

BEGINNINGS: CREATION

Why Creation?

- Because God is love, full stop. He desires to share his presence/power with others in love.
- God is NOT a God of control (“meticulous” sovereignty)
- God IS a God of love (that’s how he’s sovereign)
- God brings order to chaos, goodness to desolation.

What is Creation?

- Creation is God’s cosmic Temple - a place for him to dwell with his people
- God With Us is the Story of OT - tabernacle, law, Israel, Temple
- God (ONE) With Us is Story of NT - Jesus, Spirit, Church, Body, New Jerusalem

Creation: It’s NOT about How and When

- Literal 7-Day vs. Evolution - OT doesn’t think like that
- Scripture wasn’t written to answer questions of modern science
- Christians have always had to wrestle with and adapt readings of scripture based on science - we can do it again if needed
- Seems to be some kind of cosmic struggle/battle - ordering and restraining chaos (Flood narrative).

Original Goodness has primacy over Original Sin

- Good is primal, foundational DNA
- Sin is sickness, invasion, foreign
- Fear, guilt, and shame counterproductive

Image of God: Male and Female

- God is not a MAN. Image of God is male and female
- Gender is presented as a binary in Gen 1-2, but...day/night, land/water also presented as binary and we know they aren’t.
- Emphasis on Unity/Mutuality/ezer before Gen 3
- Emphasis on conflict, strife, frustrated desire after

The price of love: Freedom, Agency, and the Fall

- God moves TOWARD humans in sin; he doesn’t hide his face
- In a universe where love is possible, evil is also possible - our actions mean something, have consequences
- Consequences of choice vs Punishment for crime

The “Curse”

- Ground and Serpent are cursed, NOT humans
- childbirth/farming frustration = compromised vocation

ENDINGS: NEW CREATION

Everything Sad Will Come Untrue

- Redemption and Renewal of all things, not destruction and starting over...
- We're not "flying away" - we are "here to stay"
- God is still up to what he's always been up to: sharing and incorporating humans into presence and power
- Living between ascension and final resurrection

Judgment: the best thing that will ever happen to us

- Judgment is a good thing, because we are not transparent to ourselves... we need someone to sort good from bad.
- Christ *will* come again to fulfill and complete the new creation that has already begun in his resurrection.

Resurrection of the Body

- Physical, not disembodied
- New bodies will be *animated* by Holy Spirit, not merely "flesh" (that which we can do apart from God).

Rethinking Hell

- Hell is how some people experience the love of God
- God is love - some experience that fire as purification; others experience that fire as punishment
- Ultimately, we get what we want - God turns us over to it, but never stops loving
- We don't really know much about "hell"

Implications: Becoming the Body of Christ

- We are called in the present to live the life of the future
- Connected to Christ, our head, and each other as members of the Body of Christ in HUMILITY, UNITY, DIVERSITY, and MUTUALITY.
- As we practice this, we become the Body of Christ, an extension in time of the Incarnation.

Implications: Seeing Everything Through the Resurrection

- "From now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view" (2 Cor 5:16)
- New creation HAS come!
- Now we have the ministry of reconciliation, ambassadors of Christ's peace