

Theological Equipping Class

God as Creator

October 6, 2024

Apart from a healthy understanding of creation and Creator, there is no Christianity.

- “The doctrine of creation, affirming the distinction between the Creator and his creature, is the starting point of true religion.” (Herman Bavinck)
- “a fulness of immutable being. In distinction from Him the world has become and is always becoming. The thing that Holy Scripture is primarily on guard against is the confusion of God with His creation.” (Bavinck)

Creator

Creation

Creator



Creation

{all heresy distorts this}

What is Meant by Creation?

- Creation: “that act of God through which, by his sovereign will, he brought the entire world out of nonbeing into a being that is distinct from his own being.” (Bavinck)
- “It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of His eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days; and all very good.” (Westminster Confession of Faith)

- Where do we see creation in Scripture?
 - *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)*
 - *By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. (Psalm 33:6)*
 - *The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man... (Acts 17:24)*
 - *And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them... (Acts 4:24)*
 - *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. (Hebrews 11:3)*
 - *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)*
 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1–3)*
 - *Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created. (Revelation 4:11)*
1. Why does God create?
 2. How does God create?
 3. Why is this important?

Why Does God Create?

- “To the question of why things exist and are as they are, there is no other and deeper answer than that God willed it. (Bavinck)
- “asking for something that is greater than the will of God, but nothing greater can be found.” (Augustine)
- Where do we get the idea that God creates for His glory?
 - Explicit
 - *everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” (Isaiah 43:7)*
 - *Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created. (Revelation 4:11)*
 - *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. (Psalm 19:1)*
 - Implicit
 - *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will... (Ephesians 1:11)*
 - *For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another. (Isaiah 48:11)*
 - *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10:31)*

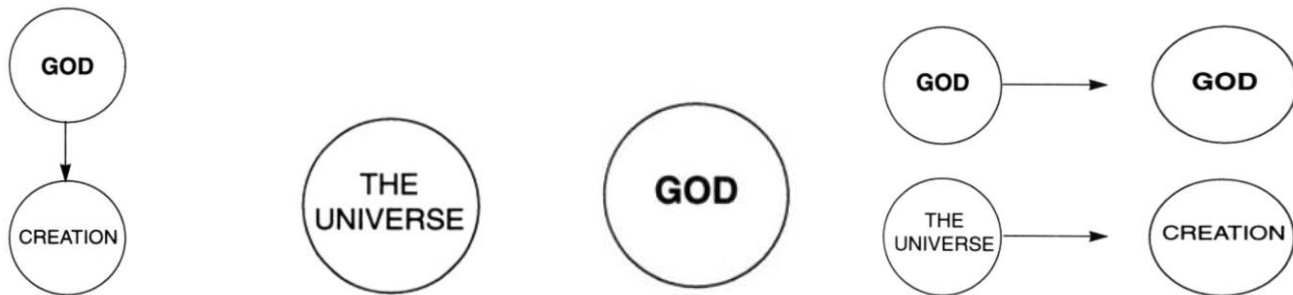
Does God need to create to be glorified or glorious?

- *And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. (John 17:5)*
- “Tis no argument of the emptiness or deficiency of a fountain that it is inclined to overflow.” The greater the fountain the greater the flow, and God is the greatest of all founts.

How Does God Create?

- By His word.
- *ex nihilo* – from nothing
 - “Elohim is not presented in Genesis 1 as a cosmic sculptor who, in human fashion, with preexisting material, produces a work of art, but as One who merely by speaking, by uttering a word of power, calls all things into being.” (Bavinck)
 - *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)*
 - *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:3)*
 - *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)*
 - *Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created. (Revelation 4:11)*
 - *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. (Hebrews 11:3)*
 - *as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. (Romans 4:17)*
 - Biblical creation vs. ANE myths (Enuma Elish, Epic of Gilgamesh, etc.)
 - “Pagan cosmogonies, which are at the same time theogonies, are all polytheistic. They all assume the existence of a primordial stuff, whether it is constructed as chaos, a personal principle, a cosmic egg, or something like it. Finally, they tend to be either emanationistic, so that the world is an emanation from God; or evolutionistic, so that the world becomes ever more divine; or dualistic, so that the world is a product of two antagonistic principles.” (Bavinck)
- to mingle Creator with creation is the height of blasphemy.
 - *Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. (Romans 1:24–25)*

- oneism or twoism
 - “Whereas Scripture affirms two-ism (the Creator/creature distinction and all the distinctions God creates in the cosmos He made), Hindu one-ism categorically affirms that things are “not two” but “one.” In a cosmos without a Creator, all distinctions collapse and man is god.” (Peter Jones)
- Do Creator and Creation belong to the same sphere or two different spheres?
 - Blurring of boundaries



1. a biblical perspective. Creator is distinct from creation, but there is a relationship of dependence there signified by the line.
 - Colossians 1:17 “in him all things hold together” (perfect tense)
 - Hebrews 1:3 “upholds the universe by the word of his power”
2. Materialism: there is no God. Matter/nature is all there is. This is the foundation of secular humanism and Marxism.
3. Pantheism: everything is God or everything is a part of God (panentheism: God is in everything).
4. Dualism: the eternal existence of both God and creation.

Next, not only does God create ex nihilo, but also trinitarianly

- “By this supremely, equally, and immutably good Trinity all things are created.” (Augustine)
- In Genesis 1:1-3, we see reference to the Father, the Spirit and the Word.
- “While there is cooperation, there is no division of labor. All things originate simultaneously from the Father through the Son in the Spirit.” (Bavinck)
- Creation is from the Father through the Son and by the Spirit.
- Through the Son
 - *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* (John 1:3)
 - *yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.* (1 Cor 8:6)
 - *For by [or in] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.* (Colossians 1:16)
 - *but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.* (Hebrews 1:2)
- By the Spirit
 - *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* (Genesis 1:2)
 - *When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.* (Psalm 104:30)
 - *The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.* (Job 33:4)
- The Creator’s works flow from the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit.
- Reverse the order and you get our worship!

Five Implications Leading to Worship:

1. God did not create the world out of some deficiency in Himself.
2. God is in no way dependent upon His creations.
 - Psalm 50:9-12 *I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine.*
 - 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.*
3. God has ownership over all things.
 - Psalm 24:1 *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.*
 - *Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. (1 Timothy 4:1-5)*
 - "The Things of Earth" by Joe Rigney.
4. God has absolute rights over creation and can do whatever He wants with what He has made.
 - Isaiah 45:9-12 *Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles'? Woe to him who says to a father, 'What are you begetting?' or to a woman, 'With what are you in labor?'" Thus says the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him: "Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands? I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.*
 - Psalm 115:3 *Our God is in the heavens, He does all that He pleases.*
 - Psalm 135:6 *Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.*
5. God is alone worthy of all glory and honor and splendor and delight.
 - Revelation 4:11 *Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.*