

A Reformed Confession Regarding Creation

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The Creator/Creature Distinction

I. WE AFFIRM that God exists uniquely, being separate from the universe, as well as being independent of any external conditions or limitations which characterize the existence and life of everything in the universe.

WE DENY that all being is one, that there are no fundamental distinctions in reality, and that God is somehow identical with what is opposite of Him.

WE DENY that God is part of or correlative to the world, that God must exist under all the same conditions or restrictions as any other thing which exists, and that history or the world process exists within God as part of His own development.

WE DENY that there is anything which exists as an intermediate kind of entity between the Creator and the creation, being neither fully divine nor fully creature.

God's Ultimacy

II. WE AFFIRM that God is a personal, sovereign, transcendent, and triune Spirit; He alone is infinite, self-sufficient, unchanging and eternal.

WE DENY that God is a secondary, created, developing or dependent being.

WE DENY that God is a being composed of physical matter, regardless of how refined matter is construed to be.

WE DENY that the act of creation changed the being of God, added anything to His perfections, or altered the internal relations among the persons of the Trinity.

WE DENY that God's eternal plan, purpose or decree of creation is inseparable from the execution of that plan or that any created thing was brought into actual existence from all eternity.

WE DENY that anything apart from God is equally ultimate with Him, and that any created thing has in itself the abilities or prerogatives of God.

WE DENY that the ideas, forms, essences, concepts, or ideals of things can exist of themselves or have existed eternally apart from God.

WE DENY that matter, the physical universe, angels, and souls can exist of themselves or have existed eternally.

WE DENY any view which maintains or implies that any reality distinct from God is not dependent upon His creative will and sovereign providence.

Creation from Nothing

III. WE AFFIRM that according to His wise plan and simply by His all-powerful act of speaking, God created from nothing, and as completely distinct from Himself, every finite thing which exists, whether physical or spiritual, and that all are dependent upon His will, His power, and His providence.

WE DENY that the opening words of Genesis 1 are a dependent clause, speaking of "when God began to create," rather than a declaration about the divine act of creation in the absolute and ultimately originative sense.

WE DENY that any finite thing originally came into being from anything which existed prior to, or was caused to exist by anything in addition to, God's creative word.

WE DENY that any finite thing is an extension of, emanation from, or was created out of God's own being.

WE DENY that any finite thing has the ability to create from nothing any separate personal being or any physical object or force.

The Goodness of Creation

IV. WE AFFIRM that creation was an act of the sovereign, good pleasure of God, equally that of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the purpose of manifesting His splendor, glory, almighty power, and wisdom, and that all things were created good.

WE DENY that God was under any compulsion, necessity, or personal need to create the world.

WE DENY that the Son and Spirit were merely secondary agents of God, the Creator.

WE DENY that there can be any awareness, understanding, or knowledge of the created realm which does not simultaneously disclose the existence, glorious attributes, and moral character of God the Creator.

WE DENY that there is any other ultimate source of rational unity or material order in the universe, and that there is any other ultimate source of rational distinction and material diversity, than God the Creator.

WE DENY that any created agent or person exists ultimately to serve the purposes and glory of anything or anyone within the realm of creation.

WE DENY any view which holds material things to be inherently evil, of less value than incorporeal things, or tending to retard or thwart piety, spirituality, or personal sanctification.

WE DENY the view that man was created as merely free and neutral, or that at creation he needed grace to counteract the moral encumbrance of a physical body, rather than being made in the image of God as positively righteous.

WE DENY that sin was essential to or inevitable in finite and dependent reality, or a necessity arising from the nature of the world in general or from the nature of created man in particular.

The Mature Condition of Original Creation

V. WE AFFIRM that the world which God created was at its very beginning invested and inhabited with a rich diversity of already mature, identifiable kinds of things and creatures.

WE DENY that the finite things in this world which are seen originally developed or were made out of things which are likewise seen.

WE DENY that the finite, mature, original things which God made came into being by any natural process in addition to direct divine utterance or formation.

WE DENY that the divine creation of mature living forms precludes subsequent, providentially designed, processes of change, elaboration or variation.

The Historicity of the Creation Account

VI. WE AFFIRM that the account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis is straightforward, accurate, and historical narrative, showing the origin of all things including the human race, whereas the more specific focus of the account in chapter two of Genesis is the history of the first man and woman, related with anthropomorphic figures of speech.

WE DENY that the realm of natural scientific truth and the realm of religious truth speak of utterly different dimensions of reality, and that they are completely isolated, unrelated or independent of each other.

WE DENY that the first chapter of Genesis is poetry, saga, or myth.

WE DENY that the creation account in Genesis 2 contradicts the account found in the first chapter.

WE DENY that the creation account in Genesis 2 explains, implies, or justifies the view that the events of creation, in part or whole, which are narrated in the first chapter took place by means of the normal, prevailing or natural processes of divine providence which are operative throughout subsequent history.

The Days of the Creation Week

VII. WE AFFIRM that the numerically sequential days of the creation week in Genesis 1, consisting of an evening and a morning, were the very first chronological days of genuine history, of the same general duration of days in a conventionally understood week, and that step by step through these days God made the heavens and earth a well ordered cosmos, inhabitable for man, after which God ceased His work of physical creation.

WE DENY that the "days" of Genesis 1 were ages or long periods of time.

WE DENY that the six days of creation in Genesis 1 represent a reconstruction of the world subsequent to God's original act of creation and a catastrophe which befell the world.

WE DENY that ages or long periods of time intervened between the separate days mentioned in the creation week of Genesis 1.

WE DENY that the days of the creation week in Genesis 1 are merely a literary figure of speech or poetic device providing a pedagogical framework for affirming that God created all things.

WE DENY that believers may, in a faithful handling of God's word, espouse non-chronological views of the days mentioned in Genesis 1 out of a desire to escape the difficulties which might exist between Genesis 1 and the alleged findings of natural science.

WE DENY that the diversity, order, harmony and inhabitable quality of the world can be attributed to any inherent features or forces within the world itself, or to any other factor but the resplendent wisdom and supreme power of God Himself.

Man's Uniqueness and Supremacy Over the Animals

VIII. WE AFFIRM that man was immediately and instantaneously created by a special engagement of the Triune counsel, not after the "kind" of any animal, but as the very image of the uncreated God Himself.

WE DENY that man evolved over long ages through the continuous development of forces resident in the physical world.

WE DENY that the "dust" from which man was formed, and which was

lifeless prior to the divine inbreathing, was any more organic or indicative of the animal realm than the "dust" to which he returns at death.

WE DENY that the human race has any animal parentage or biological, developmental ancestry among the lower animals.

WE DENY that man's unique dignity, dominion, moral character or spirituality can be accounted for in terms of any affinities to the physiology, anatomy, historical background or behavioral conditioning of animals.

The Historic and Moral Significance of Our First Parents

IX. WE AFFIRM that Adam and Eve were historical figures immediately created by God, equally as His image, with divine mandates for subduing the world, marriage, labor and sabbath rest.

WE DENY that Scripture or theological consistency permits us to reject the historicity of the first Adam's immediate creation, while upholding the historicity of the second Adam's miraculous resurrection.

WE DENY that a set of humanoid creatures, after a long period of evolutionary biological development, were spiritually made into or invested with the image of God.

WE DENY that the first man and first woman were created simultaneously or with equal authority with respect to each other.

WE DENY that the status and privilege of being made as God's image applies more to man than to woman, that man has higher spiritual value than woman, and that man is more fully human than woman.

WE DENY that animals and the vegetative world have the same value, dignity, or rights as man created as the image of God with dominion over the lower creation.

WE DENY that man's dominion over the lower creation permits him to abuse anything therein according to his own unrestrained desire, in any way contrary to the ends for which God ordained it to be used, and in any fashion other than as a caretaker seeking the cultivation of the all creation to the glory of God.

WE DENY that man is required or allowed to work perpetually, without entering into God's ordained, weekly sabbaths of physically resting in the Lord and offering Him consecrated worship.

WE DENY that the institution of marriage is not original to mankind, but evolved historically merely as a felt sociological necessity.

The Importance of the Doctrine of Creation

X. WE AFFIRM that all devout, faithful, and biblically based theology presupposes - and the very gospel message of salvation itself must be presented within the theological context of - the indispensable and foundational truth that God created the heavens and the earth.

WE DENY that we may know God in any other way but self-consciously as creatures, and that we may know God in any way, either in committed belief or hypothetical abstraction, which disregards that He is our Creator and the Creator of all things.

WE DENY that any Christian doctrine is properly conceived or faithfully set forth which contradicts, compromises or ignores the biblical teaching about creation.

WE DENY that the world or any aspect thereof may be correctly understood, or that any intelligible and morally appropriate use and application may be made of such knowledge, apart from the all-embracing, presupposed, theological worldview which affirms God the Creator, based on God's own, ultimately authoritative, self-revelation.

The Worship Due the Creator

XI. WE AFFIRM that a faithful understanding of the glorious biblical truth that God created all things makes it morally incumbent upon all men, and should incite them, to reverence Almighty God and worship Him as worthy of all praise, and that this is more especially true for those who enjoy the grace of re-creation after the image of God, our Redeemer.

WE DENY that anything or anyone may be worshipped or venerated except the Creator, through the intercession of Jesus Christ, and deny that this worship may be guided or enhanced by any human imagination, direction or authority, which is not prescribed by God's own revealed will.

WE DENY that God's original work of creation ended His involvement with, or intrusion into, the world, that there is no need for or spiritual reality of re-creation, and that history has any other end than a new creation of God wherein righteousness dwells.