

The Importance of the Biblical Concept of Creation

The first several chapters of the **Bible** give us the account of the creation of the earth, animals and mankind, of the introduction of sin and rebellion into man's relationship with his Creator, and of the early history of the earth. It is an amazingly detailed description of how God created everything and how man, by his willful act of disobedience, gave all that God had placed in his trust to God's enemy, Satan (Rom 6:16). The Biblical account of creation is unlike any other account in all human history. All of the ancient mythologies contain fantastic images, but the Bible is almost laconic in its description.

Not only in Genesis, but Throughout the entire Bible, the theme of God as Creator is repeated and expanded. Thus, the account of creation and the early history of mankind and the earth as found in the **Bible** is seen as containing deep spiritual meanings. Consider the following list of "firsts":

Genesis contains the first:

- Life -- Day 5 when God created living creatures.
- Humans -- Day 6; made in the image of God
- Marriage -- the union of man and woman
- Sin -- seated in rebellion against God
- Lies and deception -- outcome of sin
- Death -- spiritual and physical
- Judgement on sin -- banished from the garden
- Promise -- a savior would restore creation

Worldviews

What you believe about God determines how we live and what we do. For example, is God the Creator of all things, or is life just one big accident? How you answer that question, and other similar questions, forms the basis for your "worldview". Your worldview is the framework from within which you interpret the world and the events happening around you.

To illustrate the importance of a worldview consider astronomy and the motion of the planets through the sky. The early astronomers assumed that the earth was the center of the solar system and that the sun, moon and planets revolved around the earth. They had no difficulty in describing the motion of the sun and moon, but the planets presented a very difficult problem. Describing the motion of the planets from the earth is extremely difficult. However, when the center of motion was moved from the earth to the sun the planetary orbits became quite simple. What can be very difficult to understand from one worldview can be quite simple when viewed from another worldview.

If you answer that God is the Creator of all things, then you are a theist. According to polls, the majority of the American population are theists. If, on the other hand, you answer by saying that God is not the creator then you are a naturalist. "Naturalism" states that all things that are and events that have occurred are the product of natural forces, i.e. nature is all that there is. The majority of intellectuals in America are naturalists, that is, they believe that the concept of God exists only in the minds of religious believers. Naturalism is the unquestioned assumption that dominates academia.

Evolution is the foundation upon which modern naturalism rests. Instead of an intelligence directing the formation of all things, mindless and random chance is the mechanism. Such a

foundation leads to other beliefs, such as, relativistic morality and situational ethics. If "God" is mentioned, it is at best one who sits on the sidelines and watches.

Marginalization

The Biblical account stands in stark contrast to the tenets of evolution, and thus there is an irreconcilable conflict between the two. In the normal marketplace of ideas the goal is to determine the truth. However, to a naturalist there is no source of truth other than the individual, so there is little way in which he can win the argument.

The tactic that is most often employed by the naturalist is called "marginalization". When a viewpoint or theory is marginalized it is categorized in such a way that it is excluded from serious consideration **without being refuted**. There have been many examples of marginalization in our time, not only of ideas but also of people. Nazi Germany marginalized Jews and others, making them less than human, and thus provided a justification for exterminating them. The same type of argument is used to justify abortion: the fetus is not human.

Marginalization occurs in the conflict between worldviews when the naturalists label the theist position as "religion" and their position as "science". Since religion involves an element of the supernatural it is not rational; science, on the other hand, is supremely rational. Judges and journalists come largely from the world of academia, and thus they are mostly naturalists. They will tend to assume that people who base their thinking on the premise that God is real are irrational and thus dangerous when they influence public policy. From their perspective, religion does not belong outside of churches and in public institutions. As an example, when Christians become involved in politics they are labeled derogatorily as the "radical religious right". What is seen by the Christian as bias in the media comes not so much from a different political viewpoint as much or more from a different worldview.

The dilemma

Theists thus find themselves in a difficult situation. They want to believe in God, but find it difficult to find respect in academic circles; they even find themselves ridiculed in public. One solution is to find a compromise. They, too, separate science and religion. Isn't it possible to simply accept the spiritual meanings and message and ignore the physical description as being true? Doesn't the **Bible** speak to the spiritual aspects of our existence and science to the real world? Must we accept the literal truth of the Scriptures? After all, the argument is made, the Bible is not a science textbook.

These are critical questions that must be answered, for it is a typical argument of the evolutionists that evolution is scientific and creationism is religious. Many Christians have accepted this argument that there are two types of truth -- scientific truth and spiritual truth. Inherent in this argument, however, is the assumption that science is superior to religion; that empirical truth supersedes revealed truth. The result is that wherever there is a conflict between the two, and there are many, that evolution is seen to be true and the **Bible** false.

Christians in particular have fallen prey to this type of thinking. There can only be one source of truth, and to say that there is one type of truth in this situation and another truth somewhere else violates the very character of God. Numbers 23:19 states that "God is not a man that He should lie; nor the son of man that He should repent." Such a separation of truth leads to paying lip-service to the **Bible** while rejecting the authority of God. If the **Bible** is wrong concerning the physical world, how can it be right concerning the spiritual world? How can God communicate spiritual truth to us in the context of a physical "lie"? If all that God has communicated to us is not the truth then man sits as the judge of what parts of the **Bible** are true and what parts are false.

Modem science has expended a great deal of effort and resources in the attempt to provide an alternate explanation for the existence of the universe, earth, and man -- an explanation that explicitly removes any concept of a Creator/creation relationship. Since the time of Charles Darwin this alternate explanation, called evolution, has gained great popularity among Christians and non-Christians alike. Over the last hundred years or so theologians, churchmen, and Christians in general have been all too quick to compromise the Biblical account of creation. The end result has been that in many churches today the **Bible** is largely an ignored book. For example, pastors and others seem hesitant to seek solutions to counseling and personal problems in the Scriptures but prefer to consult sociology and psychology texts instead.

A careful study of the creation account in Genesis, combined with other scriptures and scientific understanding, reveal that one who believes in Creation has nothing about which to be embarrassed. While there have been tremendous amounts of research funds expended on relating paleontologic, archeological and geological "sciences" to prove evolution they have had very little or no success, and there certainly has been no evidence found that contradicts the Bible. Moreover, when the Flood is included as part of the Creation account, most of the gross features of those sciences can easily and consistently be placed into a proper relationship. The Christian need never to be embarrassed by steadfastly maintaining his belief in the Scriptures, and, in fact, should make every effort to do so.

By accepting the literal physical truth contained in the Scriptures one is free to explore the profound Spiritual truth found in them. It seems to be a practical truth that you will not expend much effort unless you believe the results to be worthwhile and important. And in order to extract the best spiritual meaning and truth, one must pay attention to detail and dig deep. The reason for this is that God did not put it all in one place, but spread it throughout the **Bible**. Unless you believe that the truth buried in the Scriptures is vital to your well-being, there will be a reluctance to search out that truth.

Below is a list of seven fundamental creation truths which I believe science, society and, to a large extent, the Church, herself, have rejected or forgotten. An understanding of these seven concepts can open to us, as believers, new vistas of faith.

1. It is because God is God that He created the universe and the earth. This creative act, and all subsequent creative acts, lie outside our common experience. They are supernatural. It is a mistake to try to understand God by reducing His supernatural nature to the level of our **natural** understanding. In Job 38 God asserts to Job that He is God because of His creative act and that all of Job's knowledge must be placed in this context. Thus it is part of God's nature that He creates. It is, in a sense, a definition of God.

In this regard, we can see that the creation stands apart from its Creator and that there is an objective reality. It is popular in some circles to see the creation and the Creator as one, and thus to assign divinity to the creation. The result of this thinking, that is, to see the creation and Creator as one, is to fall into idolatry and superstition. It is like saying that the potter and the clay pot are the same.

It is also true, however, that the characteristics of the creation reflects some of the nature of its Creator (Rom 1:18-20). We can learn a great deal about the Creator by carefully considering His creation, and this has been one of the great motivating factors of some of our greatest scientists. For example, in one of the great creation passages - Isa 40:21-31, God instructs us to consider the

stars (v. 26), that while we cannot number them He has not only numbered them but given a name to each one. Science would have us believe that the universe and life arose by chance, an accident with no purpose; everything is random. Yet when we look around us we see an intricate, delicately balanced world, **an ordered, orderly and purposeful universe.**

Imagine talking to an artist who has spent much of himself in creating a work of art and insisting that it was all just a series of accidents. What an insult that would be to the artist! Like the work of a great artist, we need to see and appreciate the handiwork of our creative God.

2. We are created in God's image. Science would have us believe that little separates us from the beasts. Is that true? What does separate us from the animals?

Genesis 1 is the most complete description of creation contained anywhere. One of the words used in that chapter to describe what God did is **bara**, which is translated "create". This word is different because, unlike the other terms, such as made, this one means to bring into existence something that did not exist before. The other words used in Genesis 1 mean to reshape or reform what already exists. There are only three instances in Genesis 1 where **bara** is used: First, in verse 1 when matter and energy were created. The second instance is in verse 21, which is the creation of life. "Life" is not just the ability to reproduce, but what we call "intelligent" life. Most of what we call the soul -- the ability to feel, think, reason, remember -- we share in some degree with the animals. The last instance is in verse 27, where it says that man was created in the image of God.

Mankind is distinct from the animal kingdom in that we are created in the image of God. **Man is not just another animal raised to a higher level of consciousness**, but a special creation of God. This idea is expressed again in Psalm 139:13. What was created was not man's mind or mind-related, but his spirit. I Cor 2:10-11 can be interpreted in this light to demonstrate that it is the spirit in man that is the essence of man. It is in the Fall that man's spirit died; Jesus talked of the necessity for man's spirit to be reborn.

Moreover, God had a special purpose in creating man. Mankind was given charge over God's creation, but he "blew it". He turned it lock, stock and barrel over to God's enemy, Satan. Satan even bragged about this to Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:6). Yet God's plan will be completed. In Jesus, reborn man has dominion over **all** of God's creation once again.

3. Because God made us He is intimately acquainted with us and how we work (Psalm 139:3,13). The world tries to escape God, to theorize Him out of existence. God points out to us through Isaiah (40:21-31) that we cannot deceive or fool Him. He knows our motives. The psalmist goes into some detail concerning this intimate knowledge of the Father in Psalm 139. Notice the response of the psalmist in verses 23-24 as he finishes.

Harold Hill, in **The Manufacturer's Handbook**, says "We will never get to know ourselves by looking inward, but only by finding out what the Creator has to say." The image in Psalm 139:13 is of a weaver who knows every thread and every flaw of the fabric. It is like a person who knits a sweater; she knows every mistake and dropped stitch.

4. Because God created us the way He did, He communicates with us. It is one thing for God to know us; we have a need to know Him. Thus the very special place of the **Bible**. The **Bible** is not man writing about his concepts of God, as are all other religious writings, but it is God telling us about Himself, ourselves, others and Jesus. The Scriptures abundantly indicate that God has a special place for the Word and has spoken to us through others (e.g. II Pet 1:19-21, Ps 138:2, Heb

1:1,2). We must realize that there is a whole dimension to life that most of our society does not recognize as being important -- the spiritual. There is the assumption in evolutionary teaching that the spiritual is a creation of man, and expression of man to fill a need, and that it really is not important what the nature of that spiritual something is, so long as it is "religious". However, Paul tells us in II Cor 4:18 that the only things that will last are spiritual. God created us first as spiritual beings so that He might communicate with us (I Cor 2:10-16).

5. Because God is Creator, He has an order for all things. In the same way that He has created certain physical "laws" by which the universe is run, He has also created spiritual laws. God is no respecter of persons. Anyone who obeys the laws reaps the benefits. His order begins with an individual's lifestyle and extends to his family, government and church. God has an order for the

Body of Christ, the Church: ICor 12, 13, 14; Eph4:8-16

Family: Eph 5 :22-6:9; Col 3:18-25; I Pet 3

Self: Mart 5, 6, 7; Phil and Col

6. Because He is our Creator we are to constantly praise Him (Rev 4:11). We are instructed to praise God 365 times in the **Bible**. Many of these reasons for praise are tied to the Creation (Psa 89:5-18; Psa 19:1). Even inanimate creation, itself, praises God; even the stones would cry out (Luke 19:39-40). We are created to praise Him, and by not doing so we harm ourselves (Isa 61:3). Praise is to be a way of life.

7. Because His is Creator He has everything under control, and He has a plan. As Creator He has absolute control. As we study His creation we see that He has ordained certain laws. God has a plan which has been revealed fully in Christ. Until the advent of Christ most of that plan was a mystery (Eph 3:4,5). The Cross and God's plan of salvation were only hinted at in the Old Testament. But in the "fullness of time" (I Tim 2:6; Eph 1:10) those things which the Old Testament saints longed to see came to pass. It is important to realize that this was no last minute thing (Gen 3:15; 22:1-16). God had a plan from the beginning (Man 13:35).

This world continues only by the grace of God and that He may work out His Plan. We need to be a positive part of that plan. We need to get on the winning side.

In rejecting the **Bible** as the source of authority and reducing it to the status of `just another book", those that teach evolution have elevated the creation above the Creator. In humanism, man becomes the center of the universe and not God. The intellect is valued over spiritual knowledge. Scientific knowledge is wonderful when it is used to glorify the Creator, but scientific reasoning is being substituted for Biblical knowledge. Romans 1:20-32 accurately describes what has ensued from such thinking. We must not look at any physical or social development as proof that the Bible is correct. We must accept the authority of the Bible and in it perceive the reasons for what has happened.

More than anything else, evolution, in robbing us of a belief in the integrity of God's Word, has attempted to rob us of our faith. Hebrews 11:3 states, "By faith we know ..." Faith is not believing a myth in spite of the truth; that is foolishness. Faith is believing the truth in spite of those who would tell us lies. The **Bible** provides the only sure foundation for faith. Evolutionary thinking causes us to waste our faith in an attempt to believe the impossible. In trying to compromise our faith with the doctrine of evolution we have devised doctrines **not found anywhere in the Bible**.

The battle is in the mind. The mind is the battle ground where Satan will attack. If we do not guard what goes on in our minds Satan gets a foothold. We can counter by studying the good

things of God. We are here to get our minds renewed, to learn a new way of thinking. It is only that way that we can defeat the enemy in our lives, families, church and nation.