

“Choose: Leviathan or Life?”
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September 4, 2011

***First Presbyterian Church
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Genesis 1:1-5, 24-31***

I'm in a David Letterman type mood this morning. So how about the top ten reasons God created Eve?

10. God worried that Adam would always be lost in the garden because he knew men would never ask directions.
9. God knew that Adam would one day need someone to hand him the TV remote because men don't want to see what's on television, they want to see WHAT ELSE is on television.
8. God knew that Adam would never buy a new fig leaf when the seat wore out and therefore would need Eve to get one for him.
7. God knew that Adam would never make a doctors appointment for himself.
6. God knew that Adam would never remember which night was garbage night.
5. God knew that if the world was to be populated there would have to be someone to bear children, because men would never be able to handle it.
4. As "Keeper of the Garden" Adam would never remember where he put his tools.
3. The scripture account of creation indicates that Adam needed someone to blame his troubles on when God caught him hiding in the garden.
2. As the Bible says, "It is not good for man to be alone." He only ends up getting himself in trouble.

AND the #1 reason why God created Eve is ...

When God had finished the creation of Adam, He stepped back, scratched his head and said, "I KNOW I can do better than THIS!!"

This morning, I want you to consider the way you look at, approach the world you are living in. This is no small exercise. What is your fundamental, foundational belief about the world, the universe you occupy?

My friends, I assure you that foundation has direct bearing on how you live your life, from getting up in the morning to how you look at your future.

The Creation story in Genesis 1, and the first human characters – Adam and Eve are household cultural identifiers in the Western world. Of course, we are familiar with this story, and this couple. But, what does the story represent, as well as the couple? There is a powerful worldview in formation as Genesis begins its journey into human existence and our relationship with creation and each other! For millennia this worldview was enfolded, grasped in our Western consciousness.

And more about this Genesis worldview in a moment.

But, I want to look at a counter worldview that over the last four centuries has gained much ground – to our detriment. And before I go further; what I am concerned about is that “Ideas”, ways of looking at our world, can have, and have had immense consequences. Ideas matter!

Thomas Carlyle, 19th Century Scottish, essayist and philosopher was once scolded at a dinner party for going on and on and on about books: “Ideas, Mr. Carlyle, ideas, nothing but ideas!”

Thomas replied, “There once was a man called Rousseau who wrote a book containing nothing but ideas. The second edition was bound in the skins of those who laughed at the first.” Rousseau inspired the ruthlessness of the French Revolution and more.

What type of world do you live in?!

It does matter!!

We read in Psalm 74:14 “It was you (Lord God) who crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave him as food to the creatures of the desert.”

Leviathan – from the ancient Hebrew – “Twisted, coiled” a sea monster.

In 1651 Thomas Hobbes took that Biblical name Leviathan and named his groundbreaking book the same – Leviathan. The book should be studied. He argues for a social contract and rule by an absolute sovereign. But what he hath wrought must also be studied!

There is no good, no evil, right, wrong, just, unjust. We humans in our natural condition are creatures completely without conscience, ruled only by pleasure and pain, with ravenous and ruthless desires.

Hobbes declared;

“Whatsoever is the object of any man’s appetite or desire, that is...[what] he for his part calleth *good*: and the object of his hate and aversion, *evil*:...for these words of good and evil...are ever used with relation to the person that useth them; there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves.”

The Genesis account of creation and Eden is false! The real garden of nature is a killing field! He also stated, “Every man has a right to every thing...”, but this leads to violence and chaos. Therefore

society is imposed on us, in order to avoid a poor, nasty, brutish, and short life in the state of nature. Society is unnatural.

- We are not bound by love.
- There is no feeling of natural duty to our family or neighbor.
- No noble affection toward anyone of anything.

Just constant mutual distrust and animosity.

There is no real constant, shared good! Only desire, controlled by a human sovereign who is in the same amoral boat!

Leviathan seems to be coiled around much of the way many see the world. Many not realizing the depth of what they are accepting as natural.

Thank God! (There it is!) Thank God!

For another way of seeing our world! The early Hebrews, the ancestors of Jesus, sought out a way of life, a worldview.

The early Hebrews were confronted with the realities of life and death;

- with love and hate,
- with pain and pleasure,
- with comedy and tragedy,
- with the mediocre and the sublime
- with hopes fulfilled and hopes destroyed
- with choosing meaning or nothingness.

Was nature in conflict with society? Were humans singular creatures, or created for relationships?

And so they began their story.

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

Notice this is not a philosophical essay.

Nor is it a biology paper,

Nor a zoology paper,

Nor a purely historical treatise –

What it is - is a Community of faith, reflecting on its experienced relationship to the One God of all creation.

Notice - God created! Whether out of nothing ("ex nihil") or in the ordering of chaos, Meaningful existence is decreed!

God the Creator,
God the giver of meaning and order - is present.

Even in the midst of chaos and confusion - God makes order.

God speaks and there is light!
Darkness is not to be the plight of humanity.
We are created for light, illumination!

This is a good creation! Over and over and over again and again and again – what God created was good. Values were present.

But -- there is darkness, there is death, there is pain and loss. How do we deal with all of this? First - we deny its sovereignty! We deny it is fated to us!

God created!

God forms meaning from our chaos.

God gives us light, God exposes the darkness.

Recall - John I, Jesus Christ - the Word of God = "shines in the darkness - and the darkness can never extinguish it."

The Faith Worldview continues into the New Testament.

The early Hebrews - recognizing all the pitfalls of life - refused the fates and declared that life has meaning. Yes, we are bewildered and perplexed but - God Created! And created us to be in relationships – not eternally warring with each other, but capable of love, friendship, and mutual governances.

Here's a wondrous worldview to life! "God created!"

So God is and God gives meaning - in a world so filled with confusion.

The early Hebrews said YES to life! – Choose Life!

They embraced life.

This earth, this "Adamah" - was created by a God that takes chaos and creates order.

My friends, there are multiple worldviews – Leviathan has become a default position in the hearts and minds of millions. But there is another, more ancient and yet more vibrant way to see your world.

Genesis uplifts life! The Genesis story is an idea that brings life; hope and meaning! Be sure you understand the view that you have been living by.

Refresh, if you need to, the Genesis story.

It will change your life! Choose Life!

Amen.