

AFFIRMING CREATION 2017  
ST GEORGE, UT  
JULY 6-14

# SUMMARY OF THEOLOGICAL ISSUES



# MAP OF PRESENTATION

AFFIRMING CREATION 2017

- Biblical Authority
- Epistemology
- Hermeneutics
- Theology
- Mission and Personal Relationship with God
- Further literature on Bible and Origins



# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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- Scripture's **claims to be unique** challenge the reader (they can be accepted or rejected but not ignored).
- Scripture claims to be the "word of God" (Ps 147:19; Deut 4:7–8)
  - It asserts monotheism
  - It asserts knowledge of the future (prophecies)
  - It focuses on salvation
  - It is objective (reports victories and defeats as well as the sins of heroes)



# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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- Scripture claims **truth** (a light into darkness).
  - It is a testimony of Jesus
  - Incarnates the truth of God in human language
  - Revelation is sufficient
- Scripture claims **power to transform heart and mind**
  - It has a radical message that christian and non-christian forces have sought to curve
  - There has been always a battle against the simple, literal meaning of Scripture.



# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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- The corollary is that Scripture should determine our **"worldview"**
  - World view is the lens, the filter, the template, the paradigm through which we understand our existence and see the world
- Foundation for **thinking and lifestyle** (personal and institutional)
- Foundation for our relationship with God (our religion)
- Foundation for our **system of education**
- Foundation for our **relationship to non-biblical disciplines**
  - "There will be a people upon the earth who will accept the Bible and the Bible only as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils. . . , the voice of the majority, not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith." GC 595



# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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- God's people has always faced the temptation to subvert the authority of God's word
  - Eve, Desert Generation, Jewish nation and the authority of the senses
  - Early church and neoplatonism
  - Medieval church and aristotelianism
  - Post-reformation and experience, reason, and feeling
  - Contemporary church and the authority of the reader



# BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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- Faith is not a human creation, it is the gift of God (Eph 2:8).
  - Faith is not based on reason; instead, reason is based on faith.
  - Faith provides the point of departure for reason.
- Freedom is not based on human autonomy
  - Freedom is a gift of God
- We do not contribute to salvation or to the understanding of the universe on our own; however, we will contribute if we begin with faith on the Word of God.



# EPISTEMOLOGY

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- **Knowledge of God** through nature is limited and General (Rom 1:16–20)
  - God's Wrath **VS** Power to Save
  - God's Deity **VS** Righteousness of God
  - God's eternal power **VS** Personal God
- **Knowledge of nature** without revelation is contradictory and disappointing
  - "Only in the light of revelation can it (nature) be read aright. 'Through faith we understand.'" (Ed 134)



# HERMENEUTICS

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- Hermeneutics is better understood as a **submission to the text**
  - “Scriptures ... bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me” (John 5:39–40).
  - This is called exegesis: Truth comes out of the text.
- Interpreter recognizes the **historical nature of the text** (respects the original context, intention, and meaning of words, and uses of genres).
- Interpreter recognizes the **literary context** (the Biblical Metanarrative).
- Interpreter recognizes the **authority of the Bible** (Sola, Tota, etc., Scripture is its own interpreter).
- Interpreter recognizes that the **ultimate purpose** of Scripture is to renew a personal relationship with God



# HERMENEUTICS

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- **Biblical Hermeneutics** recognizes that readers should not add to the Bible
  - through excessive visualization that distract from the message
  - external structures of thought (e.g., imposition of genus and species structures)
  - imposed subordination (e.g., over interpretation of conjunctions and juxtaposition of clauses)
  - foreign distinctions (universalism and particularism)
- **Biblical Hermeneutics** is patient and humble
- **Biblical Hermeneutics** is centered on the crucified Christ as the Son of God



# HERMENEUTICS

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- The registers of **Biblical Hermeneutics** include: God, self, community, history, and world.
- **Biblical Hermeneutics** refuses to subsume Scripture under the authority of the church, the reader, or humanity (Scripture as a human creation)
- The simple, literal meaning of the passage respects the words, order, original context, and purpose of the Biblical text.



# THEOLOGY

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- Scripture begins with an account of creation because it is the basis for Biblical theology
  - It provides the covenantal context and literary pattern to understand
    - Flood
    - Exodus
    - 10 commandments
    - Sanctuary
    - New Covenant
    - The miracles and theology of John, etc.



# THEOLOGY

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- It is the starting point to understand
  - The nature and authority of God, the creator (Doctrine of God)
  - Christ, as the firstborn of (preeminent over) creation.
  - The great worth of Humanity, as created in the image of God
  - Sin and death as the result of the fall
  - Salvation (as recreation)
  - Ethics (as respect of human worth established at creation)
  - Marriage as a divine institution
  - Eschatology (the end of a great controversy).



# MISSION

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- Evolution and Creation cannot be synthesized or maintained in a balance in our mission
  - They are mutually exclusive
- Our message is based on a historical understanding of God's relationship with humanity
  - Personal relationship with God
  - Relationship between sin and death
  - Basis for the Sabbath message
  - Basis for Judgment (second coming)



# FURTHER STUDY

## AFFIRMING CREATION 2017

- Exegetical Studies on Gen 1–11
- Nature of God and theodicy
- Importance of History in Theology
- Difference between cosmology and cosmogony



“

FEAR GOD AND GIVE HIM GLORY, BECAUSE  
THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT HAS COME,  
AND WORSHIP HIM WHO MADE HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, THE SEA AND THE SPRINGS OF WATER.

— *Rev 14:6*

”



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— Rev 14:6

”

If there is no creation,  
there is no salvation/  
judgment

If there is neither,  
what is our mission?

Why do we exist?



# FURTHER READING

## AFFIRMING CREATION 2017

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