



## Chapter 1

# I Believe That God Created

Confessing God as Creator means that we believe that he is the only un-created One. He has always been and will always be. The question “Where did God come from?” is answered by saying that he is the Creator of all things.

Confessing God as Creator means that we believe that he made all things, that “without him nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:3). No other being or thing in the universe is co-eternal with God. He alone is the Eternal One who has always been and who always will be.

Confessing God as Creator means that we believe that he made all things from nothing (*ex nihilo*). He did not use already-existing materials to make the universe. He spoke, and the materials came into being. There was nothing, and then there was all that God made.

Confessing God as Creator includes the truth of his superintendence over and providential care of creation. God’s providence means that he loves his creation and has power to do good in it. We call God “Almighty” because he made all things out of nothing by his mighty Word. All power resides in him and flows from him.

Confessing God as Creator means that he is prior to all our “wishings and willings.” All our life we respond to what the Creator has already done. We may respond obediently and creatively, but we do not

## 16 FIRST PRINCIPLES

initiate anything in our relationship with God—we only respond to what he has done.

We may personalize this confession in these points:

1. I believe that God made me and all other creatures.
2. I believe that he made all things that I enjoy.
3. I believe that everything I receive every day is from him.
4. I believe that he guards and protects me every day.
5. I believe that he does this out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me.
6. I believe that because of this it is my duty and privilege to live in gratitude to him, to praise him, obey him, and serve him.

### **The Problem of Evil**

Confessing God as Creator of all things sometimes causes people to wrongly suppose that God created evil. The Apostle John clearly teaches that “God is light; in him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). This teaching about the holiness and purity and sinlessness of God is consistent throughout the Bible. God is not—and cannot be—the author of sin and evil.

So where did evil come from? We believe that evil was introduced into the world through the willful sin of Adam and Eve, the first humans (Genesis 3). God created humans with a wonderful and very valuable gift—the gift of moral freedom. To be human is to have the capacity to choose to do God’s will or to choose to defy God’s will. God considered this quality of moral freedom so valuable that he was willing to create a world with the potential for the emergence of evil. Humans, made in the image of God, defied God and sinned.

God did not abandon his world or his sinful creatures. He demonstrated his love for us by sending his one and only Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for our sin and rescue us from the evil in which we were hopelessly ensnared (Romans 5:8).

### **Trusting and Entrusting**

What does it mean to confess, “I believe in God”? It means that we know and accept as true what the Bible says of God *and* we trust in him and rely on him with all our heart (Psalm 31:14 KJV: “I trusted in thee, O LORD; I said, Thou art my God”). Believing includes both trusting God and entrusting ourselves to God.

In our confession of faith, why must we use the singular pronoun “I” and not “we”? The pronoun must be singular because everyone must trust and believe for himself. We are each called to give our own answer to God. The individual stands alone before his Creator to respond to what the Creator has done (“Thy faith [singular] hath saved thee [singular]; go in peace” Luke 7:50 KJV).

The Scriptures teach that we must individually give our response to God. This does not reduce the importance of our membership in the body of Christ, the church. But it does mean that neither our parents nor our pastor nor any other person can give our answer to God. We must do this ourselves.

### **God as Father**

Why do we call the First Person of the Trinity “Father”? We do so because he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and also our Father. Jesus taught us to call him Father. This was one of the distinctive teachings of Jesus concerning God. The term “Father” which Jesus used was the familiar term

## 18 FIRST PRINCIPLES

equivalent in our language to “Daddy” (John 20:17 KJV: “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” Also see Ephesians 3:14-15).

### **Created in God’s Image**

What is the place of human beings in creation? Humans are the highest of God’s creation. God especially formed humans with a body, gave them a rational soul, made them rulers over the earth, and created them in his own image (Genesis 1:26-27 and 2:7 KJV). The image of God in humans refers to their ability to know and love God and others. It points to the capacity for meaningful and mutual relationships.

That people are made in God’s image does not imply that God has a body like us. God is spirit (John 4:24), and he is alone in his deity. No other creature is divine. There is only one God in this universe. All other beings are created by God. Humans were not gods in a former life. Humans will not be gods in a coming era.

Humans are made in the image of God in that they have a spiritual existence like God’s spiritual existence. Humans are made for spiritual fellowship with God. God intends that men and women acknowledge him as God, love him as he loves them, and bring him glory through obedience and praise.

### **The Fall of Man**

Why are not all people in a right relationship with God? Man fell into sin through the temptation of the devil. The fellowship with God was broken by man’s sinful rebellion. Fundamentally, sin is a refusal to acknowledge God for who he is (Genesis 3, Romans 3:23, 6:23).

“The Fall of Man” refers to the experience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when they lost

*I Believe That God Created* 19

their innocence and disobeyed God. Because of sin, humans fell from the unhindered relationship of love with their Creator. The Fall did not totally destroy the image of God in man, for people still had the capacity for relationships. Yet that capacity was severely damaged, especially in regard to the relationship with God. Sinful people are restored to a right relationship with God only through the Savior, Jesus Christ.