

Phil 2301 Intro to Philosophy
The Biblical Worldview

Goal: To set forth the basics “pillar points” of the biblical worldview as a basis and framework for the study of philosophy, and indeed, for the entire enterprise of Christian higher education, including liberal arts education and participation in the Great Conversation.

I. Creation: Genesis 1-2

A. Where am I?

“By the Trinity, thus supremely and equally and unchangeably good, all things were created; and these are not supremely and equally and unchangeably good, but yet they are all good, even taken separately. Taken as a whole, however, they are very good, because their **ensemble** constitutes the universe in all its wonderful order and beauty.” —St. Augustine, *The Enchiridion*, §10.

- Make the wonderful rediscovery of the world as God’s creation!

B. Who am I?

- The image and likeness of God.

C. Why am I?

- To have fellowship with God whose image and likeness we are.
- To have relationships with each other, especially as male and female in the context of marriage and family.
- To have dominion over creation and to build a culture and civilization for the glory of God and the benefit and blessing of humanity.

The task given to man to rule over creation as it was in former times and as it is down to the present day: This is the commission to establish civilization. It applies to all men, and it embraces every age. There is no human activity which is not covered by it. The man who found himself with his family on a plain exposed to ice-cold wind and first laid a few stones one upon another and invented the wall, the basis of all architecture, was fulfilling this command. The woman who first pierced a hole in a hard thorn or fishbone and threaded a piece of animal sinew through it in order to be able to join together a few shreds of skin, and so invented the needle, sewing, the beginning of all the art of clothing, was also fulfilling this command. Down to the present day, all the instructing of children, every kind of school, every script, every book, all our technology, research, science and teaching, with their methods and instruments and institutions, are nothing other than the fulfillment of this command. The whole of history, all human endeavor, comes under this sign, this biblical phrase. —Ludwig Kohler, *Der Hebraische Mensch*, p. 112, quoted in H. W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, p. 164.

Ps. 8:4 [a]What is man that You [1]take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? Ps. 8:5 Yet You have made him a [a]little lower than [1]God, And [b]You crown him with [c]glory and majesty! Ps. 8:6 You make him to [a]rule over the works of Your hands; You have [b]put all things under his feet, Ps. 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the [1]beasts of the field, Ps. 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. Ps. 8:9 [a]O \Lord,\ our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

II. Uncreation/Fall (Genesis 3)

- Separation of humanity from God.
- Separation of humanity from self.
- Separation of humanity from one another.
- Three curses: on serpent, woman, and man.
- Separation of humanity from the Garden of Eden.

III. New Creation/Redemption (Genesis 3: 15-Revelation 22)

A. Old Testament: promise of redemption via Israel

B. New Testament: fulfillment and consummation of redemption via Jesus Christ

- Already: first coming
- Not yet: second coming

IV. Distinctive Features of the Biblical Worldview

A. **Wholistic**: It is comprehensive, complete, total, universal, all-encompassing in scope, as opposed to the “sacred/secular” dualistic model.

B. **Grace restores nature** (that is, Christian salvation rooted in God’s grace through Jesus Christ is neither non-creational, supra-creational, or anti-creational, but is concerned with the renewal, restoration, and transformation of creation with human beings as God’s creatures at the center of His comprehensive redemption. Redemption is re-creation and it involves three themes:

1. The original good creation (and God’s purposes for it).
2. The perversion of that good creation through sin.
3. The restoration/renewal of that creation through the redemption in Jesus Christ and the regaining of God’s original purposes for creation and His creatures.

- a. Believers understand the world as God’s creation!
- b. Believers know themselves to be the imago Dei.

- c. Believers are renewed to fellowship with God.
- d. Believers are renewed in their relationships with others (male, female, marriage, family, church)
- e. Believers are restored to the stewardship of creation through their vocational callings and stations in life.

C. Implications for the study of philosophy

1. Metaphysics: God is the prime reality and the external world is the creation of God governed in all aspects by His law.
2. Epistemology: Human beings are designed by God to know and understand God Himself, themselves, and the nature of reality by means of natural revelation/law in general and through special revelation in the Scriptures. All truth is thus God's truth.
3. Ethics: There is a objective moral order to the universe rooted in the character of an unchanging God of love and justice that is "written on the heart" and known through special revelation in the Scriptures. All goodness is thus God's goodness.
4. Aesthetics: All beauty has its source in God and there are objective aesthetic standards that govern the imagination and acts of creation and appreciation of the arts. All beauty is thus God's beauty.