

Affirming the Essentials of Our Faith

A Study of the Apostles Creed

All Scripture references are from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

Maker of Heaven and Earth

Q – What can we say about God as Creator?

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

- The first passage in the first book in the Bible is in regards to God as Creator.
- “Heavens and earth” is biblical language for “everything that is.”
- In the creed, “Maker of heaven and earth” may imply that God is creator of both the physical and spiritual realms.
- Creation gives witness about the Creator – it is plain!

Romans 1:19–20 ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

- We are without excuse.
- This is NOT the same as salvation knowledge.

“Knowing that God created the world around us, and ourselves as part of it, is **basic to true religion**. God is to be praised as Creator, by reason of the marvelous order, variety, and beauty of his works.” – J. I. Packer

Q – If there is a Creator, what does that say about us?

- We owe our existence to Him.
- God does not depend on us, we depend on him!

God is the **Uncaused Cause (First Cause)**. All things and beings owe their existence to the Creator God. This is the *cosmological argument* to the existence of God (Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas).

God is **transcendent** and yet **immanent**:

- **Transcendent** – extending or lying beyond the limits of ordinary experience. (MW)
 - God is above (outside) all of His creation.
- **Immanent** – being within the limits of possible experience or knowledge.
 - God dwells with (in) and works with His creation

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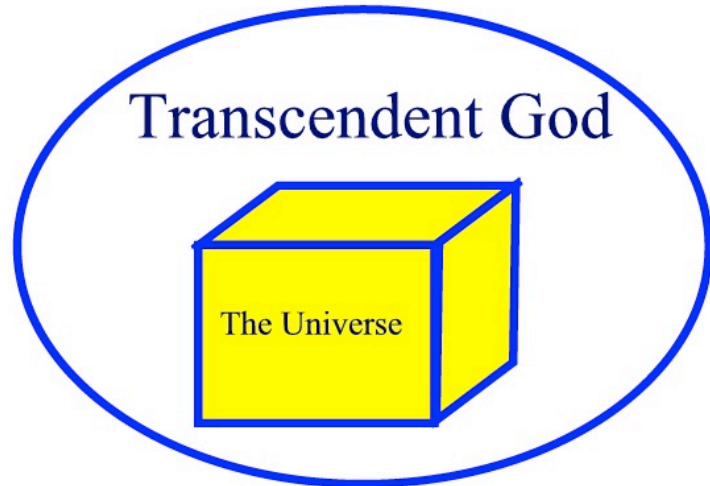
Ancient Greek View

God is all of the box
but not beyond it



Christian View

God is all of the box
but also beyond it and Creator of it



God is above, beside, and in a sense, inside His creation. However, God is separate from His creation.

Q – Does the Bible tell us how God created the universe?

Q – There is one method we are told how God created the universe. What is it?

Psalm 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

Hebrews 11:3 ³ By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

God literally **spoke** creation into existence.

The **method of creation** (other than He spoke it into existence) is not explained in Scripture. What is clear is not how the world was made, but **who made it**.

“Rather than criticize [the Bible] for not feeding our secular interest, we should take from [it] needed rebuke of our perverse passion for knowing Nature without regard for **what matters most**; namely, knowing Nature’s Creator.” – J. I. Packer

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Science attempts to explain the “how”; Scripture tells us the “who”. What is most important is knowing the **Creator** rather than the creation!

Acts 17:24–27 ²⁴ The God who **made the world and everything in it**, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ **that they should seek God**, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us

God created so that we would **seek Him, know Him, and love Him**. God left evidence of Himself. What some see as chance, we see as purpose. There is a Creator because we exist!

God created *ex nihilo*. Creation *out of nothing*, meaning, God used no preexisting material to create the universe. There was a time when nothing except God existed, and then God spoke the universe into existence. Some Greek philosophers believed that God did not create everything, but used existing material to “form” the world. Some early Christians believed this.

Genesis 1:2 ² The earth was **without form** and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Q – What issues may result from a denial of creation out of nothing?

- God used what He had, He was limited.
- God can't be blamed for unintended results (natural disasters, evil, pain, etc.).
- God is not truly omnipotent and/or almighty.
- God is not the only eternal force (the world or its material is also eternal).

God ceased to create and rested on the seventh day. (His work of creation ceased, but he continues to work within His creation – providence.)

- God's originating work – creation
- God's continuing work – providence

Days of Creation

Genesis 2:4 ⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, **in the day** that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

Genesis 1:3–5 ³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And **there was evening and there was morning, the first day.**

Exodus 20:8–11 ⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ **Six days you shall**

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labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ **For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth**, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Q – How many days did God work?

Q – What’s a day?

Q – Does it matter what we believe about this?

Deism versus Theism

Deism – God created and left His creation to its own destiny – divine watchmaker.

- God created the universe, wound it up and let it tick.

Theism – God created all that exists and interacts with His creation.

- The world (creation) is not self-created or self-sustaining
 - God sustains the universe by His providence.
 - Only God is self-sustaining.
- God is not part of creation but interacts with creation
 - Providence, Miracles, Salvation

Creation was good as God intended it to be. Sin “broke” God’s creation.

Purpose of Creation

1. Worship of the Creator – Glory to God!

- God is Worthy of Praise because He is the Creator.
- God created everything for His glory.
- We have to resist worship of the creation (world, money, possessions, idols) and worship the Creator, who alone is worthy of our worship.

Revelation 4:9–11 ⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹ “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, **for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**”

Psalms 104:1, 24, 31 ¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, you are very great! You are clothed with splendor and majesty, ²⁴ O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. ³¹ May the glory of

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the Lord endure forever; **may the Lord rejoice in his works.**

2. God created the world to be inhabited

Isaiah 45:18 For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it empty, he formed it to be inhabited!): “I am the Lord, and there is no other.

3. Human stewardship, not human ownership

Genesis 1:26 ²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Psalms 8:4–6 ⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? ⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ **You have given him dominion over the works of your hands**; you have put all things under his feet

Q – What does God’s making man in His own image mean? How are we different from the rest of creation? How should we respond to our Creator?

Christ is Instrumental in the Creation

Lastly, it needs to be mentioned the part which Jesus participated in the creation:

John 1:1–3 ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ **All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

Colossians 1:15–16 ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ **For by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things were created through him and for him.**