



# Talks

## GLUE – Session 1 – Creation

### 1. In the Beginning...

One day, when I was at secondary school, the head teacher decided to give me some advice. He sat me down in his study and said to me, “Gavin, you will never be successful in the music industry and you will never be a successful performer.” Reflecting back I suppose he was trying to help me by encouraging me to pursue a more ‘respectable’ career. However, deep inside I felt crushed. Somehow his comment was not just discouraging the career decision of an 17-year-old young man, no he was doing something far more destructive - he was eroding the very core of who I was created to be.

Have you ever wondered why human beings are so creative? We cannot stop being creative. We are creative with the way we dress, do our hair (if we have any), speak, think and move. We are created in the image of a creative God, therefore to be human is to be creative. Creativity has been at the heart of humanity since the very beginning.

The very first book in the Bible is called Genesis. Genesis means beginning. Not a bad title for the first book in a collection of books methinks.

At the very beginning of the beginning, in the book of Genesis, is an account of God making the world and human beings. Now some people get hung up on how the world was made – whether it was evolution or creation? To get sidetracked into that argument is to royally miss the point. There are two things you need to know about Genesis – well, three actually but the third one I will come onto in Chapter 2 – so for now there are two things:

### 2. Thing Number 1

The first point of the story at the beginning of the book of Genesis is that human beings are made in the image of God. God says, “Let’s make human beings in our image”. Hmmm, that’s odd. God says, “our image”. He doesn’t say, “my image”. Right from the beginning we learn that God is somehow one and many at the same time. Okay, too deep too quick. We’ll come to that later.

So, for five days God makes stuff and then on day six God makes human beings in his (or their) image. All we know about God up to day six is that he makes stuff. God has been making stuff for five days. All God has been doing is being creative and then God makes human beings in his image. Click?

Now I visit a lot of schools and I often hear young people say, “I’m not creative.” Rubbish. You are creative. Some people are creative in what we call ‘creative arts’ – i.e. music, dance, art, writing, etc. – but the creative arts is a small subset of creativity. Some people are creative with numbers, others with plants and animals. When you get along side someone who is lonely or broken-hearted and you listen to them, you are being creative. When you wipe someone’s bum in an elderly care home you are being creative. Yes, really. And this leads us nicely onto Thing Number 2.



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## 3. Thing Number 2

The second thing you need to know about the story at the beginning of Genesis is that creativity is bringing order out of chaos. Let me explain...

Right at the beginning, the very first words in Genesis in The Bible it says, “The Spirit of God was hovering over the water.” Now in the Bible water – especially natural water – is very important. Water in ancient times meant one thing and one thing only – chaos. Let me write it again - “Water means chaos”. It’s dead important that you know this and remember it because we will come across water throughout the Bible. So, from this water or chaos, God starts making stuff. In other words he starts bringing order out of the chaos and that is what he is all about. This is what God does. He plans and wants to bring order out of chaos in the world. Then God makes human beings in his image. God makes us like ‘mini Gods’ to be co-creators with him in the world.

We are called to use our God-given creativity to bring order out of chaos in the world. How cool is that? Probably time to take break and let that sink in.

## 4. Going deeper...

A guy called Walter Brueggemann (who wrote a whole book about Genesis) calls the creation story in Genesis a ‘theological affirmation’. This means it says something about who God is and what God is like rather than it being a scientific document.

The scientific world-view (or lens through which we see the world) is quite a recent thing and a very nice and useful thing it is too. However, The Ancients didn’t have a scientific worldview and they didn’t look at the world as we do. So you can see why treating the creation account in Genesis like a scientific textbook is a daft idea because it’s from another time and culture. Although it’s worth pointing out that some Christians spend a lot of time, money and energy arguing about such things.