

Study 13

GOD & CREATION

The universe was created by God. He did not make it out of part of Himself. He is separate from it, although He is always present in it (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 33:6; Heb. 11:3).

At the foundation of our belief system (also known as a “world view”, the *way we view the world*) is this truth: God is the Creator. It is the foundation of the Bible. Thus, the opening verse opens commences with this foundation (Genesis 1:1). Of all the great themes of the Scripture, *God as Creator* is arguably the most emphasized. Genesis 1 and 2 are not the only Creation chapters in the Bible. There are at least 12 Creation passages in God’s Word.

The Universe Was Created By God

1. What does Revelation 4:11 assert and what does it say this qualifies God to receive?
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Evolution?

Do Christians believe in Evolution? Some do. They are generally known as “Theistic-Evolutionists”. This is the idea that God *started* creating and *initiated* a process of evolution to complete His Creation. But most Evolutionists are not “Theistic”. They are “Darwinian” or “Naturalistic” Evolutionists. They believe in “Macro” Evolution which

means they consider that Darwinian Evolution can explain how life itself began. But “Evolution” is not a ‘*one-size-fits-all*.’ While we are going to advocate that not only did God *initiate* creation, He directly intervened at each stage of Creation with what might be called “Creation Events” (this especially applies to the creation of the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve), there is evidence that God has incorporated types of ‘evolution’ into His Creation of the Universe. Note the following types of Evolution-

1. **Darwinian** (Macro) Evolution - this is also referred to as *Chemical Evolution*
2. **Cosmic** Evolution - this includes planetary collision events which resulted in ‘moons’ being formed.
3. **Biological** (Micro) Evolution - certain genes are “turned off” in subsequent generations
4. **Social** Evolution - society’s standards change over time
5. **Geological** Evolution - how the earth’s surface changes over time

Christians who believe in an “immediate” Creator can not accept that any form of Evolution can satisfactorily explain how energy/life/matter/space/time began - but we don’t necessarily reject *all* of forms of “Evolution”. One of the biggest problems for “Theistic Evolutionists” is to explain the first Man and Woman. If people evolved into humans what does the Bible mean by “the image of God” uniquely upon Mankind? Also, how could the Fall (and thereby the introduction of evil into the world) be explained if the Biblical story of Adam and Eve is just a “myth”?

2. From this Biblical text, how can we be confident that the Bible intends for us to consider that God directly created the first man and woman (rather than humans evolving from any lower life-forms)? (Refer to Matthew 19:4; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1Cor. 15:22; 1Tim. 2:13)

God Did Not Make It Out Of Part Of Himself

Some religions, such as some forms of Hinduism, teaches that God made the Universe out of Himself. This is called “Pan-theism”. This idea was promoted in the movie Avatar. Those who advocate this idea have the burden to justify their claim - that is, *how do they know*

that the Universe is God? Recently at our church I had a visitor say that this was her belief. I asked her if she accepted that the Universe had a beginning. She did. I reminded her that every effect has a cause. She agreed. I also reminded her that no effect can cause itself - much like a knock at the door did not knock itself, it must have had a Knock-er. She agreed again. Could the Universe have caused itself? She began to immediately see the corner she had painted herself into. Interestingly, she then sidestepped our discussion with a well-worn red-herring question: *it doesn't really matter though what you think of or call "God" because all religions are basically the same.* Perhaps I shouldn't have taken the bait, but I did. I asked her if she was aware that each religion has a radically different concept of God that they claimed was exclusively true (that is, if they were right, then other religious ideas of God could not be)? She looked at me puzzled. I had my answer to my question. I elaborated by saying that Muslims believe God is a solitary being who can change his mind on a whim (Allah is 'arbitrary' to Muslims), while Christians consider God to be 'immutable' (God is unchangingly consistent). Muslims regard the idea that Allah has a Son as the most blasphemous sin a person can commit, while Christians regard the Eternal God as having an Eternal Son. I asked her, *Can Muslims and Christians both be correct about these ideas of God?* She quickly conceded the point. I may have won that little argument, but I'm not sure that I did so wisely as we have not seen that lady back to our church. Perhaps I could have said to her that one day we'll discuss these issues, but for now I was thrilled that she was prepared to come along on a Sunday?

3. What are some mistakes people make in sharing their beliefs about God with a non-believer?
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God is Separate From Creation

Similarly, God is not like the Star Wars "Force". He is not merely the energy of the universe. He did not create the Universe then 'dissolve' into it (like Obe-Wan Kenobe) did.

4. What is the relationship between Creation and God according to Colossians 1:16?
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Romans 1:20 states that God's power can be seen in what He has created - it's not that *what* He created is His power.

5. Does Romans 8:39 support the idea that Creation is God? Why, or why not?
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Despite what the movie Avatar presumed, “Creation” is impersonal. That is, it has no mind. It is therefore not conscious of itself like a person is. Thus, “Creation” can not *think, plan, or feel*.

6. Considering this, how does Ephesians 3:9 confirm that God is separate to His creation?
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God Is Always Present In Creation

One of the unique attributes of God is that He is *omnipresent* - present everywhere. This is both a comfort and a disturbing notion (depending upon your perspective).

7. How does Psalm 145:18 highlight these two perspectives of God’s nearness?
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While God is omnipresent, there are occasions when He chooses to have us acutely aware of His nearness (for example, Genesis 3:8; Numbers 20:6; 1Sam. 2:21).

8. What does First Chronicles 16:11 instruct God’s people to do regarding God’s presence? (Note also, Psalm 105:4)
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In this life, the sweet awareness of the presence of God is the occasional joy and privilege of God’s people. In the next life, it will be our perpetual delight. But conversely, for those who reject God’s offer of reconciliation there awaits them the dread of an eternity where they will be deprived of any sense of God’s presence - Second Thessalonians 1:9 - truly a dreadful thought and one that should at least give us some motivation to evangelise.

Amen.