

“Our Biblical World View” (2) Theocentrism vs. Materialism

Last Lord’s Day we began this new sermon series that we have entitled, “Our Biblical Worldview.” Every thinking person in the world has a world view, that is, he sees and perceives the physical and spiritual realms according to a set of personal convictions about values, principles of living, and the purpose for living in this world. One’s worldview is how a person understands what is true, real, and valuable. If one claims to have a biblical worldview, as we do, he asserts that his perceptions and values are shaped by his understanding of God is his Creator and the Ruler of this world, and that it is his responsibility to live in manner that is in accordance with God’s will, that which pleases Him.

Last week we emphasized that a biblical worldview understands not only that there is God, but that He is active in His world, governing and judging the lives of all that inhabit His world. Our purpose in addressing this first was to emphasize that God not only exists but that He is active in the history of His world, assessing and judging all people that are living in His world. Since the coming into the world of His Son, Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead, God the Father has entrusted this rule of the world unto Him. Jesus Christ is Lord.

Today it is our intention to underscore that our God--the Triune God of the Bible--is indeed the Creator, and that we not only believe that our origin was due to His creative work, but that that our ongoing existence is due to Him. As Paul proclaimed to the pagans in Athens,

God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth... ²⁶And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings... ²⁸for in Him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:24, 26, 28)

From the opening chapters of Genesis and throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, God is set forth as the Creator. He is the ruling King over the world because He created the world. This major emphasis is carried on into and through the New Testament, even as it announces the onset and future full realization of the new creation. Believing in God as the Creator of all things is the foundation of a biblical worldview.

The Bible sets forth God initially creating all that exists and that since His work of creation, God has been sustaining and governing the entire cosmos. Our biblical worldview compels us to know God and His will in order to discover and understand the purpose for which He created us and to live according to His will in His world. In short, ***our biblical worldview is theocentric***—God is at the center of all that exists. For us to be theocentric means that we attempt to live in a manner that understands God to be the main focus of our lives. He is the reason that we exist—in Him we live. He is the cause and the sustainer of our lives—in Him we move. He is the reason that life has meaning and significance for us—in Him is our being. But more, in God all things exist. A theocentric life is one that understands that all things are “from Him, and through Him and to Him” (Rom. 11:36). And of course, when we say that we have a theocentric worldview we are saying more specifically that we have a Christocentric worldview. Jesus Christ the Son of God is the cause of all things and for Him and unto Him all things have their purpose. As Paul wrote of Jesus Christ,

For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Col. 1:15-17)

Now our theocentric worldview is in contrast and conflict with the worldview of many who live in this fallen world. Rather than being theocentrists, most people in today’s world are materialists. Materialism is the worldview of much of the fallen world. ***Materialism is the understanding that all things are to be***

understood and explained in physical, naturalistic terms. There is no consideration to what others regard to be spiritual or supernatural causes or reasons for what is and what takes place in history. Everything exists due to natural processes over time. One philosophical website described materialism in this way:

Materialism as a philosophy is held by those who maintain that existence is explainable solely in material terms, with no accounting of spirit or consciousness. Individuals who hold to this belief see the universe as a huge device held together by pieces of matter functioning in subjection to naturalistic laws. Since materialism denies all concepts of special creation, it relies on the theory of evolution to explain itself, making beliefs in materialism and evolution interdependent.¹

Evolution is born out of this philosophy, not from science itself. Evolution is the explanation for how life exists within the framework of *materialism*. Materialism is a worldview which believes that *things made themselves*. Materialism allows no place for an eternal God who made and controls the physical realm. Materialism has faith that the physical realm itself is eternal and is self-generating and perpetuating.

Materialists are generally atheists. Atheism is the belief that there is no god. Atheism is the religion of *materialists*. Evolutionists are materialists; many materialists are also atheists. The atheist/materialist attempts to explain the existence of all that is in the universe in terms of the interaction of atoms and molecules, separating from one another or combining with one another according to fixed laws of physics. Atheism is inherently an inconsistent and an illogical belief system. In the end it has to ascribe eternity, design, and intelligence to inanimate objects. Atheism denies God's existence, but in doing so is forced to explain the universe by deifying matter.

Materialism remains utterly unable to explain how purely material, and therefore unconscious, inanimate, unfree, aimless atoms can produce that spiritual world of life, consciousness, purpose, religion, morality.²

Materialists in effect divinize the physical universe, infusing divine attributes upon physical things. Materialists have faith in this: natural forces explain all that exists presently, without input from any external designer, if only given sufficient time—billions of years. Further, they assert that all things exist without purpose and without meaning, without having had the input of a divine being. We believe in the eternal nature of God, not the eternal existence of matter. They look at the world and assume that only great amounts of time can explain the present state of the physical world. We reject the philosophy of the materialists, which include evolutionists, which teach or assume that matter itself is eternal. This itself is illogical when considering the fact of the entropy of all physical things over time. It is an impossibility, a logical absurdity, to believe that matter has existed from eternity. No, only God is eternal. God purposed and then acted when He created all that exists, having created out of nothing. And we have no problem believing that God created the world in its present mature state, as Genesis 1 relates to us.

But their evolutionary philosophy will not permit a *supernatural* explanation for what is. They only allow for a natural, physical explanation of what exists. They are inherently biased to interpret all evidence from their materialistic worldview. They refuse to consider or interpret any evidence that might lead them to conclude otherwise. They are biased against theism. **Richard Lewontin**, a geneticist and leading evolution promoter, once candidly expressed the bias of evolutionary scientists:

We take the side of science *in spite* of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, *in spite* of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, *in spite* of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our *a priori* adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce

¹ <https://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/materialism.htm>

² Herman Bavinck, **In the Beginning**, p. 33.

material explanations, no matter how counter intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is an absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.³

This man honestly admitted that evolutionary theory is based on a philosophy of materialism, and that this restricts them and compels them to give no consideration to any explanation of the cosmos apart from a natural, physical cause. He was saying no matter how much sense and how much evidence suggests that God is the cause or reason things exist, they purpose to give no consideration to it. For them that is an impossibility. Their world view presumes an antispiritual bias, so that they intentionally refuse to give theism consideration or regard. The result of this materialistic worldview is that the physical realm, or perhaps living things, become the center and meaning of life. It may devolve further so that the individual person sees himself as the center of the physical universe and that in himself alone he may find the meaning and purpose of life. He desires and pursues all things as the means to enrich himself and fill his own life with pleasure and satisfaction. He regards the world about him existing for him, chiefly. This is the soul or spirit of fallen, sinful mankind.

Sadly, there are many with this worldview of materialism that attend churches. The motivation that chiefly drives them is, “what benefit is this going to bring me?” Now granted, God in calling people of the world unto Himself will often initially draw desperate and hurting people toward Him in that they seek to escape the mess in which they find themselves or have placed themselves. But as they come to salvation, the Lord causes them to learn and grow to understand that it is the life lived before and unto God and unto others that brings the greatest blessing in life. The Word of God teaches that to live one’s life chiefly for oneself leads to despair and death, but to deny oneself and to live unto Jesus Christ is life and peace. The Lord Jesus said it this way: “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Matt. 16:25). We repudiate the worldview of materialism for we embrace the biblical worldview of Theocentrism, or Christocentrism—Jesus Christ is the center and meaning of all things. That God is the Creator of all things asserts this worldview. All that exists owes its existence to God and from God all that exists derives its intended purpose.

Let us turn to consider a portion of God’s Word that addresses these issues and their importance. Let us turn to Hebrews 11.

I. A description of saving faith (Heb. 11:1, 2)

In Hebrews 11:1-6 we read of the nature of true saving faith in God and how this faith begins with an understanding and embracing of God to be the Creator of the cosmos. Here are the words of Hebrews 11:3:

“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”

And a few verses later in verse 6 we read,

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

In these two verses we read not only that God is the Creator (v. 3), but that the faith that pleases God is belief in understanding that He is God, that is, He is both the Creator and that He is actively governing the world and revealing Himself to those who diligently seek Him (v. 6). Our Creator is present. Our God is sustaining us. God is revealing Himself to us and we can know Him, providing we seek Him. He blesses

³ Richard Lewontin, “Billions and Billions of Demons,” *The New York Review*, January 9, 1997, p. 31. He died this past July 4, 2021. He was an outspoken marxist, who was a materialist throughout his academic career at Harvard and elsewhere.

those who seek Him with the reward of coming to know Him. Thankfully, we have come to know Him for we have sought Him through His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Here are all six verses of this portion of Hebrews 11.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. ⁴By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. ⁵By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

This passage of Hebrews 11 follows the writer’s word of admonition and exhortation to his readers, who were professing Christians, that they would persevere in their faith in Jesus Christ unto their final, full salvation. The writer set forth a very directly stated and strongly worded warning and promise of Hebrews 10:35-39, which read,

Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:

³⁷“For yet a little while,
And He who is coming will come and will not tarry.
³⁸Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him.”

³⁹But we are not of those who draw back to perdition (damnation), but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

After exhorting his readers to persevere in their faith, in Hebrews 11 he cites a number of people from the Old Testament record who demonstrated and illustrated persevering and life-directing faith that pleased God and that receives God’s promise of salvation. Hebrews 11 depicts the truth of Hebrews 10:38, “The just shall *live* by faith.”⁴ Saving faith is a life that dictates the way one lives. If one’s faith does not govern one’s life, one’s faith is not saving faith, but rather, it is dead faith, being alone (cf. James 2:17). One commentator of Hebrews, **F. F. Bruce** (1910-1990), described the contents of Hebrews 11 this way:

In Old Testament times, he points out, there were many men and women who had nothing but the promises of God to rest upon, without any visible evidence that these promises would ever be fulfilled; yet so much did these promises mean to them that they regulated the whole course of their lives in their light. The promises related to a state of affairs belonging to the future; but these people acted as if that state of affairs were already present, so convinced were they that God could and would fulfill what He had promised. In other words they were men and women of faith. Their faith consisted simply in taking God at His word and directing their lives accordingly; things yet future so far as their experience went were thus present to faith, and things outwardly unseen were visible to the inward eye.⁵

The writer first defined faith in Hebrews 11:1f, which reads, “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.*”

⁴ This verse is found in four places in the Word of God: Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11, and here.

⁵ F. F. Bruce, **The Epistle to the Hebrews** (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishers, 1964), p. 277.

By defining faith as “substance” and “evidence,” the author indicates that biblical faith is not a vague hope grounded in imaginary, wishful thinking. Instead, faith is the settled confidence that something in the future—something that is not yet seen but that God has promised—will actually come to pass because God will bring it about. Thus biblical faith is not blind faith in the face of contrary evidence, not an unknowable “leap in the dark”; rather, biblical faith is the confident trust in the eternal God who is all-powerful, infinitely wise, eternally trustworthy—the God who has revealed himself in His Word and in the person of Jesus Christ, whose promises have proven true from generation to generation, and who will “never leave nor forsake” His own (13:5). Such faith in the unseen realities of God is emphasized throughout chapter 11 (e.g. 11:7, 8; cf. v. 3) and has provided confidence and assurance to all who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

When the writer declared that faith is “*the substance of things hoped for*”, he was saying that faith makes real to the believer that which he believes. “That is to say, things which in themselves have no existence as yet become real and substantial by the exercise of faith.”⁶ It makes objective in the heart and mind of the believer that which others assume to be only subjective, that which to them is uncertain and unknowable. You cannot convince a true believer that Jesus Christ is not real and true and that the promises that God has given in Him will not come to pass. Whereas “physical eyesight produces conviction or evidence of visible things, faith is the organ which enables people to see the invisible order.”⁷

The “substance” that is assured to the believer presently is of yet future things to be received. **John Owen** (1616-1683) wrote of this verse,

But still these things as hoped for are future, not yet in themselves enjoyed; and so, although hope comprises in trust, confidence, and an assured expectation, giving great supportment unto the soul, yet the influence of things hoped for into our comfort and stability is weakened somewhat by their absence and distance.

This is that which faith supplies; it gives those things hoped for, and as they are hoped for, a real subsistence in the minds and souls of them that do believe: and this is the sense of the words.⁸

But not only is faith the “substance of things hoped for”, it is “*the evidence of things not seen.*” Faith gives evidence that there are things that are true and will come to pass that God has promised to His people. What are these things not seen? **John Owen** declared,

By “things not seen,” the apostle intends all those things which are not objected or proposed unto our outward senses, which may and ought to have influence into our constancy and perseverance of profession (of faith). Now, these are God Himself, the holy properties of His nature, the person of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, all spiritual, heavenly, and eternal things that are promised, and not yet actually enjoyed. All these things are either absolutely invisible unto sense and reason, or at least so far, and under those considerations whereby they may have and influence into our profession. Everything is invisible which nothing but faith can make use of and improve unto this end (1 Cor. 2:8-12).

Materialists, who are people without faith, object to believing in things they cannot see or touch. To them invisible things are nonexistent things. Materialists choose to live by their physical senses, or claim that they only will believe what they can have scientific evidence that supports the thing they believe. But physical senses cannot apprehend or comprehend invisible things, for only faith in what God has declared and revealed can secure the certainty to the mind and heart that which God has promised which we cannot see or handle. And so, faith is the only sound and sure evidence for those who believe; it will not convince the unbeliever. “Now faith is not the evidence and demonstration of these things unto all, which the Scripture alone is; but it is an evidence in and unto them that do believe,—they have this evidence of them in themselves.”

⁶ Ibid, p. 278.

⁷ Ibid, p. 279.

⁸ John Owen, **An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews**, vol. VII (Baker Book House, 1980, orig. 1855), p. 8.

We then read that this faith just described was what brought God's approval of the Old Testament saints, of whom the writer proceeded to identify and describe. **Verse 2** reads, "***For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.***" The remainder of the chapter recites the record of the lives of faith of notable people of the Old Testament record. But before speaking of the promise of future things that moved men and women of faith, the writer cited something that occurred in the past when seen things were made by something unseen--the spoken word of God. God created space and time out of nothing.

II. A declaration of God creating "the worlds" from nothing (Heb. 11:3)

We read in **verse 3**, "***By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which were visible.***" The Word of God teaches us that God is the Creator of all that exists and that He brought everything into existence by His spoken Word. God created space and time out of nothing. The writer asserted that the unseen things of God's Word have pre-eminence over things we see, for in the beginning the things we see were made from unseen things.

But this truth cannot be understood apart from faith. You cannot convince a non-believer of the things we believe through reason and argument. Because he does not have faith, he does not have the capacity for comprehending, for understanding, the things that God has revealed. They are foolishness to him, even as the Word of God calls him the fool for his refusal to believe them (cf. Psalms 14:1). The Scriptures declare that by faith we understand, not we understand and thereby have faith.

It would seem that the writer to the Hebrews is asserting the faith that we have is based on what is written regarding God's work of creation in Genesis. The first act recorded in the Bible is God creating the world. In the first and second chapters of Genesis we read of God creating all that exists. When we consider the teaching of the Bible respecting God as the Creator of all that is, we may conclude certainties about His nature and His purposes in history. The record of creation was not given merely to explain how things came into existence; its chief role is to tell us about the God who brought these things into being.

That God is the Creator has implications for all people everywhere. God created all people from their common parents, Adam and Eve. As our first parents were accountable to their Maker, as are their children. God is the Creator of all people of all nations (although it is true that He created Israel uniquely as a nation to be in covenant relationship with himself). As created beings, all mankind are created in the image of God and have a responsibility to God to fulfil their role. Consider Psalm 139:10ff in which idolatry is repudiated even as the one true God is exalted.

But the LORD is the true God;
He is the living God and the everlasting King.
At His wrath the earth will tremble,
And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation.

¹¹Thus you shall say to them: "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens."

¹²***He has made the earth by His power,
He has established the world by His wisdom,
And has stretched out the heavens at His discretion.***

¹³When He utters His voice,
There is a multitude of waters in the heavens:
"And He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
He brings the wind out of His treasures."

¹⁴Everyone is dull-hearted, without knowledge;
Every metalsmith is put to shame by an image;
For his molded image is falsehood,

And there is no breath in them.

¹⁵They are futile, a work of errors;

In the time of their punishment they shall perish. (Psa. 139:10-15)

God the Creator has the right to rule over all, and, in fact, He does rule as King over all. The one fact that He is the Creator assures the second, that He is the King over His creation. All should recognize this and acknowledge it, even kings (cf. Dan. 4). Those who fail or refuse to acknowledge Him as their Maker, He will judge. God holds all men accountable as to how they live before Him and how they behave toward one another (e.g. Gen 9:6). One of the functions of a good king is to act as a judge punishing sin and avenging injustice. Since God is God of all the earth, He is judge of all the earth. Because God is a good, holy, and just judge, He will judge fully and rightly: “shall not the judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. 18:25). God sees all the wickedness of all people and will call each one to account for the actions of this life. His eye is on all within His creation. God watches with concern over those who are poor and helpless and He views it as His responsibility to avenge them. His people, who are in covenant relationship with Himself, are under His protective eye. He will bring retribution upon all who would do them harm. Furthermore, since God is the Creator of the heavens and all the earth, there is no escape from Him (cf. Psa. 139:7-10).

Returning to Hebrews 11:3, we read that after the writer set forth our faith in God as the Creator of all things, he then set forth first the faith of the antediluvians; that is, those who had lived before the flood of Noah’s day.

II. The faith of the antediluvians (those who lived before the flood) (11:4-7)

A. The faith of Abel (11:4)

The writer begins to cite various people of faith, first of Abel, who was the second born son of Adam and Eve. **Verse 4** reads, “*By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.*” This story is recorded in Genesis 4. Let us read of the event from that passage:

¹Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.” ²Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

⁶So the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”

⁸Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

⁹Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?”

He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰And He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground. ¹¹So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹²When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”

¹³And Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear! ¹⁴Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.”

¹⁵And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him. (Gen. 4:1-15)

We read that God had accepted Abel's sacrifice, but that He had rejected that offered by Cain. Why was Abel's sacrifice accepted and Cain's was not? It is commonly said that it was because Abel had offered a blood sacrifice but Cain had only offered a grain sacrifice, that is a bloodless sacrifice, and without the shedding of blood, there can be no remission of sins (cf Heb. 9:22). But this is simply not the case in this account. The Old Testament makes provision for the offering of grain sacrifices. It would have been an appropriate and good thing for Cain the farmer to offer what his hands had wrought, the fruit of the harvest of his fields just as it was right for Abel to offer a lamb, being a shepherd. And so, it was not because Abel's sacrifice was a lamb/sheep and Cain's was of grain; rather, God had accepted Abel's sacrifice because Abel had offered it in faith, a faith that had him to live in a righteous manner before God. Cain's sacrifice was not accepted because his life was not one of righteousness. As God said in verse 7, "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" And so, God accepted Abel's sacrifice because God had accepted Abel; God had rejected Cain's sacrifice because God had rejected Cain. God only regarded a sacrifice with favor if it was offered in faith, a faith that moved the sacrificer to live righteously. This has been God's way of salvation from the very beginning. He saves people from their sin, saving them unto Himself, through the means of faith.

B. The faith of Enoch (11:5)

We then read of Enoch, the seventh generation from Adam and Eve. **Verse 5** reads, "*By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found because God had taken him*"; *for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*" All that is said of Enoch in the Old Testament is found in **Genesis 5:21-24**.

²¹Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. ²²After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

Enoch was a man who walked with God. Walking with God is a description of godliness. It reveals the fact that Enoch, though a sinner, was reconciled to God, "for two cannot walk together except they be agreed" (Amos 3:3). To walk with God is to set God always before you, to live knowing that you are always under His watchful eye. It is a walk characterized by the fear of God, living so that you might please God and do nothing to offend Him or alienate yourself from him. This was Enoch's constant concern. This was Enoch's character. Enoch delighted himself in God. He walked with God. He had faith in God. He enjoyed fellowship with God.

And apparently God enjoyed Enoch's company. One day as they walked together, God took him home with Himself. Their fellowship was thereafter continuous, unbroken, and undiminished. One described him:

Enoch was removed to a better world. As he did not live like the rest of mankind, so he did not leave the world by death as they did. He was not found, because God had translated him. He had lived but 365 years, which, as men's ages were then, was but the midst of a man's days. God often takes those soonest whom he loves best; the time they lose on earth, is gained in heaven, to their unspeakable advantage.⁹

Enoch was no longer of this world. He was changed. In the same manner we all will be changed, we who believe on the Lord Jesus, who possess a faith like Enoch's faith. Those who walk with God in this life will walk with God in the life to come. He will perhaps take some of us sooner, while others tarry here, according to His purposes. But we shall all one day be with Him.

Now after describing the faith of Enoch, the writer describes...

C. The absolute necessity to possess true faith. (11:6)

⁹ Matthew Henry

Verse 6 reads, ***“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*** It is clear that it is the faith that moves one to seek God that pleases God, thus to “believe” here is to believe that the invisible God exists, and to believe in the blessedness which is assured to those who “walk” with Him, that is, live godly and righteously. God is the rewarder of all such who believe. The “reward” is God Himself or the “joy of finding Him.”¹⁰

Now notice ***first***, that ***true faith involves believing certain truths that God has revealed in His Word.*** True faith is not a feeling. True faith is not an experience. True faith is belief in truths that God has revealed through His Word. God’s Word has told us that He created the world and all that is in it and did so in six days. We believe what God has said respecting His creation of all things. This is the nature of faith, believing what God has said.

Secondly, we see that true faith “must believe that He is.” In other words, it is essential to true faith for one to believe in the true God. There are many people in the world who are people of “faith”, so-called, but their faith is not in the true God; therefore, their faith is not true faith. ***“For he who comes to God must believe that He is.”***

Now, an important question that must be asked is, “If one must know that God is God, what specifically must be known and believed about God?” If we had the time I would take us to Acts 17 and consider what it was that Paul had declared to the pagans of Athens regarding what they needed to hear about God in order to be saved. In Acts 17:22 through 31 we would assert the following:

First, the Apostle Paul described and defined the nature of the true God to the Athenians. They were believers in “God”, even many gods. But they had not known the “true God.” Who was He? ***Paul declares the true God to be the Creator.*** Verse 24 reads, “God, who made the world and everything in it...” In order to believe that God is, one must believe that God is the Creator of all that is. Now I believe in the literalness of Genesis 1, that is, we hold to the view that believes in a young earth and a young universe. However I do not believe that it is essential to true faith that one believe in the nature or manner of creation, as long as one believes that God is indeed the Creator. There are Christians who believe in the great age of the earth and the universe, but they still assert that God is the Creator. I think that they are mistaken, but still, they believe God is the Creator. But the point is that you cannot be a person of faith that pleases God, if you do not acknowledge Him as the Creator.

Secondly, Paul declared that God is “Lord of heaven and earth.” God is not only the Creator, but God is the Ruler over all that is. The true God is the sovereign Lord who is in control of all events and happenings in history. He has a purpose for all that He has created. History has purpose and meaning, and God is the Lord of history bringing to pass all that He has decreed to occur in history. God is not a reactor to events; He is the actor by whom all things exist and all things function in order to accomplish His will. To believe “that God is”, is to understand and believe that God is the Sovereign Lord.

Thirdly, to believe “that God is”, is to believe that ***God is holy and transcendent.*** Paul expresses this concept by the words that God “does not dwell in temples made with hands, nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything.” God cannot be controlled or manipulated by people here on earth. God is transcendent. He is outside of history, even while He is in control of history. He is spirit in nature, and cannot be confined or restricted to a single place. He does not have a physical body (cf. Luke 24:39).¹¹ He fills all and is in all. God is a holy, transcendent God. To have faith in the true God, to believe that God is indeed the true God; you must believe in His holy and transcendent nature.

Fourthly, to believe “that God is”, is to believe that ***God has commanded all men everywhere to repent in view of Day of Judgment of all mankind.*** Paul declared in Acts 17:30 and 31, “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.” To repent is to turn from living for self and for sin and purposing by God’s grace to live unto God with Jesus Christ as one’s Lord and Savior. God has declared that He will judge the world in righteousness, only those who repent of their sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved from His wrath.

¹⁰ F. F. Bruce

¹¹ That Christ is eternal God but has a body is due to His human nature, not His divine.

Fifthly, to believe “that God is”, is to believe that *God has raised Jesus Christ from the dead and that He will judge the world by Him*. The last statement that Paul made about the true God is that “He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” God raised His Son from the dead. He has thereby demonstrated that there will be a Day of Judgment. We are to live in the light of that truth that He has declared.

Let us conclude today by considering...

III. The post-Christian world in which we live

We are living in a post-Christian world. We have been doing so for the past generation, or so. No longer do the people of our western society view the world from the perspective that God, The Creator of heaven and earth, governs His creatures. No longer do people believe that God rules His world according to spiritual laws to which He has bound His creatures. People now believe that they live in a world unaccountable to God, free to live as they please apart from consequences that God, if He does exist, might bring upon them. Oh yes, most people still claim to believe in God; true atheists are few. But the vast majority of those who “believe” live as if there is no God. They are practical atheists. “They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient” (Titus 1:16).

We will not do well as a society or as individuals if we order life irrespective of God who made us and rules over us. What we believe about God, Who He is, and how He would have us live, will manifest itself in the way we choose to live. We read of king David’s assessment of those in his day who sought to live without God. **Psalm 14:1ff** read,

The fool has said in his heart,

“There is no God.”

They are corrupt,

They have done abominable works,

There is none who does good.

²The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men,
To see if there are any who understand, who seek God.

³They have all turned aside,
They have together become corrupt;
There is none who does good,
No, not one.

Notice the connection that David saw between a man’s *theology* and his *morality*, what he believes about God and how it relates to the manner that he lives in God’s world. Those who live as though there is no God will be corrupt, manifesting evil in their lives. What you believe will be evidenced in how you live.

We live in God’s world. God has decreed that we order our lives principally to know Him and do His will. To reject God and His legal claims upon us will result in our detriment. To live as though there were no God leads to moral corruption and abominable living. But to know and live according to the laws of the Creator results in His blessing. We must seek to know and understand God. When we do, we will better understand ourselves--why we are here and how we should live in God’s world. Faith is only beneficial when it leads us in a life of obedience to God. The result of a *life* ordered by faith is a blessed existence.

God did not create us to live to indulge ourselves with sinful pleasure. We are not even to devote ourselves chiefly to what might otherwise be good things. We are *not* to live with the primary aim of life to grow wise, gain power, or gather wealth. We are not to live primarily to please self, but rather to please God Who made us. The aim of life is to seek to know God and to live in His world according to His will. When we do, then all aspects of life are infused with meaning and significance. Proper balance in life and a proper perspective of life result. As God once said through a prophet,

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,
Let not the mighty man glory in his might,
Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;
***But let him who glories glory in this,
That he understands and knows Me,***
That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.
For in these I delight,” says the LORD. (Jer. 9:23-24)

But here we are, Christians living in a post Christian world, a world which refuses to acknowledge or reinforce these realities. We live in a world which is opposed to us who would live according to the faith of God’s Word. We are being pressed into the world’s mold. We are being shaped or conformed to its value system and its way of thinking. As a result we tend to forget God, or at least live out our days as though He had little influence upon us. I am afraid God could say of much Christendom today as He once said of ancient Israel, ***“My people have forgotten me days without number” (Jer. 2:32).***

Sometimes the world moves against us in open hostility in what they say about us or in the actions they take. More often than not, the world simply moves along its course irrespective of us, flowing like a huge swelling river wanting to suck us into the current and carry us along in its downward flow. The point is that none of us are unaffected by our culture. We are attempting to stand, as one attempts to stand, say, in a flowing stream or river. We are in a godless culture in which we move and think, and it adversely affects us. We have all but lost our foundation. We have attempted to stand in the shallows apart from the strongest currents of the age. But as we have attempted to stand, the flow has eroded the earth beneath our feet, and our footing is no longer sure. It is time to adjust ourselves, reassert a strong footing lest we too are swept away. We may be confident as we have faith in our God through His Son Jesus Christ, He will keep us and preserve us unto His appointed purpose and our destined end, even our blessed eternal life in His presence.

The Non-objectivity of Many Scientists

Many do not believe in creation because, they argue, “Science teaches against it.” They say, “To believe in creation is to ignore or to deny what scientists and science have proved. We answer without equivocation or hesitation, first, *scientists have not proved evolution, nor have they disproved creation; science is not able to do either.* And *second, scientists themselves are not necessarily objective practitioners of science.*

It is often said that through the centuries “the church” and its leaders were the greatest obstacle to scientific inquiry. No, it was scientists themselves who opposed new discoveries in science. Granted, they were ones whose thinking had been shaped by church teaching. But scientists were resistant to change primarily because of their established scientific views as much as they were attempting to defend church dogma. It is no different today.

Scientists are not by nature objective researchers. They have beliefs and agendas that they persist in defending. This shapes and directs their inquiry and too often their conclusions. Scientists themselves attest that scientists are biased and closed-minded like the rest of us. **Andrew McIntosh**, is Reader in Combustion Theory, Department of Fuel and Energy, University of Leeds in the United Kingdom, and trained as a mathematician. He described it this way:

No scientist is entirely objective. We are always governed by our assumptions. If a scientist does not believe in God, then his starting point of atheism will be bound to affect his judgment as he looks at the world around him. If his mind is closed to the possibility of a designer, his own assumption will force him to adopt what to many will seem like an “unlikely” explanation for what he observes.

I read another scientist’s assessment of unscientific scientists. **Stephen Grocott** is general manager, Research and Development, Southern Pacific Petroleum and he has a PhD in organometallic chemistry. He, a committed creationist, wrote this:

The first place to start is with a definition of science. Many [definitions] exist, but most of them come down to something like, “If something is scientific, it is observable and testable (i.e. able to be repeated).”

Now it might surprise the readers without a scientific background to hear me say that very few scientists have any real idea what science is. However, if you are a scientist you will probably acknowledge the truth of this seemingly nonsensical statement. In my undergraduate studies and postgraduate research, I can’t ever recall anyone telling me what science is (and isn’t!), showing me what it is, or providing me with an explanation of how it operates. If you are studying science or working with scientists and you doubt me, I challenge you to ask them for a definition of what is “scientific.” After a pause, most of them would not be able to give an answer much deeper than “It is what scientists do.”

As an undergraduate, I was taught to remember, not to think. Sure, I was given tools which I could *use* to think, but I wasn’t actually *taught* to think. Then, as a Ph.D. researcher I worked in a very narrow field (as do all Ph.D. researchers), and so the breadth of the question like “What is the definition of scientific?” was absolutely irrelevant to me. Upon graduation and working as a research scientist for 17 years and as a leader of other scientists, the question has never arisen, nor apparently needed to have been asked. My point is that most scientists don’t really know what is or isn’t scientific, because it rarely affects what they do.

Why make a big deal of this? The reason is because creation and evolution are actually both outside the realms of science and, to know this, you need to know what science is—and as we have seen, most scientists don’t.

A. Evolution--falsely called science

Much of the debate about creationism has to do with the origin of life. There are two possible models by which the existence of life can be explained. One is **creation**; the other is **evolution**. It is wrong to reject creationism on the grounds that it is non-scientific and that evolution is scientific. Most do, however. They make a false distinction, saying, “Creationism is a matter of faith; evolution is science.” We do not deny that creationism is born of faith, but we would say that evolution is also. Our assertion of creationism is born from of faith in what God has declared in His word; the claims of evolutionists are born of faith in a godless philosophy of **materialism**. Evolution itself is not a fact of science, it is a theory developed through an interpretation of evidence shaped by a non-scientific philosophy.

In order for an assertion such as evolution to be regarded as a fact of science, it must meet three criteria. It must be **observable**, **testable**, and **repeatable**. Neither creation nor evolution can meet these tests. Now to be clear, we are not denying the reality of **natural selection**. Natural selection is the adaptation of a species to its environment. Both evolutionists and creationists acknowledge that natural selection takes place. What we do deny is (1) the evolutionary belief of “the appearance of new (not rearranged) genetic information leading to greater and greater complexity of genetic information.” We do not believe, contrary to evolutionists, that (2) life may come forth from inanimate chemicals. These two assertions of evolution are assumptions that have never been observed, never tested, and certainly never repeated. These aspects of evolutionary theory are not scientific.¹²

Jonathan Sarfati, a researcher in physical chemistry, who happens to believe in creation said this:

Science deals with repeatable observations in the *present*, while evolution/long-age ideas are based on *assumptions* from *outside* science about the unobservable *past*. Facts do *not* speak for themselves—they must be interpreted according to a framework. It is not a case of religion/creation/subjectivity versus science/ evolution/objectivity. Rather, it is the biases of the religions of Christianity and of humanism *interpreting the same* facts in diametrically opposite ways.¹³

B. Belief in creation--born of faith--is not opposed to science

We confess as true the statement of the Bible, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). This is a faith statement. It is where we begin our consideration and analysis of all things. We begin with the given that God does exist and that He did create all things. We understand that God created all that is out of nothing. He called all matter and all life into existence through His creative and all-powerful Word. **Hebrews 11:3** describes the nature of our faith in God:

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

We assert that there was a beginning of all that physically exists. Prior to creation the Blessed Triune God alone existed. He brought all things into existence when He issued His decree to create. The things that we see, were not made from previous things that were visible. We have faith in God who spoke all into existence. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1).

Evolutionists confesses a faith statement also, “In the beginning God did **not** create the heavens and the earth.” Their faith is in the idea that the physical universe itself is eternal. There was no beginning, in their view. Granted, they try to push it back to what they refer to as a “big bang”; they call that a beginning. But if pressed, they admit that must go back further. Throughout eternity there have been an infinite number of big bangs, resulting in an expanding and then contracting universe, a cycle repeating itself eternally. This faith claim of theirs is both philosophically and scientifically untenable. It is nonsense. Known science repudiates the notion that matter could be eternal in nature.

¹² John F. Ashton, ed., **In Six Days; Why Fifty Scientists Choose to Believe in Creation** (Master Books, 2001), p.147.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 75.

And so, although we readily admit that creationism is not science by a strict definition, but neither is evolution. Having said that, we certainly recognize that the faith claims of creation and the faith claims of materialist evolutionists can be examined scientifically. That is through observation and consideration of what exists, scientific evidence may be gathered that will lend itself to either supporting or repudiating both creationism and evolution.

We believe in creationism, and we also happen to believe that the creation gives ample evidence to support creationism when examined fully and honestly. Science cannot and should not be the ground of our faith, but it may indeed affirm our faith. Certainly faith is not grounded on science; faith is grounded on the Word of God. Faith is not opposed to science, but some matters of faith can be affirmed by science. Creationism is one of them.
