

THE ROLE OF BIBLICAL CREATIONISM IN PRESUPPOSITIONAL APOLOGETICS

by
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The doctrine of biblical creation is often viewed as incidental, if not detrimental, to the task of defending the Christian faith.² Young earth creationism in particular is relegated frequently to the fringes of respectable society, even vilified, as Kevin Bauder has stated elsewhere of Christian fundamentalism, as tantamount to the cryptozoology of scientific and biblical studies.³ Conrad Hyers, for example, contends that young earth creationism is comparable to flat-earth and geocentric worldviews, prompting many sensible people to embrace atheism.⁴ Hugh Ross, astrophysicist and founder of *Reasons to Believe*, argues that young earth creationism invariably creates an impediment to the gospel. While the doctrinal statement of *Reasons to Believe* affirms that “Scripture is our supreme and final authority on all matters it addresses,”⁵

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²By biblical creation I mean the Scriptural doctrine pertaining to God’s existence as Creator and his unique work in glorifying himself by immediately and supernaturally creating the cosmos and all things within it (cf. John M. Frame, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief* [Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013], 185). Biblical creationism is the systematization and promulgation of that doctrine. While the nomenclature of biblical creationism is not necessarily synonymous with young earth creationism or fiat creationism, I am essentially equating them. For the differences among the various forms of biblical and scientific creationism, see Matthew A. Postiff, “Essential Elements of Young Earth Creationism and Their Importance to Christian Theology,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 21 (2016): 32–35.

³See Kevin T. Bauder, “Fundamentalism,” in *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*, ed. Andrew D. Naselli and Collin Hansen (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 19. Resolution 1580 passed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 4 October 2007 classifies creationism as, in fact, “dangerous” and potentially “a threat to human rights,” constituting “a real risk of serious confusion being introduced into our children’s minds” (available online at <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=17592&lang=en>, accessed 8 January 2020). See also Stefaan Blancke, Hans H. Hjermitsev, and Peter C. Kjaergaard, eds., *Creationism in Europe: Medicine, Science, and Religion in Historical Context* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014).

⁴Conrad Hyers, *The Meaning of Creation: Genesis and Science* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984), 26.

⁵Available online at <http://www.reasons.org/about>, accessed 17 October 2017.

Ross insists that a realistic understanding of science compels thoughtful Christians to reject young earth creationism as a bogeyman driving myriads from Christianity:

Many skeptics who need solid evidence to resolve their doubts remain untouched by the claims of Christ. Such people (educators, politicians, community leaders, and others) perceive evangelical Christians as nonthinkers or even as antiscience or anti-rational.... The young-earth viewpoint and the desire to avoid science have inoculated a large segment of society from taking seriously the call to faith in Christ. Thus, because of a belief in a universe and Earth only thousands of years old, the groundwork has been laid to discount the Bible's credibility and remove 'religious notions' from public education and the public arena.⁶

Old Testament scholar Bruce Waltke has likewise warned that "if the data is overwhelmingly in favor of evolution, to deny that reality will make us a cult..., some odd group that is not really interacting with the world. And rightly so, because we are not using our gifts and trusting God's Providence that brought us to this point of our awareness."⁷ The repercussions from these and similar statements continue to reverberate across evangelicalism.⁸ Biblical creationism is viewed with embarrassment as a relic of fundamentalism and as an obstacle keeping reasonable Christians from engaging the world and winsomely defending the faith.⁹

⁶Hugh Ross, *A Matter of Days: Resolving a Creation Controversy* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004), 16–17. Theistic evolutionist Denis O. Lamoureux likewise chastises young earth creationists for their stubborn refusal to accept the tenets of modern science: "The greatest problem with young-earth creation is that it completely contradicts every modern scientific discipline that investigates the origin of the universe and life.... If the Lord created the world through an evolutionary process, and unbelieving scientists see the evidence for this theory in their laboratories every day, then is there any doubt that a stumbling block has been placed between them and the Lord Jesus by young earth creationists (2 Cor 6:2–3)?" (*I Love Jesus and I Accept Evolution* [Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009], 22).

⁷"OT Scholar Bruce Waltke Resigns Following Evolution Comments," *Christianity Today*, 9 April 2010, available online at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2010/april/ot-scholar-bruce-waltke-resigns-following-evolution.html>, accessed 17 October 2017.

⁸A seemingly growing number of prominent evangelical pastors and scholars advocate theistic evolution, as evidenced by their publications and affiliation with BioLogos, including Tim Keller, Tremper Longman, John Walton, Peter Enns, J. Richard Middleton, and N. T. Wright. See Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012); John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015); Karl W. Giberson, *Saving Darwin: How to Be a Christian and Believe in Evolution* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008); Karl W. Giberson and Francis S. Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011).

⁹Karl Giberson's autobiographical account of his intellectual journey from creationism to the embrace of evolution is titled "The Dissolution of a Fundamentalist"

In this essay, I argue that, contrary to these aspersions, biblical creationism carries a necessary and vital connection to the task of apologetics. I begin by addressing common objections to the need for biblical creation in apologetics. Scriptural evidence is adduced that biblical creation is essential to upholding the sufficiency and authority of the Bible as well as to furthering the gospel. Following this, I develop a number of propositions which support biblical creationism's role in apologetics by establishing that evolutionary science is fundamentally incompatible with the theological correlation of Scripture. I conclude by proposing several propositions that summarize the ways in which the doctrine of biblical creation serves as a requisite component for consistent presuppositional apologetics.¹⁰

THE IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL CREATION FOR THE TASK OF APOLOGETICS

Far from an obscure doctrine, biblical creation cuts to the heart of the nature of God and of mankind and of their distinct relationships to the created order. The opening chapters of Genesis are not only foundational to the rest of Scripture but essential to it: without these chapters the rest of Scripture makes little sense.¹¹ What is more, each category of systematic theology, to one degree or another, touches upon the core tenet of God as Creator and of humankind as his consummative, image-bearing creature. Objectors to the inclusion of biblical creation in apologetics often charge that it is insignificant to the doctrine of

and disparagingly uses the term *fundamentalism* or *fundamentalist* on nearly every page (*Saving Darwin*, 1–18). On the history of the connection of fundamentalism to the Scopes trial and hence the creation-evolution debate, see Gerald L. Priest, “William Jennings Bryan and the Scopes Trial: A Fundamentalist Perspective,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 4 (Fall 1999): 51–83.

¹⁰This writer assumes the validity of presuppositional apologetics as the method of defending the Christian faith most consistent with the sufficiency and authority of Scripture. For more on presuppositional apologetics, see Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith*, 4th ed., ed. K. Scott Oliphint (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2008); Greg L. Bahnsen, *Always Ready: Directions for Defending the Faith*, ed. Robert R. Booth (Nacogdoches, TX: Covenant Media Foundation, 1996); idem, *Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1998); idem, *Presuppositional Apologetics: Stated and Defended*, ed. Joel McDurmon (Powder Springs, GA: American Vision, 2008); John M. Frame, *Apologetics: A Justification of Christian Belief*, ed. Joseph E. Torres (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015). On the important correlation between biblical creationism and presuppositional apologetics, see Jason Lisle, “Young Earth Presuppositionalism,” *Christian Apologetics Journal* 11 (Fall 2013): 63–83; Jonathan M. Hanes, “Presuppositionalism Revisited: The Necessity of a Transcendent God for the Intelligibility of Science,” *Science & Christian Belief* 28 (2016): 20–23.

¹¹See Wayne Grudem, “Biblical and Theological Introduction: The Incompatibility of Theistic Evolution with the Biblical Account of Creation and with Important Christian Doctrines,” in *Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique*, ed. J. P. Moreland, Stephen C. Meyer, Christopher Shaw, et al. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 61–62.

Scripture, that it is unnecessary for the formulation of theology, or that it hinders the advance of the gospel.¹² The biblical evidence suggests otherwise.

Biblical Creation Is Essential to the Authority of Scripture

Scripture opens with a clear affirmation of God's actions as Creator of the universe, and the remainder of the canon is predicated on the reality of this assertion. Robert Reymond provides compelling evidence that the rest of Scripture refers consistently to Genesis 1–2 as authoritative historical revelation.¹³ We find, for example, references to the authority of the creation narratives in the grounding of legal prescriptions, prophetic pronouncements, and cultic practices (Exod 31:17; Deut 4:32; Ps 33:6; 90:12; 136:5–9; 148:2–5; Isa 40:25–26; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 48:13; 51:13; Amos 4:13; Jer 10:12; Zech 12:1). In the New Testament we likewise find frequent allusions to the paradigmatic significance of the creation account (Matt 19:4–5; John 1:2–3; Rom 4:17; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16; 1 Tim 2:13; Heb 1:2; 11:3; Rev 4:11; 10:6–7). No subsequent biblical writer interprets the creation and flood accounts of Genesis as anything other than true history. Thus to undermine or deny the reality of God's work in time and space at creation encroaches upon the historicity of Scripture, as later biblical writers uniformly assume the historical validity of not only the major redemptive events (the fall, the exodus, the prophets, the Davidic monarchy) but also the seemingly minor events (e.g., Solomon's visit by the Queen of Sheba [Matt 12:42; Luke 11:31–32]; Moses' raising of the bronze serpent [John 3:14]; Balaam's rebuke by his donkey [2 Pet 2:16]).¹⁴

This consistent use of the creation account in later Scripture thus underscores its uniform acceptance as straightforwardly presented. John Whitcomb observes that “with few exceptions, all New Testament books refer to Genesis 1–11. Also, *every chapter* of Genesis 1–11 is referred to somewhere in the New Testament. Furthermore, *every New Testament writer* refers to Genesis 1–11. And finally, *the Lord Jesus Christ referred to each of the first seven chapters of Genesis*.”¹⁵ Indeed the

¹²On these objections, see Lee A. Anderson, “The Relevance of Biblical Creationism in Christian Apologetics,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 18 (Spring 2014): 86.

¹³Robert L. Reymond, “The Theological Significance of the Biblical Doctrine of Creationism,” *Presbyterion* 15 (Fall 1989): 16–26. Grudem designates Genesis 1–3 as “*historical narrative* in the sense of *reporting events that the author wants readers to believe actually happened*” (“Biblical and Theological Introduction,” 63–64). On the nature of these chapters as historical narrative prose, see Steven W. Boyd, “The Genre of Genesis 1:1–2:3: What Means This Text? in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*, ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008).

¹⁴D. A. Carson, *Collected Writings on Scripture*, ed. Andrew D. Naselli (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 24–25.

¹⁵John C. Whitcomb, Jr., *The World that Perished*, 3rd ed. (Winona Lake, IN:

doctrine of creation, which affirms the distinction between Creator and creation, is the necessary starting point of true religion and cannot be known apart from authoritative divine revelation.¹⁶ God's creative word correlates to the written Word of Scripture, as both carry sovereign power and bring him glory (Ps 19:1–10). Contemplation of the doctrine of creation inevitably leads to worship of the true God (Rom 11:36). Morton Smith aptly concludes: "The biblical doctrine of creation is the foundation of all Christian theology and of all Christian thought and action."¹⁷

Biblical Creation Is Essential to Theology

Many prominent theologians, whether old earth or young earth proponents, falter over the need for a well-defined doctrine of creation in the formulation of theology. Wayne Grudem argues, for example, that "both 'Old Earth' and 'Young Earth' theories are valid options for Christians who believe the Bible today."¹⁸ Millard Erickson concludes that while "fiat creationism" poses no difficulty for the biblical data, it encounters significant difficulties with the scientific data, rendering theistic evolution and progressive creationism the most viable options for thoughtful Christians.¹⁹ Robert Culver declares that "readers are well-advised to commit themselves without reserve only to the clear theological truths of Scripture revelation, likewise to the truthfulness of the chapters in Genesis and other scriptural passages on creation.... Those who insist that we simply must agree with them or else be somewhat sub-Christian or of questionable loyalty to biblical revelation are shouting too loudly to be obeyed."²⁰ It is unclear exactly how one is to commit to the truthfulness of the first chapters of Genesis and at the same time *not* commit to any particular view concerning how the work of creation actually came to pass. Do all the theories of the origin of the universe equally uphold the truthfulness of the early chapters of Genesis? Conversely, do the opening chapters of Genesis require a special hermeneutic to determine their truthfulness that is distinct from the

BMH, 2009), 96.

¹⁶Herman Bavinck, *In the Beginning: Foundations of Creation Theology*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 23.

¹⁷Morton H. Smith, "The Theological Significance of the Doctrine of Creation," in *Did God Create in Six Days?* ed. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., and David W. Hall (Taylors, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), 243. Smith adds a cautionary note: "It is worthy of consideration that those churches and seminaries that have abandoned the clear teaching of the Bible on creation, as so many have done in the modern, scientific age, have tended to drift in other areas as well" (ibid.).

¹⁸Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 297.

¹⁹Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 444–48.

²⁰Robert D. Culver, *Systematic Theology: Biblical and Historical* (Ross-shire, UK: Christian Focus, 2005), 163.

rest of Scripture? In contrast to such oscillation over the doctrine of creation, I would submit that a clearly defined creationism is crucial to the formulation of biblical and systematic theology.

Significant doctrines are impacted by one's view of biblical creation and the age of the earth. Theology proper is predicated on the Creator-creature distinction, that God is the Creator and King whose unique lordship extends over all the created order.²¹ The doctrines of Christology, anthropology, and hamartiology are necessarily tied to one's understanding of the nature of mankind's creation as special divine act. The apostle Paul clearly formulates these doctrines in Romans 1 and 5 on the basis of an historical reading of the creation account in Genesis 1–2. To allow for death before the fall is to undercut the uniqueness of Adam as the product of God's special creation from the dust of the ground with implications for typology of the Second Adam.²² Likewise, the doctrine of eschatology links irrevocably to one's understanding of the nature of creation and the scope of the biblical flood, especially insofar as divine judgment is worldwide and as the goal of eschatology is the new creation. Christ compares his judgment at his coming to the global catastrophic judgment of the Noahic flood (Matt 24:36–42), an understanding at odds with nearly all old-earth creationist views that argue for a local flood to accommodate the millions of years necessary to form the geological record. On the side of practical theology, biblical creation is a vital component of preaching and biblical counseling. The preacher proclaims the authoritative message of Scripture grounded in the truths that God the Creator is sovereign, that he has spoken all things into existence, and that he has revealed himself verbally in his inerrant Word. The biblical counselor provides instruction and admonition from the sufficient Word. If the doctrine of creation is detached from the synthesis of Scripture the authority and sufficiency of the Bible is crippled.

Biblical Creation Is Essential to the Gospel

Many well-meaning Christians have concluded that biblical creationism is harmful to the spread of the gospel. One example comes from the sociologists Josephine Egan and Leslie Francis, who polled nearly 6,000 students, ranging in ages 11–17, at religious schools in Scotland on the subject of biblical creationism.²³ They wanted to determine the students' positive or negative views of Christianity in relation to their views of evolutionary science. The sociologists found that

²¹John Frame, *The Doctrine of God: A Theology of Lordship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2002), 217.

²²Anderson observes that “death before the fall thus destroys everything that the Bible teaches about the goodness of God, the goodness of the original creation, and the prospect of goodness in the future creation” (“Relevance of Biblical Creationism,” 106).

²³Josephine Egan and Leslie Francis, “Does Creationism Commend the Gospel? A Developmental Study among 11–17 Year Olds,” *Religious Education* 87 (1992): 19–27.

younger students who correlated clear origin teachings with biblical creationism tended also to exhibit positive views of Christianity. Older students, however, tended to view the defined tenets of biblical creationism as incompatible with evolutionary science and also carried negative views of Christianity. The authors conclude that “on psychological grounds, the teaching of creationism in school may well prove counter-productive to the church’s mission.”²⁴

While resonant with popular conceptions about the alleged correlations between young-earth creationism and unbelief, the authors’ conclusion fails on several levels, most notably to prove clear lines of cause and effect.²⁵ Ultimately the litmus test for fidelity to gospel proclamation must be the commands of Scripture, not student attitudes toward Christianity. In distinction from those who argue that a clearly defined doctrine of creation is detrimental to the gospel, I contend that biblical creation is a necessary component of gospel preaching. Paul affirms that creation provides the basis for man’s culpability in Rom 1:20: “For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse.”²⁶ Paul declares to the Lycaonians that he preaches “the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything in them” (Acts 14:15). Likewise, Paul grounds his appeal to the Athenians on the basis that God is the Creator of all things, that he is transcendent over mankind, and that all mankind is subservient to him (Acts 17:24–25). Only biblical creationism supplies the grounds for the meaning of human life and the context for moral absolutes, vital components of the gospel. The Bible proclaims that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov 1:7), and we first encounter the Lord as Creator. The Creator-creature distinction hence becomes the basis for the dissemination of the gospel. Greg Bahnsen posits along these lines: “From the fact that God is the sovereign Creator of heaven and earth, from the fact that the world and history are only such as His plan decrees, from the fact that man is the creaturely image of God, we must conclude that all knowledge which man possesses is received from God,

²⁴Ibid., 27.

²⁵Specifically, this fallacy is the confusion of cause and effect, in this case the necessary or sufficient cause. Robert J. Gula explains the grounds for the fallacy as follows: “If Y cannot happen unless X is present, X is a necessary cause or condition for Y.... If Y always occurs when X is present, then X is a sufficient condition (or cause) of Y” (*Nonsense: A Handbook of Logical Fallacies* [Mount Jackson, VA: Axios Press, 2002], 90). In this example X (well-defined origin views within biblical creationism) is neither a necessary nor a sufficient cause for Y (adverse views toward Christianity). In fact, there may be little or no cause-effect relationship, as countless other conditions could lead young people in later years to adopt negative views of Christianity. The study proves only that older students tend to reject Christianity—perhaps because instruction about evolution simply fortifies their inborn hostility toward God.

²⁶All Scriptural citations, unless otherwise noted, are from the Christian Standard Bible (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2017).

who is the originator of all truth and original Truth.”²⁷ We begin with the truth of the gospel message because we begin with the truthfulness of the divine Creator.

INCOMPATIBILITIES BETWEEN THE EVOLUTIONARY WORLDVIEW AND THE THEOLOGICAL CORRELATION OF SCRIPTURE

Having established the vital role of biblical creationism in upholding biblical authority, formulating theology, and promulgating the gospel, we turn now to the problems arising from alternative views. Biblical scholars and scientists who set aside the doctrine of fiat creation inevitably posit an old earth and an approach to origins that incorporates to a greater or lesser degree the tenets of evolutionary ideology.²⁸ Such a move is problematic, as evolutionary science propounds a number of tenets at variance with Scripture and the theological synthesis of its truth. These contradictions evidence an irreconcilable divide between the philosophical basis of evolutionary science and the nature of unitive and authoritative Scripture.

Before exploring these incompatibilities, it is important to define terminology. Stephen Meyer has noted that the term *evolution* appears commonly in the literature to denote one of three meanings: (1) change over time; (2) the universal common descent of all organisms; or (3) the creative power of the mechanism of natural selection and/or random mutation (a mechanism that is illusive of design).²⁹ The first meaning is tangential to the study at hand. The change of organisms within species over time is attested and is discussed below. Meyer contends, however, that the second and third meanings are problematical. These understandings are commonly associated with evolutionary science and yet have proved contradictory to the best conclusions and systematizations of science, philosophy, and theology.³⁰ In this study the phrase *evolutionary model* denotes specifically the neo-Darwinian scientific approach that assumes, with respect to the origin of life, the validity of universal common descent (the development of all living organisms from a single organism in the distant past) and the generative capacity of natural selection and/or random mutations to create the

²⁷Bahnsen, *Always Ready*, 24.

²⁸John Frame acknowledges this dilemma by concluding rightly that if one rejects biblical or young earth creationism the only alternatives are either to admit of some form of evolution by taking the days of Genesis 1 as figurative (theistic evolution, progressive creationism, the day-age theory, or the framework hypothesis) or to posit a gap comprising geological ages in Gen 1:1–3. The former solution runs contrary to Scripture in its exegesis and its ideological commitments, while the latter badly handles the text of Genesis as well as the scientific data (see Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 200–201).

²⁹“Scientific and Philosophical Critique: Defining Theistic Evolution,” in *Theistic Evolution*, 34–40.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 40–49.

wide variety of living species with the appearance of design.³¹ I contend that the ideological basis of this evolutionary model is deeply at odds with the truth-affirmations of Scripture.

The Evolutionary Model Fails to Account for the Diversity of Life Forms and the Necessary Connection to Their Creator

The late nineteenth-century Dutch theologian Herman Bavinck observed that “Darwinism has...proved incapable of explaining the further development of organic entities.”³² He notes that the species of plants and animals are too diverse to have originated from four or five organisms, let alone a single organism. Transitions between species have not clearly been observed. Theistic evolutionists Karl Giberson and Francis Collins admit that the origin of life, leading to the wide variety of organisms, remains a mystery, with a number of possible scenarios including the deep sea vent theory, the radioactive beach theory, the crystal or clay theory, and the extraterrestrial implantation theory.³³ When analyzing the data of the fossil record, however, the problem, if anything, is even more acute than in Darwin’s day.³⁴ Lower organisms continue to exist alongside higher organisms even though on Darwin’s theory they should have gone extinct as unfit in the struggle to survive. As John Frame observes:

Doubtless there has been what is sometimes called *microevolution*: variations in the distribution of genetic possibilities within a species, due to natural selection. So in some environments fruit flies of a certain color become more preponderant, and in other environments those of a different color, as color proves in different ways to be an aid to survival and reproduction. But this amounts to variation within species of already-existing genetic possibilities, rather than a process that produces a new species, that is, a new set of genetic possibilities. Nor does it come anywhere near to proving the existence of a process that could derive all present living forms from a single cell.³⁵

³¹Richard Dawkins defines biology ironically as “the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose” (*The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe without Design* [New York: Norton, 1986], 1).

³²Bavinck, *In the Beginning*, 144.

³³Giberson and Collins, *Language of Science and Faith*, 173–74.

³⁴Evolutionary scientist and paleontologist David Raup conceded several decades ago that “we are now about 120 years after Darwin and the knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded. We now have a quarter of a million fossil species but the situation hasn’t changed much. The record of evolution is still surprisingly jerky and, ironically, we have even fewer examples of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin’s time” (“Conflicts between Darwin and Paleontology,” *Field Museum of Natural History Bulletin* 50 [Jan 1979]: 25).

³⁵John Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 203.

Although some interpreters of the data remain unconvinced, Meyer provides evidence for this kind of microevolution in species of peppered moths and Galápagos finches.³⁶

Meyer and others contend, however, that the alleged random mutations which, according to the neo-Darwinian theory, brought forth life and the wide diversity of living organisms have proved to be virtually impossible from the standpoint of mathematical probability.³⁷ As geneticists have discovered in the last several decades, the number of DNA base sequences capable of creating the complex, three-dimensional folds that characterize functional proteins are extremely rare in the vast number of possible sequences: only one sequence is functional out of 10^{77} non-functional sequences. To put this into perspective, there are only 10^{65} atoms in the universe as a whole and, even by the broadest calculations of old-earth proponents, no more than 10^{40} organisms have possibly lived in the history of the earth. Meyer concludes:

In other words, the number of trials available to the evolutionary process turns out to be incredibly small *in relation to* the number of *possible* sequences that need to be searched. Or to put it differently, the size of the relevant spaces that need to be searched by the evolutionary process dwarfs the time available for searching—even taking into account the most generous view of evolutionary time.... It follows that it is overwhelmingly *more likely than not* that a random mutational search would have *failed* to produce even one new functional (information-rich) DNA sequence and protein in the entire history of life on Earth.³⁸

The notion that evolutionary processes created functional life, much less such the vast variety of life forms, is thus rendered invalid by its sheer statistical improbability. The evolutionary concept of deep time is in reality an illusion. Within the lifespan of the universe, much less the lifespan of the organisms themselves (the fulcrum of the issue), the window of time for changes to occur in species to account sufficiently for the diversity of life forms is simply too brief.

Scripture presents the authoritative record of the genesis of life on earth. With respect to the variety of life forms, Genesis 1 depicts God's creation of the many kinds of plants and animals. The Hebrew term *מין* occurs thirty-one times in the OT and designates a "type" or "kind" of

³⁶"Scientific and Philosophical Introduction," 35; idem, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperCollins, 2014), x. Cf. L. M. Cook and I. J. Saccheri, "The Peppered Moth and Industrial Melanism: Evolution of a Natural Selection Case Study," *Hereditary* 110 (2013): 207–12.

³⁷Douglas Axe, "Three Good Reasons for People of Faith to Reject Darwin's Explanation of Life," in *Theistic Evolution*, 96–98; Stephen C. Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism and the Origin of Biological Form and Information," in *Theistic Evolution*, 113–18.

³⁸Meyer, "Neo-Darwinism," 117–18, emphasis his.

plant or animal with an emphasis on shared characteristics.³⁹ With respect to the natural sciences, the term designates what we might classify as an original or super “species,” underscoring the likeness and affinities between the parent organism and the successive generations of its offspring.⁴⁰ God thus creates the varieties of plant life on the third day: “The earth produced vegetation: seed-bearing plants according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good” (Gen 1:12). On the fifth day God creates the varieties of winged and sea creatures: “So God created the large sea-creatures and every living creature that moves and swarms in the water, according to their kinds. He also created every winged creature according to its kind. And God saw that it was good” (Gen 1:21). Here there is a marked distinction in the narrative. The Hebrew term בָּרָא, a verb meaning “to create” and used only of God in the OT, occurs here for the first time since 1:1.⁴¹ In distinction from his previous creative acts, God now makes “living creatures” (נִפְשׁ הַחַיָּה) that move and swarm upon the earth. These are the creatures that partake of the “breath of life” (נִשְׁמַת-חַיָּה) (Gen 7:22) along with mankind and the animals that God creates on the sixth day. God blesses the birds and the fish and charges them to be fruitful and to multiply (Gen 1:22), underscoring God’s providential care for their sustenance and proliferation.

On the sixth day God first creates the divergent kinds of land animals: “So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good” (Gen 1:25). In his climactic act of the sixth day God specially creates mankind from the dust of the earth: “So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female” (Gen 1:27; cf. 2:7). Several distinctions in the narrative at Gen

³⁹*Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 577; *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, 5:262; *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, s.v. “מִין,” by Mark D. Futato, 2:934.

⁴⁰*HALOT*, 577; *DCH*, 5:262. Futato argues that “there is no evidence in these texts for taking *min* as a technical term corresponding with precision to family, genus, or species” (*NIDOTTE*, 2:934). While true that the texts do not use scientific taxonomies to distinguish among types of animals, the term מִין appears several times in Leviticus 11 to designate groupings of animals below the genus level. Thus the Israelites were to refrain from eating various “kinds” (מִין) of falcons (11:14), ravens (11:15), hawks (11:16), herons (11:19), locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers (11:22). This suggests that the term serves to classify animals into common groups sometimes corresponding to the genus level and sometimes rather closely to what we designate as species. As Sarfati notes, the key to speciation is the capacity for hybridization and the “kinds” of Genesis 1 designate the original species with sufficient genetic information for later breeding into sub-varieties (see Jonathan Sarfati, *Refuting Evolution 2* [Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2002], 77–79).

⁴¹See *NIDOTTE*, s.v. “בָּרָא,” by Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, 1:732; Eugene H. Merrill, *Everlasting Dominion: A Theology of the Old Testament* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006), 168.

1:26–28 mark out the creation of humans as the culminating act of creation. These features include the conspicuous change in style (“Let us make man in our image”), the distinctive literary pattern, the longer description, the use of the definite article (only day 6 is *the* sixth day), and the use of royal terminology for mankind in the words *rule* (רָדָה) and *subdue* (כִּבַּשׁ).⁴² Stylistic and linguistic features in the narrative of Genesis 1–2 focus upon two primary dimensions inherent in the creation of mankind as the *imago dei*: (1) The *vertical dimension*, emphasizing humanity’s relational properties to God (fellowship, personality, worship, morality) and materializing in his priestly role; and (2) The *horizontal dimension*, emphasizing humanity’s functional properties toward creation (self-consciousness, self-determination, creativity, intelligence) and materializing in his kingly role.⁴³ Man is created as the pinnacle of creation, a priest-king who relates to God and to other humans and who represents God as ruler over the created order. Ethically mankind’s creation in the image of God bears vital import. The extent to which the evolutionary model severs the integral connection between Creator and humanity coextensively diminishes the latter’s accountability to God and liability to divine judgment.

The creation narrative emphasizes not only that God brings into being the variety of plant and animal species, along with humans, but that he carries a necessary and vital connection to the diverse kinds of life.⁴⁴ This connection is evident throughout Scripture in God’s concern for individual plant and animal life and, even more so, for individual human life.⁴⁵ In keeping with this concern we find detailed provisions in the Mosaic Law such as the prohibition against cutting down trees during a battle siege: “When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it in order to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can get food from them. Do not cut them down. Are trees of the field human, to come under siege by you?” (Deut 20:19). The capacity to sustain human life renders such wanton destruction of fruit-bearing trees inimical to God’s purposes for creation. Thus God’s concern for life extends to his protection of certain kinds of trees. Other provisions affirm God’s special relationship to the varieties of life forms within the created order. Draft animals as well as humans were given the privilege of rest on the weekly Sabbath (Exod 20:10; 23:12; Deut 5:14). Fruits and crops growing on uncultivated lands during the Sabbatical and Jubilee years were to be

⁴²Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 181–84.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 184–200; Merrill, *Everlasting Dominion*, 169–71.

⁴⁴Frame likewise notes that “the biblical view of the natural world is intensely personalistic” (John M. Frame, *Apologetics: A Justification of Christian Belief*, ed. Joseph E. Torres [Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015], 35).

⁴⁵See Roy E. Gane, *Old Testament Law for Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017), 306–308.

left for the nourishment of various wild animals and needy people (Exod 23:11). Farm animals used to cultivate the land were permitted to enjoy some of the fruits of their labor (Deut 25:4). Stray and injured animals were to be cared for by returning them to their owners even if he were an enemy (Deut 22:1–4). Newly-born animals were not to be slaughtered until the eighth day (Lev 22:27), were not to be killed on the same day as their parent animals (Lev 22:28; Deut 22:6–7), and were not to be boiled in their mother's milk (Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21). The land and its varied vegetation were to have rest every seven years (Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:2–5) with an additional year of rest each half-century (Lev 25:11). God constantly sustains the diverse creatures of his created order with food and water (Job 38:1–39:30; Ps 104:10–29). He demonstrates concern for the well-being of domestic animals as well as humans (Jon 4:11). Not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice (Matt 10:29). God's evident concern for creation harmonizes best with the reality that he has created both mankind and the diverse kinds of plants and animals and thus sustains a direct relationship with them. Evolutionary science fails to support this kind of direct involvement with the created order.

The Evolutionary Model Fails to Divest Itself from Materialism and an Incipient Form of Materialistic Dualism

The ideological concept of evolution is in fact not unique to Darwin but existed previously in Greek philosophy: “Materialism and Darwinism...are both historically and logically the result of philosophy, not experimental science.”⁴⁶ There are really only two alternatives to creation, according to Bavinck: pantheism (the view that the material world emanates from and is one with eternal being) or materialism (the view that the material world originated in the material elements and is evolving toward some form of higher life). Evolutionary science, if not wholly identified with materialism, is necessarily wedded to its philosophical outlook. Materialism posits that “all entities and processes are composed of—or are reducible to—matter, material forces or physical processes.” Thus “all events and facts are explainable, actually or in principle, in terms of body, material objects or dynamic material changes or movements.”⁴⁷

The intellectual roots of this ideology originate in the West in the metaphysics of Greek philosopher Democritus (*ca.* 460–370 B.C.), coming to flower in later thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), Karl Marx (1818–83), and Bertrand Russell (1872–1970).⁴⁸

⁴⁶Bavinck, *In the Beginning*, 145.

⁴⁷*The Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, s.v. “Materialism,” by George J. Stack, 633.

⁴⁸John M. Frame, *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015), 9–10.

The problem with materialism, however, is that, as philosopher Alvin Plantinga and others have demonstrated, its ideology ultimately cannibalizes itself, since it is irrational at its root.⁴⁹ Plantinga explains this quandary in the following manner. If humans' cognitive faculties developed by the material means of natural selection and/or random mutations, then their ultimate purpose or function (assuming they have a purpose and function) would be for *survival* rather than for the production and acquisition of truth. Suitable behavior rather than true beliefs would be the primary goal, in that truth is not necessarily conducive to survival. So then, if the theory of evolution provides the complete purpose of the human mind, humans have reason to doubt the veracity of the conclusions of those minds, including the theories of evolution and metaphysical naturalism. To posit truth claims thus becomes at the very least irrelevant, if not inimical, to the impetus and program of evolution, thus trapping one in an infernal loop of doubt and irrationality. If, however, the mind has been designed by God one need not devolve into the intrinsic nihilism that necessarily arises from Darwinism.⁵⁰ Greg Bahnsen labels the inconsistency and irrationality of the self-proclaimed autonomous materialist as "intellectual schizophrenia":

The autonomous man must claim knowledge while failing to know what 'knowledge' is, must constantly appeal to his personal authority while rejecting all appeals to authority, must generate knowledge in an ultimately unknowable universe, must seek and find truth while legislating what truth has to be, cannot justify his own dependence on the principles of non-contradiction and natural uniformity, must believe in a rational yet irrational world, must relate unrelatable facts, must be ultimately skeptical and omniscient at the same time.⁵¹

Thus not merely abstract ideas but ethics, aesthetics, and personhood itself are senseless apart from the Christian theistic point of view.

Douglas Axe applies the point by showing specifically the bankruptcy of materialism to explain human consciousness and human reason.⁵²

⁴⁹This problem was identified earlier by Sir Arthur J. Balfour in his Gifford lectures of 1914: "All creeds which refuse to see an intelligent purpose behind the unthinking powers of material nature are intrinsically incoherent. In the order of causation they base reason upon unreason. In the order of logic they involve conclusions which discredit their own premises" (*Theism and Humanism* [New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915], 138). Of course, Darwin himself harbored such doubts: "But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would any one trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?" (Charles Darwin, *Charles Darwin: His Life Told in an Autobiographical Chapter and in a Selected Series of His Published Letters* [London: John Murray, 1902], 64).

⁵⁰Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 218–19, 237.

⁵¹Bahnsen, *Presuppositional Apologetics*, 110.

⁵²Douglas Axe, *Undeniable: How Biology Confirms Our Intuition That Life Is Designed* (New York: HarperCollins, 2016), 237–38.

He comes to this conclusion as the result of a thought experiment that led him to pose a necessary sequence of realities: “Physical systems are governed by physical laws. With our minds we are able to control our physical bodies. Our minds can take precedence over physical laws and are therefore nonphysical. That which is constrained by physical laws cannot give rise to something that takes precedence over those laws. Therefore, man did not evolve from the physical.”⁵³ Evolutionary science must essentially posit an incipient form of materialistic dualism to explain human consciousness, but this is simply nonsensical within the confines of strict materialism. To use Frame’s analogy, no one has seen a plowed field produce a farmer or a machine produce an engineer, yet this is essentially what scientists claim by positing the primacy of the material and impersonal over the personal and immaterial.⁵⁴ Purposeful creation by a rational, personal God best explains the realities of the world.

The Evolutionary Model Nullifies the Unity of the Human Race with Corollary Implications

Only God’s direct creation of the material world and the single origination of man, specially and directly created by God, accounts for the following biblical doctrines.

Original Sin

The unity of the human race undergirds the doctrine of original sin, such that John Murray concludes: “Whatever additional principle of solidarity may be posited or established, it cannot be abstracted from the fact of biological ancestry.”⁵⁵ The representative or federal headship of Adam is established by virtue of his physical relationship to all humans as the primary ancestor. Beyond this, the transmission of inherited corruption is tied necessarily to the organic connection of the human race. The unity-in-diversity of humanity links indissolubly to mankind’s material connection to Adam as the first man. Bavinck summarizes this conclusion: “Creationism preserves the organic—both physical and moral—unity of humanity and at the same time it respects the mystery of the individual personality.”⁵⁶ The physical connectedness of mankind also underlies his ethical unity. Scripture is clear that all humans descend from Adam: Eve is the mother of all living (Gen 3:20), and God made from one man every nation (Acts 17:26).⁵⁷

⁵³Ibid., 238.

⁵⁴Frame, *Apologetics*, 38.

⁵⁵John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam’s Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 23.

⁵⁶Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, trans. John Vriend, ed. John Bolt, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 2:587.

⁵⁷Although John Walton interprets the “one man” here as a reference to Noah (*The Lost World of Adam and Eve: Genesis 2–3 and the Human Origins Debate*

Although some theistic evolutionists such as Denis Lamoureux contend that Adam is simply a later retrojection on ancient taxonomy and therefore never existed,⁵⁸ Richard Gaffin states the matter more pointedly: “The truth of the gospel stands or falls with the historicity of Adam as the first human being from whom all human beings descend.”⁵⁹

The apostle Paul assumes that such a relationship is the basis for the twofold headship of the first and last Adams in Romans 5 (discussed below) and 1 Corinthians 15. In his epistle to the Corinthians he establishes that both death and resurrection come through the agency of a singular man connected physically or spiritually to all his successors: “For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.... So it is written, The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven” (1 Cor 15:21–22, 44–47). No head comes before the first man, Adam, who is the natural, earthly man, and no head comes between Adam and the second man of the new creation, Christ, who is the spiritual, heavenly man. Thus there are only two heads, the first Adam and the Last Adam, upon whom hang the destiny of all other humans.⁶⁰ Adam’s sin is an affront to the holy God and the grounds for death in the human race. Paul’s schema makes sense only in the light of common ancestry from Adam, who is constituted by God as the representative head of all his descendants.

Redemption in Christ

Divine redemption springs likewise from the reality that God is the Creator of the world and that all humans are materially and ontologically related to one another as the product of his original, special creation. Redemption is often cast in Scripture as new creation, both in the salvation of humans and in the renewal of the cosmos.⁶¹ In 2 Cor 5:17

[Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015], 186–87; “A Historical Adam: Archetypal Creation View,” in *Four Views on the Historical Adam*, ed. Matthew A. Barrett and Ardel B. Caneday, 89–118 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013], 105), the context of Paul’s statement, with his mention of God’s giving life and breath to all things (v. 25), is a clear allusion to the creation account. For a robust defense of the historicity of Adam from the perspective of Scripture and historical theology, see William VanDoodewaard, *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics, and Human Origins* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015).

⁵⁸Denis O. Lamoureux, “No Historical Adam: Evolutionary Creation View,” in *Four Views on the Historical Adam*, ed. Matthew A. Barrett and Ardel B. Caneday (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 59.

⁵⁹Richard B. Gaffin, Jr., *No Adam, No Gospel: Adam and the History of Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015), 5.

⁶⁰Murray, *Imputation of Adam’s Sin*, 39.

⁶¹Steve Jeffery, Michael Ovey, and Andrew Sach, *Pierced for Our Transgressions:*

the work of salvation is compared to the work of recreation: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!" In 2 Cor 4:6 the work of salvation is described as the work of God shining light into the believer's heart, an act with literary and conceptual ties to God's first command for light to shine upon creation (Gen 1:3). The redeemed celestial elders in Rev 4:11 extol God as Creator of all things: "Our Lord and God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created." This doxology emphasizes that God is sovereign Creator of all things, that all things came to be by his express will or intention, and that he continues to sustain all things by his direct involvement in creation.⁶² God's work of creation, as well as his work of redemption, consists of his direct involvement in the created order and climactically in his relationship to human beings. Creation and redemption function thus as mutually informing intentions in God's plan for humanity and the world. God's prerogative to redeem rises from his right as Creator, and his creative work provides the theological paradigm for his redemptive work in recreation. As God the Creator exerts authority over his creation, this authority includes the right to buy back or redeem his creation (Isa 43:1–7; 44:21–26).⁶³

Scripture is clear, moreover, that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was necessary because *all people* inherited a sinful nature from a common ancestor. The apostle Paul affirms the universality of Adam and Christ as the respective heads of guilty and redeemed humanity: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned.... But the gift is not like the trespass. For if by the one man's trespass the many died, how much more have the grace of God and the gift which comes through the grace of the one man Jesus Christ overflowed to the many.... For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous" (Rom 5:12, 15, 19). Christ took upon himself common human flesh and blood, yet untainted by sin (Heb 2:14; 4:15). This solidarity is affirmed by 1 Tim 2:5: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus." Christ spanned the gap of the Creator-creature distinction by taking on human nature, as mankind could not, in view of his creatureliness, attain to God. Christ's mediation and substitutionary atonement are linked inextricably to the universal human solidarity arising from common ancestry.

Rediscovering the Glory of Penal Substitution (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 105.

⁶²Ibid., 106–7.

⁶³Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 190.

*The Universality of the Divine Kingdom
and the Dominion Mandate*

The beginning of creation coincides with the inception of God's kingdom purposes, at least in the universal sense, as Merrill observes:

The kingdom story begins with the first sentence of the Bible: 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth' (Gen. 1:1). By this simple but majestic affirmation, both king and realm are introduced; and in the six days that follow, the citizens of the kingdom, inanimate and animate, appear in their course until mankind, the crowning glory of the Creator, takes center stage.⁶⁴

As the divine king, God speaks creation into being by fiat (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24). God orders the hierarchy of living creatures and charges mankind in the dominion mandate to serve as his vice-regents ruling over the earth and subduing it (Gen 1:28; 2:18, 22–23; Ps 8:4–8). God blesses and sanctifies the Sabbath to solemnize his enthronement over creation as his realm and sanctuary (Gen 2:2–3; Ps 132:8–14) as well as to provide a pattern for mankind to replicate on the finite level (Exod 20:11; 31:17).⁶⁵ God reigns as sovereign over all creation (Ps 93:1–2); his kingdom is universal and everlasting (Ps 29:10; 103:19; 145:13). God holds authority over every sphere of the created world, including mankind: "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing, and he does what he wants with the army of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. There is no one who can block his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'" (Dan 4:34b–35).

Michael Vlach defines this universal kingdom as "God's absolute sovereignty and control over all creation from heaven at all times."⁶⁶ This reign is predicated on the Creator-creature distinction. God alone controls and sustains the cosmos. All creatures are subservient to his will and decree. God's reign over creation in the universal kingdom is

⁶⁴Merrill, *Everlasting Dominion*, 278.

⁶⁵Moshe Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple, and the Enthronement of the Lord—The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles*, ed. André Caquot and M. Delcor (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981); William P. Brown, *The Seven Pillars of Creation: The Bible, Science, and the Ecology of Wonder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 75–76; John H. Walton, *Genesis*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 148–53; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 60–66. For a constructive critique of the cosmic temple imagery used by Walton and others, see Daniel I. Block, "Eden: A Temple? A Reassessment of the Biblical Evidence," in *From Creation to the New Creation: Biblical Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and Benjamin L. Gladd (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013).

⁶⁶Michael J. Vlach, *He Will Reign Forever: A Biblical Theology of the Kingdom of God* (Silverton, OR: Lampion, 2017), 53.

unmediated in distinction from the mediatorial kingdom.⁶⁷ Evolutionary science blurs this distinction, however, and mitigates the extent of the universal kingdom by placing the evolutionary process as an intermediary between God and his realm. The evolutionary model posits that random mutations invest design and purpose into the world, while natural selection determines which species will survive and flourish. This understanding stands opposed to Scripture's insistence that God personally controls and sustains the universe and that he has tasked mankind with stewardship over the created world. God's reign is unitive. No blind processes outside God's control intervene between God and the realm over which he reigns; no evolutionary processes were directing and subduing the created world prior to God's commission of mankind. Moreover, by asserting the hegemony of blind chance long ages, evolutionary science undermines the goal of creation as God's reign as King over creation and man's joint-reign and fellowship with his Creator-God. One token that served as a tangible reminder of this reality was the weekly Sabbath rest whereby mankind and his domesticated animals were to acknowledge the supremacy of God over his created order (Exod 20:11; 23:12; 31:15; 34:21; 35:2). Understood in this fashion the Sabbath served likewise as a type for the eschatological rest of God's people when they would fully enter into God's reign and fellowship (Heb 4:8–11). God rests and rules within the first week as a historical paradigm for mankind to honor God under the Mosaic covenant. Further, the Sabbath rest constitutes a new creation prophecy for the goal of recreated mankind in the renovated heavens and earth. God's universal reign as king over all creation thus simply rules out an intermediary role for blind evolutionary processes.

The Basis for the Authoritative Proclamation of the Gospel

The reality of the Creator-God who is both transcendent and immanent is the only adequate basis for the authoritative proclamation of all truth, including especially that of the gospel. The evolutionary model privileges human autonomy in the interpretation of truth and thus undermines the power and perspicuity of the Bible. Interpretation of the sacred text is made to conform to the reigning dogma of science, diminishing Scripture to a position less than clear, sufficient, suitable, and authoritative. The marked distinction between Christianity and other religions highlights this ideological tension. Other religions tend to posit an absolute spirit that is impersonal (e.g., pantheism, Hinduism, Taoism) or personal spirits that are not absolute (e.g., polytheism; animism; Shinto; the ancient religions of Egypt, Greece, and Rome).⁶⁸ Christianity is unique in affirming a personal God who is absolute, and this absolute/personal God constitutes the grounds for the universal

⁶⁷Ibid., 55; Alva J. McClain, *The Greatness of the Kingdom: An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1974), 21.

⁶⁸Frame, *Apologetics*, 37.

promulgation of the gospel. Cornelius Van Til affirmed this uniqueness of Christian theism in his illustration of the two levels of reality. Van Til would walk into the classroom and draw two circles on the board, one representing God and the other, beneath it, representing creation, with lines between the circles depicting communication.⁶⁹ He argued that all non-Christian thought is “one-circle” thought—elevating man to the position of God or degrading God to the position of man:

The two systems, that of the non-Christian and that of the Christian, differ because of the fact that their basic assumptions or presuppositions differ. On the non-Christian basis man is assumed to be the final reference point in predication.... In other words, the system that the non-Christian has to seek on his assumption is one in which he himself virtually occupies the place that God occupies in Christian theology.... The system that Christians seek to obtain may, by contrast, be said to be *analogical*. *By this is meant that God is the original and that man is the derivative. God has absolute self-contained system within himself.*⁷⁰

Only on the basis of this reality can one proclaim the good news of the gospel: God has created all things and is therefore sovereign, self-existent, and absolute. Mankind is his image-bearing creature and wholly dependent on him. Mankind has fallen into sin by rebelling against the Creator. God has condescended in the person of Christ to redeem sinners. Salvation is received by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Thus the divine act of creation, the fundamental Creator-creature distinction, and the authority of God as Creator become the bedrock for the apostolic preaching of the gospel (Acts 7:49–50; 14:15; 17:24–25).

The Evolutionary Model Abolishes the Creator-Creature Distinction by Assigning Unwarranted Metaphysical Properties to the Evolutionary Process

Alister McGrath observes that “evolutionary thought is notoriously prone to metaphysical expansion and inflation, whether accidental or intentional.”⁷¹ He calls this “the problem of [the] transferability of epistemic authority from the scientific theory itself to the secondary metaphysical claims it is held to endorse.”⁷² Herman Bavinck noted a century earlier that due to the relative success that scientists achieve in the natural sciences they frequently resort to metaphysical and

⁶⁹Ibid., 42.

⁷⁰Cornelius Van Til, *A Christian Theory of Knowledge* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1969), 15–16.

⁷¹Alister E. McGrath, *Darwinism and the Divine: Evolutionary Thought and Natural Theology* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 36.

⁷²Ibid., 37.

worldview claims, succumbing to the temptation to offer totalizing judgments that impose upon other disciplines.⁷³ Notorious in this regard is Richard Dawkins, who routinely smuggles metaphysical propositions into his scientific affirmations.⁷⁴ Consider the following statement from Dawkins concerning the nature of DNA in relation to the blind chance underlying the evolutionary process: “In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won’t find any rhyme or reason in it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no other good. Nothing but blind, pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is. And we dance to its music.”⁷⁵

Without warrant Dawkins incorporates aesthetics, purpose, and intention into his discussion of blind physical forces. The evolutionary process itself has become conscious, even divine, in some sense. If DNA knows nothing and cares for nothing, has no design and no purpose, and turns upon only blind, pitiless indifference (even to suggest this is to feign that it is capable of thinking and feeling), one is pressed to postulate how it orchestrates and conducts the music (with its intrinsically mathematical and logical schema) to which we dance? Dawkins wants to eat his cake and have it too. He has constructed a fairy-tale world, free from design or purpose, that is at the same time replete with an orderly rhythm and melody by which humans march in step.

Such expressions of evolutionary thought regularly obfuscate empirical science with the language of metaphysics and religious ideology. Such legerdemain exalts *chance* to the position of a conscious power in guiding and directing the outcomes of the world. R. C. Sproul memorably exposes the fallacy of this thinking:

Chance is the new reigning deity of the modern mind. Chance inhabits the castle of the gods. Chance is given credit for the creation of the universe and the emergence of the human race from the slime. Chance is a shibboleth. It is a magic word we use to explain the

⁷³See Nathaniel G. Sutanto, “Divine Providence’s *Wetenschappelijke* Benefits: A Bavinckian Model,” in *Divine Action and Providence*, ed. Oliver D. Crisp and Fred Sanders (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 106. On the role of the Enlightenment and its historical aftermath in scientists’ gradual attribution of secondary causes to usurp the role of God himself, see James Turner, *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 35–43.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 38.

⁷⁵Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1995), 133. Theistic evolutionists Karl Giberson and Francis Collins include God in their definition of evolution but likewise end up with a virtually closed system: “The model for divinely guided evolution that we are proposing... requires no ‘intrusions from outside’ for its account of God’s creative process, except for the origins of the natural laws guiding the process” (Karl Giberson and Francis Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011], 115).

unknown.... Chance can do nothing because it *is* nothing. It is *no thing*. Before something can exert power or influence it must first be something. It must be some kind of entity, either physical or nonphysical. Chance is neither. It is merely a mental construct. It has no power because it has no being. It is nothing.⁷⁶

Since evolutionary science has no god, the evolutionary process itself becomes divine. But it is disingenuous to suggest that such mantras of the evolutionary approach are anything other than metaphysics masquerading as experimental science.

The Evolutionary Model Disrupts the Necessary Linear Relationship between Sin and Death and Renders Death Intrinsic Rather than Extrinsic to the World

Scripture is clear that sin is the precursor to death, that death arises because of sin. At the end of the sixth day of the creation week God declares his creation “very good” (טוֹב מְאֹד) (Gen 1:31). This pronouncement presupposes that everything pertaining to creation is pleasing and suitable to God’s purposes, that creation is “useful, fascinating, and beautiful.”⁷⁷ In the case of mankind this goodness includes ethical or moral uprightness. God commands the morally upright man to abstain from eating the fruit of one tree, lest follow dire consequences: “You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die” (Gen 2:17). Man breaks the command and sin enters with the rebellion of mankind. Guilt and shame result from man’s sin (Gen 2:25; 3:7–8), followed by the curse upon the serpent (Gen 3:14) and the ground (Gen 3:17). Spiritual death ensues with mankind’s exile from fellowship with God in the garden (Gen 3:23–24), and physical death soon follows with Cain’s murder of Abel (Gen 4:8). Sin mars the good creation. Depravity spirals downward with Lamech’s boasting over his murder of a young man (Gen 4:23) to the thoroughgoing corruption in the antediluvian world (Gen 6:5). Sin is never pronounced “good” in Scripture: it stands diametrically opposed to God and his purposes (1 Cor 15:25–26; 2 Tim 1:10; Rev 21:4). Following the storyline of Genesis, therefore, a necessary line of cause and effect moves from sin to death.

Later writers of Scripture uphold this linear movement. The prophet Ezekiel affirms that sin leads to death: “The soul who sins shall die” (Ezek 18:4 [ESV]). Paul contends moreover that sin is the necessary and sufficient cause of death: “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all people, because all sinned” (Rom 5:12). Sin was the direct cause for the subjection of creation to decay and futility, as all death stems from the entrance of sin into the world: “For the creation eagerly

⁷⁶R. C. Sproul, *Chosen by God* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1986), 191–93.

⁷⁷Frame, *Systematic Theology*, 845.

waits with anticipation for God's sons to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly, but because of him who subjected it—in the hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of God's children" (Rom 8:19–21). Death entered the world through the sin of one man: "For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Cor 15:21–22). Sin necessarily and inevitably leads to death: "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Rom 6:16 [ESV]). This is because "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). The apostle James likewise affirms that death results from sin: "After desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death" (Jas 1:15).

A few implications follow from denying that sin is the cause of death. First, if death occurs prior to sin then death becomes intrinsic rather than extrinsic to the created order. Death becomes a necessary part of the cosmos in that death serves as the catalyst for the creation of new life forms rather than the outcome of divine judgment. There is then no robust creation free from suffering to pronounce "very good" at the beginning of the world. Instead, nature is endemically red in tooth and claw and naturally evil in its essence. Second, if death occurs prior to sin the sanctity of human life is severely diminished. Death, whether of animals or humans, simply provides the mechanism for the evolution of the species.⁷⁸ Death becomes the common and necessary course of nature to achieve higher life forms.⁷⁹ Such a position contrasts with God's early concern in Scripture to protect Cain from the avenger (Gen 4:15). Likewise this renders superfluous the institution of human government to protect people made in the image of God and to maintain a just society: "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans his blood will be shed, for God made humans in his image" (Gen 9:6). It also contravenes the consistent divine concern for justice with respect to murderers who shed innocent blood (Deut 19:1–10; 2 Kgs 24:4; 2 Chron 19:10; Isa 1:15; Ezek 18:10–13; Hos 12:14; Joel 3:21; Mic 7:2; Nah 3:1; Hab 2:17). Untethered from sin, death becomes a native force operating in the world rather than an interloper and an aberration in God's good creation. Such thinking stands at odds with clear emphases in Scripture on the sanctity of human life and the original

⁷⁸An example of this type of thinking from the evolutionary perspective may be found in Sarah Sloat, "Humans Are Still Evolving: 3 Examples of Recent Adaptations," *Inverse*, 2 Feb 2020, available online at <https://www.inverse.com/mind-body/humans-still-evolving-3-recent-adaptations>, accessed 12 February 2020. The article presents a classic example of arguing from microevolution to macroevolution without skipping a beat.

⁷⁹Darwin's own view of evolution amounted to condoning some forms of genocide. He argued that eventually in human history the "higher civilized races" would eliminate the lower races, such as the Turks (*Charles Darwin: His Life*, 64).

goodness of the created order.

The Evolutionary Model Distorts the Doxological Purpose for Creation

A chief purpose for God's work in creation is to glorify himself by establishing generally his righteous reign over all creation and by establishing particularly his righteous fellowship with mankind. Despite this good creation, man embraced sin in the fall and thwarted the immediate fruition of the divine goal. Redeemed humanity now awaits future glorification, the crowning culmination of redemption. The glorification of the believer, more so even than the presence of the believer with Christ at death, is the goal of redemption, for salvation brings about deliverance from sin and all its consequences, including death.⁸⁰ At the resurrection believers receive their full adoption as sons (Rom 8:23), commensurate with the renewal of the creation itself (Rom 8:19–21). Then Christ will “transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his glorious body” (Phil 3:21). Moreover, believers will be glorified together with Christ (Rom 8:17) since participating in the glory of Christ is the goal of the gospel (2 Thess 2:14). This renewal of creation constitutes a “new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness dwells” (2 Pet 3:13).

The philosophical commitments of evolutionary science contravene this intention. Evolution denigrates the nature and reality of future glorification by negating that mankind's original and intended state consisted of creaturely holiness. Mankind's original goodness and holiness establishes a paradigm for the reconstitution of humanity and the cosmos in the glorified state. The prophets, such as Isaiah, reflect this notion in establishing that the originally good creation serves as the model for the restored and then recreated heavens and earth in the millennial kingdom and eternal state:

He will judge the poor righteously and execute justice for the oppressed of the land. He will strike the land with a scepter from his mouth, and he will kill the wicked with a command from his lips. Righteousness will be a belt around his hips; faithfulness will be a belt around his waist. The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat. The calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf will be together, and a child will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze, their young ones will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like cattle. An infant will play beside the cobra's pit, and a toddler will put his hand into a snake's den. They will not harm or destroy each other on my entire holy mountain, for the land will be as full of the knowledge of the LORD as the sea is filled with water (Isa 11:4–9).

Resurrected humanity thus reprises his originally upright condition

⁸⁰John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 174–75.

into an escalated state of glorified, confirmed holiness. Contrarily, evolutionary science severs the continuity between the present age and the future age. It contravenes the reality that God's first creation serves as the model for the renewed heavens and earth. Scripture indicates that protology ("first things") and eschatology ("last things") are integrally connected. The creative acts of God in the original and in the renewed heavens and earth go hand-in-hand.

The Evolutionary Model Contradicts Clear Biblical Texts Concerning Creation

Beyond the theological incompatibilities already discussed, the evolutionary model simply contravenes the clear and straightforward meaning of a number of other biblical passages that emphasize God's direct and immediate role in creation as well as truth-affirmations about the context, timing, and goal of creation.⁸¹ While the exegesis of these texts lies beyond the bounds of the present paper, the cumulative force of the texts provides compelling evidence that the general and pervasive tenor of Scripture lies contrary to the claims of the evolutionary model.⁸² For example, later passages in the Pentateuch affirm that God created the earth in six days as undoubtedly the original audience would have understood. "For *in six days* the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day" (Exod 20:11 [ESV]). "It [the Sabbath] is a sign forever between me and the Israelites, for *in six days* the LORD made the heavens and the earth, but on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed" (Exod 31:17). In addition, God created every bird and beast as well as mankind directly from the ground rather than as the product of evolution from lower organisms. "The LORD God *formed the man out of the dust from the ground*" (Gen 2:7). "The LORD God *formed out of the ground every wild animal and every bird of the sky*" (Gen 2:19). An important component of mankind's dominion and stewardship over the created order is the fact that he is materially and organically connected to that order. Moreover, mankind's animation originates from divine inbreathing,

⁸¹The author is aware that theistic evolutionists such as John Walton, Peter Enns, and others have proposed alternative interpretations for many of these passages. My point here is simply to say that apart from clever and sometimes ingenious twists, these passages, on a clear, straightforward, and linear reading, oppose evolutionary ideology. This author champions an approach to hermeneutics that privileges the single, authorially-intended meaning as verbally expressed by the unitive divine-human author of inspired Scripture (see Elliott E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990], 29; Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002], 141–64; Nathan Hoff, "Meaning-Types and Text-Tokens: An Examination of the Relationship between the Biblical Text and Its Meaning," in *The Theory and Practice of Biblical Hermeneutics: Essays in Honor of Elliott E. Johnson*, ed. H. Wayne House and Forest Weiland [Silverton, OR: Lampion, 2015], 11–32).

⁸²See also the concatenation of biblical texts (OT and NT) provided by VanDoodewaard, *The Quest for the Historical Adam*, 9–18.

not from evolutionary processes: “The LORD God...*breathed the breath of life into his nostrils*, and the man became a living being” (Gen 2:7; cf. 1 Cor 15:45).

The Bible affirms the unity of the human race by God’s special creation as over against descent from diverse kinds of intermediary organisms. Thus Jesus instructs the Pharisees that God created humanity as male and female at the beginning of creation, not at the conclusion of vast evolutionary processes: “Haven’t you read,’ he replied, ‘that *he who created them in the beginning made them male and female*’ (Matt 19:4). “*From the beginning of creation* God made them male and female” (Mark 10:6). “For in those days there will be such tribulation *as has not been from the beginning of the creation* that God created until now” (Mark 13:19 [ESV]).⁸³ Even more, all humans originate from Adam: “*From one man he has made every nationality* to live over the whole earth” (Acts 17:26). Finally, living organisms intrinsically possess boundaries relative to their kind (ἕκαστος). This distinction is evident throughout the opening creation narrative as well as in later texts. God tells Noah that “two of everything—from the birds *according to their kinds*, from the livestock according to their kinds, and from the animals that crawl on the ground *according to their kinds*—will come to you so that you can keep them alive” (Gen 6:20; cf. 7:14). Clean and unclean animals are distinguished by their kinds (Lev 11:14–22). This distinction likewise underlies Paul’s discussion of the various kinds of plants, of flesh, and of bodies in 1 Cor 15:37–40. Simply put, the chain of Scriptural evidence tells against the ideological commitments and conclusions of evolutionary science at every turn.

BIBLICAL CREATIONISM AND PRESUPPOSITIONAL APOLOGETICS

In conclusion, several factors render biblical creationism not only necessary to presuppositional apologetics but alone consistent with its coherent propositions. First, biblical creationism affirms the intelligibility of science as grounded in the transcendent God as Creator. Absent a personal, sovereign Creator, science has no basis for affirming uniformitarian premises: neither logical necessity nor observational evidence compel the understanding that things will continue as they have in the past, a primary tenet for experimental science.⁸⁴ Science instead makes leaps in its assumptions and becomes the ultimate arbiter of truth, attempting to fulfill a role beyond its capacity to perform. Biblical creationism, on the other hand, grounds the intelligibility of science in the

⁸³The term θλίψις, meaning “affliction,” “tribulation,” or “oppression,” occurs 45 times in the NT and always refers to the human experience of distress. This verse tacitly assumes that God created humans at the inception of creation as that is the benchmark for the beginning of tribulation.

⁸⁴See Jonathan M. Hanes, “Presuppositionalism Revisited: The Necessity of a Transcendent God for the Intelligibility of Science,” *Science and Christian Belief* 28 (2016): 20–22.

reality that a rational, personal Creator has invested the created order with meaning, purpose, and design. Second, biblical creationism affirms the proper approach to epistemology as grounded in the fear of the Lord as Creator. Apologetics involves necessarily the application of a basic theory of knowledge, that is, epistemology.⁸⁵ The supposed neutrality of the natural man is in reality a veiled hostility toward the true God. Scripture is clear that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, as both its inception and governing principle, and is thus the gateway to valid epistemology. Moreover, epistemology is necessarily ethical. To untether the character and authority of God from his work as Creator is to undermine the basis for knowledge itself.

Third, biblical creationism affirms the proper approach to metaphysics or reality as grounded in the aseity of God as Creator. God is free and in no way co-equal to nor dependent upon creation. The created order does not rival God by means of independent, metaphysical properties or processes. The Creator is wholly transcendent over the created order, and creation does not impair God's freedom as Creator.⁸⁶ The unity-in-diversity of creation is possible only because creation mirrors the Triune Creator. Apart from these truths, materialism must be stretched beyond its capacity into unwarranted metaphysical affirmations. Fourth, biblical creationism affirms the proper approach to ethics as grounded in the authority of God as Creator. John Frame observes the inherent irrationality of approaching ethics apart from the Creator-creature distinction: "The non-Christian assumes the ultimate authority of his own reason (autonomy), or he accepts some authority other than that of the God of Scripture. In any case, he substitutes the authority of a creature for that of the Creator."⁸⁷ Such approaches, however, are inherently irrational because they deign to assert ethical authority apart from the supreme and unitive authority of the Creator. Without the Creator there is simply no universal basis for ethics or moral absolutes. Fifth, biblical creationism affirms the historicity of divine redemption and providence. As stated earlier, to set aside or deny biblical creation is to undermine the historicity of Scripture. No biblical writer subsequent to Genesis treats the creation narrative as anything other than true and real history. To discredit biblical creation is thus to impugn the authority of God and his Word. Believers must recognize the deceitfulness of sin with respect to this issue (2 Cor 11:3; Heb 3:13) and must affirm resolutely that God as Creator is alone worthy of all worship: "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen" (Rom 11:36).

⁸⁵Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic*, 144.

⁸⁶K. Scott Oliphint, *Covenantal Apologetics: Principles and Practice in Defense of Our Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 58.

⁸⁷John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008), 45.

