

✧ GOD THE CREATOR ✧

God alone created the world

This will be evident from the following particulars:

1. The world could not make itself; for this would imply a horrid contradiction, namely, that the world was before it was; for the cause must always be before its effect. That which is not in being can have no production; for nothing can act before it exists. As nothing hath no existence, so it hath no operation. There must therefore be something of real existence to give a being to those things that are; and every second cause must be an effect of some other before it be a cause. To be and not to be at the same time is a manifest contradiction, which would infallibly take place if any thing made itself. That which makes is always before that which is made, as is obvious to the most illiterate peasant. If the world were a creator, it must be before itself as a creature.

2. The production of the world could not be by chance. It was indeed the extravagant fancy of some ancient philosophers that the original of the world was from a fortuitous concourse of atoms, which were in perpetual motion in an immense space, till at last a sufficient number of them met in such a happy conjunction as formed the universe in the beautiful order in which we now behold it. But it is amazingly strange how such a wild opinion, which can never be reconciled with reason, could ever find any entertainment in a human mind. Can any man rationally conceive that a confused rout of atoms, of diverse natures and forms, and some so far distant from others, should ever meet in such a fortunate manner as to form an entire world,

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so vast in bigness, so distinct in the order, so united in the diversities of natures, so regular in the variety of changes, and so beautiful in the whole composure? Such an extravagant fancy as this can only possess the thoughts of a disordered brain.

3. God created all things, the world, and all the creatures that belong to it. He attributes this work to Himself, as one of the peculiar glories of His Deity, exclusive of all the creatures. So we read:

‘I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself’ (Isa. 44:24).

‘I have made the earth, and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded’ (Isa. 45:12).

‘Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him?’ (Isa. 40:12-13).

‘Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea’ (Job 9:8).

These are magnificent descriptions of the creating power of God and exceed every thing of the kind that hath been attempted by the pens of the greatest sages of antiquity. By this operation God is distinguished from all the false gods and fictitious deities which the blinded nations adored, and shows Himself to be the true God:

‘The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion’ (Jer. 10:11-12).

‘All the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens’ (Ps. 96:5).

‘Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth’ (Isa. 37:16).

None can make the world but God because creation is a work of infinite power and could not be produced by any finite cause: for the distance

between being and not being is truly infinite, which could not be removed by any finite agent or the activity of all finite agents united.

This work of creation is common to all the three persons in the adorable Trinity. The Father is described in Scripture as the Creator: ‘The Father, of whom are all things’ (1 Cor. 8:6). The same prerogative belongs to the Son: ‘All things were made by him (the Word, the Son); and without him was not any thing made that was made’ (John 1:3). The same honour belongs to the Holy Ghost, as in Job 26:13: ‘By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens’; ‘The Spirit of God hath made me,’ says Elihu, ‘and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life’ (Job 33:4).

All the three persons are one God; God is the Creator; and therefore all the external works and acts of the one God must be common to the three persons. Hence, when the work of creation is ascribed to the Father, neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit are excluded; but because, as the Father is the fountain of the Deity, so He is the fountain of divine works. The Father created from Himself by the Son and the Spirit; the Son from the Father by the Spirit; and the Spirit from the Father and the Son; the manner or order of their working being according to the order of their subsisting.

The matter may be conceived thus: All the three persons being one God, possessed of the same infinite perfections; the Father, the first in subsistence, willed the work of creation to be done by His authority: ‘He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.’ In respect of immediate operation, it peculiarly belonged to the Son. For ‘the Father created all things by Jesus Christ’ (Eph. 3:9). And we are told, that ‘all things were made by him’ (John 1:3). This work in regard of disposition and ornament doth peculiarly belong to the Holy Ghost. So it is said, ‘The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters’ (Gen. 1:2), to garnish and adorn the world, after the matter of it was formed. Thus it is also said, in Job 26:13, above cited: ‘By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens’.

*Important lessons from the doctrine of
God’s creation of the world*

1. God is a most glorious being, infinitely lovely and desirable, possessed of every perfection and excellency. He made all things and bestowed upon them all the perfections and amiable qualities with which they are invested. So that there is no perfection in any of the creatures which is not in Him in an eminent way: ‘He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?’ (Ps. 94:9). Whatever excellency

and beauty is in the creatures, is all from Him; and sure it must be most excellent in the fountain.

2. God's glory should be our chief end. And seeing whatever we have is from Him, it should be used and employed for Him: For 'all things were created by him and for him' (Col. 1:16). Have we a *tongue*? It should be employed for Him, to show forth His praise. *Hands*? – they should do and work for Him. *Life*? – it should be employed in His service. *Talents and abilities*? – they should be laid out for promoting His interest and honour; and, upon a proper call, we should be ready to suffer for Him.

3. God is our Sovereign Lord Proprietor and may do in us, on us, and by us what He will: 'Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?' (Rom. 9:20-21). There is no reason to murmur and fret under the cross, or any afflicting dispensations, that He exercises us with. Should He destroy that being that He gave us, to whom would He do wrong? As He gave it us freely, He may take it away, without any impeachment of His goodness and justice. May not God do with His own what He will?

4. We should use all the creatures we make use of with an eye to God, and due thankfulness to Him, the giver; employing them for our use and in our service soberly and wisely, with hearts full of gratitude to our divine Benefactor; considering they stand related to God as their Creator and are the workmanship of His own hands. 'For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving' (1 Tim. 4:4). They are not to be used to His dishonour or the feeding of our base lusts and irregular appetites, but to fit us for and strengthen us in the performance of our duty to Him.

5. There is no case so desperate, but faith may get sure footing with respect to it in the power and word of God. Let the people of God be ever so low, they can never be lower than when they were not at all. Hence the Lord says, 'But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy' (Isa. 65:18). He spoke a word and so the creature was made at first; and it will cost Him but a word to make it over again. Hence Christ is called 'the beginning of the creation of God' (Rev. 3:14). O seek to be newmade by Him, that old things may pass away, and all things become new.

6. Give away yourselves to God through Jesus Christ, making an hearty, a cheerful, and an entire dedication and surrender of your souls and bodies,

and all that ye are and have, to Him as your God and Father, resolving to serve and obey Him all the days of your life: that as He made you for His glory, you may in some measure answer the end of your creation which is to show forth His praise. Serve not sin or Satan any longer. God made you upright and holy; but Satan unmade you, stripping you of your highest glory and ornament. Relinquish his service, which is the basest drudgery and slavery, and will land all that are employed in it in hell at last; and engage in the service of God in Christ, which is truly honourable and glorious, and will be crowned with an everlasting reward in the other world: for where He is, there shall His servants also be.

7. This doctrine affords a ground of love, peace, justice and mercy betwixt men, which should be carefully cultivated by all that would desire to be with God for ever. For says the prophet, 'Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?' (Mal. 2:10). The consideration of being created by God, should be a powerful inducement to us to practise all the duties we owe to one another as men and Christians.

*In what the image of God, in which
man was created, consisted*

The image of God after which man was created consisted in knowledge: 'That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God' (Col. 1:10). He was created wise: not that he knew all things, for that is proper to the Omniscient Being alone; but he was ignorant of nothing that he was obliged to know; he had all the knowledge that was necessary for life and godliness. He had clear and distinct apprehensions of God, His nature and perfections, far superior to any knowledge of that kind that can now be acquired by the most diligent and the most laboured researches of human industry. And we can hardly suppose that he was ignorant of the great mystery of the Trinity, considered abstractly; as it was most certainly the second person who appeared to and conversed with him. This knowledge or wisdom of man appeared in his knowledge of the miraculous formation of Eve, whose nature and duty, as well as his own towards her, he declares; which he could not know but by a prophetic spirit. The primitive pair had God's law written on their hearts (Rom. 2:15), even that same law which was afterwards written on tables of stone and promulgated from Mount Sinai. It was concreated with them; so that no sooner were they man and woman, than they were

knowing and intelligent creatures endued with all the knowledge necessary for their upright state. Adam's giving names to the beasts, and those such as were expressive of their natures (Gen. 2:19), was a great evidence of his knowledge of nature. Thus his knowledge reached from the sun, that glorious fountain of light, to the meanest glow-worm that shines in the hedge. And that God gave them dominion over the earth and all the inferior creatures is an evidence that they were endued with the knowledge of managing civil affairs, which a wise man will manage with discretion.

2. The image of God consisted in righteousness: 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness' (Eph. 4:24). There was a perfect conformity in his will to the will of God. He was endued with a disposition to every good thing: 'God made man upright' (Eccles. 7:29). His will was straight with God's will, not bending to the right or left hand, without any irregular bias or inclination. And he had full power and ability to fulfil the whole law of God. As, in respect of knowledge, he perfectly knew the whole extent of his duty, so he was created with sufficient powers for the due performance thereof.

3. It consisted in holiness: 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness' (Eph. 4:24). Man's affections were pure and holy, without being tinged with any vicious appetite. They were regular and orderly, free from all disorder and distemper. They were set on lawful objects, and that in a right manner, loving what God loved and hating what He hated; loving and delighting in God with all his heart, strength, soul and mind. Yet all this happy disposition was mutable; he was not confirmed therein, nor set beyond the reach of falling therefrom, as the event has mournfully shown.

This is that image of God wherein man was created, consisting in original righteousness, where his reason was naturally subject to God, his will to his reason, and his affections to his will, and consequently all duly subordinated to God, and directed to Him, without any propensity or inclination to evil. A signal of this was that both our first parents were naked, and yet were not ashamed, nor susceptible of shame.

That man was created in this condition, wise, altogether righteous, and holy is not only clear from the above-cited Scriptures, but is also agreeable to reason; which suggests that nothing impure or imperfect, nothing having any vitious tendency or inclination, could proceed out of the hands of an holy God, who cannot be the author of evil. Man was created after the image of God; and in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, the

Scripture shows us, the image of God consists. Moreover, God made all very good (Gen. 1:31). Man's goodness consists in these excellent qualities; and without these he would not have been fit for the end of his creation. How was it possible for him to have exercised the dominion he was invested with over the creatures, or served his Creator in the manner that became him, without such endowments?

*Important lessons deduced from the consideration
of man's state of innocence*

1. How are we fallen from heaven! What a lamentable change has sin brought on man! It has defaced the moral image of God with which man's soul was beautifully decorated in his primitive state and rent in pieces that pleasant picture of himself which God set up in this lower world. This stately fabric lies now in ruins and calls us to lament over its ruins with weeping eyes and grieved hearts. Now there is ignorance in the mind instead of that knowledge of God and divine things with which it was richly furnished in its primitive state. The understanding, that as a lamp or candle shone brightly, is now enveloped with darkness. The will, that was exactly conformable to the will of God, and naturally disposed to comply with every intimation thereof, is now filled with irregularity, enmity and rebellion against God and His law. The affections that were all regular, holy and pure are now disordered and distempered, placed upon and eagerly bent towards improper and sinful objects, loving and doating upon what men should hate, hating what they should love, joying in what they ought to mourn for, glorying in what is shameful, abhorring the chief good, and desiring what is ruinous to them. All the members of the body that were subordinated to the upright mind and entirely at its command, are now in rebellion and mislead and enslave the mind and superior faculties. And the creatures that were man's humble servants, ready to execute his commands, are now risen up against him, and the least of them having a commission, would prove more than a match for him. Nay, it is with difficulty and much pains that any of them are brought to engage in his service. Ah! how dismal is man's case! The crown is fallen from our head: wo unto us that we have sinned. Let us weep and mourn over our ruined state and never rest till we get it repaired by faith in the Lord Jesus, the great Repairer of this spiritual breach.

2. How lovely are knowledge, righteousness and holiness wherein the image of God consists! They shine with a dazzling brightness and should charm and captivate our minds. But, alas! by nature we are blind and see

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not their beauty and excellency. O! let us endeavour, through grace, to put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Try if this blessed change has passed upon you; if ye be now light in the Lord, be disposed to do His will, and are holy in heart and life. Study righteousness and holiness if ye would be like God. And beware of ignorance, unrighteousness and impurity, which proceed from Satan, and make you so unlike a righteous and holy God.

3. Come to the Lord Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, and the beginning of the creation of God, who at first made man after the divine image, and can make him so over again, and will do so to those that come to Him by faith, with this addition that the image of God which He will impress on the soul anew shall never be lost any more. O come to Him now that ye may become God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.