

Culture  **Christianity**



Intown
Community
Church



Creation and Evolution

Week 2: The Christian Doctrine of Creation—Key Claims



**We need to re-enchant
our world.**

Imagination, beliefs, values
What makes life worth living

Reason, facts
Actual living

God wants to use us

~~We need~~ to re-enchant
our world.



Setting the Tone

The Doctrine of Creation in Christian Creeds



The Apostles' Creed

- I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.



The Nicene Creed

- I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.



Heidelberg Catechism Q 26

- Q 26: What do you believe when you say: *I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?*



Heidelberg Catechism Q 26

- Q 26: What do you believe when you say: *I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?*
- A: That **the eternal Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **out of nothing created** heaven and earth and everything in them, who **still upholds and rules** them by his eternal counsel and providence, **is my God and Father because of Christ the Son.**



Heidelberg Catechism Q 26

- Q 26: What do you believe when you say: *I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth?*
- A: ... I trust God so much that I do not doubt **he will provide** whatever I need for body and soul, **and will turn to my good** whatever adversity he sends upon me in this sad world. God is able to do this because **he is almighty God** and desires to do this because **he is a faithful Father**.



Heidelberg Catechism Q 27

- Q 27: What do you mean by the providence of God?



Heidelberg Catechism Q 27

- Q 27: What do you mean by the providence of God?
- A: God's providence is His almighty and ever-present power, whereby, as with His hand, He still upholds **heaven and earth and all creatures**, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come **not by chance** but **by His fatherly hand**.



Defining Our Terms

Listening—and Speaking—Well

creation (little c)

- 1. The act of making something or bringing it into being.**
- 2. The act (of a god/s) that brings the universe, the earth, and/or life into being.**

Creation (big C)

God's act of bringing the universe, the earth, and life into existence by his own power, for his own purposes, and all "very good."

evolution (little e)

- 1. Change over time.**
- 2. Genetic change over time.**

Evolution (Big E)

“an unpredictable and natural process of... descent with genetic modification that is affected by natural selection, chance, historical contingencies, and changing environments.”

NABT, 2000

chance (little c)

- 1. something that happens without any evident design or purpose, or without observable cause.**
- 2. something whose occurrence cannot be, or could not have been, predicted by human means.**

Chance (Big C)

Everything happens without any design or purpose; everything is truly random. Any sense of design, purpose, or higher meaning is artificially imposed.



How Long Are the Days of Creation?

A Variety of Christian Viewpoints

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Single moment

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

Ordinary days

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

Sequence v. length

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

Topics v. time

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical

Rhythms v. time

“Day” in Genesis: Five Views

Instantaneous

Calendar Day

Day-Age

Framework

Analogical



“Big C” Creation

Key Affirmations

God comes first.

He isn't dependent on us.

**He doesn't create out of need or
lack or imperfection.**

God can communicate.

He is “a talking God.” (Carson)

He wants us to know him, and he wants us to know that his purposes can be understood—they aren't random, and they aren't entirely inaccessible to creatures like us.

The one God, who is good,
made everything good.

**He gives the gift of abundant,
flourishing life to his creatures.**

**He intends—and does—good for us
before we even exist.**

**Human beings are made in
God's image.**

**There is diversity in the human race
(male, female; parents, children).**

**But fundamental unity (same
Creator), equality of dignity and
worth.**

**Creation is under tension:
from good to groaning.**

Creation has come under a curse.

This tension must be resolved.

We anticipate the gospel: New

Creation; Second Adam; New

Heavens and New Earth.

Creation involves First Cause acts & second causes.

God is able to act directly, using no means other than his own will and power.

But he also ordains “second causes” to do his will.



For Further Study

C. John Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Esp. chapters 4-13.)

C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary.*



For Further Study

“Report of the Creation Study
Committee” [PCA position paper]

www.pcahistory.org/pca/digest/studies/creation/report.pdf



For Further Study

Guy Richard, “The Doctrine of Creation.”
The Gospel Coalition.

www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-doctrine-of-creation/

D.A. Carson, “A Theology of Creation in
12 Points.” Desiring God.

www.desiringgod.org/interviews/a-theology-of-creation-in-12-points



For Further Study

John Cox, *The One Story: A Psychologist Reaches for the Heart of God.* (Esp. chapter 1, “The Seeking God of Eden.”)

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The book of revelation and the book of nature are both from God, and will be found, when both are adequately interpreted, to coincide perfectly.

A.A. Hodge, *The Westminster Confession: A Commentary*

The record in Genesis... was not designed either to prevent or to take the place of a scientific interpretation of all existing phenomena, and of all traces of the past history of the world which God allows men to discover.

A.A. Hodge, *The Westminster Confession: A Commentary*

God requires both to believe and to learn. He imposes upon us at present the necessity of humility and patience.

A.A. Hodge, *The Westminster Confession: A Commentary*