

Doctrine for Life: God's Good Creation¹

1. Doctrine: The Triune God created all things good out of nothing for his own glory.
2. Biblical support
 - a. The Triune God created . . .
 - i. Father
 1. **Gen 1:1:** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
 2. **Isa 45:18:** For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited), "I am the LORD, and there is none else."
 - ii. Son
 1. **John 1:3:** All things came into being through Him [i.e., Jesus], and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.
 2. **1 Cor 8:6:** yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we *exist* for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we *exist* through Him.
 - iii. Holy Spirit
 1. **Gen 1:2:** The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
 2. **Job 33:4:** The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.
 - b. . . . created all things . . .
 1. Heaven and earth: **Acts 4:24:** And when they heard *this*, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is

¹ For more on the doctrine of creation, see: Paul Fuller, "Systematic Theology, Lesson 11: Theology Proper, Part 6," found at gracelakeville.org.

You who MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, . . .

2. Human kind: **Gen 1:26**: Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
3. Spiritual universe: **Col 1:16**: For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

c. . . . good . . .

- i. **Gen 1:4**: God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. (Also, **Gen 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31**.)
- ii. **1 Tim 4:4**: For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude.

d. . . . out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) . . .

- i. **Rom 4:17**: (as it is written, “A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU”) in the presence of Him whom he believed, *even* God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.
- ii. **Heb 11:3**: 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 are visible.

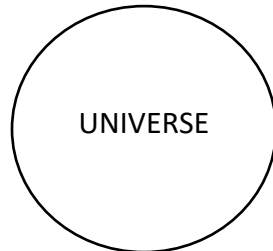
e. . . . for his own glory.

- i. **Ps 19:1-4a**: ¹ The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. ² Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. ³ There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world.
- ii. **Rev 4:11**: “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

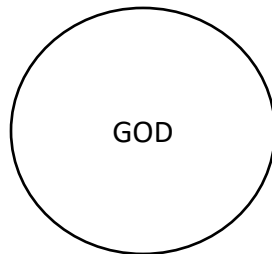
3. Implications

a. The relationship of creation and Creator:²

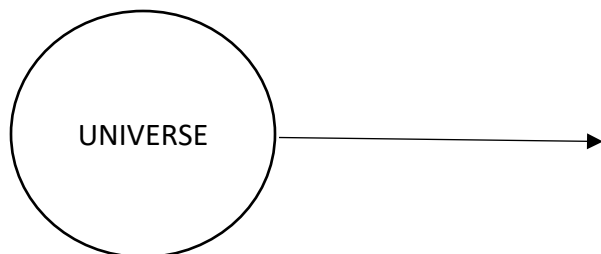
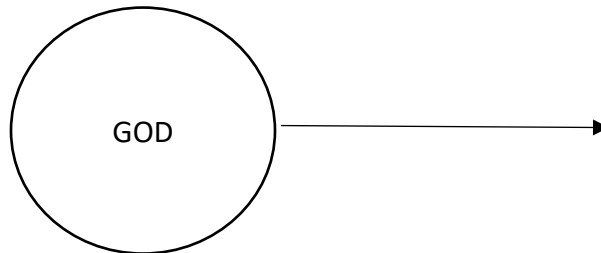
i. Materialism: all there is is material.



ii. Pantheism: all there is is God.

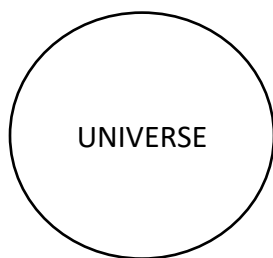
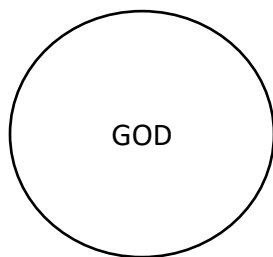


iii. Dualism: God and creation eternally exist side by side.

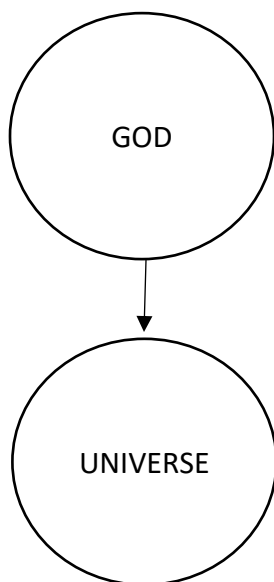


² Diagrams are adapted from: Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 268-70.

- iv. Deism: God created but is not involved.



- v. Creationism: God is separate from creation; creation is dependent on God.



- b. Since the Triune God created all things good out of nothing for his own glory, we are to find gratitude in and enjoy creation (**1 Tim 4:4; 6:17**). God created the world for our enjoyment. **Ps 104:14-15:** ¹⁴ He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, And vegetation for the labor of man, So that he may bring forth food from the earth, ¹⁵ And wine which makes man's heart glad, So that he may make *his* face glisten with oil, And food which sustains man's heart.

- c. But what about the Fall? Though the world is fallen, this does not mean that it is intrinsically evil. God's creation is intrinsically good. We can abuse and misuse creation, but this does not make it evil. Examples:
 - i. Money is not intrinsically evil, but we abuse the good gift of money when we "love" money (**1 Tim 6:9-10**).
 - ii. Sex is not intrinsically evil, but it can be misused when outside of marriage. **Heb 13:4**: Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage bed is to be undefiled*; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

4. Application questions:

- a. Do you feel that because you are a Christian you cannot enjoy life?
- b. Do you feel a tension between being a Christian and enjoying life? How are you to navigate and/or resolve this tension?
- c. Do you tend to enjoy creation too much or too little? What do you risk either way?
- d. What things in life do you reject or condemn because it is misused?
- e. What would we gain if the Fall never happened? How would this change our relationship to the "things of earth?"