

## THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Nothing is more basic and determinative in shaping our concept of the world and our place in it, than the doctrine of creation.

What are the implications of this doctrine? This question must be raised as Evangelicals have spent more time and energy on waylaying the theory of evolution than developing the Biblical doctrine of creation.

### **Creation: a confession**

We confess with the historic church, "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." We declare this on the basis of the authority of Scripture. And this Scripture begins with the majestic words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).

The Bible assures us that the entire Trinity was active in the formation of the universe. Our belief in the Creator-God is in total confrontation with the faith of the evolutionist. The denial of creation is an act of rebellion against God. It is apostate man's declaration of independence. According to Cornelius Van Til in his book, *The Doctrine of Creation & Christian Apologetics*, there is no possibility of carrying to a conclusion an argument between those who believe in biological evolution and those who believe in creation, unless this argument be seen to be but an aspect of two mutually exclusive views of reality as a whole.

How did God create? He called the universe into being. The psalmist said, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm 33:6).

Creation is God's mighty revelation of His power. As we look around us and scan the heavens, we must confess that indeed "the heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims his handiwork" (Ps. 19:1). "The world is a looking glass," said the Puritan Thomas Watson, "in which we may see the power and the goodness of God shine forth."

Since the world is created, it is independent of God. No matter or eternal power exists beside God. We cannot posit anything alongside of God. The world owes its origin to the infinite, personal Creator-God.

### **Creation: man's dependence**

The Biblical doctrine of creation has a humbling effect. We are neither independent from God nor free from all restraints. We owe our existence to God. We are dependent human beings. All that we have comes from Him who made us. Therefore, let us love and honor Him.

## **Creation: man's uniqueness**

The doctrine of creation guarantees our individual rights. A world view that eliminates the doctrine of creation is not able to uphold the dignity of the individual. When man is no longer seen as unique person created in the image of God, he can be done away with at will. The denial of the doctrine of creation leads to the death of man.

"What has happened to man?" asked Dr. Francis Schaeffer. And he gives this thought-provoking answer: "We must see him as one who has torn himself away both from the infinite-personal God who created him as finite but in His image, and from God's revelation to him. Made in God's image, man was made to be great, he was made to be beautiful and he was made to be creative in life and art. But his rebellion has led him into making himself into nothing but a machine."

Modern history offers numerous gruesome examples that confirm Dr. Schaeffer's assertion. Consider Cambodia. More than a million Cambodians have been brutally murdered for the sake of the "progress" of godless Communism.

## **Creation: ecology**

We have a responsibility towards God's beautiful creation. Christians, of all people, should treat creation with respect. This is our Father's world, and not ours. We are not owners but stewards of God's creation. We have no right to exploit the world's rich natural resources.

We must be concerned about our environment. Every great city in the world has its atmosphere contaminated. Tokyo, London, Manila do not have pure air for its citizens to breathe. The balance of nature has been destroyed, and not always intentionally, but insecticides and other pollutants are used.

In the Philippines the government is rightly concerned about deforestation through industry. Much damage has been done through cutting down trees at random. The Christian's attitude toward trees must be different. As he sees a tree he makes a confession of faith. "The Christian stands in front of a tree," writes Dr. Schaeffer, "and has an emotional reaction toward it, because the tree has a real value in itself, being a creature made by God. I have this in common with the tree: we were made by God and not just cast up by chance."

## **Creation:missions**

The doctrine of creation is basic for our understanding of missions. This is the world God has made. And the human race is part of this creation. But mankind has fallen into sin through the rebellion of our first parents in paradise. Now man, as creature, is

unable to save himself from the powers of sin and death that have gripped the world since the fall.

But this is the good news: God doesn't let go of His world. He keeps on claiming nations for Himself. Jehovah is Lord of the world. And into this world He has sent His Son. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

### **Creation: eschatology**

Finally, the doctrine of creation affects our view of eschatology (the doctrine of last things). All things have their origin and their end in God (Rom. 11:36). Someday paradise lost will be regained. This ruined creation will be restored. This is according to the Word of our Lord who said, "Behold, I will make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Nothing does more to shape our view of life than the doctrine of creation. As Christian believers our understanding of this doctrine should lead to this song of praise: "Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

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