

Doctrine of Creation

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[0 : 00] Alrighty, guys. It is 9 o'clock, so why don't we jump in! Lord, we ask that you would bless this time and help us all to grow closer to you.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Alright. Well, we're back again after a snow hiatus.

And you may be wondering, why are we back again? Didn't we spend the entire last class talking about how everybody disagrees about what Genesis 1 says?

Why are we even talking about it anymore, right? And if that's how you're feeling, I'd like to start the class by giving you a word of exhortation.

And that is, if any interpretation we have of Scripture, anything that we advocate for, makes us feel like we can ignore Scripture or avoid it, or avoid wrestling with the text, then I submit to you that it must be wrong.

[1 : 39] If you're adopting an interpretation that says, I can just ignore this part of Scripture, I don't have to read it, I don't have to think about it, then I think you should reconsider.

Because our interpretations shouldn't be licensed to dismiss God's Word. And ultimately, our job is to sit under the teaching of Scripture as a good audience, even if we're not sure of every aspect of the text, every part of it, right?

And even if we all disagree about parts of the text, it doesn't mean we don't keep on coming back and trying to learn and trying to understand. So with that exhortation, why don't we start by reading the portion of our text that we're going to be considering today.

Can somebody read for me? Yeah. Oh, here we are. You have your hand up. Can somebody read for me Genesis 1, verses 20 through 25?

Yeah, yeah. I think that's page 1. 20 through 25. 20 through 25.

[3 : 01] And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly as it was good as it was good as it was said.

which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, fill the waters in the sea, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. Yep, through 25. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beasts of the earth after his kind.

And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind. And God saw that it was good.

All right. Does anyone see sort of a recurring pattern in these verses? After its kind.

[4 : 22] You guys see that? God made the sea creatures after their kind, and the birds after their kind, and the land creatures, and the swarming creatures after their kind.

I find that, according to their kind repetition, really intriguing. What could these phrases be referring to?

Well, I mean, the most obvious explanation of these is basically just the observation that lambs give birth to lambs, and grapevines produce grapevines, you know.

So it's not really meant to be communicating to us what kinds are. just saying that, you know, like things give birth to like things. And that there's diversity.

Yeah. It's kind. Right, exactly. I actually think, given that the original audience of Genesis 1 were farmers, shepherds, people who are really super familiar with animal husbandry, this would be not really that groundbreaking if that was the only meaning.

[5 : 36] You know? I think most, these people were very familiar with the fact that lambs give birth to lambs, et cetera. So, I think it would kind of be doing injustice to the text to restrict it to merely

that meaning.

So, what additionally could it be referring to? Well, the word kind here means something like categories or varieties of things, indicating that the text is drawing on that there seems to be something behind our sort of our common sense observation that there are different ways of being. Hi, sorry, I'm like... No, don't worry about it. No, just the beginning. We're just talking about kinds, you know, according to their kinds in Genesis day five and day six.

Yeah. So, there are different ways of being that we can justifiably group together and separate. Okay?

Now, what do I mean by that? Well, apple trees seem to us to be different kinds of things than a lion, right? But we would still group together maple trees with the apple trees and we would group lions with tigers, right?

[6 : 57] There seems to be sort of these different ways of existing that we can just see with our eyes like, oh, that is like this. We put them together even though they're not identical. There's diversity among the kinds but there are different kinds of things, right?

If anyone here is familiar with the works of Plato, this may be reminding you of his concept of the ideas and some have even noted that there's an interesting parallel between the Greek translation in the Septuagint of these passages that we just read and the works of Aristotle in Greek where he is attempting to describe what he believes are like the fixity of the forms, like how every individual species of thing is its own thing and it's, you know, it has to do with substance and accents if you're familiar with Greek metaphysics.

And he's often in those passages in Aristotle, he's using a very similar kind of language to the Greek translation of these passages. But Aristotle is producing what I think could be accurately called like a scientific account of these different kinds and he's giving philosophical reasons for the separation of categories of things and categories of being.

And I don't think that's actually what scripture is doing here but I think because scripture is not making philosophical arguments, it's not making a scientific argument here, it's distating a truth. But I think beyond all that there is definitely here an affirmation that there are different ways of being and there's variety among them.

[8 : 43] Okay? Different kinds of existence. So where do these ways of being or kinds come from?

What was that? From God? Oh yeah, that was good. Yeah. From God himself. Right? Of course. Like all things they come from God.

Right? We learn class one everything was created ex nihilo. There is God and everything that God created. And so if we're thinking about where did all this different ways of being, these kinds of existences, these different forms you might call them, where do they come from?

Well they have to come from God. But let's consider this. When you and I are creative we tend to imagine that we're truly generating concepts and images from nothing.

Right? We're like we're truly original. We just we create from the nothingness that is in our mind.

Right? But actually any experienced artist will tell you that our creative activity is more of a blending.

[9 : 57] A blending or appropriating of the reality around us. Right? An artist first goes out and feeds their imagination with information from our senses and then they can go back and recombine and reimagine them as their own works.

Right? Not to say that artists aren't creative only that they have to draw on existing reality and twist them and move them and form them into something new.

Right? But they're not truly original. Actually J.R.R. Tolkien called this work sub-creation because none of us can say that we actually create proper.

We're always whenever we do something creative we're always sub-creating drawing on the things that already exist. But if we think about this that can't actually be true of God.

Right? There is nothing for God to go out and observe and feed his imagination like I think I'm going to create let me go out and see what's out there. You know? No.

[11 : 03] God doesn't have there is nothing outside of God to base his creation on. And some have attempted to say that God created based on his foreknowledge of what would be created much like some say that God elects people based on their free choice of him.

Right? So if you're familiar with the doctrine of grace we talked about this a few weeks ago not a few weeks ago it was actually like a few months ago my goodness. Anyways the idea that oh someone chooses God in their life freely and God from time immemorial knows that and says

therefore I'm going to elect this person because he chose me.

Right? And so a similar sort of activity is thought to some people have thought well God has perfect foreknowledge so he knows what will be what will exist in creation and so he creates based on his foreknowledge of what will be existing.

However Stephen Charnock makes short work of this view observing he made all things in wisdom how can this be imagined if the things known were the cause of his knowledge and so before his knowledge and therefore before his action God would not then be the first in the order of knowing agents because he would not act by knowledge but act before he knew and know after he acted. You see that it's kind of ridiculous. So God can't create based on his foreknowledge of what would exist. That creates a contradiction where the thing that exists exists before God creates it so he acts before he knows what he's creating and he knows what he did after he did it.

[12:53] Yeah. If you're confused everyone should be confused because it doesn't make any sense. So no our creator has made everything in keeping with what are called by theologians his divine ideas.

These divine ideas are the patterns of all created things that exist in his mind. Now this is actually was developed in the early church as a critique of Platonism and Aristotelianism.

So the idea was if you're familiar with Plato you know there are different kinds of trees right but they're all trees and there's this thing called tree-ness right there's this idea of the tree the ideal of the tree the form of the tree and this idea of the tree this tree-ness exists in this realm called the realm of the ideas and this is where all the concrete or abstract objects exist anyways in Christianity we believe that there is nothing else eternal outside of God right and so based on texts like here in Genesis and our common sense observation that there are there does seem to be something behind this kind idea or form idea the earliest Christians said no these are actually they're not in their own eternal realm of abstract objects they're in God these are God's ideas it's in God's mind right and they call these divine ideas now are these ideas pure inventions totally new based on nothing you know some would say that this must be true for God to be free in his creation that he had to have just like this right you know tree but most most theologians actually the majority of the church has actually viewed these divine ideas of creation that God created based these on himself that they are they are reflections of aspects of God's being because God himself is the fullness of being right this is the view that was pioneered by origin and Augustine and affirmed and modified throughout church history by John of Damascus

Anselm Thomas Aquinas Francis Turretin and many many others however like a lot of things I like how Herman Bavink puts it in summary he says God's ideas are absolutely original they arise from his own being they are eternal and immutable indeed they are one with his own being the ideas in God are the very being of God in so far as this being is the pattern of created things and can be expressed and modeled in finite creatures every creature is a revelation of God and participates in God's being the nature of this participation is not such that creatures are modifications of the divine being or that they have in some realistic sense receive this divine being into themselves but every creature has its own distinct being because in its existence it is an exemplification of the divine being the wisdom of God is manifest in the creation ordering guidance and government of all things you guys catch that in in virtue of being an exemplification of God in some way all of creation can be truly said to be

God's self-revelation that means that every time you walk outside and look at a piece of moss or a robin eating on the lawn or the mushrooms dotting a log you are in some sense receiving a revelation of God you're learning something about God he is telling you something about himself the oxaladdle the quivering aspen the secretive owl are all saying behold your maker how sad that we often walk by the outside world without appreciating the central aspect of it Raul you had your hand out even you pointed out the algae and nature but also the building of cities and civilizations and having governments that's all from God yeah all of that yeah I think and I'm not this is actually outside of my purview because I'm not

[17:38] I'm not going to be teaching the image of God class that's going to be Pastor Nick but I think you're right I think the works of human beings the work our art our architecture our organization our reasoning our science all that stuff is actually reflections of God through the medium of the human mind so the human mind is a reflection of God and therefore our works are therefore like secondary reflections of God's mind yeah exactly yeah Richard so clearly creation ex nihilo would exclude the notion that God creates everything out of himself but does it exclude the

notion that God creates everything out of his ideas no no so the idea here is God as an analogy the analogy is before we make something we have an idea of it in our mind think of it like a blueprint right we have a blueprint of a building that we're going to make the blueprint isn't the building the blueprint is what the building is going to be right the form of it the idea of it in the same way

God prior to his creation of the world has ideas of what he's going to create and what those ideas are what he ends up actualizing creating is based on himself right the ways in which he can be imitated in a finite mode right it's the finitude that is the important part here right none of us none of no part of creation is like this is the divine you know like it's no no no this is reflecting something about God it's not all of God does that make sense nothing finite can ever encompass all of God but does that make sense what we're getting out of there yeah so if all of creation is a self-revelation of God this kind of brings up a perplexing question what do we make of all those aspects of creation that make us wince that make us what wince you know make us kind of shudder what do we make of the seemingly long history of predation and death in the natural world including the extinction of all kinds of creatures like the majestic dinosaur and the funky trilobite ultimately we're asking the question how fallen is nature if creation is a self-revelation of God what are we reasonably expected to be able to learn from God from nature and how corrupted has it been by the fall one view is actually that the natural world has been comprehensively affected by the fall of man that every kind of natural evil as we might understand it is attributable to humanity's primal disobedience this view is often a distinguishing mark of young earth creationism postulating that predation and animal death per se are results of the fall of man and therefore cannot predate humanity since the publication of the Genesis flood in 1961 the history of predation and extinction as seen in the fossils is actually explained by a global flood that produced the world as we know it today but this view is actually a little bit more

I mean this general view is more ancient than that it's the view that nature has been severely affected by the fall is actually espoused by John Calvin he says that fleas caterpillars and other noxious insects are penalties of the fall so the relevant passages in scripture that are often cited are the descriptions of animal diet in Genesis 1 the curses in Genesis 3 the prophecy of Isaiah 11 verses 6-9 and Paul's discourse in Romans 8 about creation so let's go through some of these Genesis 1 29-30 says after the creation of man and animals and God said behold I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit you shall have them for food and to every beast of the earth and every bird of the heavens and everything that creeps on the earth everything that has the breath of life

I have given every green plant for food and it was so this seems like a pretty clear prohibition on carnivorous activity prior to the fall and it's only enhanced by the prophecies found in Isaiah 11 6-9 where he says the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat and the calf and the lion and the fatted calf together and a little child shall lead them the cow and the bear shall graze the young shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox the nursing child shall play over the holes of the cobra and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters covers the sea so here the predatory animals are seen to be restored in this view to their prior vegetarianism in the new creation showing that predation must have been a result of the fall and that nature is in fact currently cursed

Genesis 3 recounts God's curse on Adam saying because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you you shall not eat of it curse is the ground because of you in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life thorns and thistles shall bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground for out of it you were taken for you are dust and to dust you shall return biologist Dr. Gordon Wilson one of the people I think is one of the best proponents of this view of a cursed nature and simultaneously the creator of an excellent nature documentary called The Right and the Dance if you're able to watch it you should watch it it's great I mean all nature documentaries are awesome but this is great he comments on that work that documentary that the curse is manifest when looking closely at these elephant seals in this case the male domination of the cows the accidental crushing of calves and violent territorial battles between males are on full display this is a powerful reminder that the creation though impressive is truly fallen because of man's sin right he also

[25 : 02] Dr. Wilson also connects this curse to Paul's commentary on the fallenness of the world in Romans 8 many of you are probably familiar with that Paul says for I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us for the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God for the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God for we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now and not only the creation but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the spirit groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons the redemption of our bodies for in this hope we were saved now hope that is seen is not hope for what who hopes for what he sees but if we hope for what we do not see we wait for it with patience

Wilson Dr. Wilson again speaking of venomous snakes observes that the difference here is that venomous snakes curse condition negatively impacts human health and welfare especially in tropical countries as we profiled these deadly snakes and our adversarial relationship with them throughout the world history we wanted to highlight the hope of the gospel not only does God reconcile man to himself through the life death burial resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ but the whole creation will be liberated from its bondage to corruption quoting Romans 8 so you can see that altogether this view can support the idea of a creation that is bound in corruption as exemplified in predation venomous animals and animal death generally so this is one view of how fallen nature is in contrast another view is that creation as we have received it is now even now still very good as God declares at the end of the creation account they would say that predation animal death even venomous animals are a part of this good creation and that it is the fallenness of men that restricts us from being able to fully appreciate the breadth of God's works among these proponents would be figures like

Augustine Basil of Caesarea Thomas Aquinas William Paley to name just a few in fact this is if I had to survey church history generally this seems to be the majority view in the church an excellent modern proponent of this view would be scientist and Old Testament scholar Dr. C. John Collins I'm a huge fan love Dr. Collins who in a chapter in his book Science and Faith Friend or Foes takes up this challenge he points out that when we look at the supposed prohibition on predation in Genesis 1 that there is a curious omission from the list of animals who are meant to eat vegetation did you guys catch it?

let's see verse 30 says and to every beast of the earth and every bird of the heavens and everything that creeps on the earth everything that has the breath of life I have given every green plant for food you guys notice there's no mention of aquatic life there?

aquatic there's no mention of aquatic life so at the very least if this is a prohibition on predation it doesn't seem to be a blanket prohibition of predation because it does not encompass the aquatic animals many of which as you may know eat other things and the ancient people would know that too and further he points out that the prophecy in Isaiah 11 showing the lion eating straw like an ox is actually sandwiched between two sections discussing the turning of all the Gentile nations to Jesus suggesting it actually might be more properly understood to be a poetic representation of the peace between Jew and Gentile a result that would be just as startling as lions and lambs laying peacefully together more importantly he points to those passages in scripture like Psalm 104 that seem to glorify God for the predation of his creatures we read here verse 19 he made the moon to mark the seasons the sun knows it's time for setting you make darkness and it is night when all the beasts of the forest creep about the young lions roar for their prey seeking their food from God when the sun rises they steal away and lie down in their dens man goes out to his work and his labor until the evening oh Lord how manifold are your works in wisdom have you made them all the earth is full of your creatures so proponents of this we would say we surely have to include these passages into our view of creation as well so how do we balance those and as far as the curse in Genesis 3 is concerned he would argue that Dr. Collins would say that these are properly understood to be judgments on man alone and that thorns and thistles are going to be

[30 : 55] God's means for punishing Adam not that they are now going to exist for the first time at all similarly the corruption in Romans 8 on this view is better understood to be a lament of creation for man to finally take up their role of vice-regent for the flourishing of all of creation not for the that nature of predation and animal death but that mankind would finally come and lead creation the way it was meant to to Christians like Collins this would also make sense of our intuition of the amazing

glory and beauty of these created beings you know the intricacy of the spider's web the astonishing speed of the barracuda and the superb design of the eagle's eyes and claws Augustine thought the same of the insects saying all things after all have in them a certain worth or grace of nature each of its own kind so that in these minute creatures there is even more for us to wonder at as we observe them and so praise the almighty craftsman for them more rapturously than ever if we pay close attention we are more amazed at the agile flight of a fly than at the stamina of the sturdy mule on the march and the cooperative labors of tiny ants strike us as far more wonderful than the colossal loads that can be carried by camels ultimately the proponents of this view would say that the parts of creation that we are uncomfortable with is a result of our inability to fully appreciate the whole of creation and see just like the dark spots in a painting the greater glory that is produced in the completed project

Augustine exhorts us some things you see abide by soaring over the whole rolling wheel of time in the widest range of holiness under God while other things do so according to the limits of their time and thus it is through things giving way to and taking the place of one another that a beautiful tapestry of the ages is woven they would say just like sore eyes make the light hateful to us our fallen attitudes make us unable to properly appreciate the temporal beauty of some aspects of the world and even for those parts that we can't fully understand their purpose John Chrysostom would say from the creation learn to admire the Lord and if any of the things which you see exceed your comprehension and you're not able to find the reason for its existence then for this reason glorify the creator that the wisdom of his works surpasses your own understanding these views were espoused well before the theory of evolution was proposed so they can't actually be considered a capitulation to the current scientific theory but it has not been lost on modern proponents of this view that it would certainly make acceptance of some kind of development and creation more plausible given the animal death and predation in the fossil record that seems to predate humans okay so are those the only options we have left to us

I have to say I lean towards the second view with its insistence on the goodness of creation here and now but I'm still not fully satisfied with the arguments against our perception of some kind of natural evil I feel like the virtues of the first view are that it gels with that intuition that we have that there is something wrong there's just something off about creation something that's just not quite right still beautiful but still I don't know it's hard to put words on it and I feel like the virtue of the second view is that it helps us to appreciate creation as we have it now receive the world that we go out right now and see and appreciate and glorify

God for it there are pros and cons to each of them I feel like one of the cons of the first view is it does seem to kind of require us to posit some kind of like post-creation creation right so pre-fall there wouldn't be predators or you know decomposers or all these different aspects of creation that seem to be designed to work with animal death and deal with those issues and so I guess in this view the idea would be at the cursing of creation you have this moment where there are suddenly lions who have like big teeth now and claws and digestive systems that work on eating animals and you know venomous snakes suddenly have to get glands that inject venom you see what I'm saying there seems to be some sort of there would have to be some sort of like second creation event sort of although we don't really see something like that in scripture and again

I think one of the greatest cons of this second view is just that I feel like it asks us to pretend like we don't see what we see you know that we don't that when we watch the nature documentary we honestly don't root for the squirrel right that's being chased by the fox we're like get away squirrel go what is that I don't know so I say surely we have modern glasses so we have to come at this with a little bit of humility right because we probably have modern glasses that make us more apt to anthropomorphize animals their animals the suffering and death of animals and it could be let's be honest most of us are not spending tons and tons of time connected to nature most of us if we have animals and stuff they're pets and the death of a pet is a huge tragedy and we all feel pain so maybe we are projecting that feeling onto nature broadly but if you talk to a farmer they probably would have a very different intuition about these things right farmers are hard to find you have to find a farm first no but at the same time

[38 : 16] I don't think I can really ignore my sense that there is gratuitous suffering in the animal world almost like something has attempted to mar God's good creation but ultimately failed so this is actually a minority view in the church however there are a few people in our history that have affirmed the basic goodness of the created world as we receive it including things like predation and

animal death but that this basic reflection of God has been disordered post fall to show more cruelty fear and ferocity so in this view the general structure of creation with there being carnivores and producers and decomposers this is all part of God's good creation but there's something about it on the edges that has been corrupted or disordered or twined by the fall proponents of this view would include

Gregory of Nazianzus John of Damascus Ephraim the Syrian Hugh of Saint Victor and Bonaventure in the modern period people like John Wesley C.S.

Lewis J.R. Tolkien Alvin Plantinga and Gavin Ortlund now that's not a among others list that is as far as I know the entire list so when I say it's a minority view it is a minority view okay and depending on which one of these figures you're looking at they actually might fault the angelic or human fall with this disorder that we see and but I will remain brief here because honestly this view is basically a blending of the intuitions of the first two views and will rely on their arguments at different places so a proponent of this view might say I agree with Dr.

Collins that Isaiah 11 is really primarily talking about the relationship of Jew and Gentile in the new covenant that this is a new harmony between previously warring factions but they also might say but I don't really agree with Dr.

Collins that Genesis 1 is not talking about prohibiting predation or at least something about the way that land animals work is different now than it used to be you know so it would be kind of pedantic for me to go and say here are all the possible combinations of all the different two views so I'm not going to spend time doing that yeah Richard so one of the things I've learned from listening to Christian teachers and reading my Bible is that we hold certain truths in tension with each other and really Christians have gotten really good at doing that and it's a shame that only a minority that you speak about have even attempted to hold these ideas in tension with one another yeah I mean it could be maybe a better way of saying instead of saying we have black hats over here white hats over here and the few gray hats in the middle it might actually be more appropriate to think of it as a spectrum and that there are definable groups within the spectrum but each of these different views probably is trying to get at that tension but maybe they are waiting one side over the other right so and

[42 : 07] I'll finish up by I don't I really want to make sure I make clear that proponents of the first view don't think that you should hate nature proponents of the second view don't believe that everything is perfectly great all the time and that you should just you know life is awesome and that human sin hasn't affected nature in any way right but they would lean they would lean in their perception on one end of weighing those two things the goodness of creation and the fallenness of nature and this middle group is sort of those people who are like I kind of want to hold them together really tight somehow you know can I ask you a question about Dr.

Collins yeah so he thinks that the present state of the world of nature okay is as God pronounced it very good yep so he doesn't think that it's merely good no he thinks it's very good I can't go that far yeah yeah and that's right that's the that's the hard part it's like oh how do we how do we deal with that you know yeah right and so yeah it's it's a it's a hard problem now for this third view the sort of middle view Jared Tolkien seems to be trading on this when he depicts his creation account in the Silmarillion I don't know if any of you!

you the creation account because it was the very first page and it was I think it's only one page so if you got through one page of the Silmarillion you read this part but basically in this story Iluvatar who is sort of the god figure is leading the god like Ainur who are kind of like angels in this song of creation and Melkor who is the devil figure is constantly ringing a discordant note in this song of creation but Iluvatar is always taking that discordant note and harmonizing it and bringing it back into the story and harmonizing it and this sort of gets kind of brings an imaginative expression of the possibility of god's self revelation in nature but that is disordered at the margins but reworked finally into the whole as very good so how do we end oh go ahead that is you Matt sorry has anybody tried to look at these issues through the lens of the garden god planted and a man ruling first in the garden and then with the worldwide commission of

Genesis 1 to go out and have to be all the world yeah a lot of times people who take the second view actually would say that the garden of Eden was sort of the landing zone of humanity's rule over creation vice regency over creation you could say and that the commission was to go out and spread the bliss of Eden across the whole world and that when Adam and Eve are kicked out of the garden you know there are no squatters in the garden they are now going to encounter thorns and

thistles for the first time so it's not that they didn't exist but that they would not have experienced them the way they would have had they been growing Eden out as opposed to being kicked out of Eden and working with creation in its most difficult harsh form so that's actually a pretty common view among the second people the first people of the first view would say that Eden was the entire world the entire world was a garden of Eden usually so how do we finish how do we conclude well as usual for this class what's the point of this class the point of this class is to receive creation as a gift from God and to glorify him for it okay and so no matter which of the views you find compelling in light of the fact that creation is God's self-revelation of his being from his divine ideas we are given no warrant!

to dismiss the created world and scripture gives us a universal example of undiluted praise to God as creator to that end I will finish our talk today with quotes from proponents of each of the different views addressed above on the existing majesty of God's handiwork I actually chose Dr.

[47 : 26] Wilson as a proponent of the first view because I just love his obvious love of the created world as we have it now he says though other animals too have been affected by the curse in various ways their evident beauty grace symmetry coordination and complexity are reminders of a glorious creation once untainted by the curse they and even the gnarliest creatures reveal the ingenious artistry and engineering of our creator so that everyone is without excuse and Basil of Caesarea for the second view can double down on that sentiment he says I want creation to penetrate you with so much admiration that everywhere wherever you may be the least plant may bring to you the clear remembrance of the creator and finally John of Damascus explains how creation points us to God he says the whole earth is a living icon of the face of God I do not worship matter

I worship the creator of matter who became matter for my sake who willed to take his abode in matter who worked out my salvation through matter never will I cease honoring the matter which wrought my salvation I honor it but not as God because of this I salute all remaining matter with reverence because God has filled it with his grace and power and through it my salvation has come to me so let me finish by reading Psalm 148 which I think is just this is giving us an example of how we should respond to the natural world praise the Lord praise the Lord from the heavens praise him in the heights praise him all angels praise him all his hosts praise him sun and moon praise him all you shining stars praise him you highest heavens and you waters above the heavens let them praise the name of the

Lord for he commanded and they were created and he established them forever and ever he gave a decree and it shall not pass away praise the Lord from the earth you great sea creatures and all deeps fire and hail snow and mist stormy wind fulfilling his word mountains and all hills fruit trees and all cedars beasts and all livestock creeping things and flying birds kings of the earth and all peoples princes and all rulers of the earth young men and maidens together old men and children let them praise the name of the Lord for his name alone is exalted his majesty is above earth and heaven he has raised up a horn for his people praise for all his saints for the people of Israel who are near to him praise the Lord amen all right guys that's it that's all I have any questions we have five minutes for questions if not we have five minutes extra to go downstairs and get ready for worship thanks Ed

I can't believe our conversation yesterday I know isn't that crazy yeah it's just on my mind yeah and I loved it I think I told you hit 100% yeah right thanks dad yeah right right right yeah exactly yeah good to see you sorry neighbor Tyler yeah exactly yeah very often yeah those are the images used to describe those nations right right exactly yeah and the snake you know the snake of the west right exactly yeah exactly yeah so I'm good coming out of fruition I really like like you like you you