

Genesis is the book of beginnings. During the month of February we are going to look at some of the “beginning” this first book of the Bible. It all begins with God. Genesis’ opening words, **“In the Beginning God!”** The Bible begins with the belief that God has always been always will be. Things come and go, but not God. The Psalmist wrote, **“Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God.”** (Ps. 90:2)

This belief in God is not shared by everyone. Atheists say there is no god. Agnostics say there isn’t enough proof for god. Narcissists make themselves their own god. Some make a god out of this life and live for the moment because when you’re dead you’re dead. People who deny God’s existence put their faith in something else. Psalm 14:1 tells us, **“Only fools say in their hearts, “There is no God.”** In other words, it is foolish to go it alone in life and deny God.

Some people claim that all religions are the same and lead people to the same place. So in essence they are saying that all gods are the same. But that can’t be true because all religions don’t lead to the same place. The people who believe in reincarnation are trying to escape from this material world and gain enlightenment. Some believe human spirits continue to live on after this life and take their consciousness with them. They believe souls can interact with those living on Earth. Many people today think that when people die they “go to a better place” whatever that means. Others think you get what you deserve. So if you are good you go to heaven. If you are bad you go to hell. Christians believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and live with Him in eternity. Obviously not all so-called gods and beliefs are the same.

The Bible tells us that God is the Creator, the source of everything. Listen to just a few of the passages that describe God’s work of creation

- **“Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens with your hands.”** (Psalm 102:25)
- **“By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.”** (Hebrews 11:3)
- **“Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see.”** (Colossians 1:15-16)

People may be creative with the things that God has made, but human creativity does not compare with God’s creation.

History has recorded the famous “first words” that launch a new venture or discovery.

- Neil Armstrong’s first words on the moon, **“That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”**
- Alexander Graham Bell’s first words on the telephone, **“Mr. Watson, come here – I want to see you.”**

- Al Jolson first words in the movie *The Jazz Singer*, the first talking movie, “Wait a minute, you ain’t heard nothin’ yet.”
- The first email message sent, the top letters on the keyboard beginning with “QWERTY”

Genesis tells us, “The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters.” (vs. 2) Then God said, “Let there be light.” God is launching something new by the power of His word and declares the light good. This light continues to shine upon God’s creation. It is the light that gives life. It is the light of God’s love.

But when the first people wanted to be their own god and disobeyed God’s command, darkness entered the world. This darkness tries to deny or cover up sin. Jesus said, “God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.” (John 3:19-20)

God doesn’t want us to live in the darkness of sin and the fear of the unknown. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.” (John 8:12) God invites us into the light of Christ. He wants us to live with Christ, to let His love fill our hearts and lives.

We know that our lives can be chaotic at times. There is certainly a lot of uncertainty when big changes happen in our lives. New parents don’t really know what to expect before their first child arrives. Children can bring a lot of joy into the world, but they also bring a lot of chaos with them. Graduates don’t know what life will be like after college or the changes working at a new job will bring. When people first get married there are a lot of adjustments that need to be made. Change can bring chaos. Chaos may surround us, but God rules. God shines the light of His love into the chaotic times of our lives.

God doesn’t want us to just live in the light. He wants us to be the light. Jesus said, “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

So what does that mean? It means we try to follow the example of Christ by loving, helping, and serving others. It means we bring the light of Hope, Joy, Peace and Love into our darkly divided world and into the chaotic lives of others. It means we stop what we are doing and actually listen to that person who needs a friend who will listen and care. It means we drop our plans to lend a helping hand. It means we sacrifice our wants so that we can give to help meet the needs of those who don’t have much. It means that we try to be peacemakers for those who have no peace. It means we do all that we can to shine the light of God’s love into the chaos and dark corners of our world. It means it is time for us to shine for Christ. Amen.