

24-1117a - Detailed Summary

24-1117a - Before The Beginning, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Wyatt Woosley and John Nousek

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI

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(Sermon Notes by Scott Reynolds)

Before The Beginning

Summary of Sermon Notes (0:04 - 16:49)

Scripture Readings:

1st Reading by Wyatt Woosley - John 1:1-3 (NASB)

Describes the Word (Jesus) as being with God from the beginning, and that all creation came into being through Him.

2nd Reading by John Nousek - Genesis 1:1 (NASB)

States that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Summary

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(0:04 - 0:43) Introduction and Context of the Sermon

The speaker begins the sermon by greeting the audience and noting that the content is influenced by two recent studies. The first is the "Equipping of the Saints" series, which focuses on preparing believers, referred to as a royal priesthood, to perform works of service in unity of faith. This unity includes both unity among fellow believers and a mystical union (*unio mystica*) with God, who dwells within them, emphasizing knowledge of Jesus Christ. The second influence is an article from the Apologetics Press, presented on October 20th, titled "Why Are We Losing Them?" This article highlights the importance of maintaining faith in the first 11 chapters of Genesis, which forms the foundation for the sermon's focus on the biblical narrative starting from Genesis 1:1.

(0:43 - 1:51) Focus on Genesis and the Concept of a Beginning

The sermon shifts to Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth," emphasizing that the Bible starts by establishing a specific starting point for creation. The Hebrew concept of "beginning" implies an initial moment, marking the commencement of the temporal framework, which includes the heavens and the earth. The speaker clarifies that "temporal" relates

to time and worldly affairs, as opposed to spiritual matters, and pertains to the dimensions of space and time. This establishes the foundation for understanding creation as having a defined origin within a temporal context.

(1:52 - 2:47) God's Preexistence and Self-Existence

The speaker highlights that God is the subject of Genesis 1:1, existing before creation and being self-existing, a concept later reinforced in the Bible. The sermon recounts Moses' encounter with the burning bush during his 40 years in the wilderness after fleeing Egypt, before returning to lead the Israelites. At the burning bush, the angel of the Lord, identified as the second person of the Godhead (Jesus) from prior studies, speaks to Moses. The angel instructs Moses to return to Egypt to lead the Israelites, despite Moses' objections, setting the stage for further exploration of God's identity.

(2:48 - 5:01) God's Name and Eternal Nature

During the burning bush encounter, Moses asks for God's name to tell the Israelites. God responds, "I AM WHO I AM," instructing Moses to tell the Israelites that "I AM" has sent him. The speaker explains that God's name in the Hebrew Bible is represented by the Tetragrammaton (YHWH or JHVH), derived from the Hebrew verb "to be," meaning "I AM," "He who is," or "He brings into existence whatever exists." This name, appearing nearly 7,000 times in Hebrew scriptures, signifies God's self-existence and eternity. The exact pronunciation, possibly Yahweh or Jehovah, is uncertain due to the lack of vowels in the original Hebrew and the Israelites' reluctance to speak it to avoid taking God's name in vain. Psalm 90:2 is cited to affirm God's eternal nature, existing "from everlasting to everlasting," before the creation of mountains or the earth, humorously likened to Buzz Lightyear's phrase "to infinity and beyond," but applied to God's timeless existence.

(5:02 - 7:16) God as Spirit and the Finite Nature of the Physical Realm

The speaker notes that God is spirit, as stated by Jesus in John 4:24, requiring worship in spirit and truth. This introduces the concept of a spiritual realm beyond the physical, not bound by its constraints. The speaker contrasts this with Carl Sagan's view that the cosmos is all that exists, asserting that the cosmos had a beginning and will have an end, making it temporary and finite. Biblical passages such as 2 Peter 3:10, Isaiah 51:6, and Hebrews 1:10-12 (quoting Psalm 102:25-27) are cited to describe the eventual destruction of the heavens and earth, which will "pass away," "vanish like smoke," and "grow old like a garment." In contrast, God's salvation and righteousness are eternal, and the spiritual realm is supernatural, existing above the natural, physical realm. The speaker also introduces Jesus' eternal nature, referencing John 17:5, where Jesus prays for glorification with the glory He had with the Father before the world began.

(7:17 - 9:23) Jesus as Creator and the Role of the Word

The sermon delves into Jesus' role in creation, citing John 1:1-3, which states that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and that all things were made through Him. The speaker identifies Jesus as the Word and the Creator, noting that as the person of the Godhead called the Word, He spoke creation into being. Psalm 33:6,9 is referenced, stating that "by the word of the Lord, the heavens were made," and "He spoke, and it was done." The speaker substitutes "Jesus" for "the word" in this passage to emphasize His role, noting that even the winds

and waves obey Him, as seen in Luke 8:22-25, where Jesus calms a storm, illustrating His authority over creation.

(9:23 - 10:18) The Holy Spirit's Role in Creation

The speaker introduces the Holy Spirit's involvement in creation, citing Genesis 1:2, which describes the Spirit of God hovering over the face of the waters at the beginning. Psalm 104:30 is referenced, stating, "You send forth Your Spirit, they are created, and You renew the face of the earth," crediting the Spirit with creation and sustaining life, particularly in the context of sea creatures like Leviathan (referenced in Job 41). The speaker notes the Spirit's presence over the "deep," connecting it to the creation of life in the seas, and concludes that all three persons of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—were involved in creation.

(10:19 - 15:33) The Trinity in Genesis 1 and God's Pre-Creation Plans

The speaker summarizes the Trinity's presence in Genesis 1:1-3: God the Father in verse 1 ("In the beginning, God created"), the Holy Spirit in verse 2 (hovering over the waters), and God the Son in verse 3 (speaking "Let there be light"). Hebrews 1:1-2 and 11:3 support the Father's role, with the Son as the one through whom the universe was made and who speaks creation into being. Genesis 1:26's use of "Let us make man in our image" is explained as reflecting the involvement of all three persons of the Godhead, who existed before creation. The speaker then discusses God's pre-creation plans, citing Ephesians 1:3-4, which states that God chose believers in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless. Titus 1:1-2 and 2 Timothy 1:9 further emphasize that God promised eternal life and planned salvation through Jesus before time began, knowing humanity would need redemption. The speaker stresses that time itself is created and finite, with God's plans and grace given through Jesus, who was foreknown before creation, predating the temporal framework.

(15:34 - 16:22) God's Plan for Redemption and Christ's Role

The speaker continues discussing God's pre-creation plans, focusing on redemption, citing 1 Peter 1:18-21. This passage states that believers were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from their futile, inherited way of life, but with the precious blood of Christ, described as an unblemished and spotless lamb. The speaker emphasizes that Christ was foreknown before the beginning of the world but appeared in these last days for the sake of believers, who through Him have faith in God. God raised Christ from the dead and gave Him glory, reinforcing the believers' faith and hope in God. The speaker also references Proverbs 8:22-31, which describes God utilizing wisdom during the creation process, further illustrating the deliberate planning that preceded creation and redemption.

(16:23 - 16:49) Preview of Future Discussion and Invitation

The speaker summarizes that before time began, God made plans for both creation and redemption. They announce that the next discussion, to be held tonight, will explore events before the beginning, specifically focusing on the creation of the heavens, angels, and morning stars, all of which occurred before the earth was created. The speaker concludes by extending an invitation to anyone subject to it, to respond while the congregation stands and sings, signaling a transition to a communal activity following the sermon.