

God is at centre – not me!

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Welcome

Opening Scripture Ps 119:89-92

Hymn: MP 41 At the name of Jesus

Bible Reading: Ps 90 the psalm of Moses

Prayer of adoration and praise.

Children's talk Boomerang **surely your sin will find you out** Nu 32:23

Notices Refreshments after service, Gweno, Kimmy, KH holiday club

Choruses MP 245 How great is our God

MP 191 God of Glory we exalt your name

Open time to share

Main reading: Dan 4:1-3, 25-37 (page 887) and Genesis 1:1-3

Hymn: MP 976 Ancient of days

Sermon God is at centre – not me!

Hymn MP 109 Crown him with many crowns

Close 1 Tim 6 doxology

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Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at [www.knbc.org](http://www.knbc.org).

The audio file is [21\\_10\\_24.mp3](#). MP 676, 880

## Exordium

“**In the beginning God**” x2 Genesis 1:1 So we start our new series looking at key events in the OT. You cannot get more key than **Gen 1:1 “In the beginning God”**. Turn to God's word, open your Bible, the first page, the first line, the first thought, the first revelation is - “**In the beginning God**”

No argument is entered into to *prove* the existence of God: No, His existence is affirmed as a fact to be believed. Here is the foundation for everything. Here is the basis which makes sense of all that is to follow.

**If I asked you to draw a circle – where would you be? Where would God be?**

See the bulletin. The question for you this morning is “Do you have God at the centre? Is God in his right place? Is God in your estimation a big God? Do you see him as great and worthy of all? Or is he for you a small god lurking on the periphery, little power, little significance, someone – amongst a number - you go to just in case he can help ... No, he is the Eternal God, the One True God - the Creator - and Ruler of the universe. He is One enthroned on high around whom his servants gather – and around whom all will one day gather.

The verse says literally ‘**In beginning God**’, there is no ‘**the**’ there. In the Hebrew the word **beginning** is 07225 ראשית re'shiyth ray-sheeth’ meaning “first, beginning, best, chief, choice part.

In the Greek translation of the same phrase it is the same: ‘**In beginning**’. And the word **beginning** is arche ar-khay’ meaning ‘beginning, origin, that by which anything begins to be, the active cause, the first place, the leader, the principality, rule or magistracy.

**So God is the** ‘arche’ - the arch type, as we use the word the archbishop, the architect, the great high designer and power, the authority over all authority.

✚ **God is the inexhaustable source – Yes He is the centre.**

In this simple bare fact starting point: “**In the beginning God created,**” nothing is added to gratify the curious. The opening sentence of Holy Writ is not to be philosophized about, but is presented as a statement of truth.

Here is the start of the Space / Time continuum – the framework in which we all live. In which we are all bound – we are constrained by the elements and all the natural laws, we cannot work outside of them, they are set by God. We live within then as we live within time – for so has God determined, we cannot buck them or change them - [time waits for no man](#).

Here is the start of time – Yes time had a beginning, Paul speaks of **before the beginning of time** 2 Tim 1:9 and again in 1Co 2:7 **before time began**.

God is outside of all these constraints - he is eternal, everlasting.

- Enter the Birmingham Hippodrome and before you is an impressive stage. Walk down the adjoining street and as you look into the side entrance your eyes are met with a most impressive sight, a vast 'backstage' area, immensely high and deep, far greater than the stage. It is from this 'backstage' that everything that happens is controlled.
- ✚ So it is with this world - What did Shakespeare say “all the world is a stage and all the men and women merely players”. He had it right

So God as the Sovereign King determines everything. Jesus says sparrows are pretty worthless things “**Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.**” Mt 10:29. God works out all things according to the purpose of his will. – and nothing happens outside of it!

The Truman show is a film of a man who lived in a small town in the US. The film is a profile of his life from his getting up in the morning, going to work, those he met on the way, his friends etc. It is not until half way through the film that we discover that actually it is all taking place inside a huge studio with a domed roof for the sky. The Film Director watches through multiple screens and directs all that happens.

God is Sovereign that means everything, everything happens just as he determines and has always determined from before the world began.

**Standing outside of time he directs all things.**

God is at the centre. Your life is in his hands. So I ask you again this morning “Is God – for you - at the centre - or are you?”

### **Creation**

The verse goes on to say ***In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. So also Ps 102:25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands,*** plus the numerous other references to God the creator throughout the Bible.

The Genesis account is in stark contrast to other writings of the time, it is a straight forward record of how God created the heavens and the earth, both things seen and unseen.

Octillion stars is 8,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 = 8 plus 24 ‘0’s +/-

- Are they named? Hardly and no - you cannot buy one – not yet anyway

God is the one who made men and women as the pinnacle of his creation. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. I don’t just mean the thousands of miles of blood vessels in our body or vast amount of information stored in every cell’s DNA. Man is a living being, God has breathed his life into us - only in him do we live and move and have our being.

Everywhere you look you can see the wonder of God's majesty displayed in the cleverness and detail of the creation. Go from the flowers of the field to the stormy coast and you can’t avoid the display of God’s greatness.

The starting point, the foundation is Genesis - Genesis means origin, here we see:

1. The origin of the universe
2. The origin of order and complexity
3. The origin of the solar system
4. The origin of the atmosphere and hydrosphere
5. The origin of life
6. The origin of man
7. The origin of marriage
8. The origin of evil
9. The origin of death
10. The origin of language
11. The origin of government
12. The origin of culture
13. The origin of religion, and...
14. The origin of God’s chosen people [Extract from Genesis by Morris]

Travel though the Bible and these truths unfold progressively - like a river becoming deeper and wider. God’s revelation in Genesis gives purpose, explains design, anchors morality: marriage, social conduct, introduces us to work, rest, life and death, cursing, blessings, suffering blame, murder.....

■ for example the 7 day week - the Russian experiment of the 10 day week Jesus believed it! So I believe it – it is as simple as that. I wasn’t there but Jesus was – he can say - I believe what he says because he rose from the grave to prove it. Jesus said regarding the creation of the first man and women "**at the beginning of creation God made them male and female**” Mr 10:6

When questioned what does Jesus do? He refers to Genesis. There are 165 quotes and references to Genesis in the NT

**Genesis is the foundation, look up to it? no stand on it! you can and should!**

Here in this one brief sentence: **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth** is a statement sufficient to expose every fallacy which man has invented concerning the Deity. This opening sentence of the Bible....

Refutes *atheism* for the universe was created by God

Refutes *pantheism* for God is transcendent to that which he created

Refutes *polytheism* for one God created all things

Refutes *materialism* for matter had a beginning and God *distinguishes* between himself and His material creation.

Refutes *dualism* because God was alone when he created.

Refutes *evolutionism* because created all things

Refutes *humanism* because God, not man is the ultimate reality

"**In the beginning God created**" tells us that He was Himself *before* the beginning, and hence, Eternal. "**In the beginning God created**" informs us *he is a personal being*, for an abstract impersonal "first cause," could not create us. "**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth**" argues He is *infinite* and *omnipotent*, for no finite being possesses the power to "create," and none but an Omnipotent Being could create "the heaven and the earth."

*So No - you are not in the centre – He is*

*How insulting to God, how dangerous to put myself up in God's place.*

Nubuchadnezzar was a proud man "he said, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" Da 4:30

Nubuchadnezzar was an Emperor king who had everything, but there are many in life with nothing – but their pride – and that reaches to the heavens.

*How insulting to God, how foolish, and how dangerous.*

■ Review the magazine rack and it is all about me, "being the best me"

All of us are affected by the times we live in. Our godless secular humanism has squarely and unashamedly put man at the centre. He is not, we are not.

✚ Man at best, is at best a man x2

How the media puffs you up, you are somebody, you can be anybody you want to be. How many fall for it and believe it. Self-obsession is the result!

■ Someone waving in your direction, you immediately respond only to find that they are waving to someone beyond you – not it is not you, or a car toots their horn, and you immediately wave to find no it is not you!

We have all had that experience – it is humiliating as it is embarrassing, the effect though is to make me realise I am not the centre of attention. Sorry

■ Going to be in the big bed, waking up in the small camp bed

Putting myself in the centre means I am easily upset when I don't have my way, when something doesn't go my way. Or something is said, or my plans are thwarted, and I can't do what I want.

Ever analysed your thoughts? How easily it is to disparage others, to malign and think badly of others while always putting my actions in the best light

■ Every film has a hero – and O how we all love to be the hero of our story

✚ All your problems can be traced to trying to live without giving God his rightful place. – the remedy is repentance.

God – not me - determines how to see things, relationships, marriage, etc.

✚ God is the only one who enable us to make sense of things

Life is so short, like a mist that comes & goes, my heart can stop at any time

■ Blenheim the Duke died before able to enjoy it. change

God humbled Nubuchadnezzar. And it was a humbling - the greatest king on earth was made to crawl around on all fours like an animal.

God humbled Nebuchadnezzar until he confessed "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble." Da 4:37

Has he humbled you? What will he do to humble you, what will it take?

See what it took for him. Is there someone here still unwilling to bow or bend the knee and give God the glory? What troubles and difficulties is God giving to you to get through to you - and to humble you?

Bethshazzar his grandson knew all about this and yet still refused to acknowledge that God is God. God said: "Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honour the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways." Da 5:23

✚ How insulting to God, how foolish, how dangerous

✚ Change wood and stone for my bank balance, or my comfortable home, or the NHS or what my people think of me – idols in the place of God. – and there is only one destiny left for a man or women like that.

The cross of Christ shows more clearly than any other act of God what will happen to those who remove God from his rightful place and are unrepentant. The cross is the ultimate display of God's wrath upon the sinner. Excruciating physical pain and dreadful anguish of soul.

### *Cross*

Yet the cross is also God's great loving intervention to rescue souls from Judgment. Here is the pinnacle of God's great plan - the sending of the eternal Son, the child born, and Son given **He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.** 1Pe 1:20

It is the cross that enables all of God's purposes in the future heaven to be enacted. It is the event within history that effects God's plan for all history.

It is the cross that enables sinners destined for judgment and hell – and rightly so – to be rescued and translated into another Kingdom, the eternal kingdom of life. How do you gain this? It is through repentance – that is removing yourself from the centre - and giving God in Christ his rightful place. And it is through faith. The simple faith that trust Christ alone for everything - **Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.**" 1Pe 1:21

It cost God greatly to pull many out of that broad road leading to destruction. It was a work wrought by God himself.

Those saved are reminded.... **"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.** 1Pe 1:18, 19

This lamb is also the radiance of God's glory, the eternal Word. The parallel line to Genesis 1:1 is found in John 1:1 **In the beginning was the word**

Jesus is the creator God for we read **about the Son "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom. .... "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands."** Heb 1:8,10

It is this Creator God who laid down his physical body as a sacrifice.

Will you respond to that if you haven't already done so?

### faith

Every day we see examples of faith - those who entrust their lives to others

- The trust the migrants have in their trafficker guides to aid them to a better place. The money, the following to the port, the boats, the handing over of their lives and their family and children trusting them to take them safely over to a new and better life.

How much more should you and I trust Jesus Christ. He can take you safely over. Jesus Christ who is the creator God, the one eternal in nature and all powerful who holds the universe together – can you not trust him, trust him to take you to that better place?

**Will you follow this risen Lord Jesus? Some Mock, some Miss, some Meet**

### *Let us live under the lordship of Christ*

Those who live under the cross are those who declare Christ is the centre not themselves. It is the most profoundly and necessary turn around.

- Just as Copernicus – changing the way we look at things.

Now with Christ you can say "God is the centre, and live with God at the centre. This change and new obedience shows you have true faith

Pr 3:6 **in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.**

✚ In the difficulties - Lord what are you doing in this to teach me? This will somehow be for your glory – although I probably won't see how - at least not now, Say to yourself "it is surely a test for me that will bear fruit for eternity"

We say 'so and so' has passed away, it's a nice way of saying they have died

✚ We pass away because we are passing through, no-one stays here long.

Our days are like a mist, everything seen will one day go, the earth and all that is in it is passing away. Will you pray "Lord help me, **teach me to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.** Ps 90:12

- In the joys - Remember next time you walk in the woods with the sun glittering through the trees, the smells, the quietness and the softness underfoot, browns and greens what beauty, what splendour

✚ How it shouts about God - It is all about him. But it will all go – but the one who trusts in Him will live forever, in a perfect new world.

Remember the words from John Newton's Hymn Amazing Grace?:

*When we've been there ten thousand years - Bright shining as the sun*

*We've no less days to sing God's praise - Than when we first begun* **END**