3-2017

Creation and Cedarville

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In the early decades of the fundamentalist movement that gave birth to Cedarville University, there was little discussion of creation. When it became a Baptist school in 1953, the doctrinal statement of Cedarville College included 14 specific articles, but only one concerned the creation of man: “We believe that man was created in the image of God ….” The basic theology textbook at Cedarville and other Baptist fundamentalist schools was Emery Bancroft’s *Elementary Theology*, which stated “the scriptures clearly and emphatically show that man is the result of the immediate, special, creative, and formative acts of God.”

At the time, there were three acceptable interpretations: the Gap Theory (God created in six literal days, but there was a “gap” of undetermined length between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2), the Day-Age Theory (the word *yom* in the Hebrew could refer to a 24-hour-day or an extended period of thousands of years), and the Literal 24-Hour-Day Theory. Cedarville faculty members could hold any of these three positions as long as they recognized creation as the direct and instantaneous act of God. However, there was significant concern the Day-Age Theory could lead to theistic evolution.

By 1967, the Doctrinal Statement had been expanded: “We believe in the literal account of creation and that the Scriptures clearly and distinctly teach that the creation of man lies in the special, immediate, and personal creation of human life. The first humans, Adam and Eve, were directly created, not evolved from previous life forms. God created humans, male and female, in His image. Human life, sexual identity and roles are aspects of God’s creative design. From creation, marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman that should be marked by sexual purity, by sacrificial male leadership and by recognizing the divine blessing of children, including preborn children.”

When Thomas White became President of Cedarville University in 2013, he made a point of publically signing the University Doctrinal Statement. He committed himself, and the entire faculty, to hold true to that statement and the requisite clarifications as we continue to stand boldly for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.