

Genesis... Too Dangerous to Study?

You've probably never thought about studying the Bible as being dangerous, but in some respects, it can be. As with most of my articles, I will be raising a larger issue and alerting you to something you may not have thought of before.

For the purpose of this article, I am going to focus on those who aren't quite sure what they think about the Genesis creation account. Maybe it's meant to be taken literally, maybe not. They hear all sorts of arguments from people on both sides, and they really don't know what to believe.



I will narrow our definition of a "literal" interpretation to refer to the traditional view that God created everything in six literal solar days, much like we experience today, and this took place in a more recent timeframe, relatively speaking, as opposed to millions and billions of years ago. The "non-literal" interpretation will mean any view that encompasses most of what comes from secular geology, astronomy, and, for many, even much of what secular biology holds to be true. The "non-literal" view also entails the acceptance of the passing of multiplied millions and billions of years. (I am well aware there are various versions of views within each of these two larger categories, but we will not have time to detail these within the confines of this brief article.)

One of the biggest factors driving many to not think through the Genesis creation account in any real depth is the belief that there are various views out there held by all sorts of very intelligent Christians, and these views are all valid interpretations. They further reason the issue can be very divisive and ultimately, it doesn't really matter which view might be correct. If this was the case, you can see that setting out to study this deeply would be an exercise in futility, because since "the experts" haven't been able to figure it out, what realistic chance do you have? If someone presses you, you can always respond with, "Hey, there are different views out there with good people on all sides. We really don't know, and it doesn't really matter anyway. We're just supposed to be encouraging each other and focusing on Jesus, so don't make a big deal out of it."

There you go! Most Christians won't have much of a come-back to that, and it seemingly justifies not doing any real studying of the issue. By human nature, we can tend to be a bit lazy, and this lets us off-the-hook! I think this is why this particular response is so common – it's one that requires the least amount of work!

But what if you do actually take the time to study the Genesis creation account? This is where it could become "dangerous." Why dangerous? Let me explain.

Let's say, being unsure of your position regarding Genesis, you decide to research the topic biblically. That is, you primarily want to know what the Bible is actually teaching on this subject independent of what we may hear from the secular scientific community. (You may not have the background to

critique the conclusions of modern scientists, but you should at least be able to read Scripture and glean the most foundational and most important aspects. Otherwise, why would God tell us, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4), and tell us, “thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

At some point in your new research endeavor, you will most likely start to feel one particular view is more biblically sound than the other. This would be either the non-literal or literal view. Let’s see what siding with either of these views might lead to.

The non-literal view. If you conclude with some amount of certainty that this view is correct, you will gain the approval of the secular academic society because they are championing a secular view of origins, and you are largely accepting their geology, astronomy and biology. They may think you go too far in saying that God was behind all they discovered, and the “Jesus thing” is a bit “out there,” but other than that, they are comforted knowing you reverence their superior intellect regarding the natural world around us. You will probably also gain the respect of many of those within the church who hold advanced academic training, because many of them also accept the conclusions of secular science, for the most part. Only a small percentage of Christians will push back on your conclusions, but they can usually be dismissed as being naïve, uninformed, and those who “don’t believe in science.” Overall, you’d be in a pretty comfortable position.

The literal view. If you conclude with some amount of certainty that this view is the correct position, you will lose the approval of the secular academic society because they are championing a secular view of origins, and you are largely rejecting their geology, astronomy and biology. You will probably also lose the respect of many of those within the church who hold advanced academic training because many of them also accept the conclusions of secular science, for the most part, which you are now rejecting. Only a small percentage of Christians will be in your corner, and you will now be dismissed as being naïve, uninformed, and among those who “don’t believe in science.” You’re experiencing resistance from within and without the church. Overall, you’d be in a pretty uncomfortable position.

So, do you really want to study Genesis more deeply and run the risk of possibly concluding the literal interpretation is the most biblically defensible? Many do not! It could be very *dangerous*. Why put all that work into something like this when you can just let it all go, claiming, “There are different views out there with good people on all sides. We really don’t know, and it doesn’t really matter anyway. We’re just supposed to be encouraging each other and focusing on Jesus, so don’t make a big deal out of it.”

Question of the Month

Why Genesis matters is a topic I've covered at length in many different presentations, as well as in [my book](#), so I will not launch into that here. However, if you don't fully understand the importance of the Genesis creation account, how it is foundational to virtually every major doctrine we believe as Christians, I would highly recommend viewing our video entitled, "[Genesis & the Authority of Scripture](#)".

If you have any questions about this or any other issue, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#)!

