

John Glenn story (Feb. 20 1962)

Welcome / etc.

Why do bad things happen to good people / evil / etc. next week

Today – we’re going to talk a bit about the universe

Oh – also – next Sunday

We’re going to be utilizing the theatre next door

At each of our services

Feel free to look around in there and see what you think

Today – we’re going to talk a bit about the universe

And there’s a scale of y’all who are listening today:

One end – really smart, scientifically minded, love physics

You’re going to say, “You know what, you’ve given me a lot to think about.” {???

If that’s you, the online host is going to post a copy of my notes at the end of the message

Get on there – download it – think away

If you’d like to talk

Let me know

That’s on one end

On the other end – you’re also really smart,

you just don’t like science,

and you’re not sure why math has letters

You’re going hear this message, and say – “What just happened?!?”

And then, of course, there’s lots of us in between the two

And that’s ok

Wherever you find yourself

We're glad you're here

And I've got good news and bad news

If you're over *here* – the good news is, it's only one message

If you're over *here* – the bad news is, it's only one message

Let's talk about John Glenn for a second

Sending someone into orbit is tricky business

Did you ever see the movie Hidden Figures?

If you haven't – you should

If you have – you know that the chalkboard plays a big part in the movie

Well, that wasn't just made up

Here's a NASA picture from 1957

Getting the orbit just right was a big, big deal

Notice, this was in 1957

Glenn didn't orbit the earth till 1962

NASA had a team working on this for 5 years – after this point – before they ever took flight

It's way more complicated than this

But let me see if I can give us the bottom line

If you go throw a baseball in your backyard...

But the ground is not flat, right?

The earth is a globe

So you have hills and valleys

But eventually, it's all a little curved, right?

So if you could throw the ball further

And further

Eventually, it would “fall” around the globe

That’s an orbit

If only I had been around in 1957!

Do you remember the movie, A few good men – “You better be going somewhere with this!”

I’m going somewhere – stay with me

All of space works this way

The moon “falls” around the earth because of the earth’s gravity

The earth “falls” around the sun because of the sun’s gravity

The other planets in our solar system all “fall” around the sun as well

And our entire solar system “falls” around the center of the Milky Way galaxy

And this is all a big deal

If the moon didn’t orbit right

It would either fly off into space

Which would jack up our tides and our weather

And everything would begin to unravel really fast

OR it would get closer and closer to earth until it eventually crashed

That would be really bad

Same is true of the earth to the sun

Or the sun with the milky way

If it’s not exactly right

Exactly right - down to the finest minutia detail

It all gets really bad really quickly

My question is

How'd that get set up?

There's really only two options:

You have **Chance**

You know, just dumb luck

Or you have **Design**

Either it happened randomly

Or someone thought it through, designed it, set it up, put it in motion

Question: How many of you would want to get in John Glenn's rocket if they had just used the dumb luck method?

My Grandma loved to play Euchre

Competitive

"In the barn"

"Let me show you how the boar ate the lettuce"

Funeral

High school – Paoli Peaks – midnights

Billy – partner

Cheater – Pentagon

If you're not familiar with Euchre, let me show you something

The best hand in euchre is called a "**lay down loner**"

Because you don't need your partner's help

And you can just lay it down
I looked it up this week
The odds of getting a “lay down loner” is 1 in 1500 hands
Pretty rare

I've gotten them
And I've seen others get them
But they're very rare
So getting 2 of those back to back is unheard of
I've never seen that

Is there anybody in the room who wouldn't think I was cheating
If I dealt myself 2 of those hands in a row?
What about 3 or 4?

Scientists say that gravity has to be exactly what it is for the universe to sustain life

Exactly – down to one part in 10^{60}

The odds of the universe's gravity RANDOMLY being exactly what it needs to be

Is the same odds of me dealing myself this hand 19x in a row

19x in row?!?

If I dealt myself this hand 19x in a row

Is there anyone here who would think that was just by chance?

And yet we say the universe was created... randomly

Without a designer

The internet tells me that there are this many grains of sand in the world

Every beach

Every desert hill and dune

Every sandbox in every backyard
That's 7.5 Quintillion if you're keeping track
You'll need to know that number later for the federal deficit, so pay attention
7.5 quintillion
You would be more likely
To pick the right grain of sand – blindfolded
Then the universe's gravity to randomly be exactly right
In fact, you'd be more likely to pick the right grain of sand 3x in a row
Blindfolded
Then the universe's gravity to randomly be exactly right
And if anybody likes these odds, I wanna play cards... for money... this afternoon
Because I'm not a good cheater, but I'm good enough for you

Don't just listen to me

What do leading scientists say about this?

“The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers seem to have been finely adjusted to make possible the development of life.” - Stephen Hawking, Theoretical Physicist

“If anyone claims *not* to be surprised by the special features the universe has, he is hiding his head in the sand.” - David Deutch, Physicist at the University of Oxford

“A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with the physics. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.” – Fred Hoyle, Astronomer & Astrophysicist

“There is for me powerful evidence that there is something going on behind it all... it seems to me that somebody has fine-tuned nature's numbers to make the universe. The impression of design is overwhelming.” – Paul Davies, Physicist

Paul – something is going on behind it all

Somebody has fine-tuned nature's numbers

Psalms 19:1-4 - The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

That was true 3000 years ago

When David didn't know a fraction of the things that we've since discovered

Today, a child can see the power of God if they look at space

And so can an astrophysicist

Because the heavens declare the glory of God

Psalms 8:1, 3-4 - Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the earth! You have set Your Glory in the heavens... When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is mankind that You are mindful of them, human beings that You care for them?

And yet God

Is mindful

Of us

A God powerful enough

Wise enough

Smart enough

To set the universe in motion

And yet God

Is mindful

Of us

Colossians 1:15-17 - The Son is the Image of the invisible God,

Jesus is the image of God

You wanna know what God looks like?

You can't see Him

So you wanna know what He looks like

Look at Jesus

Study Jesus' life

Pay attention to His nature

The Son is the Image of the invisible God,

the Firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Not only did Jesus come to earth to rescue us

Not only did Jesus endure horrific torture and death on a cross

Not only did Jesus conquer death by rising on the third day

But Jesus was there with God in Creation

And Jesus is even now holding all things together

And He'll hold you together if you let Him

Wherever you land on the scale, let me bottom-line this for you:

1. Creating the universe is tricky

We focused on gravity

Because I can understand that

But there are many constants that have to all be exact for life to even be possible

The distance of the earth to the moon

The distance of the earth to the sun

The expansion rate of the universe

The balance of mass and energy

And many others

And all of them have to be balanced on a razor's edge

Down to the most exact of precision
Creating the universe is tricky business
And it points us to God

Romans 1:20-22 (NirV) - Ever since the world was created it has been possible to see the qualities of God that are not seen... Those things can be seen in what He has made. So people have no excuse for what they do.

Paul is saying as we learn more and more about how the world is made
And we realize the exact precision that it required
And we realize that dumb luck could have never given us this universe

We have no excuse for not recognizing God

They knew God. But they didn't honor Him as God. They didn't thank Him. Their thinking became worthless. Their foolish hearts became dark. They claimed to be wise. But they made fools of themselves.

Creating the universe is tricky

The chances of that happening without God are really, really, unfathomably small

Christianity says that an all-powerful, all-knowing God created everything
That explains all of it

For all we've learned, the world still doesn't have a plausible answer for life without God

And I don't think they're going to find one

Sometimes there is a stigma that says that science and faith are incompatible together

That is simply not true

There are many, many really smart, scientifically minded Christians

And even atheists can observe the fine tuning design that Christians believe God created

Look at what Richard Dawkins, a leading atheist scientist, says about science:

“(Science) is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose.” – Richard Dawkins

He doesn't know why

He sees it

But He has no explanation for how it got here

The world has been designed for a purpose

By a God who loves you

By a really intelligent, powerful God who created everything

And then was willing to take on human flesh in the person of Jesus

To die for your mistakes and sins

Creating the universe is tricky business

The chances of that happening without God are really, really, unfathomably small

If God can handle that, He can handle everything I face

Nothing is too difficult for God

Lots of things are too difficult for me

But nothing is too difficult for God

Nothing is too complicated for God

Lots of things are too complicated for me

But nothing is too complicated for God

Now what?

I want to ask you to accept two things in your life:

God designed you

You have never

A single time in your life

Stumbled across something intricate

That wasn't designed

Think about your smart phones...

There's no way that this machine could be produced without somebody designing it

It's too complicated

And you're much more intricate than it is

Factories create millions of these

We can't create a single one of you

So trust God with your life

God designed you

Follow Him

Follow Him till it makes you a little nervous

If you've never thought believing was an intellectually viable option

Research

If you've never cared much what God wants for you

Begin to read about Jesus in one of the Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

He's the image of the invisible God

Get to know Him

If you consider yourself a follower of Jesus

But you've been holding out on Him in some area

Follow Him till it makes you a little nervous

God designed you

And He's proven Himself to be a trustworthy designer

Now follow Him

Psalm 27:13-14 (NASB) - I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord.

"I would have despaired"

Life without hope is pretty despairing

I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord

Rick Warren says "The foundation of all hope is the goodness of God."

Our world is full of despair and corruption

When we try to live without God

Wait for the Lord;

Find your strength in God

Be strong and let your heart take courage;

God designed you

And He's proven Himself to be a trustworthy designer

Now follow Him

God loves you

Can you imagine?

God – who created the entire universe

Entered time and space

Entered humanity – took on flesh

Lived and died for us

For you

For your sins

God loves you

Not because you're good enough or smart enough or together enough

God loves you

Because you're made in His image

And He sees the mess that things have become

And He wants to rescue us from performance

And posturing

God knows everything about you

And loves you anyway

Let Him

John 3:16-17 - For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

God loves you – now let Him