

The Gospel's Cosmological Foundation

“And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’” (Rev 14:6-7).

The cosmological framework of the gospel will sound increasingly foreign to the ears of those weaned on philosophic naturalism, on Darwinism, treating that popular evolutionary fallacy as science and biblical revelation as myth.

Without the fear of God, human suffering will be regarded as more serious than sin itself. We should be able to explain to the seeker that Christ served the human race by His suffering, and a response to God is a response to who God is toward the human race in Christ, the suffering servant—the cross of Christ being the greatest revelation of God. For God deals with mankind out of who He is and what He is, and what the sinner is.

How Christ removes the dread of God is a wonderful topic—how through our Lord and His cross that guilt-induced dread is replaced with filial fear. The sinner at regeneration is invaded by omniscience and by holy love. At the moment of salvific quickening the glory of God revealed in Christ is like the stepped down voltage of a trillion suns made sensible and utterly desirable to the sinner in the Son of God. The sinner who at one time had a craven fear of God is enabled to behold the glory of God only in the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:6). Consider the magnitude of this miracle. For God dwells in unapproachable light, and we wouldn't naturally want to be close to unapproachable light or invaded by holy omniscience. And yet God bids us be reconciled to Him through the Son, having charged the immeasurable weight and penalty of our sin to his own Son (2 Cor 5:21). And when that reality is testified to our conscience by the Spirit of God, it puts away our enmity and alienation, enabling us to begin a life of enjoying God's glory as a mediated glory.

But what about the sight of Christ's glory when He returns (Rev 1:7)? The vast majority of churchgoers will not be ready. They'll be taken by surprise, as Jesus said, like a thief in the night, whose sudden unexpected appearing produces

incredible loss. But God's servants know the signs, and they have the urgent task of warning apathetic people. God's choice servants are seasoned veterans, not overnight mushrooms. They will have had to pass successfully through many narrow providences and countless trials requiring self-denial.

The gospel is filled with cosmology. “Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be delay no longer, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets” (Rev 10:5-7).

God is going to shake the heavens and the earth through inconceivably violent plagues and chaotic disruptions of the created order (Hag 2:6, 21; Heb 12:27-29). The preached news of this tumultuous Day of the Lord will hit the unbeliever's ‘tin ear’ in an odd way. “What is this chicken little, boogiemán indoctrination?” “What is this medieval message of panic I'm hearing?” The unbeliever has been so immersed in the origin myth of evolution, he cannot tabulate the truths of Second Peter chapter three, namely that Genesis flood deniers are also deniers of the Day of the Lord, of Christ's second coming and bodily return.

When God violently tore apart Pangea, the sole earthly continent prior to the flood, we learn from Genesis that man, the steward of creation, by his wickedness and corruption, and misuse of his dominion caused the creation to suffer immensely for his sin. At the end of the flood when God pushed the sea floors down and then raised the mountain ranges upward, the present land masses and continents were formed. And now, the residual effects of the flood are storm and quake and tsunami and glacier and tornado and hurricane and Arctic ice—this became the norm in place of the pre-flood creational equilibrium. Every one of those post-flood tremors, cloudbursts, tsunamis, and cyclones, ought to remind us of how mankind through wickedness lost the original creational balance. And God presently corrects through natural disasters (Job 37:13). In addition what a harbinger ought these minor disturbances be; for greater catastrophes are coming, associated with the terrible and amazing Day of the Lord.

But since cosmology has been ripped from the gospel, it takes passages like Acts 17 to rejoin in the minds of man that God is both Creator and Savior, both Judge and Redeemer, both Sustainer and Owner of what He has made.

The natural man is so soaked in the origin's myth of Darwinism, he is baffled when the terraform moves beneath his feet in a terrible earthquake. The shaking temporarily sends a seismic wave into his hubris and arrogant scoffing. But that fear quickly dissipates just as soon as the aftershocks cease. And just as those who will suffer the violent chaos of the plagues of Revelation, the moment there is the slightest bit of relief, their blasphemous obstinance returns. When the one-hundred-pound hailstones missed them and killed their neighbors, they still refused to repent of their habitual idolatry. In fact, they stayed with their deception of an autonomous creation, an autonomous man, and the myth of personal ownership and entitlement. They wouldn't even pay the modest rent of gratitude to their Creator. They worshiped and served the creature and the creation, and they had no thought of what they owed God (Rom 1:18-23).

Now returning to the theme of the significant role cosmology plays in the gospel. For when Christ was preaching the gospel the kingdom, He was indeed preaching that the kingdom is not simply a little portion of the world, such as the relatively small borders of Canaan under Hezekiah's reign. No, God's kingdom is His rule through Messiah over the entire creation. And so, when Christ talks about the kingdom, He's talking about God manifesting His holiness throughout the creation. As it says in Habakkuk, the glory of God will cover the earth as the oceans cover the sea floor—no gaps, no voids, no vacuums (Hab 2:14). And so, what is the nature of God's glory? It's not simply a bright, majestic beckoning light. God's glory is His moral majesty—His transcendent holiness framed by His infinitude—infinite? Yes, think of His omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. The manifestation of God's holy nature will fill the earth and cosmos.

There will not be a single dark hiding place available; no special walled-off enclosures for sinners who reject His glory. His glory will be universal from the time His kingdom is inaugurated to the endless ages of eternity. So, this brings to mind just how much God's relation to the creation is a crucial part of the gospel. We could express it this way. The natural man, that's a man who is not born again, has a huge problem. His powers of reason are contaminated with rank atomism. 'Rank atomism' means all he sees are trillions of unrelated, uninterpreted facts.

And because he has never placed his mind under the mind of God revealed in Scripture, he is left with the dilemma of no universal absolute truth to unify all knowledge. The great Christian thinker and apologist, Cornelius Van Til, referred to that moral/intellectual quandary as man immersed in a sea of brute facts. In other words, the phenomenal world around him is filled with innumerable atoms—most of which do not ‘touch one another’ in a meaningful way. So also, for the natural man, the world is filled with brute facts which are unrelatable, individual, disunified, and uninterpreted—but conversely, in biblical theism all the information is in for God, He knows, and He gives the meaning to every fact.

The God we worship and serve, the God we trust is the God who has interpreted every single fact and upholds each fact. “All things are Thy servants” it says in the Psalms (Ps 119:91). God is the focal point of reality. Knowledge is unified in Him and a whole by means of His purpose to glorify Himself—that is the indissoluble link unifying all knowledge. Those who oppose Him, sentence themselves to folly, ignorance, confusion, and as Van Til has stated, to ‘atomism’. So how do unbelievers think about our testimony concerning God’s own testimony about the Holy Scriptures, about the human condition and about His Son? The natural man pictures God as a religious spiritual deity who bears little or no relationship to the physical creation. He exists only in the minds of men.

Therefore, unbelievers assume that religious truth claims belong to the ethereal, to myth and folklore. And so, the natural man in his unbelief subscribes to what is called a non-teleological man—an undesigned, uncreated, essentially purposeless man—a man who has no real innate value, no real dignity, and no Creator. They also believe in a non-teleological universe—a coincidental cosmos. And so therefore, by default, since they've rejected the Creator, they worship and serve the creation and themselves. Our culture has embraced a non-teleological man as the definition of a ‘free man’—a noble savage, liberated from the restraining cords of religion and moral absolutism. Consequently, they've invented their own telos; a telos of which they are the architects—a telos constructed around being authentic, as in personhood theory—a telos animated by being ‘true to self’ as the ultimate reference point. But we will see that this is how the devil operates.

Lucifer rejected his created identity as the guardian cherub of God’s glory in preference for a telos of total autonomy from God. The evil one’s followers

have done the same. The natural man has defaulted to the devil's cosmology, a 'be true to yourself' ethos as the final metric for wisdom and loyalty. It doesn't really sound that bad to us; for it is promoted by social media, psychology, the academy, and entertainment. Be authentic, be true to yourself is also the worship of the creation and the creature and self. In this carnal mindset, since the creation has no telos, no designated purpose, you can use it as you wish, and that includes your body and sexuality. And consequently, our Western world has now slid into the immorality of no consequence sex. And the gospel is the only divine kryptonite that can deconstruct and deliver from that enslaving, damning lie.

To be in awe of Him who is both infinite and personal Creator of the cosmos, requires we be very frank with our unsaved friends who are captives of philosophic naturalism. For it is evident that what are known as 'natural forces' did not create the smallest living cell, nor design the telos of anything. Thus, let us understand that God's relationship to the creation is a powerful part of the gospel. We know that from Acts 17. God's creative work by fiat, by speaking things into existence, down to the very smallest detail, yielded a perfect creation before the fall of Adam (Ps 33:6-12).

Yahweh fashioned our faculties; He knows comprehensively the contents of our faculties, our powers of reasoning, our memory, our motives, our affections, the intents of our heart. And thus, to be saved is to know the God who stands behind His threats and behind his promises. It is the word of God that made the world and upholds the world, according to Psalm 33, John 1, Colossians 1, Hebrews 1 and 2 Peter 3. God's Word has the power, according to 2 Peter 3, to preserve the world for the next judgment that is universal, and that is by fire. This present author watched a movie trailer recently called Mickey 17. It's about a man who keeps dying, and then he gets a new body each time that is formed by a 3-D computer printer. He is a low-level astronaut doing life-threatening work. As he gets killed, they keep printing out a new body for him. And his friends ask him, what's it like to die over and over and over again? This reduces man to a mere jumble of molecules which can be produced on a printer—a non-teleological man! Certainly, that's nihilism as 'entertainment'—and that's exactly what is being fed to the rising generation today, the full-blown nihilism of a non-teleological man.

Well, the church today has betrayed its members with little to say about holiness, sin, hell, and biblical cosmology. In concert with this tragic lack is the assumption that heaven can be gained on terms far less than being a true Christ follower, a disciple of His—and that heaven is like a tucked away insurance policy, and not one's whole business here. As the Puritans used to say, ‘if heaven is not your main business here, you're not likely going to be in heaven’. Is that really true? Can you be a spectator at church, a spectator of the truth, without being radically conformed to the truth? Lest we forget, truth is not simply a body of proclamations. Truth is Christ, truth is a Person, a divine Person who demands your all, your whole person, your heart affections, your mind, your will, your priorities. And sadly, in this betrayal by pastors, religion becomes a pastime for hobbyists, a sentiment that you can passively trust to conduct you to glory.

But there is horror in this error, namely that pastors are indeed complicit as half of the cabal, half of this awful, unspoken contract. They're part of the problem with this unstated agreement to not disturb the consciences of their parishioners. This is a terrible tragedy. Certainly, it's recorded in great detail in the book of Jeremiah, where the false teachers did not require repentance, they did not expose the sins of the people, and they healed the wound slightly by saying, peace, peace, when there was no peace for the impenitent idolaters who listened to their flattering messages (see Jer 5:30-31; 6:10-15, 21; 8:8-12; 10:21; 14:13-18; 23; 27:9-16; 28:15-16; 29:17-23, 31-32; 50:6-7; Lam 2:14; 4:13-15).

Sadly, those ministers who do not warn are traitors to their sacred trust, for God calls preachers to warn, to plead, to proclaim, to implore, to call for repentance, to do so with compassion and with urgency. We think about Europe today, with its Islamic immigrant invasion. There are very few ‘fumes’ of biblical theism remaining. That Western continent has certainly lost its religious soul, and it's truly set itself up for the deceptions of the Beast, readied itself the lies of the Antichrist. And really, it has prepared itself for the latest form of Babylonian worship, which is the worship of humanity. And Scripture says in 2 Timothy chapter 4, that people will not endure hearing sound doctrine, but will turn to myths in the last days. Those days are certainly here now (2 Tim 4:1-4).