

THE CREATOR IN THE BEGINNING

CREATED FOR A PURPOSE, PART 2

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

I. God Always Existed: A Creator Must Be Pre-Existent – *God*

- A. **God Is Eternal** (Gen 1:1; Isa 44:6; Rev 1:8)
- B. **God Is Self-Existing** (Ex 3:14; Jn 8:58)

II. God Created Everything: All Things Created Center Around Him – *created*

- A. **God Miraculously Created The Universe Out Of Nothing (*ex nihilo*)** (Ps 90:1-2)
- B. **God's Miraculous Creation Refutes Errant Origin Theories And Stories**

III. God Created Time: All Time And Our Time Center Around Him – *In the beginning*

- A. **God Is _____ Time – He Was There When Time Began** (Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8; Rev 6:9-11; Isa 46:9-10)
- B. **God _____ Time For Man's Seasonal Purposes** (Ex 9:5; Ps 104:19; Ec 3:1-2; 1 Pt 1:17; Eph 5:16; Ps 31:15)

IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – *the heavens and the earth*

- A. **God Is _____ To Creation** (Acts 17:24-25; Rom 11:33; Isa 57:15)
- B. **God Is _____ In His Creation** (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

Conclusion:

1. God created us to know and love Him. **Reconcile** with your Creator through Christ, Who was also in the beginning. (John 1:1-2; 14)
2. God created the universe purposefully for His glory. He created us for the same reason.
 - Glorify your Creator with the **time** He gave you.
 - Glorify your Creator with the **materials** He made for you.
 - Glorify your Creator with **purpose** He designed for you.
3. Our creation and our salvation demands **faith** in it's revelation, evidences and reality. (Heb 11:3; Eph 2:8)

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IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – *the heavens and the earth*

- A. **God Is Transcendent To Creation** (Acts 17:24-25; Rom 11:33; Isa 57:15)
- B. **God Is Glorified In His Creation** (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

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Introduction:

- Am I here by accident or on purpose?
- Do I matter in the universe?
- If I'm evolved, I'm a product of chance.

Ie/ We just prayed for God's special purpose for Matthew and Nathan during our Baby Dedication. We dedicate ourselves and our babies because we belong to our Creator God.

I. **God Always Existed: A Creator Must Be Pre-Existent** – *God*

- "God" is the center of this origin story
- We are not the center of the universe, God is.
- To Israel who is wandering around among nations with pagan gods, the One Creator God is unique – they were created by hands and feeble minds, God is self-existing
- "God" = *Elohim* (all-powerful, all sovereign, majestic)
 - *ELOHIM* = strong one
 - Masculine plural – The plural form of the word suggest that God is more than 1 person – He is the Triune God
 - Singular meaning – "uni-plural" noun (Morris, p. 39)
 - But the act of creation is singular focusing that it's one Person doing the creation
- Remember that Moses is refuting the polytheistic paganism
- **Genesis 1:1 refutes several worldviews that deny the One, True God:**
 - **Polytheism** – there are many gods
 - one God is assumed as the Creator
 - Davis: "That noun's plural form does not reflect polytheism is evident from the form of the verb of which the noun is the subject: third masculine singular." (p. 42)
 - **Atheism** – there is no god
 - nothing could not generate something
 - **Pantheism** – everything is divine
 - God is transcendent to creation
 - **Deism** – God created and left creation on it's own
 - "create" *bara* gives the sense of "sustaining" – God sustains His creation
 - **Naturalism** – there is only nature, nothing supernatural
 - nature was supernaturally manufactured by God
 - **Materialism** – matter (mass-energy) is eternal
 - God created matter out of nothing
 - Matter had a beginning
 - **Dualism** – eternal good & evil

- In the beginning was only God
 - **Humanism** – man is the center of all things
 - Theism – God is the center of all things
 - **Evolutionism** – we came to being by chance
 - God purposely made us
 - God made animals, man and woman in separate acts of creation
- “God” appears 32x in Genesis 1
 - History = HIS Story
 - We are not alone in the universe
 - We are not product of cosmic chance
 - “God is”
 - That changes everything – for the atheist and practical atheist (one who lives as if God doesn’t exist)
 - Even Ben Franklin, not known for being a Christian, said” I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proof I see of this truth – that God governs in the affairs of men.”
 - Genesis assumes God’s existence
 - Whereas the universe has an origin story, God does not.
 - **Kids from Adventure Club (on 2/19/16) asked:**
 - If God is all living, how did he start?
 - What did God do before time?
 - If God made the world, how did he live before that?

A. God Is Eternal

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God

Isaiah 44:6 I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.

Revelation 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

B. God Is Self-Existing

- I can’t exist without my heart or brain.
- I can’t exist without oxygen and food.
- I’m dependent on things to exist.
- God doesn’t need anything to start Him or sustain Him.
- R. C. Sproul: “... the most important ability we need is the ability to exist. Without that ability, that power, all other abilities would be meaningless. The grand difference between a human being and a Supreme is precisely this: Apart from God I cannot exist; apart from me God does exist. God does not need me in order for Him to be. I do need God in order for me to be. This is the difference between what we call self-existent Being and dependent being.” (*One Holy Passion*, pp. 17-18)

- John Feinberg: "Aseity (from the Latin *a se*, "from itself") is nuanced in a variety of ways, but the main idea of aseity is that God depends on nothing other than himself for his existence." (*No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God*, Crossway, 2006, p. 209, Kindle Edition)
- "Yahweh" is derived from "to be" and is most likely related to God being the "eternal being" – the "I Am"
- *Yahweh* means "The Self Existent One"
- Origin: some think it's from the Hebrew verb *chavah* = "to live, life" or from *hayah/havah* = "to be" or "being"

Exodus 3:14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

- He is, He's self-existent, uncaused
- "Aseity ... the basis of God's life is within himself and is not caused by anything external." (Millard Erickson, *The Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology*, p. 77)
- Charles Ryrie: "Some theologies use the word aseity to denote self-existence; i.e., God depends *a se*, on Himself. If God exists endlessly, then He never came into existence nor was He ever caused to come into existence. He is endlessly self-existent." (*Basic Theology*, p. 41)
- William G. T. Shedd: "The self-existence of God (aseity) denotes that the ground of his being is in himself. In this reference, it is sometimes said that God is his own cause. But this is objectionable language. God is the uncaused being and in this respect differs from all other beings. The category of cause and effect is inapplicable to the existence of a necessary and eternal being." (*Dogmatic Theology*, p. 276)

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

○ **"I AM who I AM" = God is always in the present tense**

1. Self-Existence Implies God Is Eternal, Thus Ever Present With Us

- Because He is uncaused, He is eternal

2. Self-Existence Implies God Is A Person, Thus Intimate With Us

- "I Am" is not like the impersonal pagan deities of the Egyptians and Canaanites, but is the Living "I"

Exodus 3:12-14 ¹² So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain." ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and

they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."

3. Self-Existence Implies God Is Unchangeable, Thus Reliable To Us

- I AM WHO I AM implies that God will never change
 - o He can say that about Himself every year and will always mean the same thing

4. Self-Existence Implies God Is Our Creator, Thus A Loving Parent To Us

- o Because He is uncaused, all of creation emanates from Him
 - Tozer: "Origin is a word that can apply only to things created."

Ie/ Evolutionists believe life began with a big bang

- But what caused the Big Bang?

- Usually, when something explodes, does it create beauty and order, or does it cause destruction and disorder? (thought from a professor at Frontier School of the Bible)

5. Self-Existence Implies God Has No Equal, Thus One To Be Worshipped By Us

- F.B. Meyer: "There cannot be less in the Creator than we discover in the creature."

(God's eternality would be a natural category to follow self-existence, but will be covered in the future topic of God, Time & Eternity)

II. God Created Everything: All Things Created Center Around Him – *created*

A. God Miraculously Created The Universe Out Of Nothing (*ex nihilo*)

- "created" = *bara* (singular form)
 - o original creation
 - o creation *ex nihilo*
 - o The God of creation is revealed in the frequent statements:
 - "God saw"
 - "God said"
 - "God made"
 - o John J. Davis: "The creative act of God reflected in verse 1, therefore, involved no preexisting material; a sovereign, all-powerful God created the heavens and the earth from nothing." (*Paradise To Prison: Studies in Genesis*, Baker Books, 1975, p. 40)
- *Bara* is used only of God. There are other words used to describe the act of creation, but only *bara* is used of God.

- John Phillips: “Men can ‘make’ things (*asah*) and ‘form’ things (*yatsa*), but only God can create.” (citing Wilbur Smith in *Exploring Genesis*, Kregel Pub., 1980, p. 38)
 - Allen Ross: “Humans may make (*asah*), form (*yasar*), or build (*bana*); to the Hebrew, however, God creates.” (*Creation & Blessing: Exposition of Genesis*, Baker, 1988, p. 106)
 - God will create a new heaven and a new earth (Isa 65:17)
 - God creates a clean heart (Ps 51:10)
- Moses alludes to that in his prayer in Psalm 90

Psalm 90:1-2 Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

B. God’s Miraculous Creation Refutes Errant Origin Theories And Stories

1. Genesis 1:1 Refutes The Pagan Origin Stories

(summarized from Tiberius Rata, Voice, “In The Beginning, God Created,” Jan/Feb, 2011, p. 18)

- **Babylonians** – Marduk (chief god) made man to serve lesser gods so they can rest
- **Egyptians** – Khnum (god) formed man on a potter’s wheel while his wife, Hekat, breathes life through his nose
- **Sumerians** – humans are the results of gods messing around in a drunken orgy
- **Canaanites** – views El as the creator and his wife, Asherah, as the goddess of fertility who makes women pregnant

2. Genesis 1:1 refutes Modern Origin Theories

(From John S. Feinberg’s *No One Like Him: The Doctrine Of God*, pp. 541-550)

a. Dualism

- Dualism #1: Matter and God are eternal. Matter is subject to God, but God needed something to work with to make the universe. Good (from the spiritual) and Evil (from matter) are eternal. (Plato, Gnosticism)
- Dualism #2: Good and Evil are two eternally existing spiritual forces. (Zoroastrians, Taoism – ying/yang, Star Wars)
- John S. Feinberg describes: “Dualism as a theory of origins takes various forms, but the fundamental idea of dualism is that there exist two distinct, coeternal, self-existent principles. In one form of dualism, the two principles are God and matter. Matter is imperfect and inferior in being, but it is not necessarily inherently evil.... One of the basic maxims of this sort of theory is *ex nihilo nihil fit* (“from nothing comes nothing”). If one grants this principle, then God cannot create the universe out of nothing, for from nothing comes nothing. Rather, God must be coeternal with matter so there is something for him to work with as he frames the world.”

- Result for man: Uncertainty of who's in control. No basis for future hope. Despair.

b. Emanation Theories

- The universe is a result of several emanation from God.
- These theories are generally pantheistic.
- Plotinus (Greek philosopher) believed that matter was the basis of all that exists. If materials things were stripped of all qualities, matter would be pure and formless. He focused on a state of nothingness. On the other end of origins is "The One" which is the source of all that exists. There is a higher "Mind" (*nous*) that orders the material world. Plotinus sees the universe as the emanation from "The One."
- Eckhart and other odd cults hold this view.
- Result for man: God is impersonal. No hope.

c. Naturalistic Evolution Theories

- The universe developed through natural (versus supernatural) means.
- Darwinian evolution is in this category.
- Big Bang
- "That goo became you via the zoo" (Safarti, p. 88)
- Result for man: Every is out for themselves (survival of the fittest.) No ultimate purpose of man and creation is a product of chance.
- A notable biochemist once stated that "... life ceased to be a mystery. Life is only chemistry."
- Even if a biochemist is able to generate life by mixing chemicals together, he still has to do it out of nothing, like God did.

d. Creation Theories

- 1) Creation From Eternity** – God has always been creating throughout eternity because it is a part of His attributes. This view has been held from Origen to today's Process Theologians. Evolution could be a part of this process among some Process Theologians.
- 2) Gnostic Views**
 - Feinberg: "First, Gnostics typically believed that the God of the OT and the God of the NT are two different Gods. The OT God is an inferior deity, but he created the world.... Second, Gnostics held that creation was mediated by lower beings arranged in a hierarchy of being... Third ... there is an absolute dualism between creation and salvation in Gnosticism.... Thus, what the OT God did in creating the material world must be 'tidied up' by the NT Savior God.... Finally... in contrast [to Christians seeing creation as created 'good'], the creation of Gnosticism's lesser God contains evil because the world contains matter."

3) Creation *Ex Nihilo* With A Specific Temporal Beginning

Application: "My Stuff"

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God, for apart from him who can eat or who can have enjoyment?

III. God Created Time: All Time And Our Time Center Around Him – *In the beginning*

- "in the beginning" = *beresit*

A. God Is Beyond Time – He Was There When Time Began

Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- J. Carl Laney: "He sees the past and the future as if they are the present. And while human beings are limited in their knowledge by succession of events, God knows no such limitation....Nothing ever takes Him by surprise." (*God*, p. 75)
- We're linear creatures - see things in succession of events

ie/ see parade - from one point on the street, one side of the street, occasionally see down both sides of the street, but can't see around the corner

- can only see beginning and end of parade as separate events
- if in Goodyear blimp - get perspective of whole parade
- see beginning and end of parade at same time

Rev 6:9-11 - martyrs ask Lord how long to wait to be avenged - God looks to the future and pinpoints specific effects

Isaiah 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'

B. God Created Time For Man's Seasonal Purposes (Ex 9:5; Ps 104:19; Ec 3:1-2; 1 Pt 1:17; Eph 5:16; Ps 31:15)

- God created time the same time He created matter
- Einstein demonstrated to us that time and matter connected in his General Relativity

Exodus 9:5 ⁵Then the Lord appointed a set **time**, saying, "Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land."

Psalm 104:19 ¹⁹He appointed the moon for **seasons**; The sun knows its going down.

- There are 2 Greek words for time
- *Chronos* is the hours and minutes on a clock
- *Kairos* is a measured season of time with a purpose in mind
- Paul uses *kairos* which depicts the purposeful seasons in our lives, an intentional period
 - Seasons in a marriage – honeymoon, adjustment, infants, kids, teens, empty nest, golden years
 - School – pre, elementary, secondary, collegiate
 - Life – infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adult, midlife, seniors

Exodus 9:5 ⁵Then the Lord appointed a set **time**, saying, "Tomorrow the Lord will do this thing in the land."

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the **time** of your stay here in fear;

Psalm 104:19 ¹⁹He appointed the moon for **seasons**; The sun knows its going down.

OT – *mo'ed* = "appoint"

Deuteronomy 11:14 ¹⁴then I will give you the rain for your land in its **season**, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.

Psalm 145:15 ¹⁵The eyes of all look expectantly to You, and You give them their food in due **season**.

Isaiah 49:8 ⁸Thus says the Lord: "In an acceptable **time** I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;

Jeremiah 18:23 ²³Yet, Lord, You know all their counsel which is against me, to slay me. Provide no atonement for their iniquity, nor blot out their sin from Your sight; but let them be overthrown before You. Deal thus with them in the **time** of Your anger.

NT – *kairos* = "time", "season"

Luke 19:44 ⁴⁴and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the **time** of your visitation."

Acts 17:26 ²⁶And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their **preappointed times** and the boundaries of their dwellings,

Titus 1:3 ³but has in due **time** manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

1 Peter 1:11 ¹¹searching what, or what manner of **time**, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

- "The Bible thus stresses not the abstract continuity of time but rather the God-given content of certain moments of history." (M.H. Cressey, "Time," New Bible Dictionary, ed. by Wood & Marshall, IVP, p. 1187)

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 ¹To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven:
²A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted;

Ecclesiastes 3:1-10 ¹To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: ²A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted; ³A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up; ⁴A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; ⁵A time to cast away stones, And a time to gather stones; A time to embrace, And a time to refrain from embracing; ⁶A time to gain, And a time to lose; A time to keep, And a time to throw away; ⁷A time to tear, And a time to sew; A time to keep silence, And a time to speak; ⁸A time to love, And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace. ⁹What profit has the worker from that in which he labors? ¹⁰I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied.

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the **time** of your stay here in fear;

Ephesians 5:16 ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- "Redeem" = *Exagorazō* (to make the most of)
 - to purchase at full value
 - used to purchase a slave from the slave market
 - redemption
- **To Redeem Time: get the full value out of the time God has appointed us**

Psalms 31:15a ^{15a} My times are in Your hand

- Because God created time and all creation belongs to Him, thus our time belongs to God.
- Ie/ **College** – this is my time (without my parents to tell me what to do), but do see our time in college as God's time? Instead of what's best for my major, how about asking what is best for God's glory?
- Ie/ **Midlife** – empty nest, my time – no it's God's time
- Ie/ **Retirement** – now I can do what "I" want to do, instead of what does God want me to do?
- Ie/ **Parenting** – I have no time – your no time is still God's time
 - All of our busy time is still God's time
 - The average kid spends 39 hours a week consuming media and the average parent spends 39 minutes a week in meaningful conversation with their kid. (Bill Maier – Focus on the Family)

- ie/ Family Research Council (division of Focus on the Family) – parents are spending 40% less time with their children than they did 30 years ago. In the mid 60's, avg. parent spent 30 hours a week with their children – today it's 17 hours.
- **Eli** – man with 2 jobs and 2 kids – but his jobs took priority over his kids
 - 1 Sam 1:9 – priest for his lifetime
 - 1 Sam 4:18 – judge for 40 years
 - Supreme Court Justice and Arch Bishop
 - probably worked 90 hours a week
 - faithful priest, wise judge, loved God, good man
 - yet his sons were wicked – 1 Sam 2:12-17 – allowed to be priests, yet took more of priest's portion than permitted, mocked offering to God, abhorred spiritual things
 - committed to his work more than his sons
- "The best gift a father can give to his son is the gift of himself – his time. For material things mean little, if there is not someone to share them with." (C. Neil Strait)

Myths Concerning Time

(from Kevin Howard, "Busyness In The Service Of Our King", Israel My Glory, Feb/Mar, 1987)

- **Fallacy #1 – "If I only had more time ..."**
 - God has given us all the time we need to do His will in His way. This type of attitude may indicate that we are either in areas He never desired or, more often, are wasting time He has given us.
- **Fallacy #2 – "If I had the time that someone else has ..."**
 - God gave each of us 24 hours yesterday, seven days lasting week, and 12 months last year. The use of time is a decision process, not a product of fate.
- **Fallacy #3 – "I will make up the time ..."**
 - Time is a nonrenewable resource, a gift from our God. Once it is gone, it is gone forever. We cannot produce it nor can we control it. We can only manage our lives within in it.
- **Fallacy #4 – "Time is money."**
 - Time and money are not synonymous. Lost wealth can be regained; not so with time. With time one can earn money, but all the finances in the world cannot buy even one second of time. More accurately, time is life – a God-given opportunity to serve Him – and time is in God's control.
- **Fallacy #5 – "Busyness is next to godliness."**
 - Scripture strongly rebukes slothfulness, yet busyness is not the road to godliness. Our Lord corrected Martha when she was more concerned with busyness than godliness (Lk 10:38-42). It is better said that obedience is next to godliness. Only obedience to our King can bring godliness and the balance needed in our busy lives.
- "Have you ever wished for a 36 hour day? Surely this extra time would relieve the tremendous pressure under which we live. Our lives leave a trail of unfinished tasks...We desperately need relief. But would a thirty-hour day really solve the problem? Wouldn't we soon be just as

frustrated as we are now with our twenty-four allotment? A mother's work is never finished, and neither is that of any student, teacher, minister, or anyone else we know....When we stop to evaluate, we realize that our dilemma goes deeper than shortage of time; it is basically a problem of priorities." (Charles E. Hummel, *Tyranny of the Urgent*, reprinted in Discipleship Magazine, Issue 60, 1990)

IV. God Created The Universe: All Creation Centers Around Him – the heavens and the earth

A. God Is Transcendent To Creation (Acts 17:24-25)

- "heavens" = Heb. *shamayim* – plural form
 - recognizing we live in a multiverse, but it is a unified system (universe) because of God
 - the word may have originated from *sham* (there) and *mayim* (waters) that hint of the water in the original atmosphere (Morris, p. 40)
 - but does refer to space and the universe – in space and time
- "earth" = Heb. *erets* – basic form before God shaped it in the days of creation
- "the heavens and the earth" – figure of speech called **Merism**
- Merism = when two opposites represent the whole concept
- E.g. Psalm 139:2 "You know when I sit down and when I rise up"
- "heavens and earth" represents the universe
- Henry Morris notes: "The universe is actually a continuum of space, matter, and time, no one of which can have a meaningful existence without the other two." (*The Genesis Record*, p. 41)
- Morris paraphrases Gen 1:1: "The transcendent, omnipotent Godhead called into existence the space-mass-time universe." (*ibid*)

Acts 17:24-25 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

- God is above and beyond creation

Psalm 145:3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.

Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

- Yet the Transcendent God is Immanent (near) to us

Isaiah 57:15 "For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Other verses:

Isaiah 66:1-2 "Thus says the Lord: 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist,'" Says the Lord. But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word."

Jeremiah 23:23 Am I only a God nearby....and not a God far away?

Hebrews 1:3 ³who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- James Sire: "*God is transcendent*. This means God is beyond us and our world. He is *otherly*. Look at a stone: God is not it; God is beyond it. Look at a man: God is not he; God is beyond him. Yet God is not so beyond that he bears no relation to us and our world. It is likewise true that *God is immanent*, and that means that he is with us. Look at a stone: God is present. Look at a man: God is present. Is this, then, a contradiction? Is theism nonsense at this point? I think not." (*The Universe Next Door*, p. 25)

B. God Is Glorified In His Creation (Isa 46:7; Rom 11:36; Col 1:16)

Isaiah 46:7 everyone who is called by my name, whom **I created for my glory**, whom I formed and made.

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be **glory** forever. Amen.

- Westminster Larger Catechism: "Question 1: What is the chief and highest end of man? Answer: Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

- 3 prepositional phrases: by Him (lit. in Him), through Him and for Him
- "Paul's use of three different prepositions is one way of refuting the philosophy of the false teachers. For centuries, the Greek philosophers had taught that everything needed a primary cause, an instrumental cause, and a final cause. The primary cause is the plan, the instrumental cause the power, and the final cause the purpose. When it comes to creation, Jesus Christ is the primary cause (He planned it), the instrumental cause (He produced it), and the final cause (He did it for His own pleasure)." (Wiersbe, *Be Complete*, p.49)
- **Christ Is The Realm Of Creation**

- “by Him” = *en autoi* = lit. “in him”
 - Gnostic heretics taught that angels were the center of creation – Paul clearly taught that creation centers around Christ
 - not only does Christ have the power to create, but all of creation resides in His domain
- “all things” = *ta panta* = totality of the universe
 - from the electron to the black hole
- “visible and invisible”
 - false teachers taught dualism (material bad, spiritual good) and denied that God created a physical world
 - Paul contradicts the false teachers directly – all things visible
- “throne...dominions...principalities...powers” = angels and demons
 - Gnostics believe that a superior being created an inferior creature, then the inferior created something more inferior, and so on...
 - Paul taught that Christ “created all spirit beings instantaneously, directly, and out of nothing.” (Gromacki, *Stand Perfect In Wisdom – Colossians*, p. 64)
- **Christ Is The Source Of Creation**
 - “through him” = *di autou* – Christ is the active participant

John 1:3 Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.

Hebrews 1:2 His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God (Elohim = plural oneness) created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:26 Let *Us* make man in *Our* image, according to *Our* likeness

- **Christ Is The Goal For Creation**
 - “for Him” = *eis auton* = lit. “unto Him”
 - all of creation, from microbes to galaxies point to Christ
- John Piper correctly notes: “Now when God says that He created us for His glory, it cannot mean that He created us so that He would become more glorious, that His beauty and perfection would be somehow increased by us. It is unthinkable that God should become more perfectly God by making something that is not God. It is a staggering but necessary thought that God has always existed, that He never came into being, and that everything which exists which is not God is from His fullness and can never add anything to Him which did not come from Him. That is what it means to be God; and it should humble us, O, how it should humble us, when we ponder His reality!

“But this means that when God says, He made us for His glory, He does not mean He made us so that He could become more glorious in Himself. Instead what Isaiah 43:7

means is that He created us to display His glory, that is, glory might be known and praised. This is the goal of God that we must be aligned within our hearts and actions if we hope to escape His wrath at the judgment." ("God Created Us For His Glory – Isa 43:1-7; July 27, 1980, <http://www.soundofgrace.com/piper80/072780m.htm>)

Conclusion:

1. God created us to know and love Him. **Reconcile** with your Creator through Christ, Who was also in the beginning. (John 1:1-2; 14)

- One thing science does well is to tell us **HOW**. What science can't do is tell us **WHY**.
- Bruce Larson: "In Genesis, God the Creator continues to love and pursue His chosen people and desires their friendship, in spite of their failures and betrayals... To believe and trust in God rather than ourselves is to become His friend. That's the clear message of Genesis." (*My Creator, My Friend*, Word Books, 1986, p. 10)

John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

2. God created the universe purposefully for His glory. He created us for the same reason.

- Glorify your Creator with the **time** He gave you.
- Glorify your Creator with the **materials** He made for you.
- Glorify your Creator with **purpose** He designed for you.

3. Our creation and our salvation demands **faith** in it's revelation, evidences and reality.

Hebrews 11:3 By **faith** we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through **faith**. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,