

The Final Word

Scripture: Genesis 1–3

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[Among the many issues discussed in this creation series, one emerges as central—the final authority of God's Word. Not only is God's Word sufficient to answer our most challenging questions about origins, it is superior to every other explanation. When Scripture speaks, it speaks with the full weight of divine authority. Science, archeology, and any other system of study must bow the knee.]

The Genesis account simply will not accommodate naturalistic presuppositions and customized hermeneutics. The biblical text must be the starting place for the interpreter, not the last stop. This saying bears repeating: Science makes a great servant but a poor master. God's Word must be central in our quest to understand the universe.

As you read John's final word in the creation series, ask yourself these questions: Do I have a high view of Scripture? Do I put more stock in the unchanging claims of God's Word, or in the constantly-in-need-of-revision theories of science? What is your final word to answer questions of origins? Your approach to the first three chapters of Genesis will betray your answer. —GTU Staff]

The Bible gives a clear and cogent account of the beginnings of the cosmos and humanity. There is absolutely no reason for an intelligent mind to balk at accepting it as a literal account of the origin of our universe. Although the biblical account clashes at many points with naturalistic and evolutionary *hypotheses*, it is not in conflict with a single scientific *fact*. Indeed, all the geological, astronomical, and scientific data can be easily reconciled with the biblical account. The conflict is not between science and Scripture, but between the biblicist's confident faith and the naturalist's willful skepticism.

To many, having been indoctrinated in schools where the line between hypothesis and fact is systematically and deliberately being blurred, that may sound naive or unsophisticated, but it is nonetheless a fact. Again, science has never disproved one word of Scripture, and it never will. On the other hand, evolutionary theory has always been in conflict with Scripture and always will be. But the notion that the universe evolved through a series of natural processes remains an unproven and untestable hypothesis, and therefore it is not "science." There is no proof whatsoever that the universe evolved naturally. Evolution is a mere theory—and a questionable, constantly-changing one at that. Ultimately, if accepted at all, it must be taken by sheer faith.

How much better to base our faith on the sure foundation of God's Word! There is no ground of knowledge equal to or superior to Scripture. Unlike scientific theory, it is eternally unchanging. Unlike the opinions of man, its truth is revealed by the Creator Himself! It is not, as many suppose, at odds with science. True science has always affirmed the teaching of Scripture. Archaeology, for instance, has demonstrated the truthfulness of the biblical record time and time again. Wherever Scripture's record of history may be examined and either proved or disproved by archaeological evidence or reliable independent documentary evidence, the biblical record has always been verified. There is no valid reason whatsoever to doubt or distrust the biblical record of creation, and there is certainly no need to adjust the biblical account to try to make it fit the latest fads in evolutionary theory.

A biblical understanding of the creation and fall of humanity establishes the necessary foundation for the Christian world-view. Everything Scripture teaches about sin and redemption assumes the literal truth of the first three chapters of Genesis. If we wobble to any degree on the truth of this passage, we undermine the very foundations of our faith.

If Genesis 1-3 doesn't tell us the truth, why should we believe anything else in the Bible? Without a right understanding of our origin, we have no way to understand *anything* about our spiritual existence. We cannot know our purpose, and we cannot be certain of our destiny. After all, if God is not the Creator, then maybe He's not the Redeemer either. If we cannot believe the opening chapters of Scripture, how can we be certain of *anything* the Bible says?

Much depends, therefore, on a right understanding of these early chapters of Genesis. These chapters are too often mishandled by people whose real aim is not to understand what the text actually teaches but who want to adjust it to fit a scientific theory. The approach is all wrong. Since creation cannot be observed or replicated in a laboratory, science is not a trustworthy place to seek answers about the origin and fall of humanity. Ultimately, the only reliable source of truth about our origin is what has been revealed by the Creator himself. That means the biblical text should be our starting place.

I am convinced the correct interpretation of Genesis 1-3 is the one that comes naturally from a straightforward reading of the text. It teaches us that the universe is relatively young, albeit with an appearance of age and maturity—and that all of creation was accomplished in the span of six literal days.

To those who will inevitably complain that such a view is credulous and unsophisticated, my reply is that it is certainly superior to the irrational notion that an ordered and incomprehensibly complex universe sprung by accident from nothingness and emerged by chance into the marvel that it is.

Scripture offers the only accurate explanations that can be found anywhere about how our race began, where our moral sense originated, why we cannot seem to do what our own consciences tells us is right, and how we can be redeemed from this hopeless situation.

Scripture is not merely the best of several possible explanations. It is the Word of God.

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