in such a way, that you could survive and live, but it wouldn't be like it is today. For example: the make up of the atmosphere could be in such a way, that to breathe, we would do something like: uuuuhuuuu. But no, there's no struggle to breathe. In fact, breathing happens so normally and naturally, that you don't even think about it. You just do it. How did that happen? Intended? Or just explode it?

Genesis 1:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

- God made food, and plentiful. We don't just have plant life on the earth. We have food source plants and not just any plants. God could have made one vegetable, your least favored vegetable which tastes horrible. What if God took that vegetable that you don't like and put all of the vitamins and nutrients and minerals in it that you needed and said: "Here, eat this, every day, breakfast, lunch, dinner, eat it." He could have done that. But he didn't. Instead, we have lots of vegetables, a variety of textures, and colors, and flavors. And think about the fruits: the apples, the bananas, the strawberries, the kiwis, the pears, etc. You can go to a juice place where they mix different fruits and you choose: Well, I want mango and strawberries, or I want peaches and bananas. Why do we need all those? We don't. Why all the variety? We don't have to have that.
- What I'm showing you is that when God created this planet, He didn't create a place just for us to survive. He created a place for us to thrive and enjoy. It didn't just happen. Notice the details, the variety, the flavors. This is what I'm telling you: from the very first chapter of the Bible, we find not only a powerful, intelligent, and creative God, but also a loving God, who created this world for us in a special way to make us enjoy it.

Genesis 1:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then God said, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens."

- Why did God make sea creatures? Some of us here like fish. You don't have to like it, but if you like it you can eat it. Some others like shrimp or lobsters, mahi-mahi. It's not only for food, but we also enjoy those sea creatures. We go to aquariums and watch all these animals under water. Fascinating! Ex: stepping on a sea arcing in Caribbean's.

Genesis 1:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and it was so.

- Stake! God didn't just make vegetables, but stake too. For those of you who are vegetarians or vegans, let me just stop and tell you: "I love you, God bless you!". But for the rest of you, how many of you like a nice grilled stake once in a while? Is God good or is God good?
- Then God comes to His ultimate creation in verse 26:

Genesis 1:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

- Now let's make man, but not like the plants or animals, but in Our image and Our likeness. From the outside, we look like God, not like elephants. This is the way God is and we were designed after Him. We also have certain capacities that the animal kingdom doesn't have. We have certain characteristics, traits, abilities that are inherent in our design. Think about the food. Have you ever seen an animal eating its food and stopping from time to time to say: mmmm...that's good. They can't enjoy it. Their bodies crave food, but they can't enjoy it because they were not created in the image of God.
- God not only created this world and went to such great lengths to make it beautiful with all these details, all the colors, the sounds, the cents, but then He created us with the physiological ability to interface with them, the psychological ability to discern them, and the emotional ability to enjoy them. Animals don't have that. But we do. Examples of different landscapes and sceneries that take your breath away. Example about smelling a barbeque, or smell coffee. The cents of flowers, roses., etc. Example of someone playing the piano.

Genesis 2:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

- God replicated Himself into man. Adam looked like God, was walking with God, talked with God, thought like God, acted like God. And Adam had a desire. Since the Bible says that Adam didn't find

a helper, it means he searched for one.

- Adam went to God and told Him that he was alone. There's something I desire, but I don't know what exactly. All the animals come to him to name them, but there was none that resembled with what he was looking for. Then Adam goes to sleep. And when he wakes up, all of the sudden this new "animal" appears in front of him. Wow. I like her. I like this creature. She looks like me. Plus she's beautiful.
- The word "made" (used in Genesis 2:7 for man) in Hebrew is *yatsar* and it means *to squeeze, to press, to mold into a certain shape*. The word used for woman in Genesis 2:22 is *banah* and it means *designed, fashioned*. I'm personally glad that He fashioned women. When He made us men, He finished very fast.
- God made the woman out of the man. How did God know what Adam desired? How did God know that the only thing that will satisfy Adam's desire will be a bride? Why didn't God give him a car, or a remote control for all the things in this world? Because God desires the same thing: someone like Him. His greatest desire is you. He wanted to share everything with you, His life, His power, His love. He created you with a free will because only a free person can love. A robot cannot love. To bind your wife to a chair and force her to love you, that's not love.
- God's greatest desire is to love and to be loved. That doesn't mean that He felt lonely, pitying Himself and out of desperation He thought like making us. He is self-sufficient.

Conclusion

- For the next few weeks, I'm going to walk you through the Bible and show you that this same God, who created everything around us, and you and me, so beautifully, it is the same God who, when things went wrong, came to restore, came to help. He's the same God who says: I want to answer your prayers, I want to heal your body, I want to save your soul, I want to forgive your sins, I want to restore your relationships, I want to provide for you finances. Let me show you how.
- From Genesis to Revelation, there is a central story throughout all the Bible and that story is the story of God's love for us, the whole thing. Everything else in the Bible is peripheral, it's on the sidelines, watching the central story and here's the story: from the beginning of creation God loved us and wanted life to be perfect and something happened (we'll look at it in the next session) that caused things to go astray, but ever since it happened, God has relentlessly pursued us with His love to try to get us back on track, and back in a place where we can enjoy what He's doing and what He has done.
- Some of you here don't feel worthy of God's love. You feel like you've already messed things up or you've been too far away from God or it's been too long. And yet here He is, He's got you here in this group, He's speaking to you, He's tagging on your heart. That's because He's the same God and He's telling you: It's not too late! I love you today just as much as ever. Open your heart to the love of God. Commit yourself to be here in the next weeks and allow God to explain the depths of His love for you and you'll be changed.