

RUINED BUT REDEEMABLE: NATURE & SCIENCE

Genesis 1

The creation account provides an important framework for life. Studying the first 3 chapters of Genesis explains much about the world. These verses address questions of meaning and purpose.

We will see that God made everything good. As a result of sin, humans ruined God's good creation. In God's kindness, He is redeeming His world through Christ.

God fashioned an orderly and intelligible universe

God spoke the world into existence *ex nihilo*, "out of nothing". This resonates with what the scientific community calls "the big bang". Genesis states that God fashioned undifferentiated material into an orderly ecosystem fit for life.

Our universe behaves in ways that are explained by physical laws, commonly called universal constants.

The fine-tuning of the universe indicates a supremely advanced Mind behind the cosmos. The world betrays an "intelligent design".

The Christian origins of what we call the sciences is not disputed. Many of the most famous scientists were Christians (Boyle, Galileo, Faraday, Maxwell, Kelvin) and others certainly theists (F. Bacon, Newton).

The Scientific Revolution was inspired by a Christian worldview (the structure of nature and the human mind's ability to understand it). Over time, this developed into materialism and seeing the world as a machine. As a result of 20th century physics and genetics, we have learned that life is not easily reducible. Modern scientific breakthroughs have opened the possibility to faith.

Humans are to act as stewards of God's creation

Humans stand in a different position to creation than the rest of the animals. We are creatures, but we alone are "made in God's image" (Genesis 1.26-27).

Common ancestry evolution collapses the distinction between humans and other animals. This has ethical consequences (excusing certain behaviors as "instincts" or euthanizing "non-productive" life).

Adam and Eve were endowed with special responsibilities and privileges in God's created order (Genesis 1.26-30; 2.19-20).

As a result of the Fall, we have ruined God's design

We are tempted to plunder God's creation for selfish gain.

We are tempted to swell with pride, worshipping the creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1.21-25).

We embrace Naturalism and Scientism where science itself becomes our religion.

"There's so much more to atheism than its knockdown arguments that there is no God. There is the whole rest of the worldview that comes along with atheism. It's a demanding, rigorous, breathtaking grip on reality, one that has been vindicated beyond reasonable doubt. It's called science" (Rosenberg, *The Atheist's Guide to Reality*, viii).

"The findings of science imply that the belief systems of all the world's traditional religions and cultures...are factually mistaken" (S. Pinker, *Enlightenment Now*, 394).

Christ redeems the created order

In Christ, God is redeeming the entirety of the cosmos. For those of us in Christ, we can exhibit an appreciation for the natural sciences as a lens through which to see the greatness of God.

Key Idea: Christians can affirm scientific rigor and see the goodness of God through His creation.

Application Questions:

What does Genesis 1 communicate about i) humanity's relation to God and ii) humanity's relation to the natural world?

What is a healthy Christian view of math, science, and medicine?

Why do some people treat science as their religion? What are some inherent problems in this worldview?

How does belief in the Lord Jesus encourage stewardship of the created order?

Bibliography:

Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning*

John Lennox, *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?*

John Lennox, *Can Science Explain Everything?*

Rebecca McLaughlin, "Hasn't Science Disproved Christianity?" in
her *Confronting Christianity*