

Armed For The Battle

How to Think Like a Christian in a Counter-Christian Culture

A Believer's Worldview Workbook

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THE CALL TO BATTLE

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

Timothy, guard what have been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. 1 Timothy 6:20

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

*Always be prepared to give an answer [*apologia*] to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Peter 3:15

*And He [Jesus] said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37

God is no fonder of intellectual slackers than any other slackers. If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you, you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, brains and all. But fortunately, it works the other way round. Anyone who is honestly trying to be a Christian will soon find his intelligence being sharpened: one of the reasons why it needs no special education to be a Christian is that Christianity is an education itself. (*Mere Christianity*, ch. 12).
- C. S. Lewis

A Christian living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ must know both what he believes and why he believes. In the day in which we live, this has never been more important.

What is a Worldview?

A worldview is a comprehensive view of life through which we think, understand, and judge, and which determines our approach to life and meaning.

"A worldview is that basic set of assumptions that gives meaning to one's thoughts. A worldview is the set of assumptions that someone has about the way things are, about what things are, about why things are."

-Russ Bush

"A worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world."

-James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue*, expanded ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 17.

"One's worldview is perhaps best reflected by one's answers to the 'ultimate questions of life': Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? What's it all about? Is there a god? How can I live and die happily? What are good and evil?"

-James H. Olthius, "On Worldviews," *Christian Scholar's Review* 15, no. 2 (1985): 153-164.

One additional question I would add: "Is there anything I would be willing to die for?"

5 Functions of a Worldview:

1. A worldview seeks to provide a coherent and organized thought system for life and living.
2. A worldview attempts to define the "good life," thereby bringing hope and meaning to life.
3. Worldviews bring sense to life by offering explanations for the seemingly irrational events that occur in life.
4. Worldviews determine our values and establish what we think is important and really matters.
5. A worldview guides actions by assigning meaning and priorities to those actions.

*Everyone has a worldview, a particular way of looking at life. It is shaped and

influenced by where you were born and live, but it is not unchangeable. It can be adjusted, altered or radically overturned (ex. Christian conversion).

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

Little, Paul. *Know Why You Believe*. IVP, 2000.

_____. *Know What You Believe*. Victor, 1999.

Moreland, J. P., and William Lane Craig. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. IVP, 2003.

Moseley, Allan. *Thinking Against the Grain*. Kregel, 2003.

Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Summit, 1991.

Sire, James. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue*. IVP, 1997.

The Worldview of the Atheist / Agnostic

The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.

--Carl Sagan

Deceased atheist scientist, former host of the PBS television production “Cosmos”

Almost every religion talks about a savior coming. When you look in the mirror in the morning, when you’re putting on your lipstick or shaving, you’re looking at the savior. Nobody else is going to save you but yourself.

--Time Warner Vice Chairman Ted Turner in an interview, *USA Today* (2-17-00)

Human babies are not born self-aware, or capable of grasping that they exist over time. They are not persons . . . The life of a newborn is of less value than the life of a pig, a dog, or a chimpanzee.

--Peter Singer, new tenured professor of bioethics at Princeton University and advocate of infanticide, in his book, *Practical Ethics*, (pg. 122-123) as reported in *The Washington Post*

I am convinced that the battle for humankind’s future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their roles as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects what theologians call divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach regardless of the educational level—preschool day care center or large state university. The classrooms must and will be an arena of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity together with all of its adjacent evils and misery and the new faith of humanism. . . . it will undoubtedly be a long arduous painful struggle replete with much sorrow and many tears, but humanism will emerge triumphant. It must if the family of humankind is to survive.

--John Dunphy, *Humanist*, Jan/Feb 1983.

The Worldview of the Christian

Now I have given up on everything else—I have found it to be the only way to really know Christ and to experience the mighty power that brought him back to life again, and to find out what it really means to suffer and to die with him.

--Christian teenager Cassie Bernall (1981-1999)
martyred April 20, 1999
Columbine High School
(www.cassierenebernall.org)

I am just so thankful for everything He's done for me, as well as for others. Even when things are bad, He's stood next to me and things are a little less prone to becoming blown out of proportion by my emotions. . . . You know, I wonder what God is going to do with my life. Like my purpose. Some people become missionaries and things, but what about me? What does God have in store for me? Where do my talents and gifts lie? For now, I'll just take it day by day. I'm confident that I'll know someday. Maybe I'll look back at my life and think "Oh, so that was it!" Isn't it amazing, this plan we're a part of? . . .

--Cassie Bernall
letter to a friend, June 28, 1998
printed in *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

One day a week or so before Cassie's death we were sitting at the kitchen table, talking, and got onto the subject of death. I don't remember how. She said, "Mom, I'm not afraid to die, because I'll be in heaven." I told her I couldn't imagine her dying—that I couldn't bear the thought of living without her. She replied, "But Mom, you'd know I was in a better place. Wouldn't you be happy for me?"

-- Cassie Bernall, printed in *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

When God doesn't want me to do something, I definitely know it. When he wants me to do something, even if it means going outside my comfort zone, I know that too. I feel pushed in the direction I need to go . . . I try to stand up for my faith at school . . . It can be discouraging, but it can also be rewarding . . . I will die for my God. I will die for my faith. It's the least I can do for Christ dying for me.

--written by Cassie Bernall in 1998
printed in *Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

--Jim Elliot (1927-1956)

Missionary to the Auca Indians of Ecuador, Christian martyr for Jesus Christ
Life portrayed in the movie "The End of the Spear".

There was a time when one could almost be afraid to call himself a disciple of Christ because it meant so much. Now one can do it with complete ease because it means nothing at all.

--Soren Kierkegaard, (1813-55)

Danish philosopher/theologian
quoted in *Bible Review*, April 2000.

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

The Cost of Discipleship

--Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945).

German pastor/theologian
Hanged by the Nazi's for attempting to assassinate Adolf Hitler

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

--Apostle Paul (Phil. 1:21)

Everyone has a worldview, but few have one that is biblical.

"Most Americans do not have strong and clear beliefs, largely because they do not possess a coherent biblical worldview. That is, they lack a consistent and holistic understanding of their faith. Millions of Americans say they are personally committed to Jesus Christ, but they believe he sinned while on earth. Many believers claim to trust what the Bible teaches, but they reject the notion of a real spiritual adversary or they feel that faith-sharing activities are optional. Millions feel personally committed to God, but they are renegotiating the definition of that deity. In fact, one reason why beliefs fluctuate is that most Americans' hold few convictions about their faith. For instance, even among those who disagree with orthodox views, many do so while hedging their bets. Most Americans have one foot in the biblical camp, and one foot outside it. They say they are committed, but to what? They are spiritually active, but to what end? The spiritual profile of American Christianity is not unlike a lukewarm church that the Bible warns about."

"We are likely to see more significant alterations to the spiritual landscape, since what a person believes dictates a great deal about their behavior and allegiance. To give purpose to the spiritual lifestyle of Americans, there are few tasks more important than helping Americans develop a biblical view of life. Otherwise, millions of people, including many within the youngest generations, will conclude the Christian faith does not represent deep, consistent truths about the spiritual and natural world." (David Kinnaman, Barna Research Firm, 5-21-07)

The Barna Research Group found that just 4 percent of American adults have a biblical worldview and only 9 percent of those categorized as born-again Christians have a biblical worldview.

Not surprisingly, those without a biblical worldview have a vastly different view of immoral and unethical behavior. For instance, those without a biblical worldview were:

- Around 100 times more likely to endorse abortion
- Around 80 times more likely to say exposure to pornography is morally acceptable
- 31 times more likely to believe living together before marriage is morally acceptable
- 15 times more likely to believe homosexual sex is acceptable
- 18 times more likely to endorse drunkenness
- 11 times more likely to say adultery is OK

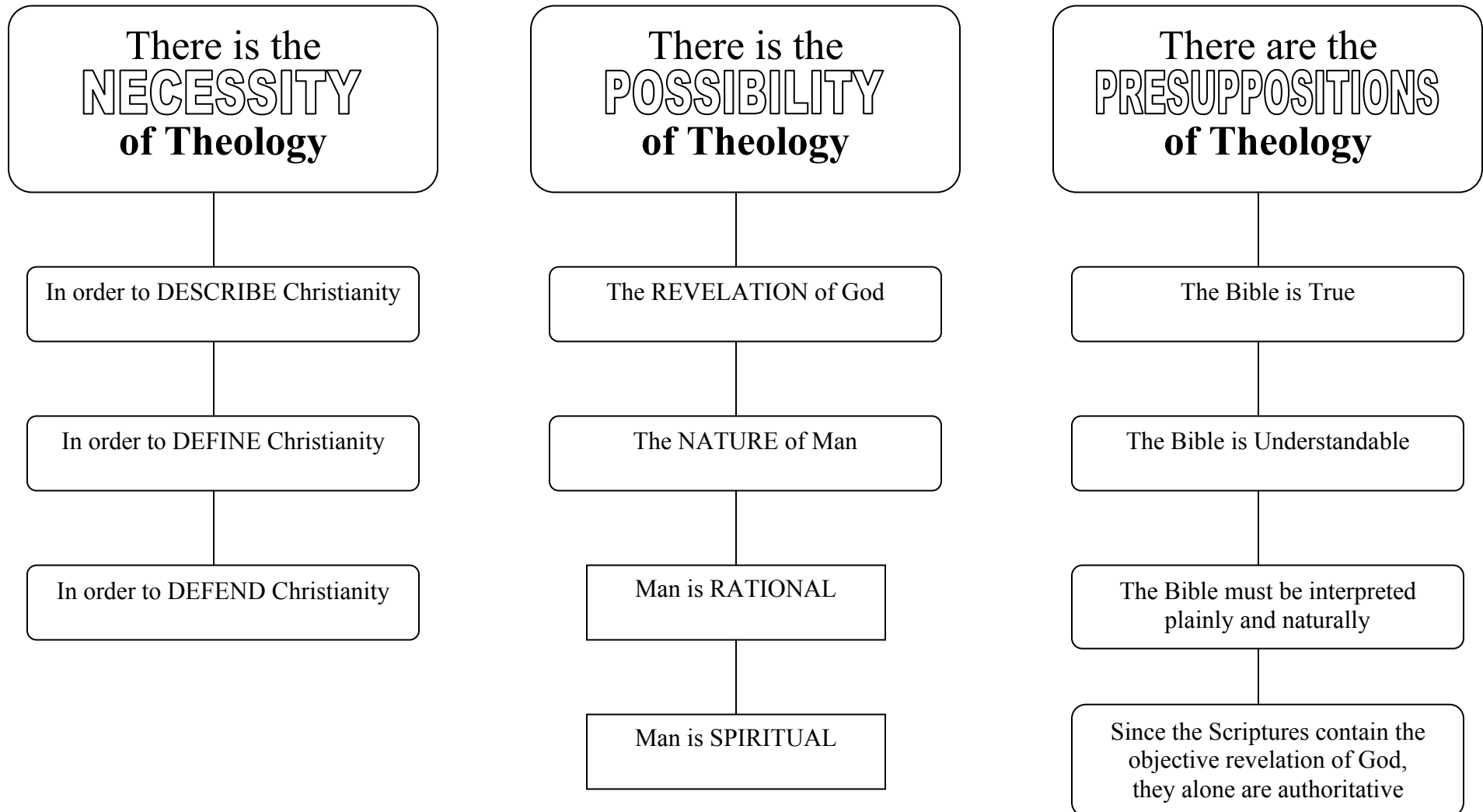
83% of Americans identify themselves as Christians, yet only 49% describe themselves as absolutely committed to Christianity.” (*The Barna Update*, 5-21-07)

“The primary reason that people do not act like Jesus is because they do not think like Jesus,” Barna said. “Behavior stems from what we think—our attitudes, beliefs, values, and opinions.”

--“Barna: Biblical Worldview Held by Only 4 Percent of Adults,” *Baptist Press* (December 2, 2003).

PROLEGOMENA

(Foundational Principles)



THEOLOGY

DEFINITION

Theology comes from “theos” (God) and “logos” (speech/discourse, word, or message) –
“A discourse on one specific subject, namely, God.”
“Thinking about God and expressing those thoughts.”

Historical

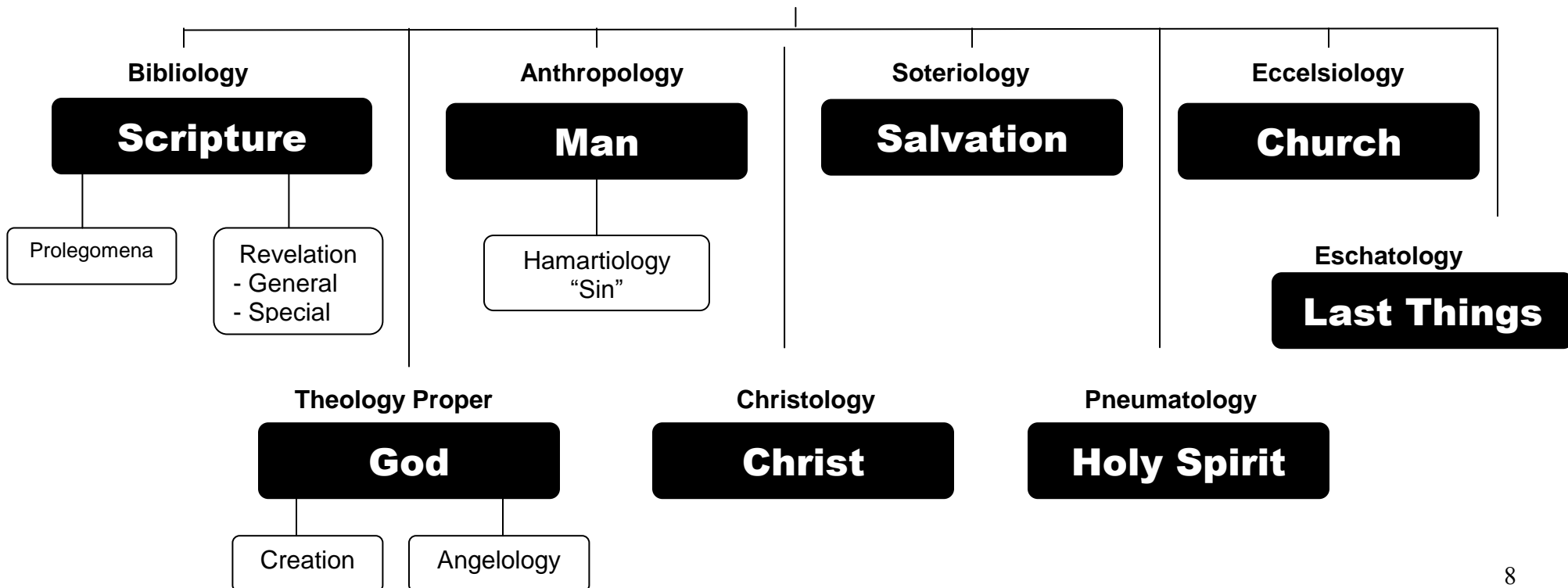
“Discipline which traces the historical development of doctrine as recorded in the writings of individuals and church councils.”

Systematic

“Discipline which follows a scheme of doctrinal development which incorporates into its system all the truth about God from any and every source.”

Biblical

“Discipline which investigates the truth about God and the universe as set forth in the unfolding revelation of the Bible.”



How Has God Revealed Himself

THE TWO CATEGORIES OF DIVINE REVELATION			
TYPE	MANIFESTATION	SCRIPTURE	SIGNIFICANCE
1) General/Natural Revelation	In Nature	Ps. 19:1-6	Reveals God exists. Reveals God's glory.
		Rom. 1:18-21	Reveals God is omnipotent. Reveals God is judge.
	In Conscience	Rom. 2:14-15	Reveals God has placed his law within the hearts of all people.
	In Providence	Matt. 5:45	Reveals God is benevolent to all people.
		Acts 14:15-17	Reveals God provides food for all people.
		Dan. 2:21	Reveals God raises up and removes rulers.
2) Special Revelation	In Christ (the Living Word)	John 1:18	Reveals what the Father is like.
		John 5:36-37	Reveals the Father's compassion.
		John 6:63; 14-10	Reveals that the Father gives life to those who believe in the Son.
	In Scripture (The Written Word)	II Tim. 3:16-17	Reveals all the doctrine, reproof, correction, and guidance that the Christian needs for godly living.
		II Peter 1:20-21	Reveals all that God has chosen to disclose through human authors directed and protected by the Holy Spirit.

Ten Foundational Beliefs of a Christian Worldview

Belief One: God

There is one true God, personal, infinite, self-revealing, all powerful, all knowing, everywhere present, self-existent, sovereign, and eternal. God is righteous, holy, and redemptive. God is a trinity of three eternal persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; God is also one – a unity. Gen. 1:1; Deut. 6:4-6; Jonah 4:2; Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:16-21

Belief Two: Revelation

God has revealed Himself in nature and Scripture, and supremely in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God. It truthfully reveals to us knowledge about God, the world, and ourselves. This Word is our sole authority for faith and life. Psalm 19; 119; Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35; Rom. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21

"There are two books laid before us to study, to prevent us from falling into error: first, the volume to the Scriptures, which reveal the will of God; then the volume of the creation, which expresses His power."

- Sir Francis Bacon, 15th century scientist who is credited with developing the scientific method (quoted in "Answers in Genesis," Feb. 1995).

Belief Three: Creation

The universe and all that exists was created by God alone through the power of His Word, and as the theater of His own glory. He oversees what He has made, exercising His holy and wise government for moral ends. Gen. 1-2; Psalm 19; John 1:1-5; Acts 17:22-31; Col. 1:15-17.

Belief Four: Human Beings

Human beings, male and female, are created in the likeness and image of God; but are born sinners in rebellion against God. Humans are sinners by nature and sin by choice. Gen. 1:26-31; 3:1-19; Psalm 51:5, 139:13-16; Rom. 3:9-20; James 3:9.

Belief Five: Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He is perfect both in His deity and also in His humanity, two natures united in one person. He lived a perfect sinless life. He suffered and was crucified for our sins, buried, and rose again in bodily resurrection. He ascended into the heavens and will come again in glory. Isa. 9:6-7; Micah 5:2; John 1:1-18; 8:58; 14:1-9; Acts 1:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 1:13-23; 2:9-10; Heb. 1:1-3; 4:15.

Belief Six: Salvation by Grace Alone Through Faith Alone in Christ Alone

Salvation is God's work accomplished in us by His grace alone, through faith alone, in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, whose death on the cross accomplished the redemption of sinners. He died as our penal substitute and was raised victorious over death in His bodily resurrection. Isa. 52:13-53:12; Mark 10:45; Rom. 3:21-26; 1 Cor. 15:1-11; 2 Cor. 5:17-21; Gal. 3:13-14; 1 John 2:1-2, 4:10.

Belief Seven: The Family

The family is God's gracious and loving creation created for our protection, pleasure and partnership. Sex is God's good gift and is to be enjoyed only within the covenant of marriage between a man and woman. It is intended for intimacy, pleasure and the gift of children. Gen. 2:18-25; Exodus 20:12; Psalm 127, 128; Prov. 5:15-20, 31:10-31; 1 Cor. 6:18-20, 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-6:4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Belief Eight: Government and Society

Human society, government, culture and nations were created by God for our good, though all societies are marred by sin and limited in authority. Christians should seek to make the will of God supreme not only in our own lives, but also in government and society. Exodus 20:3-17; Prov. 14:34; Matt. 22:21; Act 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7.

Belief Nine: Social Action

The Social Order should be permeated by Christian witness. Living out the ethics of Scripture, we are to be salt and light to a wicked and darkened world. We should oppose racism, greed, selfishness, all forms of sexual immorality and pornography. We should help the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, and the helpless. We contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Exodus 20:3-17; Deut. 27:18-26; Psalm 139:13-16; Micah 6:8; Matt. 5:13-16; Rom. 12-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; 7:21-24; Eph. 4:25-5:12; 1 Thess. 4:1-8.

Belief Ten: Judgment

History has a goal. God will accomplish the fulfillment of all His purposes, according to the pleasure of His own will and to His own glory. On the Day of Judgment, God will judge all persons and His justice and holiness will be fully satisfied. Believers in Jesus Christ, the redeemed, will enter into everlasting life in a place called heaven. Unbelievers, the unrighteous, will go into everlasting punishment in a place called hell. Matt. 25:31-46; John 14:1-3; Rom. 8:28-39; 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 1:3-14; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:11-15; 21-22.

Basic Life Questions Every Person Must Ask And Answer

Question #1: Why Should I Believe There Is A God?

A. What are the God options?

1. _____ or _____ = a world without God.
2. _____ = a world plus an infinite God. _____: There is only one God.
3. _____ = God is all that is and all that is, is God.
4. _____ = a world on its own made by God.
5. _____ = a world with a finite God.
6. _____ = a world in God or God immanently in all of the world (e.g. as a “life-force”).
7. _____ = a world with many gods. “As _____ now is _____ once was. As _____ now is _____ may become.” (Theology of _____).

B. What are the evidences for God?

1. Cosmological argument - cause and effect (creation—Creator)
2. Teleological argument - design-designer (the “watch—watchmaker”)
3. Moral argument - law-Lawgiver (our universal sense of right and wrong)
4. Ontological - greatest / necessary being (the greatest being by definition must exist)
5. Historical argument - mighty acts of God (e.g. Exodus)
6. Jesus Christ - His life, death and resurrection

God cannot be proven absolutely; neither can He be disproven absolutely. However, there is sufficient evidence to justify belief in a Supreme Being as reasonable and rational. This does not settle the issue of: What kind of God are we talking about? To answer that, Christians appeal to special revelation, the Bible.

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

- Kreeft, Peter. *Yes or No*. Ignatius, 1991.
Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. Macmillan, 1979.
Schaeffer, Francis. *How Should We Then Live*. Good News, 1983.

Question #2: Why Should I Trust and Believe the Bible?

A. Why insist on inerrancy (the full truthfulness of the Bible)?

1. The nature and character of God. (If the Bible is God's Word and God is a God of truth, the Bible must be true). This is a deductive argument.
2. The witness of Scripture to itself (Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). The Bible testifies to its own truthfulness. This is an inductive argument.
3. The analogy of the living Word (Christ) and the written Word (the Bible). Both are fully human and fully divine. Both are perfect.
4. Fulfilled prophecy. (There are multiple fulfilled prophecies concerning Christ alone).
5. Archeological confirmation that has repeatedly demonstrated the accuracy of the Bible.
6. The testimony of Jesus. His view of Scripture must be our view if we are to live under His Lordship (Matt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:25-27; John 10:35; 17:17).
7. The need of a certain word from God. If the Bible contains error, it cannot be the Word of God.

B. What are some principles to guide our study of the Bible?

1. All Scripture is of equal inspiration, but not of equal importance or applicability. All of it, however, is profitable (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. We should interpret the Bible "naturally," recognizing for example the historical context, different types of literature and figures of speech.
3. Inerrancy means that the Bible is true in what it says in all areas. Further, it has a single meaning with many applications.
4. Inerrancy does not deny the use in Scripture of summation, approximation, phenomenal language (the language of how things appear) or cultural linguistic devices common to the time of writing (an example is how New Testament authors cite Old Testament passages and sometimes paraphrase.)
5. While recognizing the epistemological (how we come to know what we know) contributions of reason, experience, tradition, and the Church, inerrancy affirms that the ultimate religious and spiritual authority for the Christian is Scripture interpreted by the historical/grammatical hermeneutic. The plain sense of Scripture is to be sought, affirmed, and obeyed.

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

- Archer, Gleason. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Zondervan, 1982.
Blomberg, Craig. *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*. IVP, 1987.
Dockery, David. *Christian Scripture*. Broadman, 1995.

Geisler, Norman, ed. *Inerrancy*. Zondervan, 1979.

Nash, Ronald. *The Word of God and the Mind of Man*. Zondervan, 1982.

Bibliology

Key Word and Concept

what

REVELATION

“The act of God by which He has made known what was otherwise unknowable.”
apokalupsis – “to unveil, to uncover”

GENERAL

“God’s witness to Himself through creation, history, and the conscience of man.”

SPECIAL

“God’s disclosure of Himself in Salvation History (revelation in a person) and in the interpretive word of Scripture (revelation in proposition.)

HISTORY

Judges
Ruth

CREATION

Psalm 19:1-3
Romans 1:18-20

CONSCIENCE

Romans 1:19
Romans 2:14-15

WRITTEN

I Corinthians 2:10-13
II Peter 1:19-21

LIVING

John 1:18
Hebrews 1:1-3

how

INSPIRATION

“The act of God by which He superintended/controlled the human authors of the 66 books of the Bible so that using their own individual personalities they composed and recorded without error, His revelation to man in the words of the original.”
II Timothy 3:15-16; II Peter 1:16-21

result

INERRANCY

“The quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake which safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions.”
Matthew 5:17-18; John 10:35; 17:17

result

INFALLIBILITY

“The quality of neither misleading or being misled which safeguards the truth that Holy Scripture is a sure, safe and reliable guide in all matters.”

responsibility

INTERPRETATION

“The process of determining the biblical author’s intended meaning.”

resource

ILLUMINATION

“The work of the Holy Spirit, which assists the reader in gaining both the sense and significance of God’s written revelation.”
John 16:12-15; I Corinthians 2:9-16

response

APPLICATION

“The process of determining the current relevance of Scripture and then actively responding.”
James 1:19-27

“What Did Jesus Believe About the Bible?”
(Matthew 5:17-18)

I. Jesus believed all the Scriptures point to Him. 5:17

- 1) He did not come to destroy the Scriptures.
- 2) He came to fulfill the Scriptures.

II. Jesus believed all the Scriptures were perfect in detail. 5:18

- 1) Jesus affirmed the OT and promised the NT. John 16:12-15
- 2) Jesus said the Scriptures cannot be broken. John 10:35
- 3) Jesus said God’s Word is truth. John 17:17

Suggestions for Interpreting the Text of Scripture
(A Summation)

I. Study the book as a whole.

- 1) Consider the questions of date, authorship, recipients, and purpose (general matters of introduction).
- 2) Develop an outline of the entire book (study Bibles and commentaries will be helpful).
- 3) Examine the relationship of the passage under consideration to the book as a whole.

II. Establish the best textual base possible.

- 1) Use the original language if you can.
- 2) Compare various versions and translations.

III. Investigate the text linguistically (eg. word by word).

- 1) Make a lexical (definitional) study of crucial words.

- 2) Research the passage for key words, phrases, and ideas.
- 3) Track the verbs!

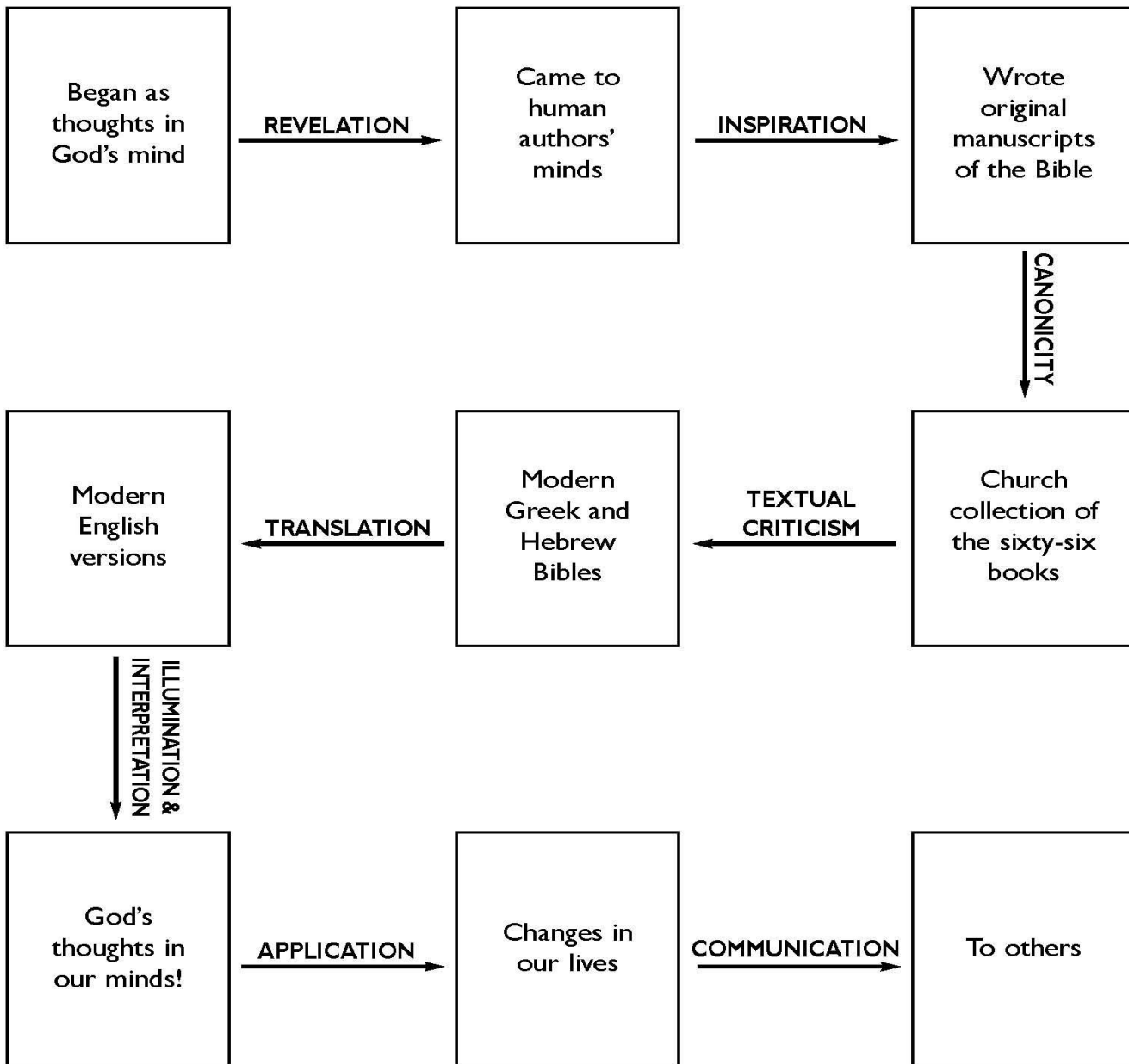
IV. Examine the form or forms of the material in the passage.

- 1) What is the literary type (history, poetry, prophetic, apocalyptic)?
- 2) Is there any indication of the life situation from which the material came?

V. Analyze the structure of the passage.

- 1) Determine if the material constitutes a literary unity.
- 2) Is there a logical sequence of ideas present?
- 3) Isolate the basic themes or emphases.
- 4) Outline the passage you are studying. Use the outline as the framework for your teaching.

HOW OUR BIBLE CAME TO US



* God has not really changed your life until He is using you to change others!

Question #3: Why Should I Believe Jesus Is The Only Way To God? Isn't Sincerity In What One Believes Good Enough?

A. What is your source of authority for answering the question?

- 1) _____ - I think
- 2) _____ - I feel (_____ : this is what everyone else is doing)
- 3) _____ - We've always done
- 4) _____ - God's Word

B. What are the options?

Four Views of Salvation and the Relationship of Christianity to Other World Religions/Cults

Universalism: All people will eventually be saved; God (or gods) is too loving to send anyone to hell for eternity.

Pluralism: All the world religions are basically the same with their particular understanding being true for them; all people will be saved through their own faith. (Pluralism is the avenue of universalism).

Inclusivism: Christ's work of salvation is essential and universal in application and it can apply even to those who have never trusted Christ personally and are not aware of its benefits (e.g. the Roman Catholic Karl Rahner's "anonymous Christianity").

Exclusivism: Christianity is the only way of salvation. Other world religions may have partial religious insights (all truth is God's truth), but only Christianity is sufficient for salvation. This is what Jesus said (John 14:6). This is what Peter said. (Acts 4:12). This is what Paul said (1 Tim. 2:5). Other religions should be seen as either having partial insights of which Christianity is the fulfillment, and/or as demonic and totally in darkness.

C. Are not all religions basically the same?

No. There are at least...

Six Points of Divergence between Christianity and Other World Religions

- The Christian God is personal, He is Father! Most religions have a more impersonal view of God (Brahman, Buddhism, Allah).
- Christ is Savior; other religions merely offer great teachers (Muhammad, gurus, bodhisattvas).
- All persons are of great value in a Christian anthropology as image bearers of God; other religions place much less value on personhood and the individual.

- A Christian philosophy of history has purpose and is linear; the Eastern religions have a cyclical view of history.
- Christian salvation is by grace through faith in Christ; virtually all other religions offer salvation by works (Torah, Five Pillars, Yoga, Noble Eightfold Path).
- Christian eschatology is based upon the hope of bodily resurrection; other religions offer immortality of the soul, reincarnation or nirvana. The body is basically deemed evil or “inferior” in those systems.

*Remember: “It is no sin to doubt some things, but it may be fatal to believe everything.”

A.W. Tozer

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

Nash, Ronald. *Is Jesus the Only Savior?* Zondervan, 1994.

Packer, J. I. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God.* IVP, 1961,

Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Faith.* Zondervan, 2000.

Question #4: How Can I Spot A Cult And Witness Effectively To A Friend Trapped In A False Teaching?

A. What is a cult?

Definition: A cult is a group that claims identity (or a relationship) with a major religion but denies basic teachings that are central and essential to that tradition.

B. What is the math of the cults?

1. (+) They add an extra-biblical source of authority either by prophet(ess) or pen.

2. (-) They subtract from the person and work of Jesus Christ.

They deny His eternal deity.

They deny as sufficient what He did on the cross.

3. (x) They multiply the requirements of salvation.

4. (\div) They divide our allegiance from God to another.

C. How do I witness to someone involved in a cult?

1. Principles to remember

- a. Always be kind.
- b. Be a good listener.
- c. Pray for them.
- d. Love them.

2. Procedure to follow

a. Give them 15 minutes uninterrupted asking them to tell you what they believe you must do to be saved and go to heaven when you die.

b. Require that they give you 15 minutes uninterrupted so that you can tell them how you believe a person can be saved and go to heaven when they die.

c. Pray with them, and pray evangelistically sharing clearly and completely the gospel in your prayer.

d. Invite them (and their friends) back to do it again!

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

Geisler, Norman and Ron Rhodes, *Correcting the Cults*. Baker, 1997.

Hoekema, Anthony. *The Four Major Cults*. Eerdmans, 1963.

Martin, Walter, and Hank Hanegraff. *The Kingdom of the Cults*. Rev. and updated.
Bethany, 1997.

Question #5: Which Is True: Creation Or Evolution?

A. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR OPTIONS?

**FIVE MAJOR VIEWS OF CREATION
(An Overview)**

I. ATHEISTIC EVOLUTION

1. Statement Of The View

Everything in the universe has come into existence and has evolved into its present form as a result of natural processes unaided by any supernatural power.

2. Positive Aspects Of The View From Its Advocates

- a. It appears to explain the origin of everything.
- b. It offers a single explanation for everything that exists: it evolved.
- c. It offers the only real alternative to creation by God.
- d. It eliminates God and exalts man. It is thoroughly humanistic, and can be classified as a form of pantheism if one wishes to invoke a deity.

3. Problems With The View And Answers By Its Advocates

It cannot explain the origin of matter.	Matter is eternal.
It cannot explain the complexity of matter.	Matter is the product of billions of years of evolution via change and natural selection.
It cannot explain the emergence of life.	Primordial life evolved (via natural selection) from bio-polymers which evolved from bio-organics which evolved from inorganic compounds (ie. life from non-life).
It cannot explain the appearance of God-consciousness, CONSCIENCE, and rationality in man.	This too was the product of evolution. In essence rationality emerged from irrationality.

4. Evaluation Of The View

- a. It rests on a foundational hypothesis that cannot be proved to be true (i.e. matter is eternal); it is essentially a faith position (just like creationist positions).

- b. It is supported by little historical (geological) evidence (only the fossil record) which has many gaps in it and is open to subjective interpretation.
- c. It relies on mutations as a necessary mechanism for change, but mutations have never produced new species, and are almost always harmful and destructive.
- d. It is extremely improbable statistically.
- e. It rejects the special revelation of Scripture concerning creation.

5. Modern Advocates Of The View

Almost all non-Christian scientists such as Richard Dawkins, Steven Gould, Ernst Mayer, William Provine, Carl Sagan.

II. THEISTIC EVOLUTION

1. Statement Of The View

Everything in the universe has come into existence and has evolved into its present form as a result of natural processes guided by the God of the Bible (or some divine being).

2. Positive Aspects Of The View From Its Advocates

- a. It unites truth known by special revelation in the Bible with truth known by general revelation in nature and discovered by science.
- b. God seems to work according to this pattern in history interrupting and intervening in the course of events only rarely.

3. Problems With The View And Answers By Its Advocates

It presupposes the truth of evolution which has not been validated.	Evolution is a fact, or at least a strongly accepted theory.
God has intervened in history many more times than the theistic evolutionist suggest.	In the early history of the universe God intervened less frequently.
Divine intervention in the evolutionary process is contradictory to the basic theory of evolutionary process.	The evolutionary process does not rule out divine intervention.
This method of creation does not do justice to the biblical record of creation.	The biblical record must be interpreted more freely and less literally.

4. Evaluation Of The View

- a. It cannot do justice to both the tenets of evolution and the teaching of Scripture. One must be given precedent over the other.
- b. It is ultimately destructive of biblical religion (at least this has been the case historically).

5. Modern Advocates Of The View

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper and Row, 1959). (He is a French Roman Catholic priest), scientist at schools like Baylor Univ., Calvin College, Wake Forest Univ., etc.

Some scientists and numerous theologians who have respect for but a deficient view of Scripture hold this view.

III. PROGRESSIVE CREATION **(also known as the Day-Age Theory or Old Earth Creation)**

1. Statement Of The View

God created the world directly and deliberately, without leaving anything to chance, but He did it over long periods of time that correspond roughly to the geological ages and a 15-20 billion year old universe.

2. Positive Aspects Of The View From The Perspective Of Those Who Hold It

- a. It provides a reasonable harmony between the Genesis record and the facts of science.
- b. The translation of “day” as “age” in Gen. 1 though rare, is an exegetically legitimate one.
- c. It is a tentative conclusion and acknowledges that not all the scientific evidence is in and our understanding of the text may change as biblical (and scientific) scholarship progresses.

3. Problems With The View And Answers By Its Advocates

There are discrepancies between the fossil record and the order in which plants, fish, and animals are said to have been created in Genesis.	Science may be wrong at this point, or the earliest forms of life may be omitted in Genesis.
Taking the six days of creation as ages is unusual exegetically.	But it is possible and best here.
“Evenings” and “mornings” suggest 24-hour periods.	But the sun did not appear until the fourth day.
Death enters the world before the Fall.	It took on its horror at the Fall but existed before that event.

4. Evaluation Of The View

This view takes the biblical text quite seriously but adopts some unusual interpretations in order to harmonize with scientific data.

5. Modern Advocates Of The View

Hugh Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos* (Colorado Springs: Nav, 1993).

Many evangelicals who have a strong respect for some conclusions of science, including James Boice, Bruce Ware, and Bernard Ramm (and the Catholic Michael Behe).

IV. SIX-DAY CREATIONISM

1. Statement of The View

Genesis 1 describes one creative process that took place in six consecutive 24-hour periods of time not more than 6-20 thousand years ago (though many would allow for an older earth and creation date).

2. Positive Aspects Of The View From The Perspective Of Those Who Hold It

- a. It regards biblical teaching as determinative.
- b. It rests on a strong exegetical base.
- c. It is the clearest meaning of the text.
- d. It is consistent with the laws of thermo-dynamics.

1. 1ST LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS: although energy can be changed in form, it is not now being created. Genesis 2:1-3; Hebrews 4:4-10.
2. 2ND LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS: all physical systems, if left to themselves, tend toward atrophy and become disordered. Romans 8:20-22; Hebrews 1:10-12.

3. Problems With The View And Answers By Its Advocates

Data from various scientific disciplines (astronomy, radioactive dating, carbonate deposits, etc.) indicates the earth is about 5 billion years old and the universe is about 15-20 billion years old	God created the cosmos with the appearance of age and much of scientific opinion is in error and also in flux and changing.
A universal flood cannot explain the geologic strata fully.	It can. The problem is most scientists refuse to even consider it due to biblical bias.
Creation with the appearance of age casts doubt on the credibility of God.	Since Adam was evidently created with the appearance of age, other things could have been as well. This is self-evident in the text.
There is no reason why God would have created things with the appearance of age.	It is consistent with his creating a fully operational and mature universe.

4. Evaluation Of The View

This view is based on the best exegesis of the text though it contradicts the present conclusions of several branches of science.

5. Modern Advocates Of The View

Creation Research Society, ICR (Henry Morris, Duane Gish, etc.).

Answers in Genesis (Ken Hamm).

Many conservative evangelicals.

V. THE GAP THEORY

1. Statements Of The View

Between Gen. 1:1 and 2 there was a long, indeterminate period in which the destruction of an original world and the unfolding of the geological ages can be located. God then recreated our cosmos.

2. Positive Aspects Of The View From The Perspective Of Those Who Hold It

- a. It rests on an exegetical, biblical base.
- b. It is consistent with the structure of the creation account itself.
- c. It is possible to translate the Hebrew verb “to be,” in verse 2, as “become.”
- d. “Formless and void,” in verse 2, may be a clue to a preadamite judgment of God on the earth (cf. Isa. 45).
- e. It provides a setting for the fall of Satan (Isa. 14: Ezk. 28).

3. Problems With The View And Answers By Its Advocates

It is an unnatural explanation since the text implies an original creation in Gen. 1:2ff. (cf. Exod. 20:11).	This interpretation is a superficial conclusion.
The exegetical data that supports this view is far from certain and highly unlikely.	This interpretation is possible.
This theory does not really settle the problems of modern geology.	The universal flood may have produced some of the other geological phenomena.

4. Evaluation Of The View

While the view builds on a high view of Scripture, several of the interpretations required for it are based on improbable exegesis. In this light some have proposed moving the gap to between John 1:1 and Gen. 1:1. Still, virtually no Hebrew scholars hold this view.

5. Modern Advocates Of The View

Arthur C. Constance, *Without Form and Void* (Brockville, Ont: Doorway Papers, 1970).

Many conservative evangelicals including W.A. Criswell, Arthur Pink, C.I. Scofield, C.S. Lewis, M.R. DeHaan, and D.G. Barnhouse hold this view.

B. What’s at stake in the debate? (7 Observations)

“Seven Tenets of the Creation and Evolution Models”

Creation	Evolution
I. The universe and the solar system were directly created by God.	I. The universe and the solar system emerged by naturalistic processes.
II. Life was suddenly created “exnihilo” (out of nothing) by God.	II. Life emerged from non-life by naturalistic processes.
III. All present living kinds of animals and plants have remained fixed since creation, other than extinctions, and genetic variation in originally created kinds has only occurred within the limits of that species (micro-evolution).	III. All present kinds emerged from simpler earlier kinds, so that single celled organisms evolved into invertebrates, then vertebrates, then amphibians, then reptiles, then mammals, then primates, including man. (macro-evolution)
IV. Mutation and natural selection are insufficient to have brought about any emergence of present living kinds from a simple primordial organism.	IV. Mutation and natural selection have brought about the emergence of present complex kinds from a simple primordial organism.
V. Man and apes have a separate ancestry.	V. Man and apes emerged from a common ancestor.
VI. The earth’s geologic features appear to have been fashioned largely by rapid, catastrophic processes that affected the earth on a global and regional scale (catastrophism).	VI. The earth’s geologic features were fashioned largely by slow, gradual processes, with infrequent catastrophic events restricted to a local scale (uniformitarianism).
VII. The inception of the earth and of living kinds may have been relatively recent.	VII. The inception of the earth and then of life must have occurred several billion years ago.

C. What are some issues I need to consider?

1. Either God is eternal and made everything or matter is eternal and organized itself into the universe we have. Neither position can be proved. Both are essentially faith positions.
2. The fossil record is a problem for evolution. Transitional forms are still absent.
3. The issue of "irreducible complexity" of living organisms is a problem for evolution. The evidence screams for an "intelligent designer." (Hence the rise of the "I.D." movement).
4. Alleged "ape-man" discoveries like Piltdown man, Nebraska man, Peking man, Java man, Lucy Ramapithecus and Neanderthal man have all been proven to be either a hoax (Piltdown man) or a case of mistaken identification.
5. The age of the Earth/universe is not the best place or even a necessary place to wage the war of evolution/creation. Leave it open.
6. A historical Adam and Eve is a must and not negotiable for a Christian. The issue is both Christological (what did Jesus believe?) and soteriological (related to salvation).
7. Evolution is in trouble. The theory continually changes form. It is reasonable to believe that early in this century it will cease to be viable, at least in its present models.

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

- Dembski, William, and Michael Behe. *Intelligent Design: The Bridge between Science and Theology*. IVP, 1999.
- Dembski, William. *What Darwin Didn't Know*. Harvest House, 2004.
- Johnson, Phillip. *Darwin on Trial*. IVP, 1991.
- _____. *Defeating Darwinism*. IVP, 1997.

Question #6: How do we explain the problem of evil or why do bad things happen (especially to good people)?

A. What is the problem? (theodicy: justifying the ways of God to human persons).

1. God is all-loving so He is opposed to evil.
2. God is all-powerful (omnipotent) so He can prevent evil.
3. But there is pain and suffering; disasters, disease and death. Why?
Philosopher David Hume: “Is he [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing: where then is evil?”
(*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*).

B. What are possible responses to the issue?

1. Maybe there is no God (Atheism).
2. Maybe God is not all good and/or all-powerful (Finite Theism).
3. But . . . why do humans even ask such questions? Animals don’t. Is this sense of right and wrong, good and bad, only an accident of evolution, or is it a reflection of our being made in the image of God?! Why do we even ask right/wrong and good/bad questions?

C. What is the answer?

Let’s be honest. This is one of the most difficult issue we face, given our belief in the God of the Bible who is perfect goodness and all-powerful.

1. The Freewill Argument (Augustine [354-430]: “the greatest _____”)

- a. God made us in His image as free creatures.
- b. God desires that we love Him freely. Coerced love is a contradiction.
- c. Freewill gives us the ability to choose good or evil.
- d. The gift of freewill explains, in part, why there is evil. Free beings made and make bad (evil, sinful) choices. _____ which is natural (hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) is the result of _____ in general. Thus _____ evil and _____ evil are interrelated (Rom. 8:18-25).

2. The Soul Building Argument (Irenaeus [c.130-200]: “the greatest _____”)

- a. God desires to develop our character into God-likeness.
- b. We learn some things and develop spiritually through evil or suffering that we could not achieve any other way. (Ex – Would I know God loves me simply because He made me? Yes. – Do I know God loves me more or less because of Christ dying for my sins? More!)

*This may not be the best world _____, but it is the best world _____ given the good things God intended to provide and accomplish.

3. The Theological/Eschatological Argument.

- a. Though all things are not good, God causes all things to work for good to them who love Him (Romans 8:28-30).
- b. In the end, God promises to make all things right and render perfect justice.
- c. Because of the cross, even when I cannot trace His hand, I can trust His heart. The cross teaches that God has defeated evil decisively, and will do away with evil completely in eternity.

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

- Boa, Kenneth, and Robert Bowman, Jr. *Faith Has Its Reasons: An Integrative Approach to Defending Christianity*. NavPress, 2001.
- Carson, D. A. *How Long, O Lord?* Baker, 1990.
- Lewis, C. S. *Problem of Pain*. Reprint ed. Macmillan, 1980.

Question #7: What Does The Bible Really Say About Sex?

“80% of teenagers who say they have been “born again” believe sex outside of marriage is morally wrong. However, 2/3 of them violate their own belief system in their sexual behavior” (*World*, 8-11-07, p.9).

A. Sex was God’s idea not ours (Gen. 1:28).

B. God made us as sexual creatures (Gen. 1:26-27).

C. Sex is God’s good gift to be enjoyed between a man and a woman within the covenant of marriage (Gen. 2:24-25). Thus premarital sex, extramarital sex and unnatural sex is sinful and wrong.

D. Sex within marriage is for the purposes of:

1. Procreation (Gen. 1:28; 4:1)
2. Partnership (Gen. 2:24; 24:67)
3. Pleasure (Prov. 5:15-19; Song of Solomon [the whole book!])
4. Protection (Prov. 5:20; 1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5)

E. Sex is a powerful passion that can override both the mind and will. It must be handled with great care.

1. Guard your thought life (Prov. 23:7; Rom. 12:2).
2. Guard your eyes (Job 31:1; Prov. 20:12).
3. Watch your hands, your pelvic area and your mouth (1 Cor. 6:18).
4. Never be alone with someone of the opposite sex. Always make sure there are people around.
5. Never do anything you would not be willing to do in a room full of people.
6. Never do what you would not want done to and with your future mate.

F. Playing with pornography is playing with fire.

G. The myth of "safe sex" is exactly that: a myth.

H. God calls us not just to abstinence, but purity (both in thought and action!)

16% of American teenagers who say their faith is “extremely important to their lives are living morally pure lives.” (*World*, “Sex and the evangelical teen,” 8-11-07).

I. Follow God’s guidelines for good decision-making and the "Gray" areas of life.

Paul’s Corinthian Principles

1 Corinthians 6:12 – 11:1

1. Will this action edify self? (6:12)
Will it build me up? Profit me? Help me personally?

2. Will this action enslave my soul? (6:12)

Can it bring me into emotional/psychological (even chemical) bondage?

3. Will this action exalt the Savior? (6:13; 10:31)

Can I glorify my Lord in this activity?

4. Will this action encourage other saints? (8:13)

Is this a potential stumbling block to someone else?

5. Will this action evangelize sinners? (9:19, 22; 10:32-33)

Will this help or harm my witness for Christ?

6. Will this action be an example of my Savior? (11:1)

Remember: The wrong person and the wrong time and the wrong place = the wrong thing happening!

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

Akin, Daniel. *God on Sex*. Broadman and Holman, 2003.

Arterbun, Stephen. *Every Young Man's Battle: Strategies for Victory in the Real World of Sexual Temptation*. Waterbrook, 2002.

Clark, Jeramy. *I Gave Dating a Chance*. Waterbrook, 2002.

Elliot, Elisabeth, Joshua Harris, and Ruth Bell Graham. *Passion and Learning to Bring Your Love Life Under Christ's Control*. Revell, 2002.

Question #8: Why Should I Believe Jesus Is God And That He Rose From The Dead?

Among these Jews there suddenly turns up a man who goes about talking as if He was God... He says He has always existed... Among Pantheists... anyone might say that he was a part of God, or one with God: there would be nothing very odd about it. But this man, since He was a Jew, could not mean that kind of God. God, in their language, meant the being outside the world who had made it and was infinitely different from anything else. And when you have grasped that, you will see that what this man said was, quite simply, the most shocking thing that has ever been uttered by human lips.

-C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, pgs. 54-55

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

-C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, pgs. 54-55(1979 ed.)

A. Who was/is He?

Four options:

Liar: He was not who He said He was and He knew so.

Lunatic: He was not who He thought He was and He did not know it.

Legend: He was not who others later imagined Him to be.

Lord: He was who He said He was and the resurrection proves it to be so.

B. Who did Jesus say He was? (His self-claims)

John 8:58 "Before Abraham was I AM"
(He claimed to be the God of Exodus 3:14.)

John 14:9 "He who has seen Me has seen the Father."

John 10:30 "I and My Father are one."

Seven Great "I AM's" of John's Gospel:

1. I am the Bread of Life (6:35, 41, 48, 51).
2. I am the Light of the World (8:12).
3. I am the Door of the Sheep (10:7, 9).
4. I am the Good Shepherd (10:11, 14).
5. I am the Resurrection and the Life (11:25).
6. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (14:6).
7. I am the True Vine (15:1, 5).

The point is this: put these words in the mouth of any other person and they sound absurd and insane. Put them in the mouth of Jesus and they make perfect sense.

C. Who did others of His day say He was?

Four Great Christological Texts

John 1:1-18, He is the eternal Word who became flesh and showed us the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11, He is the very essence of God who humbled Himself to die on the cross and is now exalted to the highest place.

Colossians 1:15-20, He is the one who makes visible the invisible God who created all things.

Hebrews 1:1-3, He is God's superior revelation and is greater than the prophets or the angels (or any other thing!).

D. What has the church believed about Jesus throughout its history?

The Nicene Creed of A.D. 325

We believe in one God, the Father all-sovereign, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all the ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, and was made flesh of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into the heavens, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and comes again with glory to judge living and dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

The Chalcedon Creed of A.D. 451

Following, then, the holy fathers, we unite in teaching all men to confess the one and the only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This selfsame one is perfect both in deity and in humanness; this selfsame one is also actually God and actually man, with a rational soul <meaning human soul> and a body. He is of the same reality as God as far as his deity is concerned and of the same reality as we ourselves as far as his humanness is concerned; thus like us in all respects, sin only excepted. Before time began he was begotten of the Father, in respect of his deity, and now in these “last days,” for us and behalf of our salvation, this selfsame one was born of Mary the virgin, who is God-bearer in respect of his humanness.

[We also teach] that we apprehend this one and only Christ – Son, Lord, only-begotten – in two natures; without confusing the two natures, without transmuting one nature into the other, without dividing them into two separate categories, without contrasting them according to area or function. The distinctiveness of each nature is not nullified by the union. Instead, the "properties" of each nature are conserved and both natures concur in one "person" [prosopon] and in one reality [hypostasis]. They are not divided or cut into two persons, but are together the one and only and only-begotten Logos of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus have the prophets of old testified; thus the Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught us; thus the symbol of the fathers has handed down to us."

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ (A Historical and Theological Analysis)

Our Options

1. A great hoax (The resurrection is false)
 2. A nice mythology (The resurrection is fiction)
 3. The supreme event in history (The resurrection is fact)
- A. Naturalistic Theories That Reject the Historical, Bodily Resurrection of Jesus
Naturalistic ideas were popularized by 19th-century liberal theologians, and some of them are still prevalent today. All of them are rooted in an antisupernatural worldview.
1. The swoon theory. This view argues that Jesus did not really die but fainted because of the enormous physical punishment He suffered. Later, Jesus emerged from the tomb and convinced His followers that He had risen from the dead. In his best-seller *The Passover Plot*, Hugh Schonfield says Jesus planned the whole thing with help from Joseph of Arimathea. Jesus was drugged while on the cross, making it appear that He had died. Unfortunately, He was seriously injured and actually died a short time later. Barbara Thiering, who teaches at the University of Sydney, Australia believes that Jesus was crucified alongside Judas and Simon Magus at Qumran. He was given snake poison to fake His death and later recovered. He would go on to marry Mary Magdalene and later Lydia, and He would father several children! The evidence for these theories is “zero!”
 2. The spirit theory. Jesus was not raised bodily, but He returned in a spirit form or as a spirit creature. This view is sometimes popular among liberal theologians who have mystical interests, as well as among New Age followers. The Jehovah’s Witnesses cult, which

- teaches that Jesus was created by God as the archangel Michael asserts, “King Christ Jesus was put to death in the flesh and was resurrected an invisible spirit creature.”
3. The hallucination theory. The German scholar David Strauss (1808-74) argued, “According to our view the imagination of his [Jesus’] followers aroused in their deepest spirit, presented their master revived, for they could not possibly think of him as dead. ...[it is] reduced completely to the state of mind and made into an inner event.” Ian Wilson, believes that Jesus preprogrammed His disciples to hallucinate by means of hypnosis.
 4. The vision theory. The disciples had experiences they interpreted or understood to be literal appearances of the risen Jesus. Though not identical, this view is similar to the spirit theory.
 5. The legend/myth theory. Basically the view of the Jesus Seminar, Jesus stories were embellished and exaggerated. Proponents of this view wrongly separate the Jesus of history (who He really was) from the Christ of faith (what the church later imagined Him to be). They see the resurrection as a wonder story indicating the significance the mythical Jesus held for His followers. The tomb, this position claims, most certainly was not empty.
 6. The stolen-body theory. This is the earliest theory that attempts to explain away Jesus’ bodily resurrection. It goes back to Matthew 28:11-15 and says the disciples stole His body. Occasionally, it is alleged that the body could also have been stolen by the Jewish leaders, the Romans, or even Joseph of Arimathea.
 7. The wrong-tomb theory. Belief in Jesus’ bodily resurrection rests on a simple mistake: first the women and later the men went to the wrong tomb by accident. Finding the wrong tomb empty, they erroneously concluded that Jesus had risen from the dead.
 8. The lie-for profit theory. Jesus’ alleged resurrection was perhaps the greatest religious hoax ever attempted and was perpetrated by His disciples. Jesus’ death by crucifixion was a huge disappointment, but His followers saw a way to turn it for good and financial profit. They proclaimed that Jesus had risen, built a substantial following, and profited from the monies they fleeced from people.
 9. The twin theory. In a 1995 debate with Christian apologist William Lane Craig, philosopher Robert Greg Cavin argued that Jesus had an identical twin brother. Separated at birth, they did not see each other again until the crucifixion. Following Jesus’ death, His twin conjured up a messianic identity and mission for Jesus, stole His body, and pretended to be the risen Jesus.
 10. The Muslim theory. Islam questions the biblical witness of Jesus’ crucifixion. Some teach instead that God provided a substitute for Jesus, perhaps even making the person look like Jesus. Surah 4:157 in the Qur’an says, “They declared: ‘We have put to death the Messiah Jesus the son of Mary, the apostle of Allah.’ They did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but they thought they did.” Muslims who hold to this “replacement theory” do not agree on who took Jesus’ place. Candidates include Judas, Pilate, Simon of Cyrene, or even one of the disciples.

B. Contemporary Models for the Resurrection

1. The facticity of the resurrection is seriously questioned or dismissed. The nature of the original eyewitnesses’ experience cannot be ascertained (Ex. Bultmann, Marxsen, Koester, Kung, Van Buren).
2. A literal resurrection may be true but it cannot be historically verified. The important element is the nature of the disciples experience, and the truth that the resurrection can only

be accepted by faith (Ex. K. Barth, Brunner, Bonhoeffer, Bornkamm, Rahner, M. Barth and Torrance).

3. A resurrection is probable and an abstract reconstruction of the historical nature of the appearances is possible. The empty tomb is viewed as the best explanation of the available data. However, it is still argued that the resurrection is an eschatological event and is not demonstrable by historical methodology, although it may possibly be verified in the future (Ex. Grass – Christ appeared in a spiritual form; Moltmann – the disciples witnessed visionary appearances of the risen Lord). Jesus’ appearances, then, were more along the lines of private revelations (also included here are R. Fuller, Jeremias, O’Collins). Again, such appearances cannot be known except in faith.
4. A literal resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the most probable solution based upon the available data. (Ex. Pannenberg). Yet Pannenberg rejects a corporeal resurrection body in favor of a spiritual body which appeared from heaven, was recognized as Jesus, spoke, and in Paul’s case, was accompanied by a phenomenon of light (Also A.M. Hunter, R. Brown, J.D.G. Dunn, L. Gopplet and A.M. Ramsey).
5. A literal bodily resurrection of Jesus and an empty tomb is the best solution of the Easter event based upon the evidence. This position differs from number four in its affirmation of a “resurrected body.” This is the classic orthodox position, and the one affirmed by evangelicals (significant contributions come from Ladd, Craig, Osborne, D. Fuller, Gundry and Geisler; it is also my position).

SPECIFIC EVIDENCES

1. Naturalistic theories fail to explain away the event and have been disproved or rejected (even by liberal scholarship).
 2. It does work and meet genuine needs (subjective evidence).
 3. The birth and continuance of Christianity with the central message of the resurrection from the beginning.
 4. The change in the day of Worship from the Sabbath to Sunday by Jews.
 5. Testified to have been seen by women first, in spite of the invalid nature of their witness in major cases in the first century.
 6. Radical change in the disciples.
 - A. New power
 - B. New courage
 - C. Faithful to death
- * Men will die for a lie. They will not die for what they know is a lie.
7. Empty tomb/no body.
 8. Numerous and various resurrection appearances.
 9. Unlikely nature of mass hallucination.
 10. Reported appearances which lasted 40 days then completely stopped for all.
 11. The 50 day interval between the resurrection and the proclamation at Pentecost (Acts 2) in Jerusalem itself.
 12. Multitude of fulfilled Old Testament prophecies (Gen.3:15; 12:1-3; 49:9-10; Num.24:17; Deut.18:15; 2 Sam.7:12-16; Psalms 2, 16, 22, 45, 110; Isa.7:14; 9:6-7; 53; Zech.9:9; 12:10; Mic.5:2).
 13. The Jewish leaders could not disprove the message.

14. Conversion of two skeptics: James and Paul.
15. Accepted character and claims of Jesus.
 He claimed to be God (John 8:58; 10:30; 14:9)
 He claimed He would rise (Matt. 16:24)
 C.S. Lewis said, “He is either Lord, Liar or Lunatic. He left us no other options.”
16. Articles left in the empty tomb (John 20:5 ff.).
17. Unexpected nature of the resurrection.
18. Reliable eyewitness documents recording the facts.

* The New Testament is the most well authenticated document from the ancient world. There are more manuscripts of the New Testament (5700) of an earlier date and more reliable nature than any other book from antiquity.

Histories	Oldest MSS	Number Surviving
Livy 59 B.C. – A.D. 17	4 th Century	20
Tacitus A.D. 56-120	9 th & 10 th Centuries	3
Thucydides 460-400 B.C.	10 th Century	8 + a few papyrus Fragments
Herodotus 484-425 B.C.	10 th Century	very few
<hr/>		
New Testament	c. 100-150	c. 5,700 (counting only Greek manuscripts) Plus there are more than 10,000 in Latin, and more than 1 million quotations from the church fathers (<i>Reinventing Jesus: What The Da Vinci Code and Other Novel Speculations Don't Tell You</i> , p. 71)

ADDITIONAL SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY:
 Akin, Daniel. *Discovering The Biblical Jesus*. LifeWay, 2003.
 Driscoll, Mark. *Vintage Jesus*. Crossway, 2008.
 Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Christ*. Zondervan, 1998.
 Stott, John. *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, 1986.

Question #9: What is Calvinism, and How Does One Reconcile Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility/Free Will?

FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM
(The T.U.L.I.P.)

The Doctrines	An Explanation
Total Depravity (Or Inability)	As a result of Adam’s fall into sin, the entire human race is born with a sin nature; all of humanity is dead in trespasses and sin. Man is unable to save himself or turn to God without the enablement of the Spirit.
Unconditional Election	Because man is dead in sin, he is unable to initiate a response to God; therefore, in eternity past God elected certain people to salvation. Election and predestination are unconditional; they are not based on man’s response or foreseen faith.
Limited Atonement (Or Particular Redemption)	Because God determined that certain ones should be saved as a result of God’s unconditional election, He determines that Christ should die for the elect. All whom God has elected and Christ has died for will be saved.
Irresistible Grace (Or Effectual Calling)	Those whom God elected and Christ died for, God draws to Himself through irresistible grace. God enables man to willingly come to Him. When God calls, man responds.
Perseverance Of The Saints (or the Savior)	The particular ones God has elected and drawn to Himself through the Holy Spirit will persevere in faith. None whom God has elected will be lost; they are eternally secure.

* God is the sovereign Lord of the universe. He predestines and elects persons to salvation, but does so in such a way as to not violate our free will and human responsibility to repent from sin and believe in Jesus Christ for salvation.

* Resist anything that attacks the sovereignty of God. Resist anything that lessens our passion for missions and evangelism.

* Recognize a great mystery and tension exist in this area of theology.

Recommended Sources of Additional Study:

Daniel L. Akin. “Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility.” *SBC Life*. April, 2006
J.I. Packer. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. IVP, 1991.

Major Evangelical Views of Election

	Arminianism	Calvinism	Compatibilism
Definition	Election is the conditional choice of God by which He determined who would be saved based on His foreknowledge of who will exercise faith. Election is the result of man's faith.	The unconditional and loving choice of God by which He determined who <u>must</u> believe. Election is the cause of man's faith.	The unconditional and loving choice of God by which He determined who <u>will</u> believe. Election is the cause of man's faith and yet it is consistent with free will/human responsibility.
Notable Adherent	Jacob Arminius, John Wesley, Clark Pinnock, Methodism	John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Spurgeon, RC Sproul, Presbyterianism.	Moise Amyraut, Millard J. Erickson, A.H. Strong, Danny Akin.
Historical Roots	In the early 17 th century, the Dutch pastor Arminius became convinced that Calvin was wrong. Wesley later went beyond Arminius by emphasizing <u>prevenient grace</u> .	During the reformation, Calvin followed Augustine's emphasis on God's irresistible grace, man's sin nature, and predestination. Calvin was succeeded by Beza, who went a step further, as did the Synod of Dort.	17 th Century and the French Saumur Academy. Starts with justification by faith rather than predestination.
Pros	Emphasizes the responsibility of man to make a choice. Also acknowledge man's depravity and helplessness without God's intervention. Most attractive aspect is its allowance for man's free will to choose. Man can also resist God's grace and thus a genuine believer is capable of losing his salvation.	Emphasizes the holiness and sovereignty of God and thus His right to make such decrees as election to salvation. Rightly emphasizes the total depravity of man and his inability to choose what is right unaided. The overriding doctrine is the absolute sovereignty of God, who is not dependent on the whim or will of man. Man cannot resist God's grace. This view is supported by a substantial amount of Scriptural evidence.	Emphasizes the holiness and sovereignty of God while at the same time preserving human responsibility. God's grace is effectual but only because God has chosen to make it so appealing to the elect that they will accept it. In other words, God enables the elect to want his grace. God works his sovereign will through the will of the elect. Strikes a balanced position between traditional Calvinism and Arminianism.
Cons	Deemphasizes God's sovereignty. By putting God in a position of dependence on the decisions of a created being, this view makes it appear that God is not in control of His universe. Also, acknowledging the doctrine of total depravity required Wesley to come up with prevenient grace, which has no basis for Scripture.	Deemphasizing man's responsibility. Seems to eclipse man's free will and thus his responsibility for his sin. Critics charge that it is fatalistic and destroys motives for evangelism. Biggest problem: apparent logical contradiction with human freedom.	Borders on semantical dodging when it distinguishes between God's rendering something certain and something necessary (God's deciding that something will happen as opposed to deciding that it must happen).
Scriptural Evidence	Central Text: No logical treatises can be found to support the Arminian Position. Thus, they appeal to the universal character of God's invitation to salvation; 1 Timothy 2:3-4 is offered as evidence that God desires all people to be saved (see also is. 55:1; Ezek. 33:11; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Peter 3:9).	Central text: Romans 9:6-14; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 1:1-2. These text demonstrates that election is based on God's just character and his sovereignty. Therefore, he will not make an unjust decision, and he is not required to explain to man why he still finds faulty with those whom he did not chose.	Central text: taking the whole of John 6:35-71 and Romans 9-11. Erickson bases his position on the strengths of the Calvinist position and the weakness of the Arminian and is motivated by the antinomy in God's sovereignty and man's free will. The Calvinist position in most passages is given the greater weight.

WHY BELIEVE IN ETERNAL SECURITY: A SUMMATION

I. Positive reasons for believing in security

1. The relation of the believer to God.
 - We are elected and called by God according to His sovereign purpose (Rom. 8:28-30).
 - We are related to His sovereign power to preserve us (Jude 24, 25).
 - We are related to Him as children (John 1:12; Rom. 8).
2. We are related as believers to Christ in death, resurrection, identification, glorification and heirship (Rom. 8).
3. We are related as believers to the Spirit in sealing, baptism, union (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14).
3. Central passages – John 10:27-29; Rom. 8:28-39; Eph. 1:13-14; 1 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 13:5; Jude 24-25; 1 Peter 1:3-5.

II. Reasons for lack of assurance

1. Faulty understanding of the fact that it is God who does the saving.
2. Faulty methods of assurance at the time of salvation.
3. Doubt of God's faithfulness.
4. Lack of proper teaching on the Christian life.
5. Presence of sin in one's life.

III. Practical ways to give assurance

1. Look to the cross and use God's word.
2. Ask questions about their experience of the Christian life.
 - a. Do you believe the gospel and trust Christ?
 - b. Do you experience remorse over sin and have a desire to please God?
 - c. Do you see any evidence of fruit in your life?
 - d. Does the Holy Spirit witness to your spirit that you are a child of God?
 - e. When you sin, do you experience the discipline of the Father?

* By his work on the cross Jesus obtained our salvation.

* By his work in heaven Jesus maintains our salvation.

Question # 10: What Does the Bible Say About the End of Time?

AN OVERVIEW OF ESCHATOLOGICAL EVENTS

I. THE RAPTURE AND FIRST RESURRECTION

- A. *Definition.* “Rapture” means literally “to be caught up.” It refers to the meeting *in the air* of believers in Jesus Christ when he returns for His Church. The first resurrection refers to the raising of the bodies of those who are believers in Jesus Christ who are dead when he 1) returns for his church (prior to the tribulation period and simultaneous with the rapture) and 2) at the Second Coming prior to the millennium.
- B. *Scripture* passages related to these events.
1. The rapture. John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-57; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:1-8.
 2. The first resurrection. 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6

II. THE REWARDS OF THE BELIEVER

- A. *Definition.* The believer will be judged according to his works and will receive rewards based upon those works. This takes place sometime after the rapture at “the Judgment Seat of Christ.
- B. *Scripture.* Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; James 5:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17-18; 2 Pet. 1:9-11; 1 John 2:28

III. THE RETRIBUTION OF UNBELIEVERS (THE TRIBULATION)

- A. *Definition.* This is a period of seven years when God’s judgment on unbelieving man will be intense and fulfilled. It will be specifically related to Israel but will include all the earth. It is also known as “Daniel’s seventieth week,” the time of “Jacob’s trouble,” and the “Day of the Lord.”
- B. *Parenthesis* – “Day of the Lord.”

The “Day of the Lord” is the future period of time when the Sovereign Lord will judge Israel and the nations of the earth for their pride and will establish His kingdom on the earth. The “Day of the Lord” is a time when God will judge totally and destroy all the nations who have resisted him and who have been against Israel (God will honor the cause of Israel). Man’s pride will be judged and idolatry will be done away. God alone will be Lord. It is characterized as a time of judgment, death, destruction and restoration. It will be a fearful time—worse than any other period of previous or subsequent history. Despite the ominous nature of the period, it will also be a time of worshipping God—God’s Spirit will be poured out and many will call on the name of the Lord and will be saved. The “Day of the Lord” thus includes the blessing of God promised and realized in the millennium.

Isa. 2:12-21; 13:1-22; 22:1-25; 34:1-17; Jer. 46:1-12; Ezek. 7:1-27; 13:5; 30:11-19; Joel 1:15; 2:1-11, 28-32; 3:9-17; Amos 5:18-20; 8:8-9; 9:5-6; Obadiah 15-21; Zeph. 1:7-8; 2:1-3; 3:8; Zech. 14:1.

Scriptures relating to the period in general. Dan. 9:27; 12:1; Matt. 24:1-25:46; Rev. 6-19; 20:1-6; Jer. 30:4-7; Luke 21; Zech. 13:8-9.

C. *Specific* events of the period.

1. The period will begin with a 7 year covenant being made between Antichrist and Israel. The covenant will reestablish sacrifice in Israel. Dan. 9:27
2. The covenant will be broken at the midpoint (3 ½ years) and Antichrist will set himself up to be worshipped as God. This will take place at the midpoint of the seven-year period. Dan. 9:27; 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Matt. 24:15ff.

D. The *judgments* of the period.

1. The Seal judgments. Rev. 6:1-8:5.
2. The Trumpet judgments. Rev. 8:6-11:19.
3. The Bowl judgments. Rev. 16:1-21.

IV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST (The Second Coming)

- A. *Definition.* This refers to the bodily return of Jesus Christ *to the earth*. This return will be a great and glorious return in power. It will take place at the end of the tribulation period and the millennial kingdom will immediately follow. The enemies of Christ will be defeated at this return.
- B. *Scriptures.* Zech. 14:1-9; Matt. 24:29-25:26; Mark 13:26-37; Luke 21:27-36; Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7; Rev. 19:11ff.
- C. *The specific and precise time* of the Second Coming is unknown to man. Acts. 1:7; Rev. 3:3; Matt. 24:36ff.; Mark 13:32ff.

V. THE REIGN OF JESUS CHRIST AND HIS SAINTS

- A. *Definition.* The millennial Kingdom is that 1,000 year period in which Jesus Christ rules over the earth as the promised Messiah, the seed of David. This reign will follow the revelation (2nd Coming) and will be an intermediate stage of the eternal kingdom. Jerusalem will serve as His capital.

The eschatological kingdom refers to that time, which is yet future, when God will sovereignly reign over all the earth through the person of his divinely appointed and anointed mediator, Jesus Christ—the Son of God, the son of David (Messiah). The eschatological kingdom will be a time of restoration for the nation of Israel. She will be returned to her land and will live there in safety, never to be removed again. There Messiah will reign over his people. The extent of the eschatological kingdom will be universal. All nations will voluntarily submit to Messiah's authority. Even the wildlife of earth will live in peace and tranquility, posing no threat to other animals or mankind. The earth itself will be fruitful. The reign of Messiah will be characterized by justice, righteousness, peace, safety, and wisdom; the earth will be full of the knowledge of God and the people will obey the laws of God. The sovereign reign of God will last forever. The eschatological kingdom will be a time of rejoicing. Isa. 9:6-7, 11:1-10; Zech. 9:9-10; Amos 9; Psalm 110.

- B. *The reign will last 1,000 years* and the saints of Christ will reign with him. Rev. 20:1-5.
- C. *Satan will be bound* for the duration of the 1,000 year reign. Rev. 20:1-5.

VI. THE RELEASE AND REVOLT OF SATAN

- A. *Definition.* This event will take place at the end of the millennial reign. Satan will be released from his prison. He will deceive many on the earth, fight against God, and be defeated and thrown into the lake of fire.
- B. *Scripture.* Rev. 20:7-10

VII. THE SECOND RESURRECTION (DEATH)

- A. *Definition.* This refers to the second resurrection of the dead. It is actually called the “second death.” In the first resurrection, believers will be resurrected to life; here unbelievers will be resurrected to judgment and eternal damnation.
- B. *Scripture.* Dan. 12:2-3; 1 Thess. 5:1-11; Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:5-6.

VIII. THE RENOVATION (THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH)

- A. *Definition.* This is the renovation of the present heavens and earth. This will be the eternal abode of the saints of God.
- B. *Scripture.* Rom. 8:19ff; Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22-23; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-4.

IX. REMORSE (ETERNAL DAMNATION)

- A. *Definition.* This refers to the eternal punishment of unbelievers. They will be cast into the lake of fire where they will be punished forever.
- B. *Scripture.* Rev. 20:14-15; Rev. 19:20; 20:10; Mark 9:43-48; Matt. 5:29, 30; 10:38; 18:9; Luke 12:4-5; Rev. 14:10-11; Matt. 25:41.

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