

No Beginning No End

By Ben Swift

'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'
Genesis 1:1

For over a decade I have had the privilege of teaching Christian Studies to primary aged students. This journey has taught me that when it comes to grappling with the concept of God, the minds of children can and will take you down many different and winding paths, rarely allowing you to arrive at a destination without taking the scenic route. There is, however, one common question that continues to emerge like a timeless classic; a seemingly unavoidable obstacle on the road to comprehending God.

“Who made God?”

It's certainly not a new question, maybe even one asked by the likes of a preteen Socrates or Plato. I guess we'll never know. But what a great question to take us into the ring as we wrestle with what God is really like. For the God of the Scriptures is eternal, a concept that never ceases to challenge the limitations of the human mind at any age.

Martin Luther considered that every believing person is a theologian. In fact he thought that the question, “What is a theologian?” could be transformed into the question, “Who are you?” A question relating to both God and us. What this means is that the beginning or foundation of theological thought is to acknowledge that God is God and we are not. Without embracing this basic Christian truth, all other understandings become distorted; truth becomes twisted and God's Word can only be viewed through the dirty lens of human desire.

A clear understanding of our own finite and created nature and that of the entire material universe, one found sitting in stark

contrast to the eternal existence of God, is the launching pad for the theological journey of both children and life veterans alike. Dr. Herbert Locker puts it like this:

“The existence of God must be a settled matter before we can consider whether He has revealed Himself in Christ...This doctrine is also one of greatest importance because our concept of God determines our views of the world, sin, life, duty and conduct.”

If God is not eternal and therefore having always existed, then all biblical truth concerning his revelation crumbles and is rendered useless in terms of ultimate Christian hope and truth.

So how then do we answer the question, “Who made God?” How can we help others to hurdle this stumbling block on their journey to knowing God?

Eternal truths can only come from the one who is eternal. Answers can only be found in the one who opens finite, closed minds and changes rebellious hearts. It is God himself who answers us through his Word.

Paul knew this well during his presentation of the unknown God to the idol worshippers of ancient Athens. He explained that the creator of the world and the universe, “is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else” (Acts 17:23-25).

To put it another way, we lose touch with the reality of both who God is and who we are the moment we place human limitations on God who has no limits. The eternal God, creator and sustainer of all that exists, cannot be squeezed into the box of our own finite comprehension and fantasy.

And why would we ever want him to?

Sometimes human beings subconsciously believe that if God can be limited by the very things that limit us, so we create a God in our own image, one that allows us to climb right up there with him.

There's no shortage of reality checks in the Scriptures when it comes to lessons of humility regarding humanity's place before God. Take for instance the account of Moses and the burning bush. When Moses was given the task of representing the Israelite people he asked God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:13-14)

Here the God of Moses, the God of the Old Testament Scriptures, is clearly identifying his eternal divinity. The great I AM will not be defined; the God of eternity cannot and will not be fully known by his creation apart from what has been revealed throughout the Scriptures and most clearly through the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Christ.

"Who made God?"

When children ask such questions, perhaps we should remind ourselves of Jesus' words, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14). It's when we ask such questions with childlike humility, in the absence of our own perceived intellectual prowess, that we can come to listen to the eternal words of truth with which God desires to transform our hearts and minds.

It often comes as a shock to children when you try to explain to them that no one made God. Without embracing this truth, however, people will not be able to experience the greatest shock of all, that the eternal, infinite God created each of his children to live in relationship with him.

It's good for children to ask questions. It's good for us all to ask questions. But it's even better when we listen for God's answers and let them sink deep into our lives.

Ben Swift is the author of Beyond the Fish Sticker