

God's Vision: The Will of God in his Creation and in Eternity

Synopsis: Learning what God's will is in Creation and in Eternity by studying God's motivations through his revelation given unto us. We will examine the purpose of Life, how the existence of evil is actually part of God's plan and not merely a byproduct of certain creatures (man, angels, cherubs) free will. Then we will study the centrality of the Lord Jesus Christ to all of creation and eternity. Lastly we will spend time focusing on apologetics in light of the revealed will of God, and how that enables us to become better disciples and witnesses of Christ in this world.

I. Laying the Foundation (1st week):

- a. Study Genesis 1-3 focusing on the beginning of the creation. This will give us a foundation for further exploring and learning about God's character and motivations for creation and eternity.

II. Implications of God's Will for his Creation: Theodicy – The "Problem" of Evil

III. Implications of God's Will for his Creation: The Purpose of Life

IV. Christo-centricity: The centrality of Christ in God's Will.

V. Implications for Apologetics

- a. Emphasis on how learning about God's will in creation and eternity enables us to be more accurate witnesses to God and his word, being able to testify of the gospel of Christ, and the grace of God that is Christocentric.

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God...

What do we learn from Genesis 1:1?

- God is separate from creation.
- Creation had a beginning
- Time had a beginning, since time is discerned by the created order (sun, moon, stars)
- Creation is not God
- Creation is subject to God, God is not subject to creation
- It shows that God likes to make things and this brings him pleasure.
- Creation is the result of *work*. This tells us God works, enjoys work.

The why questions are the best questions, because they bring out the will and motivation behind actions and words spoken.

Have you ever thought of why God created in the first place?

And why did he create things the way he did?

And why did he place the forbidden tree in the garden?

And why he did not intervene when the serpent tempted Eve?

Asking the why questions to these things bring you close to the heart beat of God and draws you closer to understand his overall purpose in will in his creation.

What do we learn from the Creation Narrative (Genesis 1-2)?

- Everything that he made he called good* (With the exception of the firmament/expanse that caused division)
 - At the end he called his creation “very good”
- He desires to see things reproduce and multiply (all creatures, vegetation have seed within themselves to multiply and reproduce)
- He desires to see things bear fruit (vegetation, creatures)
- Certain aspects of creation are to guide man in his understanding (Sun, moon, and stars are for signs, seasons, days, and years)
 - The ability for us to tell time was important to God apparently.
- God creates man in his image (Genesis 1:26, compare with Genesis 5:1-3)
 - We are in his image
 - We have his likeness
 - God gives us dominion over the entire earth, God has dominion over all his creation
 - He wants man to work (Genesis 2:7-15)
 - The nature of the work was to “til the ground, and keep it”
 - You work towards a goal, and you work to maintain something that once was not realized, but now is, as long as you maintain it (If that is not God’s business and what the Christian life is all about, I don’t know what is).
 - He commands man to do and not do things (What does this reveal to us about the nature of God?)
 - Apparently this shows man has a choice to obey or disobey God
 - It was part of God’s will for man to be able to make these kinds of choices. Think on these things...
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 - The age old question: Did God never want man to know good and evil?
 - He doesn’t want man to be alone, so he makes one particular woman for that man – for companionship, fellowship, love, and perpetuation of mankind
 - This woman’s purpose for being, is to help the man. Help the man in his work and labor which God gave him.
 - God brings all the animals before Adam and lets Adam pick the name for all the animals.
 - What does this tell you about God?
 - Is it any wonder at all that every kid loves animals, especially early on in life? Isn’t it also interesting, that it was God’s intention that man was to rule over the animal creation and that every child that

comes into the world loves the very things he was to rule over?
Do you see any similarities between us and God yet?

- Likewise, God rules over all his creation and man who he gave dominion over the earth, and loves that which he reigns over. A ruler ought to love those over which he rules.
- Parents are to rule over the children in love
- Husbands are to rule over the wives and what does scripture say, “Husbands, love your wives”. It is contrary to God’s will to rule over something you do not love.
 - Wives are to be subject unto their own husbands, like the church is to Christ.
 - Wives are to reverence and obey their husbands
- Christ rules over his church, and he loves his church and gave himself for it.
- It is God’s will for parents to raise and rule over their children in love. When the child is old and finds a wife from the Lord, it is God’s will for him to leave his parents and be joined to his wife and become one flesh.
- Naked and not ashamed (Childlike innocence for two full grown adults!)

What do we learn from the Fall of Man (Genesis 3)?

- God did not intervene when Satan tempts Eve (Think about that).
 - This is huge. What is about to happen is the fall and ruin of mankind for millenniums because they are about to disobey God. Why didn’t God stop it? Could he have? Yes he could have, but he didn’t. This tells us something about God.
 - God was willing to allow the fall and ruin of all mankind
 - The consequences of which corrupted the entire creation, which God once called “very good”
 - How much violence, how much evil, how much death and destruction that came as the result of this event!
 - Yet God sat by and watched. That means something!
- The devil lies to Eve saying you will not surely die (completely contradicting God) and says you will be as gods/God knowing good and evil.
 - Has knowing good and evil done any good for mankind?
- They both eat the forbidden fruit, they are now ashamed knowing their nakedness, and attempt to hide their shame by making a covering for themselves.
- God then shows up (how about that?) and they hear the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hide themselves because of their sin.
- Where are you?
 - First question God asks man in scripture
 - How often does God present us with questions that he knows the answer to, he just wants to know how we will answer and respond!

- Man responds saying, I was afraid because I was naked so I hid myself.
- God says who told you that you were naked, did you eat of that which I commanded you not to eat?
 - Man tries to blame God in a roundabout way, saying the woman YOU gave me, she gave it to me and I ate it.
 - God addresses the woman, “What have you done?”
 - I was tricked by the serpent, and I ate.
 - (At least the man and woman acknowledge they ate of that which they were not supposed to!)
 - The Lord curses the serpent for what he did.
 - **Note how all three were punished, since they all played a part in disobeying their Maker**
- God makes a promise, the first prophecy in scripture, of enmity between the woman and her seed and the serpent and his seed.
 - The woman’s seed, He shall bruise your head, you shall bruise his heel
 - What does that tell you about God?
- The woman punished in child bearing
- Man – ground is cursed; bearing food from the ground is sorrowful and full of toil and that will not end. It will cause him sweat to just eat. Something that was so easy before, now requires much labor.
 - You are dust, and shall return to dust
- The LORD sheds the blood of an animal and gave the skin as clothing for Adam and his wife.
 - What does that tell you about God?
- The Lord does not want man to live forever in the shameful condition that sin brings (**Genesis 3:22**)
 - In that way death is a good thing.
 - And thank God, we have hope in death in Christ!

This is the revealed word of God concerning origins and answers many of the why questions that all men have?

- Why am I here?
- Where did all this (creation) come from?
- Why are things so messed up?

Here are the questions that the Creation Narrative does not answer, but the rest of scripture does:

- Why did God do this?
- Why did God allow this?
 - Why did he let the serpent into the garden in the first place? Isn’t he in control?
- If God is loving, why would he not prevent the fall of man from happening?

It is these kinds of questions that I want to spend time answering. Because the answers to these questions drive us ultimately closer to the heart beat of God, and understanding him and his ways, which is his desire for us all.

Next Week: Theodicy – Why does God allow Evil?