



FOUNDATIONS • COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY • GENESIS 1

## It All Begins with God

A guided conversation from the September 13, 2026 sermon by James Drake

### SUMMARY

James Drake opened the Foundations series in Genesis 1 on the church's one-year anniversary — and he started where Scripture starts, because remembering why you began changes how you see today. Before science, before us, there was God: creating out of nothing, hovering over the void, and sustaining everything he made.

Verse 1 does not argue for God; it announces him. James said either God is eternal or matter is — everyone is a person of faith about where the universe came from, and 'I do not have enough faith to be an atheist.' In verse 2 the Spirit is already hovering over the dark and the empty, at work before anything visible changes. The seven-day rhythm we live by came from this text: we work because God works, and we rest because he is in control. We neither worship what he made nor neglect it — we steward it for his glory.

The sermon landed on the oldest question, the one a Dodgers player asked after chapel: why us? James's answer — we were created by a good and loving God for his glory, and purpose is never achieved in a World Series or a career; it is received. Creation runs to Christ to the cross: the same hands that set the stars in the sky are the hands that hung on the cross, and the invitation, pictured in this week's baptisms, is to be buried with him and raised to new life.

### PRAYER

## OPENING PRAYER

*Father, before anything was, you were. Before we could earn a thing, you made a world and called it good. Tonight take us back to the beginning — quiet the noise, and let us hear you speak into the formless places we have been carrying. Meet us in Genesis 1 as it is, and show us the God who was here first. Amen.*

### START

## ICE BREAKER

Christchurch turns one this week. Think back to why you first showed up — what is one thing from this first year you do not want to forget?

**GENESIS 1:1 (ESV)**

Genesis 1:1 (ESV) *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

**GENESIS 1:2 (ESV)**

Genesis 1:2 (ESV) *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

**GENESIS 1:3 (ESV)**

Genesis 1:3 (ESV) *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*

**GENESIS 1:26-27 (ESV)**

Genesis 1:26-27 (ESV) *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

**GENESIS 1:31 (ESV)**

Genesis 1:31 (ESV) *And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

**GENESIS 2:2-3 (ESV)**

Genesis 2:2-3 (ESV) *And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

**01 GOOD WITH NOBODY WATCHING**

Seven times this chapter says what God made was good — and every one of them lands before a single person exists to enjoy it. What does it tell you about God that he called it good with nobody watching?

**02 GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING**

James came in from a chapel with the Marlins and Dodgers and said that remembering why you started — in a career, in a marriage — changes how you see today. Read Genesis 1:1. Where in your life do you most need to 'go back to the beginning' to see the present more clearly?

**03 ENOUGH FAITH TO BE AN ATHEIST**

Read Genesis 1:1 again. James said it announces a Creator rather than arguing for one — and that everyone is a person of faith about where the universe came from: either God is eternal or matter is. He said, 'I do not have enough faith to be an atheist.' What have you put your faith in about the origin of everything, and why?

**04 SPEAK INTO THE VOID**

Read Genesis 1:2-3. Then sit with this: it opens with something formless, empty and dark, and the first thing God does is speak. Where in your life would you most want to hear him speak into something formless?

## 05 WORK AND REST

Read Genesis 1:31–2:3. James said the seven-day week came from this text, not from convenience: 'We work because God works, and we rest because he's in control.' What would it look like this week to actually rest — to set one thing down and trust that God is holding it?

## 06 WORSHIP, WASTE, OR STEWARD

James said we neither worship what God made nor neglect it — we steward it for his glory. Where are you tempted to either worship or waste something God has put in your care — your body, your money, your work, this creation?

## 07 WHO GETS TO NAME IT

God names things: Day, Night, Heaven, Earth. What difference does it make that God gets to say what things are, and we don't?

## 08 WHY US — THE SAME HANDS

Read Genesis 1:26-27. A Dodgers player asked James why God made any of it. James said we were made by a good and loving God for his glory, and that purpose is never achieved in a trophy or a title — it is received. He added that the same hands that set the stars in the sky are the hands that hung on the cross. Where are you still trying to achieve a purpose God is offering to give you?

### APPLY THIS WEEK

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Pick one. Do it before you meet again.

- 1 **Name the void** Name the one formless, dark place you are carrying right now. Once this week, say it out loud to God and ask him to speak into it — the same Spirit was already hovering over the void before anything changed.
- 2 **Take a real rest** Set one thing down for a full day this week — a screen, a project, the thing you are white-knuckling — and treat the rest as an act of trust: you work because God works, you rest because he is in control.
- 3 **Receive, don't achieve** Catch yourself this week chasing purpose in a win, a title, or a result. Stop and receive it instead: you were made by a good God for his glory. Thank him for a purpose you cannot earn.

Come back next week ready to say what happened, not what you intended.

### REMEMBER REMEMBER

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- ▶ Genesis 1:1 doesn't argue for God — it announces him. Everyone lives by faith about where it all began.
- ▶ The Spirit was hovering over the dark and the void before anything changed — he is already at work in yours.
- ▶ We work because God works, and we rest because he is in control.
- ▶ You were made by a good God for his glory — purpose is received, not achieved.

*Before science, before us, there was God — and the same hands that made the stars hung on the cross for you.*

*God of the beginning, you spoke light into the dark and you have not stopped speaking. We work because you work; help us rest because you are in control. We were made for your glory — let us stop chasing a purpose you are holding out as a gift. The same hands that set the stars hung on the cross for us; we come to those hands now. Amen.*

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