

# Creation Essentials & Acceptable Biblical Theories

Revised 08/07

## Doctrinal Conviction of Pastor-Teacher Paul B. Phair

Creation: Did God create the world in six, twenty-four hour days or did He do so over an extended period? I believe the verdict is still out. The Bible is clear that God alone, and not finite matter, is the creator of the world. The Bible is also clear that humans did not evolve from lower forms of life, for God uniquely made them in His image. From this perspective, every believer ought to be a creationist.

A legitimate interpretation of the Bible is that God completed His creation in six literal twenty-four hour days. Though this view is not in favor with most or many scientists, (including many *Divine-Design Theorists*) there is a body of scientific evidence that supports a young earth theory (*The Flood Theory* – The catastrophe of Noah’s flood significantly altered the appearance of the earth).

Nevertheless, a faithful interpretation of God’s inerrant Word does not necessitate a young earth view. It is equally possible in Genesis, that God is poetically conveying that He is the creator, without His articulating the technical process by which He brought it all into being. This view is sometimes referred to as *The Literary-Framework Theory*. This is the one I presently find particularly compelling when coupled with *The Day-Age Theory* (in which God created in a series of acts over long

periods of time -- each “day” in Genesis is an extremely long age of time.) Two other Biblically plausible interpretations are *The Gap Theory* (gap of millions of years between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2) and *The Mature Creation Theory or The Ideal-Time Theory* (God created the world with the appearance of maturity in age).

I agree with Wayne Grudem’s statement that an accurate Biblical interpretation is not simply a matter of “believing the Bible” or “not believing the Bible.”<sup>1</sup> Every Bible interpretation or theory has points of strength, but they also all have difficulties too. We must also see that scientific theory is just that – theory, with varying supporting evidences. However, one day all the evidence will be in. Science will no longer be a theory and Bible truth will no longer be a matter of human interpretation. In that day, our debate will be over. God’s glory will be fully manifested and His process will be accurately grasped. We will then see complete congruency between biblical facts and scientific facts. Until that day, Bible-believing Christians ought to focus on the essential truths concerning creation, and with regard to particulars, be charitable with those who hold varying views.

Grudem well summarizes what all Bible-affirming followers of Christ agree and

assert as being clear, essential truths related to the doctrine of creation:

1. God created the universe out of nothing
2. Creation is distinct from God, yet always dependent on God
3. God created the universe to show His glory
4. The universe God created was very good
5. There will be no final conflict between Scripture and science
6. Secular theories that deny God as Creator, including Darwinian evolution, are clearly incompatible with belief in the Bible
7. Humans alone are uniquely created by God in His image<sup>ii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*, p. 297

<sup>ii</sup> Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*, p. 289. I made minor modifications to Grudem's list.