

Gaines Congregational United Church of Christ

June 4, 2023

Old Testament Reading; Genesis 1: 1-2:4a

Responsive Reading; Psalm 8

Epistle Reading; 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Gospel Reading; Mathew 28: 16-20

Sermon Title:

## **Let's Get Back to Basics**

By Rev. Jim Gardner

Summary; God created the Earth, love, mankind, and an assignment for mankind. OK, "See how you can mingle'em."

The title of my message today is, "Let's get back to the basics". It seems to me that this is something we as human beings have to do every now and then.

In sports when an athlete goes into a slump he or she often has to get with the trainer and revisit the basics of their trade. They have to check to see if they are doing the basic things the exact way they need to for the best results. How they hold the club, or bat, or baseball, or football, or racket. They must check out their stance and footwork, their swing, their body control, their

eye movement and the list goes on and on. The point is they cannot grow and improve if their basics are flawed.

Just as an athlete cannot reach his or her full potential without a firm understanding of the basics, we as Christians cannot reach our full understanding of God's plan, and how we fit into it, without a firm foundation in the truth on which our faith is based.

Today's scriptures directly address that issue.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.'  
Period! There is a period at the end of that statement. Period.  
The infinite magnificence of the plan is the product of an infinite creator. "Natural selection" is not an option. Natural selection brings about two headed snakes and calves with an extra set of legs growing out of their shoulders. The creation that we live in is too perfect to be a random happenstance. Creation was the product of God. Did He use a Word, a Breath, or even a Bang? It does not matter. What matters is that God did it. He created the universe and He created us.

Genesis gives the story and Psalm 8 gives the glory.

"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth. Who have set Your glory above the heavens! O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!"

Sliding back to that creation story for a minute, on the sixth day. On the sixth day God created man. “Then God said, “Let Us (a reference to the trinity) make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on earth.”

This is God’s creation and just look where He chose to put us in the scheme of things.

Back to Psalm 8 verse 5 the psalmist expresses his awe in this when he says, “For You (God) have made him (man) a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.”

Let that sink in. God created everything including us and then commissioned us to be the custodians of the whole kit and caboodle.

The basics are starting to get scary.

The logistics of this responsibility are astronomical. This job is too big for 12 disciples, or 70 disciples, or even 3000 followers of the disciples.

Spoiler alert. Here comes the Great Commission.

In the last three verses of the last chapter of Matthew, Jesus says, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” It all comes down to basics.

God created the world and the whole universe.

God created Love. God created love because God is love and we love because God first loved us.

Oh yeah, that brings us to the next creation. God created Mankind. Not only did God create mankind, He created mankind with a purpose. God gave humanity a purpose, a purpose to be custodians of His creation.

God knew that this was not a one-man job so God sent His Son to be a role model and a blueprint. Jesus showed us how we could live our lives to reflect God’s glory. Jesus gives us the “Great Commission” to make disciples of all nations because God the Father wants all of the children of His creation to be part of the glory of His creation.

Paul believes that we are up to the challenge and encourages us by saying, “Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.” So those are the basics. Be with God. Go with God. And, don’t be afraid to brag on God. Hallelujah and Amen!