

The Most Important Verse in the Bible

So, I want you to ask somebody who knows anything about the Bible, “What do you think the most important verse in the entire Bible is?”

And I think most people will say, “Love God and love your neighbor.” Or just, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” or something to that effect. And I certainly agree that’s really important. But, I’d like to offer you a different thought.

The most important verse in the bible is Genesis 1:1. The *first* verse in the bible is the single most important one. Because, if that is not the case, if what it says in Genesis 1:1 is not the case, then nothing that follows matters, and nothing that follows makes real sense.

What’s Genesis 1:1? “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

In other words, *God is the author of everything*. But that’s not the only reason it’s important; that God is the author of everything and that’s the reason that we worship God, and listen to God, and that’s why life meaningful; because there really is a God who made this all -- it didn’t happen by itself.

That’s the first verse: *it didn’t happen by itself*. That’s another way of reading Genesis 1:1, “Hello, we want you to know, that whatever you believe...” and I’m not talking about evolution or not evolution, it’s not my argument here -- it’s just “It didn’t happen by itself!”

That’s why Genesis 1:1, in my opinion, is the most important verse. It tells you there is a designer, there is meaning, there is someone who is intelligent who made intelligence, it didn’t come from nothing.

Reason number 2: It says God is above nature. All the gods of the ancient world, *all*: this was a staggering revolution, Genesis 1:1, all the Gods of the ancient world were nature gods.

Oh there was a god of thunder and a god of lightning and a god of rain, and a mountain god and a sea god, and they were all inside of nature. That’s why people tended to worship nature. And along comes Genesis that says, “Nope, God created nature.” God is not *in* nature, -- that’s a common mistake that people make.

You can see God within nature, you can see God everywhere; you can see God in music, you can see God in goodness. But God is not *in* nature, God is *above* nature.

A lot of people are uncomfortable with this. I know that. But here, let’s think about this for a moment. If God is in nature, if nature is God, if you will, pantheism, as it is known among theologians, then there’s no morality because nature isn’t good.

Nature doesn't teach you the difference between good and evil. In the natural world, hospitals aren't built for the weak. In the natural world the weak die out. That is after all the essence of evolution and of natural selection: the weak die out. You don't take care of the weak, you let them die.

The notion that you take care of the weak is entirely a Genesis biblical notion. It's a human God-based idea. God is not in nature because nature isn't good and God *is* good, so something good made nature. That's why Genesis 1:1 is so important; it tells us that God is above nature. It means that God has no sexual identity, he is not male or female and never copulated with humans. All the natural gods copulated with humans. They found favorite beautiful men or beautiful women to have sexual relations with, or they had sexual relations with another god.

Genesis 1:1 gets rid of all that. And now there is this pristine, beautiful opening: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Everything comes from God. And if everything comes from god then ultimately everything has some meaning. Because, if there is no God, there is no ultimate meaning.

Yes, we can make meanings for our own lives, I find it meaningful to be a father, I find it meaningful to be a worker, of course. But that's entirely subjective, there is no overarching meaning to all of life. If there is no god, life is just a coincidence. It just happened to be. There's no aim -- there's no purpose -- there's no end except for oblivion.

But, no, Genesis 1:1 undoes all of that. "Folks, I, God, created everything." There is a purpose to it all. We may not know all of its purposes, that's true, but Genesis 1:1 reassures us and states for the first time in history there is something above nature that created nature.

So, my nomination for most important verse of the Bible is indeed Genesis 1:1.