

Pro-Life Genesis

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[0 : 00] Let me lay down some limits to what I am attempting to do here. I believe that as long as we examine the Bible in a way that is always connected to what the Bible actually says, it is not just possible, but fruitful to examine the Bible from a variety of viewpoints and disciplines.

For example, John D. Currid, in his book *Against the Gods*, makes the case that the Old Testament was written in an abductive, that is, a comparative way, in order to reveal to its readers how much different and how much better their God is from the so-called gods of the cultures around them. The creation account found in Genesis is a perfect scenario for such a discussion. However, that discussion is not the point of today. Today, I will, importantly, discuss the Bible through its grammar and word choice by means of a God-honoring English translation, but also from the perspective of some relevant scientific understandings.

The former isn't. The latter is valuable, but not the only way of doing things. Second, I must point out that, while I believe important pro-life insights, I do not think that that is its primary purpose. To put it another way, I believe that these passages were made to be understood at the time they were written, not only in a future when a particular, though profound, ethical issue arose in the 20th century.

[1 : 31] I have no intention of forcing all that these passages have to offer only into that framework. As important as the abortion issue and its related issues are, the insights and implications that God's word has to offer far exceed the importance of the abortion issue.

That being said, I believe that from the very beginning of Genesis, which is also the very beginning, period, we are given an understanding about our universe that makes sense of who we are and where we begin.

Lastly, please note that I am not an elder and that it is good that not many should become teachers. I have a firm conviction that the members of a church, to the extent that they are able, should know the Bible well enough to be able to hold their ministers accountable to at least major error. In fact, their ministers should have the goal of teaching them so well that they are able to do so, at least corporately. If that is true for those God gifted to be evangelists, shepherds, and teachers, then it is definitely true for me.

Since we are the body of Christ, holding myself accountable to y'all is a very real way of holding myself accountable to Christ. So please, don't just believe me, but partake with me in this exploration, and hold me accountable if I go astray.

[2 : 57] With that being said, here's my goal. To walk through Genesis 1 by seven mainly chronological points that, by the last one, will give us some foundation for the pro-life worldview.

With that being said, let us turn to and read our main passage, Genesis 1, which, I'm very happy to say, is page one of our few Bibles.

No, on my study Bible, it's page 48. But no, on this one, page one. Please stand, if you are able, for the reading of God's word.

Here reads the word of God. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light. And there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

[4 : 11] God called the light day, and the darkness he called night. And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day. And God said, let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.

And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse heaven.

And there was evening, and there was morning, the second day. And God said, let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let dry land appear.

And it was so. God called the dry land earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit, in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.

And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit, in which is their seed, each according to its kind.

[5 : 20] And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the third day. And God said, let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from night, and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years.

And let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth. And it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and the stars.

And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth. To rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

And there is evening, and there is morning, the fourth day. And God said, let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.

So God created the great sea creatures, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind.

[6 : 27] And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters and the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there is evening, and there is morning, the fifth day.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds, livestock, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.

And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind.

And God saw that it was good. Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. And God blessed them, And God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

[7 : 42] And God said, Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed and its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given you every green plant for food.

And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

So it reads the word of God. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, the head of the triune God, may everything that I say that is fruitful, that is a pleasing aroma to you, that brings glory to you, and edifies the church, be remembered.

May everything that is not a pleasing aroma, that is a mistake, be forgotten. May your spirit, because of what Jesus Christ did on the cross, be a filter, that only the God of truth can be.

In your name I pray. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. The first thing that I want to point out may be obvious.

[9 : 09] God creates. He creates, and he creates, and he creates some more. It is an obvious point, but it is profound beyond all measure. Note that he doesn't give us a treatise, nor does he start by giving us a dictionary.

Rather, he gives us an account, of his mighty universe creating needs. This is a blessing, not always understood, but understanding may not be far away.

Ask yourself a question. Who is more self-sacrificing? The person who says that he is a self-sacrificing person, or one of the first responders, who ran into the World Trade Center buildings

on 9-11, in order to save people?

Does the latter need to say anything at all? Our God is the primary example of the fact that actions speak louder than words, at least near words. You see, our God is also very much a God of words. And the second important thing to point out is that, from the third verse on, speaking and creating have an intimate relationship. Eight times in the chapter, God decrees what will be made, and it is made.

[10:16] I find the use of the word and to be very fascinating and quite telling. In the English Standard Version of the Bible, the word and is the word most often used to connect his declaration and his action.

To compare, if a connecting word like then was used, the connection between God speaking and creating would read as far more chronological and far more distinct.

The two would take on more distinct roles done in a sequential order. By using and, however, the connection between the speaking and the acting are more interconnected and potentially less temporally distant.

Our God is so great that his speaking and creating are at total harmony with each other and may even be the same thing. To put it another way, his use of language functions as a way of creating. This point will be brought up later. Still, there is some obvious chronology to the Bible. So my third point is that God's creative acts create an increasingly diverse universe.

[11:20] First, we have water and space. Then we have multiple bodies of water and space. Then we have land added to the bodies of water and space. Then, things escalate quickly.

For God then makes all plant life, at least on the level of kind. That category is an intense change of pace. Make no mistake, water, space, and earth are mind-boggling interesting in their own rights for those who dedicate themselves to studying them and for those like me who then watch what they've learned on YouTube.

And yet, they pale in comparison to the diversity and complexity that plant life brings to the creative order. I agree with younger slash recent creationists that plant life is categorically different than what is called living creatures in verses 20, 21, and 24, and man in verses 26, and 27.

Biblically, plants are more food than life. And it is only the fall in chapter 3 of Genesis and its continuing consequences that make it seem otherwise. Still, from a biological perspective, through the creation of plants, we see the God of life beginning to demonstrate himself as such through his creation.

However, this is by no means the end of the increasing diversity. For God now adds every extraterrestrial body, every star, every asteroid, every nebula, everything that is not our planet and that does not exist on our planet.

[12:49] Most of it is done in three words that look like an almost forgotten add-on at the end of verse 16. And the stars. Whoa. Make no mistake.

The God we serve and the God we praise is all powerful. Anyway, like I said, most of that is an add-on. Yes, the universe is an add-on for a God who has an exhaustible power.

Most of what is found in verses 14 and 19 is just about two objects, the sun and the moon, and their special purposes for existing. I could go on and on about those objects and their special creation, however, there is one important feature that I can't not mention.

I stated earlier that plant life from a biblical perspective is food life. It is not characterized as having the breath of life, a characteristic given to the living creatures in verse 30.

Still, plants apart from showing God, showing the diversity of God's creation, are a great example of my fourth point.

[13:53] That is, the more God creates, the more his creation becomes livable. For example, before plants came on the scene, water, earth, and light were made, which are all essential for plant existence.

These four, in turn, are necessary for living creatures, and man to exist more than briefly. The sun and moon are not exempt from this point. For example, the moon is our closest natural extraterrestrial neighbor, only an average of 238,712 miles away, a minute distance on the cosmic scale.

This means that, despite its relatively small size on said cosmic scale, it has a profound impact on our lives. How does it impact us? Many ways, but a vitally important way is through the ocean tides, which are largely powered by the moon's gravitational tug on the earth.

The importance of these tides is said by Dr. John C. Whitcomb and Don DeYoung in their book titled, *Our Created Moon*. In a way that is far better than what I could say.

I quote, Tides are essential to the health of oceans. The shorelines are continually scrubbed as the water rises and falls in its daily rhythm.

[15:12] In the process, the seawater is oxygenated. Poison runoff from the land to the sea by the rivers is diluted, dispersed, and broken down. Without this major stirring of the sea, the waters would become stagnant and unhealthy.

Sea life would die, especially along the shorelines of the world. This includes the abundant plant life of the oceans. There are vast amounts of grasses of the sea, or floating plankton, plus larger plants such as the kelp forests in shallow areas.

In fact, there is more total plant life by weight, biomass, in seawater than on all the land. This follows because the world is about 70% covered with water.

Plants breathe the opposite of us, taking in carbon dioxide and giving off oxygen. Therefore, if sea plants perished, the earth's atmosphere would rapidly deteriorate.

When we then would have insufficient oxygen for life. In this way, our very breath is dependent on lunar tides. Even in a cursed and perfect world, the ecological design of the world is amazing, including the essential functions of the moon.

[16:25] To be clear, in order to be pro-life, we need to first have life. As the God of the Bible continues to create, he is creating a place that is increasingly capable of maintaining life.

Even an extraterrestrial rock like the moon is a part of that life-supporting system. As God's creating order becomes more life-supporting, God creates more life.

In verses 20 through 25, God creates the living creatures of the sea, air, and land. A major difference between these two creation sections and the previous ones is that God begins to start speaking to his creation after it is made.

In verse 22, he tells the living creatures of the sea and air to be fruitful and multiply. These created things are alive enough that giving them a mandate is good in God's sight.

Importantly, in that same section, we now see a new kind of creation, an ethical mandate. To be fair, the use of the word good throughout the chapter already brought this on, but now we see applied to creatures that are at least capable of some kind of thinking and willing, even if to a degree well below and distinct from that of man's ability.

[17:38] So far, God has spoken a physical world into existence, and now he begins to speak an ethical world into existence that coincides with that physical world.

The created order is now clearly no longer a world of only what is, but now also a world of what ought to be, a world of what must be if the living creatures will slash wish to honor God.

That leads to my fifth point. The creation goes from good to very good. Up until this point, when God completes a particular stage of creating, he assesses it as good.

This in itself is huge. Jesus said to, to the man who asked him what he must do to inherit, to, sorry, let's start that one over my bed.

Jesus said to the man who asked him, oh, sorry, at, my apologies, everyone. As Jesus said to the man who asked him what he must do to inherit eternal life, found in Mark 10, 17, Jesus replies in the following verse, why do you call me good?

[18:47] No one is good except God alone. For Jesus, God incarnate, the good, at least in its totality, only applies to God. Perhaps nuances between Greek and Hebrew, as well as genre styles, may help explain this.

As a person left only with English and the same word in each instance, my best explanation is that pre-fall, God's creation was such a pure representation of who God is, his power, his provision, his creativity, among many other facets, that it was worthy of being called good in his eyes.

Impressive to say the least, but good is not where it ends. You see, good is what God calls the stages of creation before he creates man. As epic as all the creation is thus far, it is only man that is created, as said in verses 26 through 27, in God's image and likeness.

He then blesses them and commands them in verses 28 through 29 as well, creating the ethical order for men. Unlike the other living creatures, he gives man dominion over the created order.

Interestingly, the animals are given some dominion as well, but man is given charge over the animals too. As, as he says it, so it was.

[20 : 10] Sorry, and, as he says it, so it was. Then God assesses it as very good. Not just good, but very good. Part of this is no doubt in part, because the created order was now complete.

The beginning of Genesis 2 makes that clear. Day 7 is a day of rest. Each period is good, so their totality is more so, representing God in an even more complete, multifaceted light.

However, I also have no doubt that God calls the created order very good at this point, because an apogee, that is, a culminating point, has been reached when he created those that he made to reflect his attributes.

My sixth point is that, though we are made in his image, we are never explicitly told what that means.

And frankly, I am grateful for that. For example, the history of genocide is one example after another of people in power first defining what it means to be a person worthy of life, and then second using their power to destroy those who do not fit the mold they made by said definition.

[21 : 19] In the Bible, though, God makes our values solely his to know and own by both A. grounding it in him by having us made in his image, and then B. not telling us what it means.

No one can take the definition and twist it because God never gives it. Those created order, in both anatomy and physiology, will reflect whatever the true understanding is regarding who is made in his image, and while the rest of scripture can give us a vague outline, an important outline, though a vague one, we are fully reliant on God to first make the distinction for us.

We look for what he gives that distinction to. Fortunately, we don't have to look far to start. My seventh and final point is that we don't even have to look past this first chapter of the Bible to see a foundation form for the pro-life cause.

Not the whole picture, but a definite start. You see, on the sixth day of creation, God commands man and woman to be fruitful and multiply. For man and woman, there is a very clear way this happens.

We procreate. We make babies. And by babies, I mean human babies. Baby man in both editions. Baby male and baby female. To multiply in this context is not a matter of unit conversion, like using mass and volume to create density.

[22 : 44] It is humans, male and female, and humans alone that are being addressed. They are the only unit. Humans alone are plugged into the procreation equation. To multiply humans is to make more humans.

So if making babies is the equivalent to multiplying, then babies are under the category of man created in God's image. And they are so from the moment that they begin to exist at. So it is not a far stretch to suggest that they bear the image of God from conception onward.

To suggest that their creation is their creative beginning, as God intended in his created order. Note that, when God first created earth, he did not create it complete.

In Genesis 1-2, it was without form and void. Yet it was still earth. God is sovereign. He knows not only what something is, but what it will become. Further, he sees and governs the continuum between the two.

Why make lines that define is and is not in the development of the very man that God created and creates? God doesn't draw those lines. At this point, there is still pro-choice wiggle room that requires the application of other passages of the scripture to squeeze out.

[23 : 58] To take one example, Exodus 12-22-25, in Exodus 12-22-25, the pre-born are called children and are given such a level of protection under Jewish law that even accidental harm to them demands eye-for-eye justice.

Other passages, many of which are found in your bulletin insert, continue to push pro-choice possibilities out of the biblical narrative. Still, even from Genesis 1 alone, I assert that the wiggle room is that the pro-choice wiggle room is questionable at best.

If the creation of man is very good, and if man is created in God's image, and if our ethical mandate is to reproduce, and if only God can determine who is made in his image, and says that man is indeed made in his image, and if reproduction is equivalent to multiplying, then, all things being equal, how can it possibly be right to assess those that are reproduction, our children, are not worthy of existing?

We have and will continue to see what responses come our way, but I believe that Yahweh, the creator God of the Bible, has already had the first say, and he will have the last say as well.

So, how shall we then live? While a fuller biblical case can be made, I believe that we already have sufficient biblical evidence to justify helping those who help life.

[25 : 19] The Life Network is a local example that this local church can help out with, and there's more than one way to help, as we were given in the demonstration. And yeah, I wrote about here donations of money.

They talked about prayer. Donations of time may even be more so. Sorry, getting back on track. I was proud to see our sister Ann promote the Bridges of Hope project a while back. I don't know if anyone here felt called to do it, but I hope God that has reserved, by hope that God has reserved a remnant for that mission, whether it comes from our church or others.

So, regardless, there are multiple ways to help out. That being said, part of the answer, and perhaps the most important part of the answer, is the same ultimate answer for all situations.

Turn to Christ. And if you've already turned to Christ, return to Christ. Turn to Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the second person of the Trinity, the God incarnate through whom and for whom all of creation was made, who himself became a pre-born child that he could live the full human life as it was supposed to be lived, who suffered and died for our sins in order to save us and to begin the renewing of God's creation.

Let us pray. O Father in Heaven, O Father of Life, thank you for this time to worship you. Thank you for this time to reflect on your word.

[26 : 48] Thank you for a time to preach, a time that forces us to look in your text and to see what it provides for us. I pray that you, Holy Spirit, filter us well.

Because since Jesus died on the cross, you can now dwell with us and make us temples for the Almighty God. In your name I pray. Amen.