

Intro. Sir Isaac Newton had a friend who was an atheist. The friend did not believe in God, but preferred to take the position that the universe just happened. One day the friend was visiting his learned colleague and Newton showed him a model of the solar system. The sun, the planets, and the moons were all in place. The sizes of the spheres were in proportion and the planets and the satellites revolved around the sun at their relative speeds. The friends admired the model. “It’s intriguing,” he said, “who made it?” “Nobody,” said Newton, “It just happened” (ministry127.com). Though some people make this claim today, Scripture says otherwise. As we continue our series on “Building a Foundation for Your Faith,” today we look at “A Panoramic View of Creation, Part 3: Created in God’s Image” from Genesis 1:26-31.

Theme: Creation of mankind

Background: Moses recorded Genesis ca. the 15th century BC as a book of beginnings—foundational issues of life.

- In this opening chapter of Genesis, I’ve mentioned some of the Darwinian evolutionists’ claims & when we think of the animal kingdom & mankind, you are probably familiar with the links they try to make between chimpanzees & humans today. Geneticists have said human & chimp DNA is 98.5-99.4% identical, but some are saying 96% (see Ham, *Answers* 3, 100-102)—the differences are in nearly 800 different genes between the two species (when one accounts for single base pair substitutions & DNA nucleotide insertions & deletions, there are 125 million DNA differences)—if God wanted to create using similar DNA between some species, He could & still create vastly different individuals
- What about Neanderthals, Cro-Magnon, Homo erectus & such? They were early humans, some of which slight gene differences (80 different genes between Neanderthal & modern man)—they buried their dead, made jewelry, used tools—slight differences occur much like they do in certain ethnic groups today (I’ll say more when we get to chapters 10-11)
- Man stands out in God’s creation & because of that, I want you to notice several key elements of God’s creation of man:

1. Notice the unique dignity of man (1:26-27)—created in the image of God

- “created” (1:27)—3x; God created man with a soul/spirit, different than the rest of the created world
- “Let Us make” (1:26)—the only account in these opening verses which uses a plural verb with “God” (Elohim—a plural noun of majesty)
- “Us”—could refer to a royal decree, asking for angelic assistance or referring to the Trinity for assistance in creating & making man
- “man”—literally “Adam,” made from ground (adamah)
- “image/likeness”—not to think of a mirror or physical characteristics, because God is Spirit (John 4:24); could refer to spirituality, morality or rationality/intelligence—we live eternally, we can choose between right & wrong morally, we can reason things out & communicate on a much higher level

Illus: Chimpanzees & other ape-like creatures are not mankind’s relatives, because they haven’t been created with a spirit & don’t possess high-levels of spirituality or morality or intelligence

- “male & female”—when God created mankind, He made a man & a woman (mentioned again in chapter 2 & by Jesus in Matthew 19:3-6)—when God created mankind in His image, He didn’t just create man that way nor woman that way, but man & woman in His image
- Because God creates humans in His image, we are right to view abortion as murder of a tiny human & euthanasia as murder of elderly humans, both of which are created in God’s image
- Thus, because you are created in the image of God, you are special—not because of your innate goodness but because you are in the image of God, the God who created you, provides for you, sustains you & has sent Jesus Christ to redeem you

2. Notice the universal dominion of man (1:26, 28)—to govern the world

- Mankind is to rule over all the animals (1:26)—repeated in v. 28 for emphasis on one of his primary tasks (cf. Psalm 8:3-8)

Illus: We are at the top of the world & can research & study & capture animals because we were made to rule over them—you won’t ever see a group of chimps performing studies on humans or any other animals walking

around human zoos & you never need to worry about a Planet of the Apes becoming a reality, because God didn't design it that way, but if Darwinian evolution were true, then you would have need to worry eventually

3. Notice the fruitfulness of the union of man (1:28; cf. 2:24)

a. Marital union & sex is for pleasure—be fruitful

- The idea of “fruit” conveys that which is sweet & delicious & sex within marital union (more clearly in 2:24) should be pleasurable—if it isn't, you should seek counseling

b. Marital union & sex is for procreation—multiply & fill the earth

- Another important purpose of marital union & sex is for procreation—multiplying through having offspring—the only natural way for procreation is through the sexual relationship of male-female

Illus: In 21st century America, the average rate of replacement is having 2.11 children per couple (though we are only averaging 1.8), so having only 1 or 2 children doesn't “fill” the earth but “empties” it

Illus: Mormon families have 2.6 children per family & Muslims have 5 children per family & they are not only growing much faster than average American families & average Christian families, but they are spreading their false views of religion to them

- The command to “multiply” occurs at least 20x in Genesis & more than 30x more in the rest of the OT—it occurs in contexts of many children and/or grandchildren
- I'm not saying you can't use some forms of birth control, because we are also commanded to “subdue” our families (most cannot survive with 15 kids today), but I am saying 1 or 2 is not multiplying but subtracting or replacing

4. Notice the special diet of man & the animal world (1:29-30)—plants

- Plants & their seeds & fruit were the original diet of mankind & the animal world until the Fall

Illus: Darwinian evolutionists want you to believe that the earth is old & certain animals with sharp teeth have always been meat-eaters & thus, they ate other animals & killed them long before Adam & Eve came along. But the Bible says death entered the world through sin (Romans 5:12) & you need to know that having sharp-teeth doesn't prove you are a meat-eater, it only proves you have sharp-teeth, like these pictures of modern-day herbivores (camel, hippo, baboon, saber-toothed deer)

Illus: Some people argue mosquitoes live off blood & thus were not originally restricted to this diet, but we know some mosquitoes have more than 90% of their diet consisting of nectar, so they could have lived without relying on animals originally

- Some theologians, following Hugh Ross, claim plants being eaten proved they died & thus, death existed long before the Fall, but the Bible never describes plants as “living” & “dying” like it does of animals & mankind. Thus, when sin entered the world, so death was introduced—death of animals & mankind

5. Notice the evaluation of God about man (1:31)—His work was “very good”

- Up until this time, everything God made & evaluated was simply “good” (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25)
- After mankind is created, God looks at His work & calls it “very good”—thus, man is the crowning work of God's creation
- Thus, man is at the top of everything else in creation—while we should care for the earth as stewards, the earth is subject to us
- Moreover, those who want to hug the trees & save the whales & remain silent on a baby's life in the womb or even scream for a woman's right misses the tremendously high value God places on mankind over everything else

Conc. A few years ago, the founder of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) appeared on the Fox News show “Hannity & Colmes” & claimed the eating of animals is murder. He compared the slaughter of chickens to the slaughter of the Jewish people during the Holocaust. He said, “Six million Jews died in concentration camps, but six billion boiler chickens will die in slaughter houses” (Vines, 24/7, 10). Many a fallen man has a messed up understanding of the unique dignity of mankind, created in the image of God. But God sent Jesus for them, too. Even if we see a difference between humans & animals but don't repent of our sins & trust in Jesus, then our destiny is an eternity apart from our Maker. As spiritual beings, we will live forever either in heaven or hell & we are all headed to hell unless we repent & trust Jesus. Will you trust Him today?