

A Christian Worldview

(Part 1)

by Gary T. Panell

I have thought about writing a Christian worldview for a long time, but decided to write one after hearing on the radio about a survey that said that about 85% of Christians have no world view for themselves. With that in mind would you please prayerfully consider this "Christian Worldview."

A worldview would not be complete without boiling everything down into a basic statement of belief. This statement could be stated as, "God created us for His own pleasure and glory." This means God wants to have fellowship with his creation, and wants His creation to honor and love Him back. We see this in many verses of Holy Scripture, for example: 1 John 1:3, 4. "that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, and these things we write to you that your joy may be full." The infallible Word of God tells us we are created to have fellowship with God!

We believe in the existence of God, because He has revealed Himself in the Word (the Bible), and in the bodily resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Also the existence of God can be seen in nature and is intuitive. The heathen even have this knowledge of God, and so they are without excuse..."because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them." For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts were darkened." Romans 1:19-21

The existence of God is assumed by Scripture: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1 this belief in the existence of God is confirmed by arguments. Any one of these arguments, though, in itself, is not sufficient to prove the existence of God, but they all add more evidence that our faith is based on fact. Also since God is a Spirit, we must not insist on the same type of proof that we demand for the existence of material things.

Everything begun must have an adequate cause, the universe was begun, and therefore, the universe must have had a cause. "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God." Hebrews 3:4 Order and useful design in a system shows intelligence and purpose in the originating cause, "He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see?" Psalm 94:9 there is sometimes order and useful arrangement caused without design, this is called "chance." For the whole universe to have come about, and continue in a state of order by chance, is mathematically impossible.

In order to know what God is like we must first see what He is not like: A PANTHEIST says that God and matter are the same, he might be heard to say, "Look at that tumble-weed, isn't God beautiful!" Then there is the DEIST, he says God is way out there somewhere, "Whatever we'll be, we'll be." According to him, God wound the universe up like a clock, so to speak, and then left it to "run" down by itself. Next

we come to the MATERIALIST, he tries to prove that matter is self-functioning without God; another name for this person is "Evolutionist." Then there is the POLYTHEIST, he says there is not one God, but many gods, a few of which are rocks, trees, stars, etc. DUALISTS believes there are two distinct and irreducible substances or principles, good (God), and evil (Satan). How about the ATHEIST who says there are no gods, and he believes and teaches this with a vengeance! The AGNOSTIC, well, he says, "I don't know and, and furthermore "I don't care." He has no solution to the problem. HUMANIST, says, "Man is the center of everything. What are we? We are BIBLE THEISTS, or are ones who believe in the existence and primacy of God!

We do not believe that God and matter are the same. Nor is God only way out there somewhere. We do not believe matter is self-functioning without God. There are not two forces that are equal, good and evil. There are not many gods, but ONE GOD, IN THREE PERSONS.

God is everywhere at once, "Am I a God near at hand," says the LORD, and not a God far off?" "Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the LORD.

Jeremiah 24:23, 24 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! 1 Kings 8:27. "Men of science reveal that our galaxy contains more than 100 billion stars, and that our sun is 150 trillion miles from the center of our galaxy. Our galaxy is one of a small cluster of 19 galaxies, the nearest of which is 30 million light years from us (150 million trillion miles). Our research scientists, by using powerful telescopes, have made reasonably sure that there are more than a billion galaxies. They estimate the number of stars in these galaxies is close to 100 quintillion. The candle power of one of the galaxies is equal to that of 400 million suns."

The Bible does not contradict this, when it says men can be taken out of the presence of God. God has chosen a throne room in the entire universe to show His glory, but when men are taken out of His presence it means out of His direct attention, "Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden." Genesis 4:16 "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You. Psalm 139: 7-12.

At one time the Holy Trinity was alone, John 17:5, just the three-in-one were there. God was under no obligation to anyone or anything to create, except for the fact that -who would ever see His glory unless He did create. So for this purpose alone did He create: Revelation 4:11 "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created." Ephesians 1:6, 11, 12, 14 to the praise of the glory of His grace by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved... in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Also Romans 11: 33-36 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgment and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His

counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

To decide on what would best show His glory He relied on omniscience (knowing everything, past, present, future, actual and possible). He could look at all possible plans and select one which would most perfectly show His glory. Of course there could be an infinite number of possible plans for all of time.

So try to imagine God considering the different planes. With God this would happen in an instant of time, but in our minds we can only think of it in this light. There God is-looking at all the plans to display Himself. If He makes His plan show only His love, well, His justice cannot be displayed. So He chooses a plan that will include all the attributes of Himself.

"But," people say, "why did God allow sin (notice I did not say create sin, but allowed sin) to enter His perfect plan. Could it have been that unless there existed people who deserved judgment for sin, God could never show His "grace attribute" (His goodness to those who deserve just the opposite). Unless such a circumstance existed, John 3:16, could not have been written, and God's great love toward the world would be to that degree unknown. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Perhaps also, God has allowed evil to exist so that it might have a chance to totally express itself for all that it is -to totally run its course and be eternally judged in order that in eternity future there could never be asked the question, "Yes, but what if someone disobeyed you God?"

Omnipotence (by the mere exercise of His will, He is able to produce whatever He wills), brought it into being. Immutability makes it certain: Isaiah 14: 26, 27; Psalm 33:11. "This is the purpose that is purposed against the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?" "The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations."

Finally it may be assumed that though free choices will be made by men, the very fact that God has chosen this plan with its certain "free choices," rather than some other plan with different circumstances, guarantees that the free choices men have and will make will be totally in agreement with God's eternal purpose for His own glory. This being said, let's go back to before the beginning of time. Before time existed God existed, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, three persons in one. These three had fellowship with themselves. There the three-in-one had glory, honor and power, but who besides themselves would ever feel the love of God that is in the Holy Trinity? Who would know what God is really like unless one of them revealed it to people?

Jesus said in (John 17:11b "Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. John 17:21."that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22-26) "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and

these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." So with this in mind, God began to create.

God created angels to begin with. We know He did this before the creation of the earth and cosmos, because it says in Job that the angels sang together as God created the heavens and earth. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? (God tells Job) Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job 38:4-7 God is reminding Job, he Job, was not there at creation, but the angels were! Also: Psalm 148:2, 5; Colossians 1:16. We are not told how many there are, but that number is very great, Daniel 7:10; Matthew 26:53; Hebrews 12:22.

The Bible does make it clear that one third of the angels have fallen and are kept forever in that state. Revelation 12:7-9 "And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Revelation 12:4 seems to indicate that Satan took a third of the angels with him. "His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth." These angels which are now thought of as "demons," are allowed to move about around at least on our planet. There are some others that are locked up now but may be let out later. 2 Peter 2:4a "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment."

The other fallen angels or demons are allowed to move about on the earth, even as Satan is able to do at this time, Job 1:6 "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." One day these fallen angels will be judged by Christians for the choices they are making even in their fallen state. I Corinthians 6:3a "Do you not know that we shall judge angels?" In the "mean time" the demons are allowed to make choices, but cannot go back on their decision of rebellion against God. Evidently they were given only one chance at free will. They, no doubt had to choose to stay holy or to join in the rebellion with Lucifer.

Let's here talk about Lucifer's fall since he seems to be the key to the "falling away" of the other angels that he took with him out of heaven. For this study look at Ezekiel 28: 12-16, where the prophecy starts talking about the king of Tyre, but then zeros in on the one behind his actions, "Lucifer:" "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, o covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones." Isaiah 14:12-15 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, on

the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit."

At some point just before or just after this God created the universe. It is hard for us to think of spirit beings not needing to have material surroundings like we are used to, but for them they don't need material chairs to sit on, etc. Glory of glories, God created the universe, in six literal days. This is exactly what Genesis chapters 1 and 2 state. Also Moses makes it clear also, in the giving of the law where he says: "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day." Exodus 20:11

The holy angels were full of rejoicing, to put it bluntly, they were beside themselves seeing all that God could create. Oh, yes, they had seen His glory around the thrown, but now He was doing something new and different. They were not disappointed, and, no doubt were overjoyed at first to see new beings with bodies different from their own. There were the first man Adam and the first woman Eve. They must have liked watching God the Son go down in the evenings to visit with Adam and Eve. Then they, no doubt, were shocked when they saw their old peer and arch enemy tempt these new beings, like he had tempted them.

Can you imagine the total dismay of the holy angels as Adam and Eve succumbed to the lies of Satan as he spoke out through the body of the snake? Then they must have watched in total horror at the aftermath of the sin of Adam and Eve. Through it all they knew God was accomplishing a plan, that He had set in motion at the beginning. Also they were learning things about God that they had not known before this, 1 Peter 1:12. "--things which angels desire to look into." Also as this scene was played out in front of them, they were also given a part to play. They were, for example, put in front of the entrance to the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve sinned, "So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life." Genesis 3:24. They heard God as He told about the curse on the man and woman. They were there to hear about the curse on the universe.

*All the Bible references are from the New King James Version.

*Some of the thoughts I have in here come from Mr. Needham's classes that I took at Multnomah.

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