

From Your Pastor

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question: What is the work of creation?

Answer: The work of creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

Scripture memory: Acts 17:24; Psa. 104:24: *"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth..."* and *"O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."*

An explanation: Creation is a work of God's power and wisdom whereby He makes all things out of nothing. God did not create using any preexistent matter to bring about His creation, but spoke into nothing by His divine and powerful word and created all things such as the heavens, the earth, the waters, the souls of men--all things were made out of nothing; as Hebrews 11:3 teaches: *"By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible"* (Acts 14:15). God spoke, saying *"Let there be..."* and there was. *"And it was all very good!"* (Gen. 1:31). Man can form matter, but he cannot create matter; man can put matter into another form, but only God can make matter when there is none (Swinnock). After God created all things in the space of six days, He rested from His work, and enjoyed His created things in Sabbath rest, setting a pattern for His people to follow of working six days and resting on one of them (Exo. 20:8-11).

The biblical teaching of creation should remind us that God alone is the Creator, and all other things are His creatures. God is not completely separated from His creatures (utterly transcendent), nor is He confused with and identified in His creatures (utterly immanent). God is distinct from His creatures, but never separated from them; He is both transcendent and immanent: *"Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God afar off?"* (Jer. 23:23; also Isa. 57:15). Acts 17:28 teaches us that God's creatures utterly depend upon Him for life and breath and being: *"In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring!"* All power to live comes from God. All creatures rely upon God's power.

God created all things through and for the Lord Jesus Christ, and He in His Sovereign power and majesty upholds all creatures: *"For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities- all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together"* (Col. 2:16-17) and *"[Christ Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power..."* (Heb. 1:3). God created all things for His own glory, for the manifestation of His wonderful character and His power (Psa. 19; Rom. 1:19ff): *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created"* (Rev. 4:11) and *"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen"* (Rom. 11:36).

God made all creation and man good and upright. But sin has come into the world. *"See, this alone I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes"* (Ecc. 7:29). Nevertheless, this is God's good world though tainted by sin (1 Tim. 4:4-5), and we look forward to the renewal of all creation, a New Heavens and a New Earth: *"But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells"* (2 Peter 3:13).

A prayer: Thank you, Creator Lord, and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, Transcendent and Holy God, yet Immanent and close to those contrite and lowly in heart; we worship you! You are the Glorious Creator we confess: *"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth..."* who reveals your mercy to sinners through your promises and grace revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for giving us life and all that we need in Jesus Christ. Let us live our lives enjoying you and your good world!

In Christ's love,
Pastor Biggs

"What is required of those that hear the word preached? A. It is required of those that hear the word preached, that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what they hear by the scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the word of God, meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives." - Westminster Larger Catechism 160