

Ask the Vicar Anything!



By **Revd Mark Ackford** on 05/02/2026



Every so often, I'm invited into my local church schools for an "Ask the Vicar Anything" session. The children's questions are often profound: "Why are we here?" "Where do we come from?" These queries always give me a reason to pause. Should I talk about the science of creation, or is there a way to offer an answer that complements science, going deeper into meaning and purpose?

Interestingly, these are the very questions the ancient Israelites pondered when the book of Genesis was written. The Creation as described in Genesis chapter 1 isn't a scientific manual—it's a narrative about intent, not technique. It's concerned with the "who" and "why," not the "how." So, what does God want us to understand from the very first chapter of the Bible?

I believe Genesis chapter 1 which is our Old Testament reading for this Sunday offers three profound insights: it tells us about God, about God's world, and about ourselves.

Firstly, Genesis tells us about God. The opening verse is striking: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” At the time, this was a radical claim. Genesis asserts that there is only one God, who created everything by divine power. This was unique in a world filled with competing deities. Genesis sets the foundation: God is sovereign, and all other so-called gods are not gods at all.

Secondly, Genesis tells us about the world. The creation account is detailed and deliberate. Each part of creation is made purposefully and declared “good.” For example, “God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind... And God saw that it was good.” This isn’t a world born of chance; it’s a world crafted with intention and care. Every part of creation is valued, and none is disposable. This has profound implications for how we treat the planet. The ongoing environmental crises stands in stark contrast to God’s command to care for creation. As Christians, we are called to lead the way in environmental stewardship, treating the earth with the respect and love it deserves.

Thirdly, Genesis tells us about ourselves. “God created humankind in his image... male and female he created them.” God’s verdict on humanity? “God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.” This means every person is made good, valued, and loved by God. There are no inferior or superior races or sexes. No one is irredeemable. Even those whom society might write off—such as hardened criminals—are loved by God and must be offered hope and redemption. For the Church, this means for instance advocating for the vulnerable people of our world, as each person is made in God’s image for a purpose.

Will we fulfil our purpose of loving God, caring for His world, and valuing every human being we encounter? If we strive for this, we truly understand the heart of Genesis chapter 1. Let’s pray for the strength to live out this calling.