

We're going to take a little break this week before we start 2 Peter chapter 2. So turn with me if you will, to

Romans 10:8 - 13 *But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."*

I've titled our little special this week: *The Theory of Everything*.

Stephen Hawking died this week. He presents a fascinating subject. He was obviously brilliant. Some would say a one in a billion mind.

To me it was fascinating to watch how the public sort of latched onto him. Its as if people were saying, we're not smart enough to find the way out, but this fellow is, if anyone is. We waited expectantly for him to solve the riddles of the universe.

He seemed transcendent. The odd mechanical computer generated voice added to the aura. And then one day, he's gone the way of all flesh. Vanished from the earth. It reminds us how tenuous life is. Here for a little time, like a blade of grass, then like grass in the hot sun, it's dried up and blown away in the wind.

He beat all odds, with his illness, but he's gone. And while he added significant learning to the collective learning of men, he didn't solve any riddles. He understood entropy. In the end, he was a victim of that very concept.

He wrote books about gravity and black holes and time. He was an optimist and spent his life speaking and writing about what he called,

"The theory of everything".

And the theory of everything according to Stephen Hawking was that there is no God, we don't know where the universes came from, the vast countless stars and planets, suns and black holes, energy positive and negative. He surmised that . . . it just is.

But ultimately his theory of everything boiled down to; men will figure this out. Soon, we'll have all the answers to where it all came from and why we are. Soon, but not yet.

He said; *"I believe the simplest explanation is there is no God. No one created the universe and no one directs our fate. This leads me to a profound realization, he said that there probably is no heaven and no afterlife either."*

He went on to say, *"We have this one life to appreciate, the grand design of the universe and for that I am extremely grateful."*

Excuse me, Mr. Hawking? The grand what? What was that that you said about the universe? The grand . . . design? Did you say design? And who exactly are you grateful to?

Modern secularism and it's resulting atheism claims that we are nothing more than a random tiny rock lost in a universe too vast to really know much about, and our fragile bodies hold brains that think for a time and try to figure out if there is a why, and ultimately the best that the most brilliant mind can do is say . . . we don't know anything, but we're confident we'll figure it all out very soon?

We look at the magnificent pictures we get back from the Hubbell telescope of the inconceivably vast reaches of universes and we might think, well, the vastness is unmeasurable and we are a tiny insignificant rock in a tiny solar system in a tiny universe and perhaps we think, is the God of the Bible too small, now that we've got pictures and understand more than the goat herders who wrote this book. And now Steven Hawking is gone. We're just lost in the vastness.

Let me show you some of the things that those goat herders and fishemen wrote down thousands of years ago. It turns out, our God is bigger than all the vastnesses we can see and begin to measure.

Our Father, Who art in heaven . . . In 6 words, Jesus revealed more than the most brilliant mind we had and just lost could surmise in a lifetime of theories.

He told us there is a God, and that His home is . . . heaven. Heaven as opposed to this rock.

He tells us more; *Hallowed be thy name . . .* He tells us in 4 words that God is bigger than all the heavens we can see. It's God whose name is hallowed, not the universes and vastnesses.

Then in a very few words, Jesus gives us the "Theory of everything"

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

In those 14 words we learn that God rules . . . everywhere . . . in all of that vastness we can't measure or understand, He is the ruler. The greek word we translate "kingdom" means authority to reign.

So the prayer is for the day when God's authority to reign on this earth, as opposed to Satan, the usurper, will come to this rock. This earth.

We learn that this rock, this earth is in rebellion. God rules the universes, but His will is not done on this rock. Earth is in rebellion. In all of the vastness of the universes, this place, earth does not do God's will, we are at war with Him.

Jesus then taught us to pray for provisional things within the reality of living on a planet at war with it's creator. Give us bread. Forgive our sins. Grant us to avoid as much trouble as possible.

And then He closes the prayer with with truths impossible for the most brilliant minds to find out.

For, Thine is the kingdom
and the power
and the glory, forever.

Even though this rock is in a rebellion, the authority to reign, is ultimately in the control of the Father. Thine is the Kingdom

And the power, God has the power to come and exert His authority to reign, and we wait for the day when He will do that,

And the Glory, His name is hallowed above all creation, forever and ever.

That, Mr. Hawking, is not the theory of everything, it is the fact of everything. God is glorious, He is from everlasting to everlasting, He rules the universes, and this rebellious earth belongs to Him and He is waiting patiently for those who He will gather out of the rebellion to belong to Him, and when that is finished, He will come and crush the evil one and turn the rebellers into ashes.

It seems so elegant in it's simplicity. The answers to all the who's and why's in such a very few elegant words. It takes far less faith to understand those realities than it does to ultimately say, we don't know where it came from and we don't know why we're here, or how it happened somehow by accident, but, we have the arrogance to believe we're right on the threshold of figuring this all out with our science and our brains.

Listen to Psalm 104. I'm going to read all of it. Within it are the answers to "The Theory of Everything"

*1 Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, You are very great;
You are clothed with splendor and majesty,*

*2 Covering Yourself with light as with a cloak,
Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain.*

*3He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters;
He makes the clouds His chariot;
He walks upon the wings of the wind;*

*4He makes the winds His messengers,
Flaming fire His ministers.*

*5He established the earth upon its foundations,
So that it will not totter forever and ever.*

*6You covered it with the deep as with a garment;
The waters were standing above the mountains.*

*7At Your rebuke they fled,
At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away.*

*8The mountains rose; the valleys sank down
To the place which You established for them.*

*9You set a boundary that they may not pass over,
So that they will not return to cover the earth.*

*10He sends forth springs in the valleys;
They flow between the mountains;*

*11They give drink to every beast of the field;
The wild donkeys quench their thirst.*

*12Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;
They lift up their voices among the branches.*

*13He waters the mountains from His upper chambers;
The earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works.*

*14He causes the grass to grow for the cattle,
And vegetation for the labor of man,
So that he may bring forth food from the earth,*

15And wine which makes man's heart glad,
So that he may make his face glisten with oil,
And food which sustains man's heart.

16The trees of the LORD drink their fill,
The cedars of Lebanon which He planted,

17Where the birds build their nests,
And the stork, whose home is the fir trees.

18The high mountains are for the wild goats;
The cliffs are a refuge for the shephanim.

19He made the moon for the seasons;
The sun knows the place of its setting.

20You appoint darkness and it becomes night,
In which all the beasts of the forest prowl about.

21The young lions roar after their prey
And seek their food from God.

22When the sun rises they withdraw
And lie down in their dens.

23Man goes forth to his work
And to his labor until evening.

24O LORD, how many are Your works!
In wisdom You have made them all;
The earth is full of Your possessions.

25There is the sea, great and broad,
In which are swarms without number,
Animals both small and great.

26There the ships move along,
And Leviathan, which You have formed to sport in it.

*27 They all wait for You
To give them their food in due season.*

*28 You give to them, they gather it up;
You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good.*

*29 You hide Your face, they are dismayed;
You take away their spirit, they expire
And return to their dust.*

*30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created;
And You renew the face of the ground.*

*31 Let the glory of the LORD endure forever;
Let the LORD be glad in His works;*

*32 He looks at the earth, and it trembles;
He touches the mountains, and they smoke.*

*33 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.*

*34 Let my meditation be pleasing to Him;
As for me, I shall be glad in the LORD.*

*35 Let sinners be consumed from the earth
And let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!*

Within that Psalm are the answers to everything. We learn about God, We learn about His abode, the heavens that Hawking was so enamored with. And we learn that all life and all of the functions of the earth are under His control and command.

All of the waters, above the earth and on the earth are His. The mountains rise and fall and utter smoke at His command. The animals

very breath and heartbeat is His to create and also to turn back into dust.

And the part that causes the secularists to abandon this truth as untenable, the wicked will vanish, sinners will be consumed. God owns it all, and the whole definition of rebellion is the arrogance of men to beat on their chests and say, "*We will not have this man to reign over us!*" Luke 19:14

The shepherds conference this year was simply fantastic. You reach something like total saturation. But in all of it, my take away passage this year, the words that won't stop ringing in my mind fit very well with what we're saying this morning about the Theory of Everything.

It's a very familiar passage, you can turn there if you like; These were some of the final words of Jesus before He left this world and ascended back to His Father. Matthew 28:18 *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth."*

Just stop and consider those words. *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*

Because of His faithfulness in doing all of His Father's will, even to death on a cross, having been raised from the dead, He tells us something important about the theory of everything. *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*

Everything that is, vast universes unmeasurable, everything the Hubble telescope can show us of the beauty of the vastness of all of the universes and black holes and whatever else is beyond that, that we can't see, even with the Hubble; It all belongs to Him. All of it!

Including this tiny rock we call earth, that is in rebellion against His ownership. He was careful to delineate specifics of what His Father gave Him; *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*

Everything! Everything that is, seen and unseen. Spirit worlds our eyes have yet to see and our minds do not understand . . . belong to Him.

As I was driving back to Tonopah, I was thinking; that might be a revolutionary way to approach evangelism. Knock on every door and tell the occupants, Jesus owns everything.

That means you. And this book maintains that you, along with every other breathing human, past and present and future, born here, are in rebellion against the one who owns you. And the book assures us that now or later, every knee will bow and acknowledge that ownership.

The good news is, you can do it now, and He will graciously remove all sin, all rebellion that is recorded in His book against you.

Or . . . like Stephen Hocking, you can rebel and look all over the universes for some other answer because you do not want to bow your knee to anyone, and you can do it later, in everlasting torment.

But one way or another, **every** knee **will** bow to the authority of Jesus, risen from the dead, seated at the right hand of God, in the heavens. *All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*

Stephen Hocking wrote a best selling book in 1988 called "A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes". It was a best seller! Later, Leonard Mlodinow, a physicist and science writer at the California Institute of Technology, who became a colleague and collaborator with Stephen Hawking, said; A Brief History of Time was "*Probably the least read most bought book ever.*"

It was a best seller, but no one could understand it. Hocking's tremendous mind did in fact scratch the surface of the vast unknowable. But most of what he says is beyond comprehension for normal folks.

So much for a theory of everything. Yet, our ancient book approaches those same problems and presents the answers dumbed down enough that even I can get a grasp on the problem.

This isn't a science book. God doesn't explain black holes. These truths are provided to us in a way similar to how we might answer our 3 year

old when they ask, "Where do baby's come from". We answer them in very simple understandable terms that satisfies their curiosity at a level they can understand.

That's how God explains the universe to us, and even in the simplest terms, that we can begin to grasp, we are far ahead of the most brilliant mind, perhaps, ever. Listen to the Word of God, about His dwelling place.

Isaiah 40:22

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

Isaiah 42:5

Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it And spirit to those who walk in it,

Isaiah 45:12

"It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands And I ordained all their host.

All of the vast universes that the hubble shows us, all of the immensity and vastness beyond understanding and description . . . is not more than a tent, a curtain, a boundary between us and God who dwells there-in.

The Bible says he spread that curtain out *Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.*

I stretched out the heavens with My hands And I ordained all their host.

The picture given by the ancient writers, as given by God, is in terminology that is familiar. The words are the same as what would be described of how a scholar takes a scroll that is rolled up, and unrolls it, and stretches out what was coiled up, on a flat surface. Or unrolls a section in the synagogue partially, to read a single section. The teacher is not seen, behind the scroll.

Those are the terms God uses to define all of the vastness we see in those images from the Hubbel telescope. Those hosts of planets and suns and moons and stars are all ordained by Him. They hide Him from our view.

Did you note that God in His book told us the world we live in is a circle.

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth when science taught it was flat?

Isaiah 34:4

And all the host of heaven will wear away, ... ; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree.

Stephen Hawking asked that his formula that describes the effect of entropy on black holes be written on his grave stone.

Entropy is the second law of thermodynamics which explains the constant that everything is winding down. Like a top that is set spinning on a surface, little by little it slows down, down, down, until it stops.

That's what Isaiah's prophecy told us about the universe, 2,700 years ago. *And all the host of heaven will wear away, ... ; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree*

The vast unchartable universes are wearing out. Getting old the same as a fig leaf, or a dead leaf on a vine.

I mean, bravo for Mr. Hawking finding the formula that describes that, but Isaiah told us that 27 centuries ago. By the way, Mr. Hawking's formula depends on mathematical constants that are built into the universe. He basically uses constants that are set in place by the design of the creator, to solve his equation.

$$S_{BH} = \frac{kc^3}{4\hbar G}A$$

Copied from Wikipedia; "The formula is the centerpiece of our understanding of black holes and a crowning achievement for Hawking, who worked on it with his colleague Jacob Bekenstein. It connects important thermodynamical quantities such as entropy, represented by the capital S, to physical properties of the black hole, namely its area, A. The remaining letters are constants of the universe; k is the Boltzmann constant, c is the speed of light, h-bar is the reduced Planck constant, and G is the universal gravitation constant."

What a tremendous mind and intellect to find the formula that defines how the universe is slowing down. Isaiah, the mouthpiece for God, dumbed it down for folks like you and me.

The universe is withering like a leaf on a vine. It's green, then yellow, then brown. It becomes dry and falls from the vine. Eventually it comes apart and becomes dust again, in the earth. I can get my mind around that. Sort of.

It tickles me that the wikipedia definition says that all of the mathematical numbers to solve the equation are; quote, constants of the universe. But there's some plagiarism going on there. Those constants of the universe, so called, are there by intelligent design. And no credit is given to their owner.

God set all of it in motion. He stretched the heavens out like a man unrolls a scroll.

In the 1000 AD time frame men were producing star catalogues with between 964 and 1500 stars. Yet Jeremiah 31, where God is talking about the promises He has made to Jacob about the Jewish race says some things about the universe that are astonishing.

35 *Thus says the LORD,
Who gives the sun for light by day
And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar;
The LORD of hosts is His name:*

36 *"If this fixed order departs
From before Me," declares the LORD,
"Then the offspring of Israel also will cease
From being a nation before Me forever."*

37 *Thus says the LORD,
"If the heavens above can be measured
And the foundations of the earth searched out below,
Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel
For all that they have done," declares the LORD.*

We learn two truths here that science and even Mr. Hawking has verified. Those constants that are locked in place, that Stephen Hawking used in his formula were locked in place by God. *If this fixed order departs*

And as to star catalogues we have from ancient times, by 1500 when the telescope was invented, those went out the window, and in our times, when we built and installed corrective lenses for the Hubbell (it didn't work at first) we have forever verified what the Lord said in that passage. *"If the heavens above can be measured* We now know they cannot.

But, there's a part of that verse in Isaiah 34 that I read earlier that I withheld for my own purposes. Here is the full rendition.

Is. 34:4 *And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree.*

The Bible tells us over and over that just as God spread the heavens out like a scroll, He will roll them up, like a scroll.

A day is coming, when that entropy which Hawking described, will at the pleasure of God, be sped up. Those constants that He set in place, will become un-constants. The heavens will be opened up. Rent in two.

Oh, in the promise in Jeremiah, He did not say he wouldn't undo the heavens, He promised the Jacob would still be present . . . when He did, and Jacob is in fact, back in the promised land. Amazing accuracy!

Isaiah breaks forth in magnificent praise when he says;

Is. 64:1 ***Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,***

And that's exactly what this book says God is going to do.

Peter, in our next chapter, says; 2 Peter 3:10

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be dissolved in the fire,

and Revelations 6:14 says; *The sky receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place.*

Those unchartable reaches of outer space, the universes that are the tent curtain between God and us, are going to be ripped open some day soon.

*1 Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down,
That the mountains might quake at Your presence—*

*2 As fire kindles the brushwood, as fire causes water to boil—
To make Your name known to Your adversaries,
That the nations may tremble at Your presence!*

Let me read you a little more from Revelation chapter 6.

12 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.

14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

And that, my beloved friends, is not the theory of everything, it is revealed truth. Those are the facts of everything.

But there's good news. The wrath of God on this rebellious earth is avoidable. Jesus died for your sinful rebellion against God. He took the punishment that was stored up for you. He rose from the grave on the third day, and He offers you His righteousness.

I want to finish by coming full circle back to a couple of verses that we started with. Romans 10:9,10

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Sometimes those verses are cheapened as if Jesus is his first name and Lord is his last name. Just say Jesus is Lord and you'll be saved.

I don't think it's quite that easy. These verses take us back to Jesus final words. *All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.*

Confessing Jesus as Lord is a heart understanding and acceptance humbly, that Jesus owns every molecule of you. Following Him and doing His bidding isn't optional. He owns you.

We are slaves of God. We don't do as we please. We were bought with a price. Those who have come out of this rebellious world to belong to Jesus now and forevermore, have been purchased by Him to do His will.

Those of us who have entered into that blessed contract will tell you, it is a sweet slavery, and we would give up this world to have Him as Master.

That's what Paul means when he says; *9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

That's the truth of everything. This book doesn't posit in theories. Give your heart to Him. Humbly acknowledge Him as Lord. Ask Him to remove your filthy sinful clothes and to clothe you in His righteousness. Do it today.