
Title: What is Creation

Series: Speaking of God

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Introduction

The Created Creation

God created the universe out of nothing. Nothing but God existed before the universe was created. Creation had a **beginning**; matter is not eternal (Genesis 1:1; Matthew 24:21; Mark 10:6; Mark 13:19; John 17:24). It is important, in a day where evolution dominates the discussion of life origins, to affirm that at one time (if we can use that word to describe a point in eternity past) there was nothing. Evolution only goes as far back as the big bang. There is no answer for *where* the original matter came from. The uncomfortable presumption of evolution is that matter has always been. The scriptures tell us this isn't the case. Time itself is created. The first three words of the scripture knock such thinking down: "In the beginning". There was a beginning to time and matter.

All things were **created** by God (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). Creation is not a product of random chance. There is an intention to the created order. It has been designed by God in his infinite knowledge and wisdom. "Intelligent Design" is an understatement.

A few weeks back we talked about how all of the members of the **Trinity** were involved in the creation process. The entire creative process is attributed to the entire Godhead (Deuteronomy 4:32; Isaiah 45:5-19; Malachi 2:10), yet there were functions within the creative process, functions which carried over into the creation of the New Creation. God the Father created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1, 1 Corinthians 8:6), yet the other two persons of the Godhead were involved. John tells us, via Proverbs 8 and 9, that Jesus, THE WORD, made all things. Christ is Creator (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17). The Spirit, working as the agent of the Second Person of the Godhead, hovered over the earth in the creative process, creating order out of disorder (Genesis 1:2). The Spirit as the life breath of God made man a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

God **spoke** all of creation, except for man, into existence (Gen. 1:3—25). This creative breath of God, sometimes spoken of as a wind, sometimes as an indistinct voice, sometimes as thunder, was responsible for speaking something from nothing, ex nihilo. Sometimes this is called the divine "fiat". The original fiat was a sudden, immediate speech-act of God. It is this immediacy and suddenness that puts a kink in any notion of a divine evolution promoted by some Christians. It is this divine fiat as the very breath of God that was involved in the Resurrection, the giving of the Scriptures, and our own regeneration. Just as creation was spoken into existence, so too has the New Creation been given immediate life via the breath of God.

Man was created a little differently than the rest of creation. This is one of many details of man's creation that sets him apart from the rest of the created order. He is not like the other creatures. He is above the rest of creation. Both man and woman were created by God's very **hands** and received life from God's very **breath** (Gen. 2:7, 22). So while we see the divine fiat-breath working in man's creation, we also see God's hands molding man in His image.

God made human beings "in his own **image**" (Gen. 1:27). To be in God's image means to be like God and to represent God. As God's image, man is the pinnacle of all creation, more like God than any other creature, and the only one appointed to rule over the rest of creation as God's representative (Gen. 1:28—31).

The Distinct but Dependent Creation

As Creator, God is both **involved** in and **distinct** from creation (Psalm 46:1; Matthew 6:26; Colossians 1:15-20). God is "other" than man and the rest of creation. God exists independently of creation for He is its Creator. Further, he did not create, wind creation up like a top, and then let it go. He does not watch the created order from a distance. In fact, the incarnation guaranteed that God would forever be intimately involved with Creation.

Because God created creation, creation owes its worship to the Creator. Nothing in creation, including man, is worthy of the affection that God deserves.

The Glory-Giving Creation

All of creation was made to give **glory** to God (Psalm 19:1; Isaiah 43:7; Revelation 4:11). God's creation shows his superior power and wisdom (Jeremiah 10:12). God created the universe to show his greatness, to demonstrate his excellence, and to delight in his work.

The work of creation serves as a pattern and a type of the "**new creation**" (2 Cor. 5:17; Revelation 21:5). The original creation meant to create a **people** for God and His glory (Isaiah 43:7). As we take spontaneous delight in God's creative activities, our creative activities, and the creative activities of others, we are giving glory to God by imitating the delight he takes in his creation.

The Good Creation

What we see in creation is not the way it always was. It's a mistake to assume that the creation that we are able to observe now is the way things have always been. There are two huge events that have happened since the original creation that have radically altered creation: the fall, and the flood.

Even though the creation doesn't always function as it is supposed to because of sin, we should also consider the **material** creation good (1 Timothy 4:4). We are to **enjoy** the good things God has created for us (1 Timothy 6:17). We should joyfully use the abundant earth God has given us and seek to develop it in a way that brings glory and honor to God's name.

Created for God's Glory

Because we were created for God's glory, our ultimate **goal** in life must be to live for his glory. We glorify God when we know, enjoy, and **delight** in Him (Psalm 16:11; Zephaniah 3:17).

Created in God's Image

As creatures made in God's image, we were made to be **like** him. We were not made "the image" of God, but "in the image" of God. We are not his exact likeness. We have been made "after" his likeness. This is an important point to make. If we were made "the image" of God... we would be equal to God. There is only one Man who is called "the image" of God in scripture. Christ is the image of God. And we are being conformed to the image of Christ. Christ, the image of God, was everything the first man was not in reflecting God's image in man.

The more we understand about God, the more we understand about ourselves. We are moral and spiritual creatures. We are created with an innate sense of right and wrong.

Sin has partly and irreparably **distorted** God's image in us. Sin distorts our moral judgment, clouds our thinking, and hinders our fellowship with others. The reformers insisted that God's image in man has been marred to the point of no recovery. This is a key distinction between the reformers and the Catholic church which insisted that God's image in man is still intact. Those who believe that God's image in man survived the fall do not have a dead-in-trespases-and-sins man who is dead enough.

God's image is being restored

God redeems his children through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus so that they can be "conformed to the **image** of his Son" (Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Colossians 3:10). Jesus Christ, the new man, is the "**image** of the invisible God" (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15). The new creation is being conformed to the image of Christ as He makes all things new through the new creation (2 Cor. 5:20; Rev. 21:5). As we conform to Christ's image, we bear the image of God as was originally intended in the creation mandate (Genesis 1:26-31). When we bear the image of God in Christ, we are God's ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20).

Responsibilities as Creatures in God's Image

As creatures made in God's image, we were made to be his **representatives** (ambassadors – 2 Cor. 5:20) on the earth and to take care of his land (Genesis 1:28). When we fill the earth with God's image, we **demonstrate** all the places where he reigns and rules and bring him the glory he desires and deserves (Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 21:5).