

The Implications of Creation

- Concerning the Implications of Creation, we will view the significance of:
 - i. Nature.
 - ii. Man.
 - iii. Worship.
 - iv. Ethics

Nature

The material universe, which is made of matter, is what is also referred to as nature. Here we will refer to nature as matter.

- Negative views of matter state that matter is evil and is opposed to God, some examples:
 - i. Gnosticism (metaphysical dualism – two equal powers, good and evil)
 - ii. Manichaeism (metaphysical dualism)
 - iii. Sankaran Hinduism (matter is unreal)
 - iv. The philosophy of Plato and Plotinus (negative, dispensable, degenerate)

The Biblical worldview of Matter

- from a Biblical worldview, matter is good, because creation in general is good, consider:
 - i. Genesis 1:4; 10; 12; 18; 21; 25
 - ii. Psalm 19:1-6
 - iii. Acts 14:17
 - iv. 1 Timothy 4:4; 6:17;
 - v. James 1:17
- Note, the human body is also good, and bodily appetites such as sex or food is not evil in and of themselves.
- When the Bible condemns the flesh (Galatians 5:16-21) it is not talking about the body as such, but sin being carried out by a person controlled by sin.
- Matter in and of itself is not evil, nor is its source evil, the source of evil is ethical, it is not due to some error in creation; it is due to the freely-willed decisions of beings who choose immorality.
- Evil enters when the good things of God's creation are used for the wrongs ends or are made an ends in themselves, as when one's appetite becomes his god (Philippians 3:19).
- Matter is not opposed to God but serves God's purpose in serving both God and man. While the presence of sin has distorted and cursed God's creation, God is not going to discard it, but will redeem and renew it (Romans 8:18-21).
- The elements negative of suffering and death are the consequences of sin; they are not inherent in the human nature as such, salvation is not the shedding of the body but the redemption of the Body.

Matter is Contingent

- Although creation, (matter) is real, and good, it is not absolute or ultimate. Matter is not divine and so to be worshipped. No pantheistic divinity animates the material universe as in Stoicism (virtue is the highest good, divine reason governs the material universe).
- Because the universe is created, it is contingent. The opposite of contingency is necessity. If something exists necessarily, then it is impossible for it not to exist, or for it to exist in any other way. Only God exists in this manner.
- Matter owes its existence to God and is completely dependent on Him (Hebrews 1:1-3)

Nature is Dependable

- Matter is not only dependent, it is dependable, a characteristic of its creator. Thus, material existence is rational and predicable; we can depend upon it to act according to fixed patterns.
- It is creation that guarantees the dependability of nature. Because the Creator Himself is rational and faithful, so is the product of His creation, operating in accordance to stable patterns known as natural laws. See again Psalm 19:1-6.

Science is Possible

- Uniformity and dependability in nature is a final implication of creation. The uniformity and dependability of the created natural world has made science possible.
- When the distinction between Creator and creation came to light out of the pagan shadows, scientific investigation of creation emerged.
- Because of the uniformity of the laws of nature, Christians, who were the first scientist realized that hypothetical theories could be tested, observed, and uniform and consistent finds could be made known.
- Langdon Gilkey states:

Now the conception which effected this fundamental reinterpretation of the world's order, and so provided those presuppositions of modern science, was the Christian idea of creation. It is no accident that modern science has developed in a culture formed and dominated by this conception, for when nature was thought of as possessing an order stemming from the creator's will rather than from its own inherent intelligible forms, then modern science became possible.¹

¹ Langdon Gilkey, *Maker of heaven and Earth*, pp. 129-130.