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# The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: Sin and its Consequences

*As Christians, we know that the world as we see it contains vestiges of the glory of God that shine through the corruption of the universe blighted by sin. Nevertheless, we are constantly reminded that the entire universe is groaning under the burden of human sinfulness.*

Friday, January 7, 2011

Our experience of the world requires us to perceive that things are not as they should be. We do not experience the world of unblemished blessedness that is revealed in the first two chapters of the book of Genesis. To the contrary, we experience a world filled with mosquitoes, viruses, earthquakes, and malevolence in the animal world. We are surrounded by the evidence of death and decay, and we see it in our own bodies.



Furthermore, we see the violence and sin that human beings cause and commit. We are not only those who experience the violence of nature, but we also know ourselves to be creatures whose own nature is often violent. To observe humanity is to see the undeniable reality that something has gone horribly wrong.

Even as the Bible begins the story with creation, it immediately moves to an explanation of what has gone wrong. Again, such an account is required of every worldview, and every philosophy of life must provide some explanation for why human beings are as we are and why we act as we act.

The Bible directs those who asked this question to the Garden of Eden and to the event we know as the Fall. When Adam and Eve sinned, they brought corruption and rebellion into the very heart of God's perfect creation. The only creature made in God's own image rebelled against him and sought to rob him of his own glory. The nature of sin is just this—we would deny the Creator his rightful glory and would seek this for ourselves.

The consequences of the Fall were immediate and catastrophic. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden and cut off from the tree of life (Gen. 3:23-24). The earth, which had freely given of its fruit and crops, will now turn hostile, and human beings will have to work with the sweat of the brow to gain a hard-earned harvest (Gen. 3:17-19). Human reproduction will now be accompanied by pain and labor. Most importantly, the Fall explains why human beings are no longer at peace with our Creator. God's verdict on Adam's sin was immediate. As Genesis reveals and the New Testament affirms, when sin came, death came.

Our understanding of the Fall and of the sinfulness of humanity is absolutely necessary for any adequate understanding of the human condition. We cannot possibly understand human existence without reference to sin. The Bible steadfastly refuses to allow us to find the cause and substance of the human problem outside of ourselves. Instead, the Bible points directly to our individual culpability, even as it affirms that every single human being inherits Adam's sin and guilt. The complex of human sinfulness is so vast that it encompasses every individual human sin and the totality of human depravity as demonstrated in the rise and fall of nations and the course of human history.

The Bible's account of the human problem goes far beyond a mere explanation of human foibles and failures. In essence, the Bible turns directly to the human creature and offers an indictment of our rebellion against God. Even as Adam and Eve sought to create aprons in order to hide their own nakedness (Gen. 3:7), human beings will attempt any number of creative and desperately-asserted explanations for what is wrong with us.

In other words, the Christian account of humanity and human behavior runs into direct collision with all other worldviews. This is particularly evident when we compare the Bible's account of human sin with contemporary attempts to explain the brokenness of humanity by means of economic, sociological, political, or psychotherapeutic explanations. The Bible affirms the inherent goodness of humanity in terms of the pristine goodness of God's creation as it was in the beginning. But the Bible also explains that, after the Fall, every single human being is, in his or her own way, a rebel and insurrectionist who is attempting to dethrone God and take his glory as our own.

Thus, when we look at humanity, read the newspapers, watch the news reports, or tend to our own children, Christians must be constantly aware that what we witness is the working out of sin and a demonstration of the fallenness of humanity. Yet, our most direct evidence for this fallenness is what we see when we look at the reflection in our mirror.

Every worldview must give an account of what is wrong with humanity and why the cosmos demonstrates so much death, decay, and apparent meaninglessness. As Christians, we know that the world as we see it contains vestiges of the glory of God that shine through the corruption of the universe blighted by sin. Nevertheless, we are constantly reminded that the entire universe is groaning under the burden of human sinfulness. We are unsurprised by human sin and the awful consequences of that sin. We are able to endure this knowledge because we are confident that this is not the end of the story.

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I am always glad to hear from readers. Write me at [mail@albertmohler.com](mailto:mail@albertmohler.com). Follow regular updates on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/AlbertMohler](http://www.twitter.com/AlbertMohler).

For background reading, see:

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., "[The Glory of God and the Life of the Mind](#)," Friday, November 12, 2010.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr. "[The Knowledge of the Self-Revealing God: Starting Point for the Christian Worldview](#)," Friday, December 3, 2010.

R. Albert Mohler, Jr., "[The Christian Worldview as Master Narrative: Creation](#)," Wednesday, December 15, 2010.

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