

Creation

GOD CREATED ME, AND ALL THAT EXISTS

September 16, 2007

MEMORY VERSES

Old Testament: Genesis 1:1 (NIV) – “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

New Testament John 1:1 (NIV) – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Luther: The start of Luther’s Small Catechism explanation to the Apostle’s Creed, 1st Article “I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.” What does this mean? I believe that God has created me, and all that exists.”

BIBLE STUDY & LUTHER

Creation. Why were we created, and by whom? Instead of writing a history or science book (which they didn’t know much about, anyway), the Old Testament writers teach that the true God created humans and all things out of God’s unlimited love for loving relationships with God and neighbors.

This was not what the writer’s neighbors believed – they taught about “gods” who only cared when humans gave them sacrifices to avoid being destroyed. The Bible counters that the Triune God: God of three persons who together creates, redeems, comforts and counsels us, loves us *so* much, and is *so* hurt by our rejection, that God actually became part of creation – living and dying as Jesus of Nazareth – in order to heal our relationship.

This is no man-made deity! God always does things backwards from any “god” we think up. *God* gave the sacrifice for *us*, so that *we* would not be destroyed, loving us with an ultimate and infinite love. God protects and provides for us daily, and gives us the faith to trust God’s promise that, because of what *God* has done for *us*, God will never leave us.

Did you know?

The people of the Old Testament knew God as Yahweh, or Jehovah, or by their code word “The LORD.” They revered God’s name so much they expected death if they said it aloud. Have we progressed or recessed with how we treat and use God’s name?



In the early 1500’s, Martin Luther understood God’s hand in his life, even with his children dying, his friends abandoning him, bad health tormenting his body, and living under constant death threats from church officials (not quite the friendly, neighborhood pastors and church officials we enjoy today!!). For Luther, no matter what happened in his life, he always trusted and gave thanks and praise, that 1st: God created, protected, provided, redeemed, and called him – and all people – to lives of helping each other, and 2nd- God gave him faith to trust God’s promise God would never abandon him, no matter what.

Luther wrote these well known words which we still sing today in “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”: “...*Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse; though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day – the Kingdom’s ours forever!!*” (LBW 229). Listen for it on Reformation Sunday (Oct 28th)!

Thoughts to grow on:

God gives us all we need to grow in body, and also in faith – by creating faith in us from nothing when we hear God’s Word spoken.

What happens when we decide we can live without God’s light and “faith food”? Are we and our faith able to grow, like seeds that are nurtured; or, do we and our faith wither and die like a plant hidden in a closet?

How do you think God feels when we tell God and others the Bible is just a story?

put them into a dark closet? Would your plants survive? God never forgets to give us water, food, light, as well as clothes, family, neighbors., and asks us to share what we have with other. When your herb seeds sprout, eat and enjoy, and share them with others! “God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.” (Genesis 1:29)

- ✦ Read Genesis 2. Discuss with friends or your family differences you see between Genesis 1 & 2. Each were written for different purposes – from what you read what do you think those purposes might be? How do you feel about the Bible starting with two contradictory chapters? Or, can you find a common ground between them?
- ✦ If God provides us with all we need, as Luther claims, then why are there people in this world (including in our own city) who are barely able to live? Why hasn’t God given them everything, too?
- ✦ Adults argue a lot between Darwin’s Theory of Evolution (by chance and survival of the fittest), Biblical Creation (everything completed in exactly six 24-hour days), and Intelligent Design (somewhat of a combo of the two, but with differences – of course!). How do you see the Bible trying to explain how the world was created? What questions do you think the Biblical writers tried to answer? Should we use the Bible to answer our own questions, or should we try to learn what the original questions were, and then study how they were answered? Why?

Suggested Activities and Questions to Ponder

The activities suggested below are listed from younger to older. Parents, it is hoped you will use some or all of these suggestions as faith activities at home, or conversation in the car, to help reinforce the week’s lesson, and to create a space and time when family faith dialogue can develop and flourish during the week.

- ✦ What are your favorite things that God created? Finish this sentence: “Thanks, God! I’m so thrilled you made _____!!!”? Now, if you had been God, what crazy things would *you* have made when you created the world? Use paper or some sculpting clay to create your new creations!
- ✦ How would you feel if people decided to trash and ruin what you had made? What would you say to them? How do you think God feels when we are careless with the creation and people we have been given? Write down three things you can do this week to help take care of God’s creation (maybe cleaning up a mess someone else made, without complaining!) and three things to help others. Now, do them!
- ✦ Plant some herb or vegetable seeds in a pot or in your garden. Give your seeds light, water, and plant food. What happens to your seeds in a few weeks? What if you didn’t feed or water your seeds regularly, or

Our Ministry Project for 2007 2008

*I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’
Matthew 25: 35-36 (NIV)*

This year the Sunday School is covenanting to sponsor a child through Compassion International, as a means of teaching intentional ministry and relationships. Please prayerfully consider your ability to support this ministry.

PRAYER – Try praying this each day this week

God, Creator of me and of all that I see – thank you for loving all of us so much that you give us what we need each day: food & clothing, home & family, an earth to live on and a faith to trust you with. Feed my faith with your Holy Spirit by revealing Jesus to me as your Word, who even creates faith where none existed before. Forgive me when I stick you on a shelf, taking you down only when I want something from you. Thank you for keeping me safe in your arms, in your giant “God Hug”, and help me to pass that hug of safety and support onto others. In Christ and by your Holy Spirit I pray, Amen.