

# The Relationship of God to the Space/Time Universe

## By Dr. Robert A. Morey

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The question of God's relationship to His creation is once again a matter of controversy. Most of the present discussions are inane because they completely ignore the Bible and assume that such issues are to be decided by *sola ratione* (reason alone). Various ancient heresies have been revived and some new twists have been invented as modern rationalists sit in the dark spinning out endless theories on God, time and space.

In the last five years a prestigious amount of theories have come and gone. The game is played as follows: You assert some theory and then sit back waiting for some fellow rationalist to refute you. The points and counterpoints fly back and forth like tennis balls. It is all done with a good sense of fun and there is a gentleman's agreement not to spoil the game by bringing up such killjoys as *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone).

By avoiding *Sola Scriptura*, a truly ecumenical situation is created in which errant Evangelicals join with Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Liberals, Neo-orthodox, processians, atheists, skeptics, cultists such as Mormons, and occultists in playing the natural theology game.

Now, I don't care how people spend their free time. If they want to waste their time pooling their ignorance with a bunch of anti-Christians, that's their business.

But what is disturbing is that they ask me to give them the money to play the game because they are doing "Christian" theology and philosophy. What a joke! Why should a true-blue Protestant give them a thin dime to print up Jesuit book reviews of Evangelical books? Let the Catholics pay for it. Why should Bible-believing Christians pay for the wild and

heretical speculations of far-out liberals who deny the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? Let the liberals pay for their own publications.

Well, enough of my gripes with the way the game is played, who is playing, and why I will not fund it. Humanists have been playing games with "god-words" since the "Golden Age" of Greek philosophy. They will play it until the Lord returns and closes it down ([2 Thess. 1:7-8](#)).

### A Dialog With A "Christian" Humanist

**Theist:** I see you have recently put out a lot of new material. What are you trying to accomplish?

**Humanist:** We are working on solving some of the great issues in theology and philosophy such as the existence, nature, and attributes of God, the problem of evil, and the time/eternity problem.

**Theist:** Well, those are big issues and I assume that I will find some detailed exegesis on relevant passages in the Bible. After all, Paul warned us, "Do not go beyond what is Written." ([1 Cor. 4:6](#)) If we do not heed his warning, we will end up in vain speculations.

**Humanist:** Oh, don't be so stupid! If you brought the Bible into these discussions, the Catholics would walk out, the liberals would rebel, the Mormons would complain, and you would spoil everything. No, we have a gentleman's agreement that no one is bring up the Bible in these discussions as if it were the ultimate authority. We may quote a proof text here and there but no one is going to do any serious exegesis.

**Theist:** If the Bible is not the final authority in your discussions, what is?

**Humanist:** We are all agreed that human Reason apart from and independent of the Bible is the Origin of truth, justice, morals, meaning, and beauty. Reason is thus the only common ground on which we can discuss issues because it knows no creed or race. Since human Reason apart the Bible can solve these issues, why bring up divisive things such as the authority of the Bible?

**Theist:** This upsets me because you have asked me and other Evangelicals to pay for your publications when you promote the heresies of people who are absolutely opposed to everything Evangelical theology has historically confessed.

**Humanist:** I don't see why you are upset. Yes, we do have Jesuits, liberals and even cultists writing articles for us. Anyone who believes in Reason and freewill is welcome to our group. I hope you are not one of those narrow-minded bigots who think that the Bible and Christianity have a corner on truth.

**Theist:** If believing in the exclusive nature of the biblical Gospel makes me a bigot in your eyes, so be it. You really think that rebel sinners can find the truth about God apart from the Bible?

**Humanist:** "All truth is God's truth" means that we must learn from non-Christian religions.

**Theist:** I would like to debate you on that issue sometime. Would you be willing to do a public debate on the heathen issue?

**Humanist:** Yes, as long as you are not going to bring the Bible into the debate. The issue must be resolved on the basis of Reason alone instead of the Bible.

**Theist:** If I were to agree to *sola ratione*, I would be denying *Sola Scriptura*! This I will never do. By limiting the debate in this way, you have excluded those who hold to historic Evangelical theology. Well, I don't think the Catholics, the pagans, the Mormons, etc. would like what I had to say anyway. I see that you have recently published a lot of material on the issue of "God and Time." I have studied this issue for over twenty years. Would you be willing to discuss the issue?

**Humanist:** Of course.

**Theist:** I see you framed the issue as "God and Time." But have you framed it right? One of your writers objected to the order of the words and wanted it framed as "Time and God" because he wants to define "time" *before* seeing how it relates to "God." I myself have wondered if it would not be more correct to begin with "God or Time" instead of "God and Time." After all, how we frame an issue may predetermine the outcome.

**Humanist:** What do you mean by using "or" instead of "and?"

**Theist:** The word "and" seems to suggest that God and time are being put on the same level. Wouldn't it be more biblical to begin with the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*? Thus the universe was not created "in," "out" or "by" time but "out of nothing" or "no-thing," including time.

According to [Gen. 1:1](#) and many additional passages such as [Col. 1:16](#), every "thing" was created by God *ex nihilo*. Surely, you must admit that time is a "thing." How else would you discuss "it?"

Since the Bible clearly teaches the Creator/creature distinction, every "thing" must fall into one category or the other. Time is either on the Creator or creature side of the ledger. There is

no third category found in the Bible. For example, [Gen. 1:1](#) does not state,  
"In the beginning God and space"  
"In the beginning God and time"  
"In the beginning God and space/time"  
"In the beginning God and chance"  
"In the beginning God and the fates"  
"In the beginning God and Chaos"  
etc.  
[Gen. 1:1](#) says, "In the beginning God" (plus *nothing*)

The historic Judeo/Christian doctrine is that the universe was created *ex nihilo*, i.e. out of nothing. Those who claim that the universe was created "in Time" are denying creation *ex nihilo*. Since that doctrine is part of the core of biblical religion, this is very serious indeed.

**Humanist:** Wait a minute. I know some fine Christians who teach that Time is as eternal as God and that the world was created "in" Time. Thus Time was not created *per se*. They have no problem saying, "In the beginning God and Time." Time is neither Creator or creature but a third kind of being.

**Theist:** But where in the Bible is this "third kind of being" taught? Can you show me anywhere in Church history where this was taught?

**Humanist:** We are not limited by Scripture, Church history, creeds or confessions. If an idea is in accord with Reason, that is good enough for us.

**Theist:** But if time is as "eternal" as God, did God exist "in" Time or did Time exist "in" God for all eternity? Which one is the basis of the other's existence? If God existed "in" eternal Time then Time becomes a "God" above or beneath God. How can you deny the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo* and still claim to be a Christian?

**Humanist:** Some of us do not accept the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. But we still feel that we are Christians.

**Theist:** There is nothing more clear and certain in the Bible than creation *ex nihilo*. Has not Christianity in every major creed professed it and cast out those who denied it? The Bible, the early Church Fathers and the subsequent history of the Church is 100% against anyone who denies creation *ex nihilo*.

**Humanist:** Well, I must admit that you have a point.

**Theist:** Why do you follow the pagan philosophers in abstracting time from space? On what grounds do you absolutize it and then reduce all things to it - including God? I can see why the Greeks did that. They believed in such Time gods as Chronos and Chaos. But how can you, as a professing Christian, talk about Time in the same sense as these pagans? It is bad theology, poor philosophy and even poorer science.

**Humanist:** Philosophy has always assumed that "time" could be abstracted from space. We are beginning where the philosophers began. What is wrong with that?

**Theist:** You are assuming that "man is the measure of all things" - including God and time. But God has not been silent. He has spoken in Scripture. The Creator/creature distinction, like the Trinity, is a revealed truth that no philosopher ever imagined.

**Humanist:** If you limit the discussion to what the Bible says, the philosophers will rebel. They appeal to their Reason, not to the Bible.

**Theist:** God will humble them in due season. Has not God made foolish the philosophers of this world? ([1 Cor. 1:19-20](#)) They did not seek

God and thus it is no surprise that they never found Him (Rom. 3:11; 1 Cor. 1:21).

**Humanist:** Boy, you are becoming mean! Are you saying that Plato and the other philosophers did not find God? That is not how the game is played!

**Theist:** Theology is not a game to me. It is a matter of eternal life or death. I have a suggestion. It is an intellectual exercise. Would you humor me a little?

**Humanist:** Sure.

**Theist:** What if we substituted the word "space" in the place of "time" in every argument for eternal time? For example, suppose someone said,

"A timeless being cannot create a temporal universe."

It would now read,

"A spaceless being cannot create a spacial universe."

If the first statement is deemed valid, on what grounds is the second deemed invalid? If the timelessness of God is denied, then the spacelessness of God is likewise denied. Thus God is limited by both time and by space. But who can make a credible claim to be a "Christian" and deny the omnipresence of God?

Again, if someone said,

If you say that God "exists," this necessarily means that he must exist "in" something as opposed to "in" nothing. Otherwise the word "exist" has no meaning. Thus if God "existed" before the creation, then he must have existed "in" something before the creation. This

something must then be as eternal as God himself. This something is eternal time.

Now we change it to read,

If you say that God "exists," this necessarily means that he must exist "in" something as opposed to "in" nothing. Otherwise the word "exist" has no meaning. Thus if God "existed" before the creation, then he must have existed "in" something before the creation. This something must be as eternal as God himself. This something is eternal space.

To claim that God has to "exist" in something for eternity leaves it open to either space or time or space/time as that "something." Why arbitrarily omit space from the equation?

**Humanist:** Well, some of our writers such as the Mormons do believe that the gods are limited by space and time. But I cannot accept the idea myself.

**Theist:** Let me give you another example. I read somewhere:

If you say that God exists, do you mean that he exists *now* as opposed to some past or future existence? Doesn't the Bible talk about God existing now in his temple? If you believe that he exists *now*, then he must exist in time because the word "now" is a temporally bound term. God is thus limited by time.

Now replace time with space.

If you say that God exists, do you mean that he exists *here* as opposed to some other place? Doesn't the Bible talk about God being "in" his temple?

If you believe that he exists *here*, then he must exist in space because the word "here" is a spatially bound term. God is thus limited by space.

**Humanist:** I don't go to that extreme. If I applied to space the exact same arguments I use on time, I would end up with a finite god! Some people in our group have gone there.

But I accepted Jesus as my Savior when I was sixteen years old and I have to draw the line somewhere.

**Theist:** I appreciate where your heart is. But your emotions should not be in charge of where you draw the line. You should draw the line where the Bible draws the line.

**Humanist:** But I think that I do.

**Theist:** Do you draw the line on creation *ex nihilo*?

**Humanist:** No.

**Theist:** Do you draw the line on the inerrancy of Scripture?

**Humanist:** No. Some in the group openly deny it.

**Theist:** Do you draw the line on the issue of whether God can know the future?

**Humanist:** No.

**Theist:** If someone said that "God can lie" and "God can sin," would you draw the line at this point?

**Humanist:** No.

**Theist:** If someone taught that god was a struggling, finite deity evolving into what he/she/it did not know, would you draw the line there? What about the ontological Trinity or the ontological deity of Christ? The two natures of Christ? Eternal punishment? The lost condition of the heathen?

**Humanist:** Look, I am not about to tell you what I really believe on those issues. They are all "up for grabs" as far as I am concerned.

**Theist:** That is why I am praying for you. I really think you are on the slippery path of apostasy. Biblical and historic Christianity is

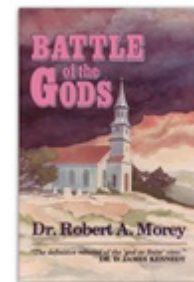
like a home-knit sweater. When you start pulling one piece of yarn, the whole thing unravels. All the issues I raised are truths that once you deny anyone of them, it is only a matter of time before you end up as apostate as Clark Pinnock.

## Conclusion

Well, you get my drift by now. There are those in Evangelical circles who teach in Evangelical schools and even pastor Evangelical churches who deny and even despise Evangelical theology! They are drifting on to the shoals of liberalism where the mainline denominations have already wrecked. The root of this apostasy is humanism, i.e. the idea that man starting only from himself, by himself, and with himself, apart from the Bible, can discover the truth about God and all things. Instead of following the swan song of human autonomy, the words of Paul shine as a light in the midst of darkness.

*"Let God be true even if it makes every man a liar." (Rom.3.4)*

## Recommended Book



### Dr. D. James Kennedy-(Coral Ridge Ministries)

Today, God's character and attributes are again being called into question. Some well-known theologians have resurrected neo-pagan views of God and have tried to pass them off as Christian. Dr. Morey has written the definitive rebuttal to the "god as finite" view. May God use it to arrest this abomination before it spreads.



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