

Cosmology 101 for a Pagan Culture (Part one)

By Jay Wegter, with Shane Haffey

I. *What is Biblical Cosmology?*

Cosmology is that branch of philosophy which deals with the origin and structure of the universe. Biblical cosmology includes man as the image of God (with the sub-themes of male and female; the dominion mandate; and biblical anthropology). At the heart of biblical cosmology is the Creator-creature distinction. Biblical cosmology states that God is ‘Definer’ of what He has made. God as Creator has structured reality by giving us *designations, definitions, categories* and *relations* of what He has made.ⁱ God’s defining role over His creation has established the creation structures of male and female and marriage and family. These creation structures are foundational and ontologically real, which is why social contract theory and sexual perversion constitute a radical overturning of biblical cosmology.ⁱⁱ The absolute truth of biblical cosmology is essential in correctly interpreting the universe.ⁱⁱⁱ God’s relation to the creation is the ordering principle of the universe and of reality. Because God is the sustainer and definer of all that He has made, there is no such thing as a reality greater than God—or a reality in which God is but a component.

Biblical cosmology is about the origin and nature of the cosmos, and especially about God’s relationship to what He has made as Maker, Upholder, Ruler, Definer, and Owner of the universe and its contents. Thus, biblical cosmology is inseparable from God’s purposes for His creation and His rule over creation. Cosmology touches teleology—God’s created design and goal for all that He has created. God intends a specific function and purpose for all the things He has made. For example, the goodness of God manifested in rainfall and in renewable food sources for billions of people and animals. It will only take a single butterfly, rose, or honeybee to condemn the unbeliever on Judgment Day. When the biblical cosmology taught in Scripture is ably wielded, it is able to dismantle and deconstruct every single assumption and facet of paganism’s lie that we live in a *self-made, divine universe*.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete (2 Cor 10:3-6).

Biblical cosmology is the sole vantage point ‘high enough’ to provide the foundation for a unified cohesive worldview. Cosmology alone provides a ‘wide angle lens’ broad enough to see man’s place in the universe and to see God’s relation to what He has created. Exalting God’s transcendence and omnipotence is the starting point in biblical cosmology. For the creation is utterly dependent upon God, therefore the creation gives praise, it does not receive praise. Biblical cosmology is a totally unified ordering principle—without it, worldview has no foundation. Consequently biblical cosmology is the foundation of the gospel—for the gospel only makes sense in a world in which our omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God is *Creator, Owner, Upholder, Lawmaker, Redeemer, and Judge*. The gospel has no interface in a world in which pagan cosmology has replaced biblical cosmology. That is why there is a vital need to define categories as God does—for He is *Ruler, Sustainer, Owner* of His creation. In the

designations God has made concerning creation, He has established His 'blueprint'. His blueprint, found in His Word, is not only our moral map, but also our 'metaphysic'—our fixed point of reference which provides our understanding of the nature of reality. Only by what God has said in His infallible Word do we know beyond a shadow of a doubt what is true, real, right and wrong.^{iv}

Biblical cosmology is expressed in the distinctions which God has made. We could say that God creates by 'separating things'—*heaven and earth; dry land and sea; animal and plant; day and night; good and evil; man and woman*. The creation structures formed by God are: male distinct from female, parent distinct from child, human distinct from animal, animal distinct from plant; etc. These 'binaries of two-ness' constitute boundaries or divisions established by the Creator. "These principles should not be seen and understood merely as primitive cosmology (God's testimony concerning creation week), but as stating a metaphysical principle and teaching a point that the universe has a moral base."^v In other words, there is a moral order built into the creation. "Human beings are only correctly understood *in relationship to their Creator [and His moral government]*."^{vi}

As humans, our identity and purpose are inseparable tied to our designation as the very image of God. Our rationality, worship, and morality are the direct expression of having been created in the image of God. Thus, to be human is to be 'mission-focused'—we are to raise up God-fearing communities; we are to devote ourselves to marriage and family; we are to exercise the dominion mandate over the works of God's hands. Our identity and our calling as humans made His image are inseparably joined.^{vii} By contrast, the world's cosmology seeks to achieve spirituality by removing the distinctions which God has made. This 'pagan spirituality' seeks to erase the distinctions between God and man; between man and animal; and between man and woman. Perverse behavior is the inevitable result—the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter one that the overturning of created order will result in unnatural ways of living (Rom 1:24-27). To remove the distinctions between God and us is ultimately the same as acknowledging no created distinctions.^{viii}

In biblical cosmology we define the creation as God does. Just as in Acts 17 in Paul's sermon to the Athenian philosophers, we cannot know the creation as it truly is, and we cannot know our place in the creation apart from knowing God's relation to the creation. For, the entire cosmos is a kind of theater of God's glory, for according to Romans one, the creation is a sacred teaching device which infallibly reveals God's divine nature and attributes.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse (Rom 1:18-20).

Pagan cosmology departs from biblical theism at this foundational juncture. For pagan cosmology places everything in the circle of a self-existent universe including the divine. Thus, pagan cosmology is pantheistic because it affirms that everything is infused with the divine. How often have you heard, "I'm spiritual, but not religious?" We need to be able to explain to our young adults that it is the height of arrogance to suggest that a human shares the same essence as God, and is therefore divine/spiritual.

II. What is the evidence that the West has changed cosmologies?

Our public universities are teaching our youth that the essentials of human flourishing are grounded in pagan cosmology. The secular academy is determined to separate Christian students from their biblical worldview and replace it with a pagan one. It is no accident that paganism is violently opposed to patriarchy. For, from the fatherhood of God issues His moral government and from the fatherhood of God, the Son of God is sent to be the heart of the good news of the gospel. But, in the fall in Eden, human and angelic sin turned our world upside down. God's chain of order and honor was flipped upside down in the rebellion. For, prior to apostasy, in the unfallen creation, the animals were subject to the man and woman. The woman was subject to the man, and the man and the woman were subject to God. But, in the temptation and the fall, a creature (the serpent) deceives the woman who then leads her husband into sin, and then he abandons God.

Thus, we now have an upside down world in which unregenerate humans are subject to the creation and the devil (Eph 2:1-2). And, in which the glory of God has been exchanged for that of an ox and creeping things (Rom 1:22-23). Consider the size of the challenge we face. Our Christian youth are being victimized by LGBTQ propaganda. They should be witnesses for the gospel and they ought to be bold worldview-changers, but, instead they are mute. Christian millennials feel utterly stranded between two worldviews. And because they have not been trained in biblical cosmology to exercise discernment, they feel helpless when the political left defines the two antithetical choices as either *heartless Bible dogma versus loving social justice*. The words *love* and *hate* now have new definitions, but what millennials do not see is that the new definitions have been cast and framed within the worldview of pagan cosmology. So, when our Christian young people face the choice of speaking a word for Christ or being silent, they find the choice immensely easy—they choose silence. In part, this is because of their blindness to the nature and consequences of pagan cosmology.

Denial of the Creator-creature distinction constitutes a plunge into absurdity—for it is impossible for the creature to set up an alternative rationality in defiance of his Creator who is the source of all rationality.^{ix} The secularists have used the philosophy of materialism to attack the divine 'blueprint' given by God by which His creatures are to interpret the world, and order their lives and society. Naturalism has been 'shredding' mankind's understanding of the divine blueprint. This new level of human rebellion is reminiscent of the Lord's words through Jeremiah addressed to apostate Judah, "Do you not fear Me? Declares the Lord. Do you not tremble in My presence? For I have placed the sand as a boundary for the sea, an eternal decree, so it cannot cross over it. Though the waves toss, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet they cannot cross over it. But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and departed" (Jer 5:22-23). "Thus says the Lord, 'Stand by and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your soul. But they said, 'We will not walk in it'" (Jer 6:16).

What the rising generation of millennials does not see is that the vast majority of the inner workings of pagan cosmology is concealed from sight. This is much like the iceberg analogy in which 90% of the iceberg is below the waterline. Our young people only see the behavior and the moral messaging which is the 10% above the waterline. In other words, they know all too well the content of the reigning, shrill narrative of the LGBTQ agenda, but, what they do not see is the 90% beneath the waterline. What they don't see is that America, in changing cosmologies has changed religions. The O.T. prophet Jeremiah rebukes the inhabitants of Judah in Jeremiah when he thunders, "Has a nation changed gods when they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit" (Jer 2:11).

Mankind is created in the image and likeness of God functions philosophically as a divinely ordained ‘vantage point’ from which all other truth claims concerning worldview may be evaluated. When human sexuality is viewed from this divine view point, we see an immense watershed, or continental divide. Like a mountaintop rising to a sharp peak, human sexuality serves as a ‘fulcrum’ which forces one to declare his or her worldview. In other words, your spirituality defines (reveals, or is manifested in) in your view of sexuality. States Peter Jones, “The two views of sexuality in our world emerge from two timeless religious options which are tied to two fundamental worldviews or cosmologies. How we order our sexuality is one of the most telling indices of a civilization. Actually, how we do order our sexuality will determine whether our civilization will survive.”^x At the heart of worldview is how the sexual body is to be used. Therefore, sexuality is the inescapable divider—one cannot balance on the needle-sharp tip of the peak, one will either come down on the side of the biblical cosmology, or upon the pagan cosmology side of the mountain.

These two mutually exclusive worldviews of biblical cosmology and pagan cosmology are driving the culture war. Consider that the two moral-social issues which divide our nation politically are: 1) abortion on demand, and 2) LGBTQ ‘rights’.^{xi} By enshrining choice for both abortion, and erotic ‘freedom’, it is clear that the political left is now advocating a pagan worldview or cosmology in which man is not the image of God. By exalting choice as the liberation of self, of self-expression and self-identification, it is clear that just beneath this idolatrous autonomy is a pagan cosmology which gives tacit permission to worship the self. To rail against the distinctions which God has established is to oppose the God who formed them for His glory—war on God’s created distinctions is war against God, who is the ‘distinction Maker’.

Thus, as Christian worldview recedes in the West, the culture of death (abortion, perversion, euthanasia, etc.) will enthusiastically claim every square foot of territory that has been abandoned by biblical theism. And, with this eagerness to ‘liberate’ our culture from the remnants of its ‘Christian harness’ comes the wholehearted rejection that our human identity and dignity rest upon our being image-bearers of our Creator. The progressive left’s pagan cosmology constantly telegraphs that the priority of choice overshadows any assertion that the dignity and sanctity of life that are at stake in these matters. Nevertheless, the rejection of our creational identity as the image of God is primary in the ploy to justify the moral revolution. Bearing the image of our Maker comes with massive and profound consequences: history reveals a record of spiritual and physical carnage whenever a culture has denied mankind’s creational identity as the image of God.

We cannot afford to hide our heads in the sand by relegating this replacement of cosmologies to nothing more than political differences. Pagan cosmology is no longer waiting patiently on the sidelines for a few seekers to become adherents. The assumptions and ramifications of this lying cosmology are rapidly being legislated as public policy in our own government. And as Isaiah warned 2700 years ago: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!” (Is 5:20-21). The Christian West has rapidly become the pagan West. Therefore, there is great urgency to warn and train our youth as to what is taking place. For, the vast majority of young Christian adults are completely unable to provide a biblical apologetic in the face of progressive left’s branding of their worldview as regressive and bigoted.

Consider how the following terms are utilized in a frontal attack on religious freedom while placed in the service of defending erotic freedom. Here are some of the most common modifiers and

nouns that are incorporated in the narrative of the progressive left: *diversity, peace, tolerance, inclusion, justice, equality, self-affirmation, civil rights, equal protection, compassion, non-discrimination, personal empowerment, unity, and human flourishing*.^{xii} The vast majority of these terms, in their original meaning are derived from Christian values. Their origin cannot be traced to Darwinian, secular, humanistic, or pagan sources. Yet, the left has no compunction of conscience for its ‘theft’ of Christian values—which they then label as values inherent in erotic freedom! Millennials need to be able to see through this ruse. For, the self-justifying, all-inclusive cosmology of paganism is parading these pseudo-values as the very core of human flourishing.^{xiii}

This pagan cosmology is a reconfiguration of the way we think, especially about our sexuality. People are imagining that they can create their own reality, as if law emanates from them. This self-justifying deception is flowing from a demonic cosmology. When the New Age movement first offered itself in America, this ‘*way out*’ way of thinking was an invitation for some to ‘drop out’ of the accepted flow of society in order to seek individual enlightenment. But, now the New Age has gone mainstream and the evidence is that its pagan cosmology is now being applied to everything in our culture. This is evidenced by the fact that the deconstruction of gender and sexuality is welcomed as pure self-expression without restraint.^{xiv} The radical nature of this moral revolution would not have found traction 30 plus years ago, for the fumes of Christian worldview still held that heterosexual marriage constituted the building blocks of a civilized society. But, now erasing every God-ordained distinction and creation structure is considered the foundation of liberty. Christian millennials are far too easily silenced by the arguments from the left. It is this author’s contention that the reason our young people are mute in the face of progressivism’s assault is that they have never been taught biblical cosmology.

The breaking down of the gender binary (male-female) is central to the whole new vision for society—a vision which intends to usher in a new moral order with new laws and ethics. The deconstruction of the fixity of male and female lays the groundwork for a new morality in which laws are made to ‘prevent discrimination against alternative lifestyles.’ This pagan cosmology rejects the divinely created order. The outcome is a new set of ethics which enforces homosexual politics (including laws about transgender pronouns).^{xv} In pagan spirituality, the male-female distinction is erased making homosexuality appear ‘natural’ within that worldview. As this devilish cosmology is applied, Christianity will increasingly be regarded as the adversary of progress and liberty. And, because of the male-female binary is foundational to biblical cosmology, Christianity is regarded as the single greatest threat to public acceptance of homosexuality.^{xvi}

Materialistic, pagan, and pantheistic conceptions of the cosmos yield a self-focused, or self-referential view of human existence. In other words, if one believes that the universe is self-originating, self-sustaining, and self-defining (i.e. autonomous and ‘divine’), then it is a very short leap to believe the same things about oneself. The academy today is happily serving as the devil’s apprentice, and is playing an immense role in fully bending the arc of education toward paganism. The Darwinist creation myth has become the ‘state-sponsored’ cosmology. University students are daily brainwashed into thinking that the binaries God has established do not exist, and that they are the worst kind of oppressive social contracts. This ought to make us weep for what our children are going to face. For the liberating truths of Christianity are being described as platforms for hate, power, oppression, division, and intolerance. Thus, an illusory worldview reigns in the academy today and in our culture at large.

Today’s ‘scientific paganism’ proposes a non-teleological man—a human who is not created or designed by God. This has become the state-sponsored creation myth and cosmology. Even the

progressive left admits that the culture war is progressing at warp speed. The last vestiges of biblical theism are being cleansed and purged from the public arena. Corporate technologies are playing their part in *cancel culture*. The progressive left has virtually pronounced itself the victor in this culture war. The divinely ordained structure of the universe spelled out in biblical cosmology, has been written off as myth, and relegated to the realm of hate. Those who hold to God's created binaries are labeled intolerant bigots. The tearing apart of these binaries is taking place to make room for the pagan ordering principle of *monism* (the oneness and connectedness of all things). What deformed shape will the post-Christian West assume if it morphs into this cultural mold of the brave new world? What will fill the room of cosmology when God's binary 'furniture' is broken up and discarded? The answer is chilling, for history is replete with examples of what takes place when the foundational binary—the Creator-creature distinction is eliminated. History shows that with hardly a pause, once theism is removed from a culture, fallen man's *hardwired propensity* to worship nature is unleashed. Paganism is the result, with its justification of manifold sexual immorality and violence.

The devil's goal in promoting a pagan cosmology is to conceal the glory of God in Christ as fully as he can (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). As this global lie of pagan naturalism gains momentum, war, chaos, disorder and cruelty are unavoidable. The spiritual holocaust that is coming will not be incidental in its wreaking of havoc. It will not be a few individuals here and there subscribing to the lie. For, Scripture tells us that a Babylonish, world-unifying religion will be utilized by the powers of darkness (2 Thess 2:11-12; Rev 17:15-16). Secular humanism's atheism may dominate the academy and the media, but, no amount of godlessness can erase man's worshipping nature. For, according to the book of Revelation, as the lie picks up momentum, and goes global, mankind's worshipping nature will be fully co-opted by the powers of darkness for the purpose of worldwide idolatry (Rev 13:8-18).

III. Why has the West changed its cosmologies?

As Peter Jones has pointed out in his lectures and books, pagan cosmology has appeal because it proposes, explains, and justifies progressive ideas about behavior that they can be adopted in 'good conscience'^{xvii} For, in pagan spirituality/cosmology, there is no transcendent authoritative Lawgiver whose commands are immutable and binding. Whether ancient animism practiced by a Sudanese witchdoctor, or philosophic naturalism practiced by a university professor who teaches a self-originating cosmos, both individuals share adherence to pagan cosmology. There's a cogent reason why this paganizing phenomenon rushes into the vacuum left when theism is removed. For, the foundational binary of the Creator-creature distinction orders all other binaries. When the God of Scripture is rejected by a society, the other binaries He has formed will begin to collapse as social structures. And, as we are seeing in the media and in political theatre, that collapse is regarded as progress! The state becomes the culture's god. The political enforcement of pagan cosmology is evinced in the requirement of a gender-neutral bathroom in new public utilized buildings.

What exasperates the ardent materialist (secularist) is that all the permanent things that God has ordered are not up for discussion. Thus, the secularist is waging open war on the fixed structures in biblical cosmology. For the secularist attempts to usurp God's role as absolute definer. God created the world and all that is in it including people in a way which gives it a fixed nature. This means that by the will of the infinite personal God, He willed your gender before He created a single atom. There is nothing you can do to change it. There is nothing that can be done to undo it. You can vandalize it, deface it, surgically mutilate it, cross dress it, but you cannot erase the image of God as male and

female. The infinite gulf between the Creator and the creature is a truth that is inseparable from the cosmic order which God has fixed. We sometimes refer to this order as the furniture of the universe.

The worldview being fed to our young people daily by the latest memes, satire, fake news, misinformation, and political correctness is nothing less than the devil's cosmology, how he conceives of the world. Entertainment, and social media are tools to teach this enslaving Gentile cosmology (Eph 4:17-19). This present author meets few Christian young people who have the ability to articulate biblical cosmology. Therefore, it is not surprising that they are blind to the spiritual war for souls that is raging beneath the culture war. The devil is the arch-concealer of God's glory, the enemy uses the world's philosophies to accomplish his blinding purposes. Is it any wonder that the gloriousness of the gospel is obscured? And, because professing millennials have imbibed so much of the devil's cosmology, for the most part, they do not envision that ultimate reality is found in God's purpose for His creation.

Pagan cosmology desacralizes or profanes the creation by suggesting that the cosmos is self-originating, self-sustaining, and self-defining. The scoffer's premise is that God's book of works is unreadable, having no clear message or Author. By contrast, the truthfulness of biblical cosmology asserts that our Creator has an absolute claim upon us, His creatures. And, central to His claim upon us is that God requires holiness from His creatures and that holiness means honoring the creation structures and distinctions which He Himself has formed and hallowed. This absolute claim is inseparable from the fact that among the innumerable orders of creatures which God has formed, there is but one order of creatures that exists to bear God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27).

The strident narrative of erotic freedom continues to cast aspersion upon proponents of biblical worldview as being guilty of *homo-phobia, trans-phobia, etc.* But, there is an underlying cruel agenda beneath the surface when these insults are flying about (*classist, racist, xenophobic, sexist, hetero-sexist, etc.*). For, the goal of pagan cosmology is the ushering in of a monolithic worldview of egalitarianism. This is an all-embracing cosmology of homo-cosmological sameness. Everything must be deconstructed; any notion of sexual morality must go. All sex is found within the 'rainbow of options' as good or permissible. This comprehensive 'leveling' is all done in the name of equality so that the culture is fully 'rinsed' of all of the distinctions that God has made. This is the fast track to a spiritual holocaust; the carnage will be immeasurable (Rev 9:15-21). Our Christian young people need to hear that it is impossible to buy into this omni-gendered, pansexual view of the world apart from a deeply pagan notion of the world—a pagan cosmology which redefines human existence.^{xviii}

Education is inescapably religious, one's conception of the world and of human existence is of necessity religious in nature. Public schools today in the Western world teach a pagan cosmology. What will it take to get Christians out of the public, secular, educational establishment? The current education model is designed to separate believers from their Christian worldview. Teachers and administrators are glad to have Christian 'breeders' as their underlings^{xix}—for these 'breeders', as they abandon their Christian worldview, become evangelists for pagan cosmology. The goal: separate believers from their worldview of biblical theism in the name of a new, more compassionate social order.

Because this is God's world, a boy saying he is now a girl is like saying I am a carrot or an artichoke. We've seen in this article that biblical cosmology is about God's relationship to what He has made and His plan for His creation. When we communicate biblical cosmology, we are seeking to make our unsaved listeners epistemologically self-conscious, bringing to the light of day what they believe as their pagan cosmology is scrutinized—perhaps for the very first time in their experience. For, only our Creator sees all things as they really are, for He has designed a cosmos with purpose and order—an

order that is both physical and moral.^{xx}

End Notes:

ⁱ Dave Doveton, "Paganism in the Church" (Escondido, CA: Christian Witness to a Pagan Planet, think-tank, 2007).

ⁱⁱ Jay Wegter, "Worldview, Apologetics, and Evangelism, BCW363A" (Newhall: The Master's College, 2007).

ⁱⁱⁱ Dave Doveton.

^{iv} Jay Wegter, "Christian Worldview."

^v Emil Brunner in Dave Doveton, "The Pagan Deconstruction of a Biblical Worldview," p. 3.

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} Jeffrey Ventrella.

^{viii} Ibid.

^{ix} Michael Vlach, "Presuppositional Apologetics" (Sun Valley, CA: The Master's Seminary, 2006).

^x Peter Jones, *God of Sex*, p. 11

^{xi} Albert Mohler, The Briefing, January 7, 2020

^{xii} Peter Jones, "Paganism in Today's Culture," Ligonier Conference, February 25, 2015

^{xiii} Peter Jones, "Paganism in Today's . . ."

^{xiv} Ibid.

^{xv} Dave Doveton, "Paganism in the Church."

^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} Peter Jones, *One or Two*, p. 48

^{xviii} Ibid.

^{xix} Douglas Wilson, "Sanity as Insurrection," 2019 Illinois Family Institute Worldview Conference

^{xx} Jay Wegter, "Our Worldview from the Psalms"