

SOLID ROCK 2: GOD – ‘*In the Beginning, God...*’

1. “Christianity does not begin with ‘Jesus saves you from your sins’. It starts with ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.’ (Francis Schaffer)
2. Christianity is more than a Bible tract, it is a comprehensive account of the structure of reality — from before time began — to when time will be no more.
3. Everyone has a world-view—but most world-views cannot explain all of reality...
 - a. like a jigsaw puzzle, some pieces are missing, some pieces are from different puzzles
 - b. And most pieces are still in a pile—Not assembled enough to see the Big Picture of reality

I. BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW: IN THE BEGINNING, GOD

A. THE BIBLE BEGINS WITH GOD (Genesis 1:1)

1. It Begins with a personal being, not an impersonal thing...
2. The universe is not eternal—but God is... ([Psalm 90:2](#))
3. The 1st chapter of Genesis names God 32 times in 31 verses

B. THE BIBLE BEGINS WITH GOD—NOT WITH US

1. Because the Bible Begins with God—it doesn’t begin with us
 - a) God created everything from nothing... including us
 - b) But the cosmos was not created by us, nor does it revolve around us...
 - c) We have an important part—But the glory goes to the creator & sustainer of all life.
2. Sometimes This point is lost on us—even Christians can forget this
 - a) Sometimes we ask: How could this happen to me?
 - b) Forgetting that everything isn’t about me...
 - c) Many things are not about me and are not in my control...
 - d) God has a Bigger Plan than just making me happy ([Isaiah 29:16 NIV](#))
3. So We Are the Created—not the Creator—We Belong to God
 - a) But Not as an Object to be Owned—We Are Human Beings Precious in His Sight
 - b) He is Our Creator and King—But Also Our Father and We Are His Children
 - c) Therefore God is Near to Us ([Isaiah 57:15](#))

C. GOD IS CREATOR OF ALL—THEREFORE HE IS RULER OF ALL

1. Since God Made it All — He Owns it all...

—Because of His Divine Power—He has Divine Authority ([Rom. 1:20](#))
2. Even the Power and Authority to suspend the laws of nature by Miracles!
 - a) Sometimes Atheists scoff at the idea of miracles
 - b) like those described in the Bible—Crossing of the Red Sea or Jesus Resurrection
3. But It is a mistake to assess the view of one kind of world—

—By the Standards of a Different Kind of World

 - a) To assess a world in which God exists by a World-view which claims God doesn’t exist
 - b) The Question is What Kind of World do We Actually Live in?

4. Astro-physicists, Astronomers, and Cosmologists all agree the Universe was not always in existence...

- a) The discovery of the rapidly expanding universe [Bible calls it 'the expanse']
- b) The discovery of Cosmic Background Radiation: [the residual radiation of creation]
- c) And discovery of 2nd law of thermodynamics: everything is slowing down & cooling
- d) All Prove the Universe had a Single Beginning Point—Known as the 'Big-Bang.'
- e) The Big Bang May be Controversial to some Christians—but it is consistent with the account of Genesis 1—the Universe Began in a Singular Spectacular Origin Event!

5. And Since God Can Create the Universe From Nothing—

then the idea of Miracles are not a problem for an all powerful God

D. AS CREATOR OF ALL—GOD IS DISTINCT FROM ALL HIS CREATION

- 1. Nature is NOT God — and God is NOT Nature—God Created Nature...
- 2. The idea that nature is God is a different worldview...
- 3. The Heavens Declare the Glory of God—but they are not God (Ps. 19:1-4)
- 4. We do not worship the sun or moon—these are created things, not deities

E. WHEN GOD CREATED THE COSMOS—IT WAS GOOD

- 1. In Genesis 1 it written "and it was good" 7x - 7 being a complete number

On 7th time: "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good."

- 2. That's because God is Good! Every Good gift is from God!

He works all things for good to those who love Him

- 3. Sin, suffering, sickness or death were not part of the created world
 - a) They didn't enter the world until sin separated man from God who is Good

F. GOD CREATED THE COSMOS WITH DIVINE PURPOSE

- 1. We see a repeated theme from Genesis to Revelation

'I will be their God and they shall be my people' (Jer 24:7; 31:33; Heb 8:10; Rev. 21:3)

- 2. CHART: You Are Created for a Beautiful Life with God (Eph. 1:4-5)

- a) God Created it for Our Good and for His Glory

Every other alternative world-view can be found under two main categories...

II. MATERIALIST WORLDVIEW: Atheistic Materialism

A. IN THE BEGINNING MATTER—Matter is all that exists

- 1. In this competing Belief System, it is only matter that exists

- a) This is matter-ism — or usually called 'Materialism'
 - b) This is the Belief System most atheists, humanists, and marxists believe

- 2. Carl Sagan: "The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be."

- a) Matter is where the story starts and matter is where the story ends
 - b) because there is nothing more... No Good or Evil, No Right or Wrong,
 - c) No God, No Meaning or Purpose, No Hope or Future—just molecules in motion

- 3. Many Find This Easy to Believe Because we live in a physical world.

B. BUT ISN'T SOMETHING MISSING?

1. Materialism is a belief system that refuses to recognize any non-materialist explanation for anything...

- a) If it doesn't have molecules of matter it cannot exist—
—Which is why much is missing from this world-view
- b) Human Consciousness of the Mind—Cognition, Perception, Conscience
- c) None can be explained by Materialism—especially the inner voice of conscience
- d) Emotion, intuition, affection, soul and spirit, love and jealousy...
can be nothing but molecules in motion

2. The result is that human life is the result of purposeless, meaningless series of chemical reactions and accidents

As leading atheist professor: "In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt and some are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reason to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good. Nothing but blind, pitiless, indifference." (Richard Dawkins)

3. As the 17th century philosopher Thomas Hobbs summed up life in this world-view: "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

4. 'Evolution has 1 commandment, not 10: Eat or be eaten.' (Dennis Prager)

C. THIS BELIEF SYSTEM IS AN INCOMPLETE PICTURE OF REALITY

1. We all know something terrible has happened to the world... we call it the problem of evil...

- a) This is the obvious conclusion that matches reality...
- b) Socio-paths, Psycho Killers, War, Disease, Death...
- c) But if there is no God, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, What's the problem?
- d) There is no problem—if were all just mutant creatures of evolution

2. Since there's no divine purpose, Everyone creates their own life purpose...

- a) Which means yours is no better than anyone else's life purpose
whether your a social worker, stock broker or human trafficker...
- b) A Lion Killing its prey is not a moral problem—why is it a moral problem for humans?
- c) Why shouldn't Man be just as cruel as nature? (as Hitler once asked)

Serial Killer John Wayne Gacy said: "There's a right way, there's a wrong way and there's my way."

3. Those who take this world-view seriously admit that it leaves them empty.

- a) Life is meaningless, hopeless and leaves them empty and lost...
- b) Philosophers call this Nihilism which means Nothing-ism
- c) When a person believes this about themselves and others—bad things happen

4. This belief system does not give an adequate picture of reality...

- a) It is so hollow that Atheists Borrow pieces from a Biblical World-View to fill in gaps
- b) Such as LOVE, Morality, Moral Law, and Justice, Kindness, Fairness
- c) None of these are a part of an Atheist, Materialist worldview!

After Materialist world-view, the 2nd category is...

III. PANTHEIST WORLDVIEW: Mind-sim / Pantheism

A. IN THE BEGINNING MIND—Mind is all that Exists: God's Mind

1. **FIRST: This is the Believe that Everything is God and God is Everything**
 - a) Francis Schaffer called this: Pan-everything-ism (known as: pantheism)
 - b) That there is only one thing REAL in the Universe and it is Mind—God's Mind
 - c) Everything is a part of this universal mind of God—including you and I
 - d) Which means nothing is actually real—only the mind of God is real,
so life is like a dreamscape of the mind of God
 - e) But not the Personal One true God of the Bible—but an impersonal cosmic life force
2. **The Belief that Everything is God and God is Everything Has Strong Appeal**
 - a) It makes people feel important—especially when hyped by New Age writers
 - b) Notice this excerpt from a popular new age book called 'The Secret':

"You are God in a physical body. You are spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as you. You are a cosmic being. You are all power. You are all wisdom. You are all intelligence. You are perfection. You are magnificence. You are the creator, and you are creating the creation of You on this planet" (The Secret, p.164).

3. **You Probably Didn't Realize You are God in human form...**

- a) but according to this belief system that's what you are—But You Forgot!
- b) Somewhere in the fog of multiple re-incarnations you forgot you were god
- c) So You Have to Re-learn who you which can take maybe hundred of lifetimes!

4. **And Here you get to choose your own path to enlightenment**

- a) Another huge appeal to people who want to do their own thing their own way
- b) You have to rediscover you are god through New Age books, meditation, Crystals, Astrology, Occult, Drugs, Witchcraft, Seances, the Journey Within, Whatever....
- c) Anything that leads to the enlightenment of who you really are

B. VARIATIONS OF MIND-ISIM

1. **There are a number of variations of this Pantheist World-view**
 - a) Variations of Hinduism, New Age belief systems, All forms of Eastern Mysticism,
 - b) Yin & Yang dualism of darkness & light, good & evil all in a symbiotic unity
 - c) Even Scientology, Christian Science and Mormonism integrate mind-ism beliefs
 - d) But There are Two Main Branches That Go in Two Different Directions...
2. **VARIATIONS OF HINDUISM: The variations of Hinduism revolve around the idea that you are god in a way—but you are not really you...**
 - a) Because only One thing is real: God—everything else is an illusion—called the Maya
 - b) Like when you have a dream—the dream seems real—but it is only a dream
 - c) Reality is not real—it is a dream in the mind of God who is real
 - d) So when you "Wake Up" to "enlightenment" of this belief then you realize nothing is real but God—Everything else is an illusion.
 - e) Any belief that you are a distinct individual separate from God is an illusion...
Which means you are the illusion!
 - f) God is all and all is God—so in a way your god, but no more than a cow or rock is
 - g) Your not as significant as you initially thought—but there is a more optimistic version

3. VARIATIONS OF NEW AGE BELIEFS:

- a) New Age takes the Mysticism east but adds the narcissism of the west
- b) Instead of god being the One everything—now you are the one everything...

As described here: “The earth turns on its orbit for You. The oceans ebb and flow for You. The birds sing for You. The sun rises and sets for You. The stars come out for You. Every beautiful thing you see, every wondrous thing you experience, is all there for You. Take a look around, None of it can exist, without You. No matter what you thought you were, now you know the Truth of Who You Really Are. You are the master of the universe. You are the heir to the Kingdom. You are the perfection of Life. And now you know the Secret.” (Rhonda Byrne, The Secret p.183)

C. IMPLICATIONS OF MIND-ISM

1. Master of the Universe! The world revolves around you! Wow...

- a) You get to run the universe without an all powerful God looking over your shoulder!
- b) C.S. Lewis called this ‘all the thrills of religion with none of the costs.’

2. But Divinity Has a High Price You May Not Have Expected...

- a) Since You are the Master of the Universe—anything hardship or tragedy that happens to you is your own fault.
- b) You are responsible for your own reality—your supposed to be god
- c) So There’s no higher power above you to answer to...
- d) But there is no One above you to help you when life gets hard
- e) If You Get Cancer—You have to cure your own cancer
- f) If you get sick—you have to heal yourself
- g) If you have a problem—you have to save yourself
- h) And When you die—you have to have the power overcome your own death

3. When you hear New Age leaders talk, they like to use biblical quotes, terms

- a) Things like “Christ - Consciousness” or “the Kingdom of God within you”
Eternal Life... The Way, the Truth, the Life...
- b) I actually saw a Buddhist Monk quote **Psalms 46:10 “Be still and know I am God”**
but the monk wasn’t referring to God, he was applying this passage to himself!

“Here’s the amazing part. Some have suggested that the New Age story is the way the Christian Story really goes, but Christians have misunderstood it. Jesus Himself, they say, was a New Age guru whom we mistook for a Torah-observant Hebrew prophet when he was really a Hindu all along.” (Greg Koukl, The Story of Reality, p.60)

CONCLUSION:

1. So What Makes More Sense?

1. That we are here by accident? or everything is God and God is everything?
2. Or that God is Who He Said He is—the creator, the Ruler and the Redeemer
3. That He Created You in His Image and Has Prepared a Home with Him in Heaven

2. What we believe Determines Where We Spend Eternity! (Jn 8:12)

Knowing the Truth Will Set You Free (John 8:31–32)

Main Points Adapted from: ‘The Story of Reality’ by Greg Koukl, professor of Christian apologetics. For Further Study: ‘Faith Built on Sand’ by Phil Sanders; ‘Evidence that Demands a Verdict’, Josh McDowell; ‘Has God Spoken?’ A.O. Schnabel; ‘The Creator and the Cosmos’, Hugh Ross.