

Christ Presbyterian Church

Foundations Class

Lesson 3

"Maker of Heaven and Earth" --Cosmology and Anthropology

Introduction: Debates over creation and modern science

I. God, The Creator

A. The "Non-negotiables" according to the Christian Bible:

Gen. 1-2:3

Definition of Creation: That work of the triune God by which he called all things that exist, both material and spiritual, into existence out of non-existence by His own will and for His own glory.

1. Creation is the work of God alone

References throughout redemptive history

Law- Genesis 1; Psalms- 90:2; Prophets- Jeremiah 10:12-14; Gospels- John 1:1-3; Epistles- Col. 1:16; Revelation- 4:11

2. God created all things by fiat and out of nothing (*ex nihilo*)

Gen. 1:1-3, *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep...*

Psalm 33:6-9, *By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.... He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast.*

John 1:3-4, *All things came into being by Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.*

Romans 4:17, even God, who give life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist...

Acts 17:24-25, *The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is he served by human hands as though he needed anything since he himself gives to all life and breath and all things.*

Hebrews 11:3, *By faith we understand that the worlds (ages) were prepared by the word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.*

3. All Three Persons of Trinity Present and Active in Creation

Father:

Malachi 2:10, *Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?*

Son:

John 1:2-3, 14 *[The only Son from the Father] was with God in the beginning; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.*

Col.1:16-17, *In [the Son] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together.*

Holy Spirit:

Gen.1:1-2, *In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth... the spirit of God swept over the face of the waters.*

B. Significance of Sabbath Framework in Creation:

Pictorial framework of a Sabbath-crowned week whereby God identifies Himself as the one for whom all things are and were created, the Lord worthy to receive glory and honor and praise. Meredith Kline, Kingdom Prologue

Genesis 1:1-13, First three day-frames describes the origin of three vast spheres over which rule is to be exercised.

Day-Frame 1: vv. 1-5: Day and night

Day-Frame 2: vv. 6-8: Water below and sky above

Day-Frame 3: vv. 9-13: Dry Land and vegetation

Genesis 1:14-31, The next three day-frames describe the rulers of each of these created spheres in power order by divine appointment.

Day-Frame 4: vv. 14-19: Sun and Moon

Day-Frame 5: vv. 20-23: Fish and Birds given to possess their spheres

Day-Frame 6: vv. 24-31: Land animals with humanity at pinnacle

Genesis 2:1-3, Seventh day frame describes the supreme rule of Him who is Lord of the Sabbath.

C. Conclusion

As reflected in the framework understanding of Genesis 1, the topic of Creation ought to move us to worship. The narrative of the six days serves ultimately as a prelude to the coronation of the Creator. The various creature-kings, full of majesty and beauty, bow down in worship before the Creator-King, the one who commands all things into existence.

Nehemiah 9:6*You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens and all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything and the multitudes of heaven worship you*

II. Humanity in Relationship to the Creator

It is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself."
John Calvin

A. Created in the image of God.

Humanity, at the pinnacle of creation, is given the unique distinction of image-bearer. Consequently, humans have a special dignity (a soul) and capability (freedom).

Gen. 1:26 *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*

Psalm 8:4-6 *What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor.*

B. Rebellious and fallen creature, cursed by God

Humanity (in Adam and Eve) exercised its freedom to please self rather than to obey God. The consequence of disobedience is separation from God's presence and coming under God's curse.

Gen. 3:23 *Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden*

Rom. 5:12 *Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned....*

C. Objects of mercy and redemption

Gen. 3:15 The enmity between the seeds of Eve (Jesus) and the serpent (Satan)

Rom. 5:17 *If, because of one man's [Adam's] trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*

B. Creation and Modern Science:

Four Main views Concerning the Origins of Humans:

1. Naturalistic Evolution: Impersonal process (mutation, natural selection, etc) account for all forms of life. Humans, though thinking, personal beings, are product of unthinking, nonpurposive forces.

2. Theistic Evolution: God as immanent agent sustains and directs natural processes that shape the development of life from ? (amoeba) to humans.

3. Progressive Creation: God immanently supports and directs an extensive evolution of species but also acts transcendentally at special stages of the process to create the main biological taxonomical orders of being. Whereas humans may be dependent physically on intermediate humanlike forms but in distinction from the primates humans are made in God's image, the idea of soul being distinctive.

4. Recent Creation: (Creationism) All life forms are created de novo by supernatural agency, no late orders of creation are dependent on earlier kinds of beings, humans are totally unique creation fashioned from cosmic dust into a creature that bears his Makers moral and rational being.

Note: Both 3 and 4 views of creation as stated above are compatible with the Biblical "non-negotiables" .

"At the time (1973) I received Jesus Christ into my life, I held a firm 2.0 position on the above scale. In subsequent years I moved to higher positions on the scale before reaching equilibrium several years ago at a position of about 3.2." Henry Schaefer, Prof. of Quantum Chemistry, UGA

THE WHOLE OF LIFE IS TO BE THE LIVED UNDER THE SABBATH PRINCIPLE

1. All of life (Day 1-6) is what is *mirrored* in the Sabbath ordinance Day seven.

2. Sabbath is intended to *mirror*, not supplant, the meaning of Sabbath as intrinsic to the six days of work.

But all this pomp and majesty of the six days simply subserves the revelation of the ultimate and absolute dominion celebrated in the seventh day. Even during the pageant of the creature-kings in the narrative of days four through six, their royal splendor is paled by the surpassing glory of the Creator-King who commands them into existence, identifies them in his fiat-naming of them, and invests them with their subordinate dominions. And then when the creation apocalypse has reached the vicegerency of the

God-like creature-king of the sixth day, and moves beyond it, we observe the glory of all the creature-kingdoms of all six days being carried along as a tributary offering with the gates of the Sabbath day to be laid at the feet of the Creator-King, now beheld in the brilliance of his epiphany as Sabbath Lord.