

Creation

Part 1

LIFE-CHANGE OBJECTIVE

- To deepen your conviction that the world and all that is in it are created by the personal action of a personal God

We study the origins of life because every one of us needs a sense of identity and purpose; what you believe about your origin affects:

- _____
- _____
- _____

In this study we're going to answer three simple questions. Simple to ask, that is. The answers involve who God is, who we are, and why we are here. The three questions are:

1. Why did God create?
2. How did God create?
3. What will I believe?

WHY DID GOD CREATE?

1. God created for _____.

PSALM 104:31 (NLT)

May the glory of the Lord continue forever! The Lord takes pleasure in all he has made!

COLLOSSIANS 1:16

All things were created by Him and for Him

2. God created to express his _____.

PSALM 89:11

The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it.

PSALM 24:1

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

3. God created to reflect His _____.

ROMANS 1:20 (NLT)

For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

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A CLOSER LOOK

The Bible is filled with verses that tell us God's creation is an expression of God's character. To look more deeply into this, take some time before the next session to read through these verses.

Nehemiah 9:5-6; Psalm 19:1-4; Psalm 104:30-32; Isaiah 43:7;
Romans 1:20; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Psalm 8:1, 3; Psalm 104:24;
Isaiah 51:12-13, 16; Amos 4:13

WHY DID GOD CREATE?

GENESIS 1:3

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Before we look at some views of creation, it's important to understand that before there are competing worldviews as to whether there is a creator.

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A CLOSER LOOK

Naturalism vs. Theism

Naturalism as a worldview says that everything arises from natural causes, so supernatural explanations are excluded. When applied to creation it is the view that life originated only from natural processes.

Theism is a worldview that holds to belief in a personal God as Creator and ruler of the universe.

There is a popular belief that naturalistic evolution has been proven by science thereby making the biblical account of God as a personal Creator untrue.

It is impossible to prove _____ any theory of origins. This is because the scientific method is based on _____ and _____, and it is impossible to make observations or conduct experiments on the origins of the universe.

THREE WAYS CREATION POINTS TO A CREATOR:

1. The improbable odds of creation occurring by only _____

Francis Crick, co-discoverer of the molecular structure of DNA, wrote:

This is an easy exercise in combinatorials. Suppose the chain is about two hundred amino acids long; this is, if anything, rather less than the average length of proteins of all types. Since we have just twenty possibilities at each place, the number of possibilities is twenty multiplied by itself some two hundred times. This is conveniently written 20^{200} , that is a one followed by 260 zeros!

This number is quite beyond our everyday comprehension. For comparison, consider the number of fundamental particles (atoms, speaking loosely) in the entire visible universe, not just in our own galaxy with its 1011 stars, but in all the billions of galaxies, out to the limits of observable space. This number, which is estimated to be 10^{80} , is quite paltry by comparison to 10^{260} . Moreover, we have only considered a polypeptide chain of a rather modest length. Had we considered longer ones as well, the figure would have been even more immense.

Others write more simply:

Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology*:

It requires an incredible amount of faith to believe that evolution could have caused by chance all life that ever did or does now exist.

Fred Hoyle, *The Intelligent Universe*:

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The current scenario of the origin of life is about as likely as the assemblage a 747 by a tornado whirling through a junkyard.

2. The irreducible _____ of living things

Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*:

By irreducibly complex I mean a single system composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, wherein the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning... An irreducibly complex biological system, if there is such a thing, would be a powerful challenge to Darwinian evolution.

Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*:

In summary, as biochemists have begun to examine apparently simple structures like cilia and flagella, they have discovered staggering complexity, with dozens or even hundreds of precisely tailored parts... As the number of required parts increases, the difficulty of gradually putting the system together skyrockets, and the likelihood of indirect scenarios plummets.

3. The evidence of a personal designer within creation.

PSALM 139:13-14 (NLT)

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous – how well I know it.

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Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?*:

“Over the past thirty years or so, scientists have discovered that just about everything about the basic structure of the universe is balanced on a razor’s edge for life to exist. The coincidences are far too fantastic to attribute this to mere chance or to claim that it needs no explanation. The dials are set too precisely to have been a random accident. Somebody, as Fred Hoyle quipped, has been monkeying with the physics.”

If we see ripples on a sandy beach, we assume they were formed by natural processes. But if we see words written in the sand – “John loves Mary” – immediately we recognize a different kind of order, and we know that a couple lovers recently lingered there... In the same way, when scientists probed the nucleus of a cell, they came across something analogous to “John loves Mary” ... the only difference being that DNA contains vastly more information ... The discovery of DNA provides powerful new evidence that life is the product of intelligent design.

FIVE THEISTIC VIEWS OF CREATION:

The debate between these views centers around the translation of the word *day* (*yom* in Hebrew) in the Genesis 1 text. *Yom* can mean any of the following:

1. A 24-hour day, which is the most common usage in the Old Testament
2. An unspecified period of time
3. An era

1. SIX-DAY CREATION VIEW:

Interprets: *Yom* as a literal _____ - citing that the 1,900 times it appears in the O.T. only 65 do not refer to a literal day. The wording “Evening and Morning” indicates a 24-hour day.

Contends: God created the world in six 24-hour days and in the exact manner indicated in Genesis 1. Holds that the cosmos is relatively young and that the Great Worldwide Flood of Genesis 6-8 caused such a disruption in the earth’s atmosphere and surface that it made the earth appear older in the geological record than it actually is.

Problem: scientific data (geology, astronomy, physics) seems to contradict the age of the universe indicated by six-day creation.

2. THEISTIC EVOLUTION VIEW:

Interprets: *Yom* as a _____ - maintains that Genesis 1 is simply a religious allegory intended to teach the world that God is the source of its existence.

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Contends: God set the whole process in motion (created the original elements of the heavens and earth) and then let evolution take over (including the evolution of the man from animals).

Problem: This view has a low view of the authority of Scripture; interprets many of the supernatural events as allegory. Sees God as personally distant from the acts of creation.

3. SIX-DAY RE-CREATION/GAP THEORY VIEW:

Interprets: *Yom* as a _____.

Contends: Genesis 1 does not describe the original creation but rather God's re-creating of the world from a state of chaos. This was probably the results of the judgement of God on the original creation due to the fall of Satan. This explains the geological record, the age of dinosaurs, primeval man, etc. The Re-Creation/Gap Theorists see Genesis 1:1 as a description of the original creation, vs. 2 as the description of the remains of the judged world, and the space between the versus as a long gap when the original creation existed.

Problem: No biblical evidence to support this theory.

4. SIX-REVELATORY DAY VIEW:

Interprets: *Yom* as _____.

Contends: The days of Genesis 1 are days of revelation not creative process. The events of each day are not descriptions of what occurred on certain days but the things God revealed to Adam or Moses during six 24-hour days about the creation.

Problem: Low view of the authority of Scripture; Genesis does not say "God revealed..." but "God did..."

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5. PROGRESSIVE CREATION VIEW:

Interprets: *Yom* as a _____
_____ citing Genesis 2:4 (“*This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day [Yom] that the Lord God made earth and heavens*” [NASB].) as an example in the creation account when *yom* does not refer to the literal 24-hour day.

Contends: God used a combination of supernatural creative interventions and natural evolutionary processes (within species) to bring the final product about. Believes God separately and uniquely created man as distinct from the animal kingdom. Contends the truth about the world can be found in the astronomic, archeologic, and geologic records as well as the biblical narrative and the two should not contradict.

Problem: This view often says that nature and the Bible are on an equal footing; both speak with equal authority.

Dr. Ray Bohlin, *Why We Believe in Creation*:

“Biblically, we find the young earth approach of six consecutive 24-hour days and a catastrophic universal flood to make the most sense. However, we find the evidence from science for a great age for the universe and the earth to be nearly overwhelming. We just do not know how to resolve the conflict yet... Therefore, we believe we must approach this question with humility and tolerance for those with different convictions.”

The major theological question is: When did sin and death enter the world?

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Since...

The Bible tells us that it was Adam's personal choice to sin that brought death and the fall of creation.

ROMANS 5:12 (NLT)

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

Romans 8:20 tells us that the whole of creation suffers because of Adam's sin. Our sin infected all of creation.

And since...

The salvation that Jesus brings to us is tied in the New Testament to the historical fact of Adam's sin.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Therefore...

Any idea of creation that theorizes the death of human beings and the fall of God's creation before the sin of Adam and Eve is contrary to the clear teaching of God's Word.

WHAT WILL YOU BELIEVE?

1. God is intimately involved in creation.

The Bible pictures God as being intimately and actively _____ in each aspect and moment of creation.

NEHEMIAH 9:6

“You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry 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.”

PSALM 33:6, 9

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth... For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

2. God is intentionally revealed in creation.

PSALM 19:1-2

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

PROVERBS 6:6

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

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ISAIAH 53:6a

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.

3. God is personally trusted as Creator.

Ultimately, believing in God as Creator is a matter of _____

Science may provide reasonable evidence, but ultimately it is a matter of faith.

1. Science shows us the big bang, but it takes faith to believe God said, “Let there be light.”

Science can point to a creator.

On May 4, 1992, Time magazine reported that NASA’s Cosmic Background Explorer satellite – COBE – had discovered landmark evidence that the universe did in fact begin with the primeval explosion that has become known as the Big Bang. “If you’re religious, it’s like looking at God,” proclaimed the leader of the research team, George Smoot.

But only by faith can we believe in our Creator.

In Genesis 1:3 the Bible says, “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”

2. Science shows us the intelligent design of the universe, but it takes faith to believe God personally created that universe.

Science can point to a creator.

A July 20, 1998, Newsweek article entitled “Science Finds God” reported:

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Physicists have stumbled on signs that the cosmos is custom-made for life and consciousness. It turns out that if the constants of nature – unchanging numbers like the strength of gravity, the charge of an electron and the mass of a proton – were the tiniest bit different, then atoms would not hold together, stars would not burn and life would never have made an appearance.

But only by faith can we believe in our Creator.

In Genesis 1:1 the Bible says, *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

Robert Jastrow,

Founder of NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies:

A sound explanation may exist for the explosive birth of our Universe; but if it does, science cannot find out what the explanation is. The scientist’s pursuit of the past ends in the moment of creation. This is an exceedingly strange development, unexpected by all but the theologians. They have always accepted the word of the Bible: In the beginning God created heaven and earth... For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.

PSALM 95:6

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.