

## **Biblical Theology**

### **Unit 2: Doctrine of God – Lesson 9: Creation Part 1**

#### **Summary of Creation**

##### **1. God created the entire universe out of nothing.**

- God did not use any previously existing materials when he created the universe.
  - *Genesis 1:1 - In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*
  - *John 1:3 – without him was not anything made that was made.*
  - *Colossians 1:16 - For by him all things were create...visible and invisible.*
  - *Romans 4:17 – ...calls into existence the things that do not exist.*
  - *Genesis 1:31 - God saw everything he had made, and behold, it was very good.*

##### **2. Creation is distinct from God yet dependent on God.**

- Erroneous understandings of God's relationship with creation.
  - Materialism: The material universe is all there is.
  - Pantheism: The material universe is god.
  - Dualism: The material universe and god have always existed.
  - Deism: God created the universe but is no longer directly involved in it.
- God is the maker and sustainer of creation but he is not part of creation.
  - *Job 12:10 - In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all man.*
  - *Colossians 1:16-17 - and in him all things hold together.*
  - *Hebrews 1:3 - he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*

##### **3. God created the universe to show his glory.**

- God is independent and free to do whatever he desires, and yet he chose to create the universe to display his glory.
  - *Revelation 4:11 - "by your will they existed and were created."*
  - *Psalms 19:1-2 - The Heavens declare the glory of God*
  - *Jeremiah 10:12 - ...by his power...by his wisdom...by his understanding.*

#### **Modern Science and Evolution**

- Darwinian Theory of Evolution:
  - Basis for modern scientific thinking regarding origins.
    - Micro-Evolution—small development within one species
    - Macro-Evolution—“nonliving substance giving rise to the first living material, which subsequently reproduced and diversified to produce all extinct and extant organisms”
- Current challenges to Darwinian Evolution
  - Life coming from non-life is non-existent in universe.
  - No indication of macro evolution in recent history. (Dogs are still dogs)
  - Mutation is not known in modern science to give way to progression, but regression.
  - Intense archeological activity has not produced anything to support the number of transitional species necessary to support length of time transitions take place.
  - “That a living organism emerged by chance from a pre-biotic soup is about as likely as that a “tornado sweeping through a junkyard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein.’ Chance assembly is just a naturalistic way of saying ‘miracle.’” - Fred Hoyle
  - The uncertainty of evolution has created many novel positions.
- The Destructive influences of evolutionary theory in modern thought
  - If man is product of randomness, life has no purpose.
  - With no creator, there is no Judge to hold us morally accountable.
  - If natural selection brings improvement in life forms, should we hinder this process by caring for those who are weak or less able to defend themselves? (why not war to destroy those who are inferior? Marx, Nietzsche, Hitler use this kind of argument

## Unbiblical Creation Theories

### **1. Scientific Authority**

- Definition: Belief that observable science trumps the truth of scripture
- Biblical Objections to Scientific Authority:
  - Illegitimizes the Bible as source of ultimate authority of truth.
  - Human understanding of science is always changing.
  - Requires one to believe that matter has always existed and therefore eliminates God as creator.

### **2. Theistic Evolution**

- Definition: Belief that God used evolution to create the universe.
- Biblical Objections to Theistic Evolution:
  - Randomness of evolutionary theory is inconsistent with purpose and design of God's deliberate "Let there be" actions described in the Bible.
  - Theistic Evolution requires Deistic view of God
    - *Psalm 139:13 - you knitted me together in my mother's womb.*
    - *Psalm 104:14 - You cause the grass to grow...*
    - *Matthew 6:26 - your heavenly Father feeds them.*
  - God's creativity is clearly seen in creation process.
    - Genesis 1:11, 24 suggest God is responsible for the different kinds of plants and animals, not random mutation.
  - Creation of Adam and Eve directly contradicts evolutionary theory.
    - Adam and Eve created as highly developed in language, morality, and spiritual abilities. (Rejected by those who study and believe in evolutionary theory)

### **3. The Gap Theory**

- Definition: Belief that there is a gap between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2
  - Used to explain apparent age of universe, chronological placement of dinosaurs, Satan's rebellion, etc.
- Biblical Objections to The Gap Theory
  - There is no verse in the Scripture that directly affirms earlier creation.
  - There is no language to indicate that current creation is a re-creation.
  - God's statements "It is good" and Genesis 1:31 give indication of a perfect creation, absent of evil.

## Discussion Questions

1. When you consider God as the creator of the universe, what are some of your favorite aspects of his creation that leave you in awe of his power and goodness?
2. Are you prepared to give an evolutionist a well informed explanation of the truth of God as creator? How should you get/stay prepared?
3. Have you ever considered or struggled with any of the more popular creation beliefs listed above that are not biblical?

## Reading Assignment

*Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem – Chapter 15: Creation (Specifically Pages 289-309)*