

Advent/Apologetics

11.29: 14:12-25 Passover/Lord's supper: Jesus and The Flow of History

12.6: 14:26-72 Denial and betrayal: The Unique One

12.13: 15:1-37 Crucifixion: Jesus and Human Suffering

12.20: 15:38-47 Jesus: The Evidence

INTRODUCTION:

*Estimated that 107 billion people have ever lived.

*How many of those 107 billion are still being read about, emulated, thought about, on a daily basis on every continent? (Even Antarctica (Operation deep freeze))...probably 1 maybe 2.

*How many humans have their own personal life history connected with the flow of human history going back to the earliest recorded histories of humanity?...only one.

*How many of the 107 billion lived an exemplary life, were clearly brilliant, no "dirt" could be found on them to discredit them during their lives or after their deaths, in fact no one could point out a single sin?...only one.

*How many world-renowned, exemplary humans out of the 107 billion have there ever been who claimed to be God?...one.

*Jesus is unique in human history.

*Not unique as in rare, or interesting, or "we are all unique in our own way"...but unique as in a singularity...he is unlike the other 107 billion in ways that no one else has ever been.

*Begin the Advent season today, the four weeks before Christmas.

*Advent means arrival, or coming...the first Advent was the Birth of Jesus, the second Advent is, of course, the return of Jesus in the future.

*We are also in the home stretch of our year in Mark...the remainder of Mark covers the last three days up to the Crucifixion...then the resurrection.

*We are going to spend the 4 weeks of Advent looking specifically at the uniqueness of Jesus.

***Today: Jesus and the flow of human history.**

*According to the Scriptures and to the Western Calendar...Jesus marks the turning point in human history.

*Before the year of our Lord's first advent and then after...is how we measure our history.

*Biblical history describes life as we know it and experience it:

1. Creation: the world has clearly been created.
2. Fall: the world is clearly in need of repair
3. Preparation: the flow of history points forward to the coming of Jesus.
4. The first Advent of Christ....his unique and miraculous life, death and resurrection points to his special place in human history.

Psa. 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 2:14 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15 since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts,

*These passages describe "general revelation" the evidence of the reality of God in the created world.

*They describe three core evidences...or "proofs" for a certain kind of God.

*These have been named:

1. The Teleological Argument (Purpose)
2. The Cosmological Argument (design)
3. The Moral Argument (built in sense of right and wrong)

*Look at creation as art, the work of an Artist.

1. Purpose: Art has a beginning, it cannot be here before the artist. Artist first, art second.

-The artist has a purpose in mind with his art.

2. Design: Art has a design, because it has a designer

*You may bump into a table, spill some paint and call it art..but its really accident...it lacked design.

*Art in the true sense of the world begins with the purposes of the artist.

3. Character: Art takes on the character of the artist. You can tell something of the artist by his art.

1. Beginning/Purpose: Teleological:

*Science at one time thought the universe was eternal...time and space had no beginning.

-Kalam.

*Then endless cycles

*Then self-creating:...irrational.

*Then "M" theory.

*There is no good theory at present to describe how everything...time, space, matter came to be.

*There is however a very good explanation..."In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God...through him all things were made."

2. Design: Cosmological:

***If you saw this word in the sand on the beach...you would not think any amount of chance wave action for any amount of time would account for it....yet its only 6 letters.**

***Or this in the rocks on Mt Rushmore, no amount of chance plus time would allow erosion to create this.**

***Cosmos:**

-There are at present well over 122 specific factors that have to be in place in terms of the placement and design of the earth for human life to exist.

-The odds of any planet in the known universe having the numbers of factors necessary are a statistical zero.

-Its called the Antropic principle...and it is absolutely compelling.

*So much so that a leading Atheist gave him up his atheism in the face of the evidence.

*Others continue struggle to explain what they see...without resorting to an artist...changing theory after theory.

***Life:**

*The design of life has become increasingly compelling the more scientists understand who and what we are.

*Your DNAs genetic alphabet consists of 4 letters, and within each human cell there are 3,000 million pairs of those letters.

-Your body has trillions of cells and makes millions each second.

*Each cell is irreducibly complex (has to be complete or doesn't work...cannot be gradual)...and contains complex subsystems.

*Francis Crick, co-discoverer of DNA warms about the appearance of design in a note he once penned encouraging other biologist to "constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved."

*The appearance of design is so compelling they must continually tell themselves..."There is no artist, there is no artist."

3. Character: Morals:

*Romans 2 says that God has written evidence of his nature on our hearts...conscience.

*Ecc. says he has placed eternity in our hearts.

Lewis wrote, "[As an atheist] my argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?"

*This realization led Lewis out of atheism and ultimately to Christianity.

*Where does the universal sense of "oughtness" come from?

*Jean Paul Satre was a existential philosopher who argued that there is no creator and no ultimate right or wrong...but he worked to stop the Nazis in the 40's (because he believed they were wrong) and then later wrote and spoke against the Soviet oppression and their death camps.(because he believed they were wrong)

*But what grounds did he have to say that killing children in gas chambers was wrong?

*His opinion, his preference...or that in some absolute sense...it was wrong?

*Many can say there is no absolute wrong...but in the heart of hearts...all sane people know that murdering an innocent person or saving a person are not morally equivelant.

***So...**The Evidence apart from the Biblical record clearly points to a Creator, an uncaused choosing being...an infinite artist.

*It is clearly both possible and reasonable to expect this same Artist to speak to us...not just in general terms in the Cosmos...but in specific ways in history and in Words...acted, spoken and written.

***Box...closed and open system.**

1. God reached into the box.

-A people

-A history of interaction

2. God stepped into the box.

-God becoming man was not the subtraction of divinity it was the addition of humanity.

*To think of these things is enormously encouraging to me.

*Its not a mere intellectual exercise...

*God is the creator...this is clear.

*God has spoken...in history, in his word, and his Son...this is clear.

*Now...how will I live today?

*Living today...flows from the reality of a creator... his creation...his revelation of himself...to my single life here, today.

Mark 14:12 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" 13 So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. 14 Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' 15 He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." 16 The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. 17 When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. 18 While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me — one who is eating with me." 19 They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?" 20 "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. 21 The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." 22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." 23 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. 25 "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

***This passage ties the flow of human history with life of Jesus:**

*To see this we need to look at the key event in history that Jesus is commemorating....then how Jesus is tied in with that event.

1. The Passover in history

*Passover was an annual meal that commemorated a defining moment in the history of Israel.

*More than a 1000 years earlier Israel was trapped for hundreds of years in miserable slavery.

*After a series of plagues that failed to loosen the pharaoh's oppressive grip...God sent one final plague.

*Justice would fall on the land...on everyone in the land.

*This justice would not pass over your house simply because you were a Jew.

*In every home, Jews and Egyptians alike...some would die under the wrath of justice.

- *The only way for your family to escape was to put your faith in God's sacrificial provision.
- *You had to slay a lamb and put the blood on your doors as a sign of your faith in God.
- *In every home there would either be a dead firstborn human or a dead lamb.
- *When justice finally came...it fell on you or you took shelter under the substitute, the blood of the Lamb.
- *If you did take shelter...death passed over and you were saved.
- *Only those who placed their faith in the substitutionary sacrifice were safe.
- *This is how God affected their escape from the bondage of slavery and ultimately led them into the Promised Land.
- *Every year that followed this event is celebrated with the Passover meal.
- *Why would God choose this rather strange way of rescuing his people...why would an innocent lamb's blood substitute for the blood of guilty humans?
- *It was a mystery until the Passover that Jesus celebrated right before he was killed on the cross.

2. The Passover and Jesus

- *The Passover meal was and is prepared in a certain way.
- *It included four points at which the presider, holding a glass of wine, would get up and explain the meaning of the meal.
- *The four cups represented the four promises made by God in Exodus 6:6-7.
 - Rescue from Egypt
 - Freedom from slavery
 - Redemption by God's power
 - Renewed relationship with God.
- *The third cup came when the meal was almost completely eaten...the presider would use words to bless the elements...bread, herbs, lamb...by explaining how these were symbolic reminders of the various aspects of Israel's captivity and deliverance.
- *So he would say something like "This is the bread of our affliction, which our father's ate in the wilderness."
- *So...here's what Jesus said as he presided over the Passover meal with his disciples and raised the third cup:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,"

*The disciples had heard the script many times, since they were children...now Jesus is changing it...dramatically.

*He's changing the age old script into a "first person" narrative.

*"This is my body"...this is the bread of my affliction...my suffering...I'm going to lead the final Exodus and bring you to the ultimate deliverance from bondage.

*"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

*He is the Passover lamb...he is the substitutionary sacrifice.

*Here Jesus is saying and is going to soon demonstrate...that all the deliverances of history and a thousand years of ceremony pointed forward to him.

***Step back for a moment and take this in.**

*This no elaborate fabrication...no myth designed to foster faith.

*Jesus is the consumation of thousands of years of prophecy...the centerpoint of human history.

1. See the art of the artist...the artist has revealed himself in his art...creation.

2. Hear the artist speak...in action, spoken and written word.

3. Then he enters his own creation...validating it is him by:

-fulfilled prophecy...who else could do that?

-miraculous and sinless life...who else could do that?

-prediction of his own death and resurrection...who else could do that?

***The application this morning is this:**

-Be encouraged in your faith!

*We will celebrate the "Lord's supper" as an act of faith and remembrance.

*But be encouraged in your faith...if you are a follower of Christ...you are living in line with reality.

*Your prayers...matter

*Your service...matters

*Your discipline...to turn from folly...matters

*Your suffering...matters.

*Your life, lived by faith in Christ...is in line with the flow of God in human history...you are on track.

COMMUNION: we align ourselves together today with the flow of God in history.

*There are a number of views regarding history:

1. It is a series of endless cycles: both the cosmos, human history, and human destiny
2. It is linear but it undirected and meaningless
3. It is directed, and meaningful: The cosmos, as well as human history has a beginning...like an artist putting his brush to the canvas.

*And it has an end...when the same artist finishes the painting.

*Often in the mind of an artist...the entire painting is completed from the start...that is the case for God the artist.

*When he paints one stroke here, it is in preparation for another stroke at a later time...the strokes might even appear to be random...but they are not...they are purposeful.

*The final intention of the Artist is not realized until the final stroke is laid...but as the painting unfolds, it does become clearer what the finished work will look like.

*We are somewhat like pixels on a page...the pixels have no power on their own to tell the Artist...what the painting must look like...can you imagine if they could?

*It would not be art, but a distortion built around a single, small perception...each pixel demanding the picture center around them.

*As we live out our existence as a part of this living art...we have no capacity on our own to understand what is happening in, through and around us.

*We cannot possibly understand what this painting is becoming and is going to be...or what part we play in it...**by our own powers of deduction, or wisdom.**

*However, this Artist has spoken to his art...he has told us what he is doing...he doesn't explain each stroke...but he has given us what we could never obtain on our own...his view of what he is painting.

*Today, is not another random, undirected and meaningless turn of the earth on its axis in relationship to the sun, exposing Wichita first to light from its photons then to the dark as we face open space.

*What we call November, and then more specifically Thanksgiving Day, is not just a point in time in the purposeless cycles of our little planet round and round a small star.

*Let me read to you from the Words the Artist gave us to help us understand.

Ps. 74:16 God...The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. 17 It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.

*We are not sitting in a vehicle...with no one at the wheel...at the mercy of mindless fate...trying to eek out some reason for our existence before we crash and then the ride...short and ultimately without purpose...is over.

*We are the work of an artist on a canvas...today is another loving stroke of that artist.

*To understand, at all, we must pay careful attention not just to the events around us...we must pay attention to his Words.

*It his through his spoken Word that we are able to make sense out of what he is doing in the world.

***Advent is a celebration of the coming of the Savior and a longing look forward to his return.**

***Rom. 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 8:22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.**

*We will distribute the communion elements while the worship team plays and a video of Jamin, an artist who is a part of our body, helps us visualize how the shape of the art and the mind of the artist is revealed in steps, over time.

*When everyone has been served I will return and lead us in prayer and then we will take communion together as a family.

***Mark 14:22 "Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying 'Take it, this is my body'"**

*This is an act symbolizing faith...(gospel)

Video with life music, while Communion is passed.

***Terry come up and lead Communion.**

**We have done our best to "think" larger thoughts today than just our own personal issues and struggles.

*The flow of human history, the fulfillment of prophecy in the life of the Lord Jesus, the clear design and purpose of the world.

*All this "larger" thinking does not mean God is unconcerned with the small details of our lives...in fact, that is one of the things that the "larger" thinkers of scriptures were amazed at...we should be as well.

***Psalms 8:3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?**

SMALL GROUP NOTES

11.29.15

Mark 14:12-25

Intro:

*In history there have been four kinds of people:

1. Those who were not exceptionally wise and good and did not claim to be God. (most of humanity)
2. Those who were exceptionally wise and good and did not claim to be God. (a few)
3. Those who were not exceptionally wise and good and claimed to be God. (a few, mentally/morally deficient)
4. The **one** who was exceptionally wise and good who claimed to be God. (Jesus)

*The uniqueness of Jesus is absolutely compelling when considered carefully.

*What are some social, personal implications for his uniqueness?

Read:

Psa. 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

Romans 2:14 (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15 since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts,

Discuss:

*There are three primary "proofs" for God's existence from creation.

1. Teleological: This comes from a word that means "purpose" or "an end in mind"

*The Universe (time, space, matter) clearly had a beginning. It is not "self-created".

*If the Universe has been here for an infinite amount of time we could never arrive at "today" because you cannot travel an "actual infinite" number of days. There was a beginning.

2. Cosmological: This comes from the word for the physical universe. The universe has the appearance of design.

*What are some of the aspects of the created world that point to design?

3. Moral: There are those who say that morality is entirely relative, there is no absolute right and wrong. What do you think is wrong with this position? Can a rational person truly hold this position consistently?

Read:

Mark 14:12 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" **13** So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. **14** Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' **15** He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." **16** The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. **17** When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. **18** While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me — one who is eating with me." **19** They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?" **20** "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. **21** The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." **22** While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." **23** Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. **24** "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. **25** "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

Discuss:

1. The Passover:

*Read the account of the Passover from Exodus 12.

*How does the entire Exodus account provide a picture of the Christian life (The gospel)?

2. Jesus and the Passover:

*Jesus personalized the traditional Passover meal. How did he do this?

*What does this say about him? For instance...either he was crazy(egomaniac) or God. What else?

3. We have evidence of God in the created world. We would expect a creator to speak and he has. We did not expect the creator to enter his creation, but he did.

*Consider the three prevailing views of human history:

a. Endless, meaningless cycles

b. Linear, meaningless

c. Linear, meaningful

*What are some personal & social implications for each of these views of history?

4. Ps. 74:16 God...The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. 17 It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.

*How might the worldview demonstrated in Ps. 74:16 affect a person's view of their life in a personal and practical way?

Apply:

Rom. 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 8:22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

*We live in the "already/not yet" kingdom of God.

*Jesus inaugurated the kingdom and someday he will consummate it.

*Thinking "grand" thoughts (the flow of human history, prophecy fulfilled in Jesus, the design of the world, the reality of morality) can help us think more clearly about our lives today.

*Pray and think through some of these larger facts in relationship to your own personal struggles, doubts, and fears.

THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



Mark 14:12-25

**“FOR EVEN THE
SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME
TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE
HIS LIFE AS A
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MANY.”**

MARK 10:45

J. STILL

- 1. Creation: The World has been designed**
- 2. Fall: the World is in need of repair**
- 3. Preparation: The flow of history points to
Jesus**
- 4. The 1st Advent of Christ: His unique and
miraculous life and death show his special
place in history.**

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1. The Teleological Argument (beginning)

2. The Cosmological Argument (design)

**3. The Moral Argument (built in sense of
right and wrong)**

Beginning: (teleological)

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Purpose: (Cosmological)



Character: (Morality)



1. God reached into the "box"

2. God stepped into the "box"



Mark 14:12 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

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So they prepared the Passover.

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The Passover in history



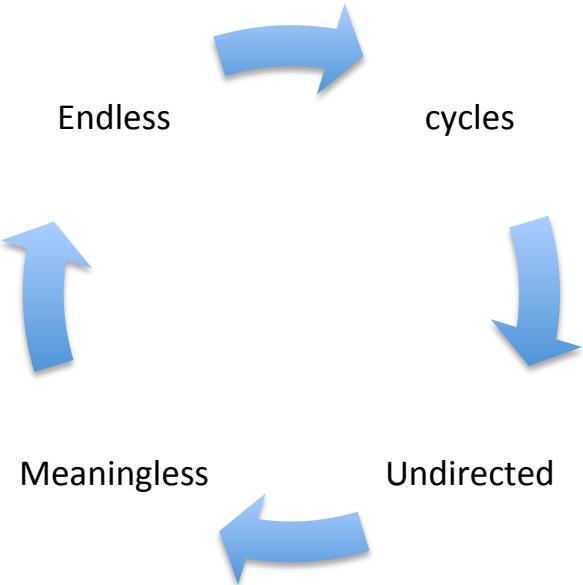
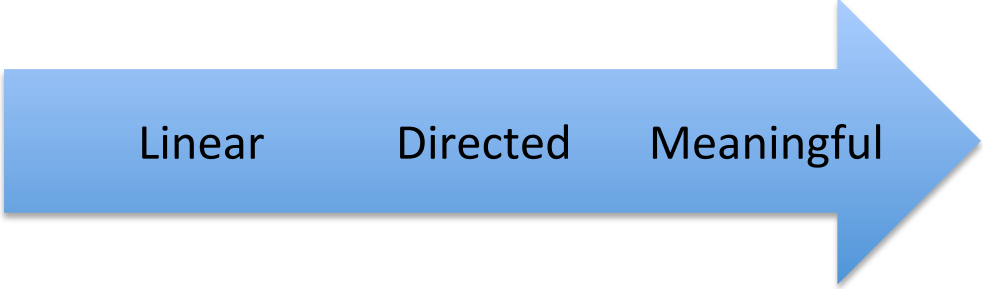
The Passover and Jesus

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.” Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,”

1. The work of the Artist

2. The words of the Artist

3. The Artist entered his creation



Ps. 74:16 God...The day is yours, and yours also the night; you established the sun and moon. 17 It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth; you made both summer and winter.

Rom. 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 8:22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Mark 14:22 "Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying 'Take it, this is my body'"

