

**I. The Foundation of the Divine Institutions:** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1, NKJV) It says, among other things, three key truths.

**A.** First, **GOD** \_\_\_\_\_. “In the beginning \_\_\_\_\_...” This simple statement allows us to form a syllogism, a logical statement which allows us to correctly predict what kind of God the Bible posits.

**1.** Everything that \_\_\_\_\_ to exist has a cause. “God created – God is the cause!”

**2.** The \_\_\_\_\_ began to exist. “In the beginning” Therefore:

**3.** The universe has a \_\_\_\_\_. And that cause is God.

What this argument tells us we should expect the Bible to say about God:

**a.** God is the uncaused cause. He was \_\_\_\_\_ created, and He did not come to be. He simply \_\_\_\_\_ and always has been.

**b.** God is, therefore, \_\_\_\_\_, spaceless, immaterial, and immensely \_\_\_\_\_ since out of the power of His thought alone He was able to create space, time, and the material universe without any preexisting material.

**c.** God is \_\_\_\_\_; He is non-deterministic – that means that He is not a robot or bound to do certain things intrinsically, but He has the ability to make up His own mind, do what He desires to do within His own divine \_\_\_\_\_. He can create what has never been before, for His own purposes and His own pleasure.

**d.** God is \_\_\_\_\_, since we are given no other reason to believe that there is more than one uncaused cause. In fact, God makes it very clear in His Word that He \_\_\_\_\_ is God, and that beside Him, there is no other. “ (Isaiah 45:5–6, NKJV)

Therefore, if the universe has a cause (and it does), then a personal Creator of the universe \_\_\_\_\_ Who is apart from the created universe, and He is beginningless, changeless, immaterial, timeless, spaceless, and extremely \_\_\_\_\_. He is the uncaused God. He is the personal Creator of the universe. He exists as a beginningless, changeless, immaterial, timeless, spaceless, infinitely powerful being. All of this is packed into this first verse and is unfolded throughout the pages of Scripture from Genesis through Revelation.

**B.** Now, there is a second truth that arises from the words “in the beginning” God created the beginning of time and space and of the material universe. Again, simply stated, **GOD** \_\_\_\_\_. God faced no obstacles in creating a perfect balance of everything on a single planet at just the right distance from the right type of sun to have discernible seasons, tilted on the planetary axis at just the right angle to keep earth from burning up or freezing like some planets in our solar system. And He balanced gravity, the density of water, the strong and weak nuclear forces, and many other evidences that the universe is finely tuned for human life. One philosopher and scientist put it like this: *“It’s as if there were a large number of dials that have to be turned within an extremely narrow limit for life to be possible in our universe. It is extremely unlikely that this should happen by chance, but much more likely that it should happen because there is such a person as God.”* (Dr. Alvin J. Plantinga)

**C.** God is. God can. And finally, **GOD** \_\_\_\_\_. “God created the heavens and the earth.” And this leads us directly to our subject for this conference. God made a world to show His glory to the creature He created in His image and in His likeness because He cares for this creature. (Genesis 1:26–27, NKJV) God

cared enough for us to create certain divine institutions for our good and for His glory. He did not have to, but He desired to have the best for His special creature.

God is a God of \_\_\_\_\_. The concept of God as a God of order is evident in various aspects of creation and divine governance. According to the Bible, God is the originator and sustainer of the entire created order, both in the supernatural realm and in the \_\_\_\_\_ world. (Ephesians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:16-20; John 1:3-5, 14-17). This divine order extends to the natural world where God is described as having control over celestial \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 1:14-18; Psalm 19:1-6), \_\_\_\_\_ cycles and phenomenon (Ecclesiastes 1:6-7; Psalm 29 [David's vivid picture of a thunderstorm]; Job 36:27-28), and all living creatures (Genesis 1:21, 24-27) including \_\_\_\_\_.

And this order is seen in God's program of \_\_\_\_\_ **DISPENSATIONS**: Innocence: Genesis 1-2; Conscience: Genesis 3:14-8:13; Human Government: Genesis 8:14 ff.; Promise: Genesis 12:1-Exodus 19; \_\_\_\_\_: Exodus 20:1-Acts 1; \_\_\_\_\_: Acts 2-Revelation 4:1; and the \_\_\_\_\_: Revelation 20 through the Eternal State by which God is bringing about His physical and spiritual purposes for humanity. In the social realm, God is pictured as guiding the lives of human beings through the divine institutions of \_\_\_\_\_ and of the **FAMILY** (Genesis 1:26-30, 2:7-9, 15-25, 3:16-20; Ephesians 5:22-31), and of the destinies of nations through the institutions of **HUMAN GOVERNMENT** and \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 9; 11:1-12:3; Acts 17:24-31), especially **ISRAEL** through the **Abrahamic** (Genesis 12:1-3, 17:19), the **Land** and the **Law** (Exodus 19; book of Deuteronomy), the **Davidic** (II Samuel 7), and the **New** (Jeremiah 31:31-34) \_\_\_\_\_, in accordance with God's divine purposes.

The idea of order is also prominent in the New Testament's institution of the \_\_\_\_\_ as God's household in a separate \_\_\_\_\_ from the nation of Israel where the proper structure and authority are emphasized (Ephesians 5:22-25; Matthew 16:18; John 14:1-3; I Thessalonians 4:13-15; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-16, 3:6, 15).

Summing up the Foundation of Divine Institutions: This divine ordering is an ongoing process with human beings created to \_\_\_\_\_ alongside God with His servants and as His sons, bringing about His \_\_\_\_\_ for creation. The Bible teaches that God's order is intrinsically linked with His wisdom and any human attempts to usurp, distort, or replace God's order or to replace God as its center have resulted in disorder, disruption, and disaster. Through these descriptions, God Himself is characterized by His various attributes, including His wisdom, knowledge, peace, love, \_\_\_\_\_, and pardon.

**II. THE \_\_\_\_\_ OF DIVINE INSTITUTIONS.** We can clearly say that these divine institutions began in the \_\_\_\_\_ and plan of God long before time began. (Ephesians 1:9-10, Colossians 1:19-20, NKJV)

**God's ultimate plan for creation:** to be in perfect \_\_\_\_\_ and peace with Him through \_\_\_\_\_. To bring about this glorious state, God had to assign certain institutions for His glory and our good. Our God is a God of order. And we can see the development and deployment of God's purpose and plan throughout the history of His dealings with humanity. I would like to briefly and in a very shallow way quickly touch on the \_\_\_\_\_ of each of the divine institutions.

**A. The divine institution of marriage.** Announced on the sixth day of creation (but in the mind of God, before the creation of humanity), marriage was designed to \_\_\_\_\_ the first problem recorded in the Scripture. Everything God had made in the first five days of creation was pronounced by God as "\_\_\_\_\_."

The word TOB in the Hebrew means “pleasant” or “desirable.” But after God created the man or “Adam,” He made a great point of the fact that it was not good that man should be alone, or that he should be solitary. So, God brought all the animals to him. (Genesis 2:19–20, NKJV)

But as God knew that there was not an animal compatible to be with man for his soulmate and \_\_\_\_\_, so our loving Father-God put Adam to sleep and removed part of him from his ribcage to make a help worthy of Adam. Not from his \_\_\_\_\_ to dominate him, nor from his \_\_\_\_\_ to be his slave, but from the area near his \_\_\_\_\_, to be loved and cherished. When God perfected Eve and brought her to Adam, “Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.” (Genesis 2:22, NKJV). It was at this point that \_\_\_\_\_ was instituted as a divine institution for God's glory and man's good. Marriage was God's idea – \_\_\_\_\_ man for one woman in a monogamous, heterosexual, permanent \_\_\_\_\_, bounded by love. And this, God said, was “very good.” (Genesis 1:31)

**B. The divine institution of the family.** At the same time God created the institution of marriage, He also ordained the \_\_\_\_\_, for He commanded the first couple in Genesis 1:28 “to be fruitful and \_\_\_\_\_ and fill the earth.” But the roles in marriage and some of the details were occasioned by the temptation and fall of man into sin in Genesis chapter 3. Sin brought about the \_\_\_\_\_ in the home. Eve blamed the serpent for her fall, Adam blamed Eve and God, and God cursed the ground for their sake, not laying the full effects of sin on either Adam or Eve. God pronounced that man would work harder, childbirth would be more painful, and yet through the seed of the woman, salvation would come to the world in the first mention of the Gospel. Soon, Eve experienced the joy of childbirth and the difficulty that it brings as her firstborn son Cain, whom she thought was to be her greatest blessing but ended up breaking her heart by killing her second-born, Abel. The family would struggle with polygamy and with favoritism in the lives of the patriarchs, but it would find its best expression in the principles of godly families as expounded by the apostle Paul in the New Testament. (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21).

**C. The divine institution of human government** arises just after the universal judgment of the \_\_\_\_\_ in Genesis chapter 9. Noah and his descendants were given the command to multiply and fill the earth. Man was given the right to eat \_\_\_\_\_ for the first time and granted the right to execute through capital punishment those who would \_\_\_\_\_ human beings who are made in the image of God. This implies all the \_\_\_\_\_ authority also to rule in other areas of national life. Further explanations will arise in Romans 13 and elsewhere through the Scriptures.

**D. The divine institution of nationalism, especially the nation of Israel,** is anchored in the events of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) and the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12). God scattered the nations, the Gentiles, and explains the meaning of that move in scattering them. We will not have time to discuss it tonight in this message, but study Acts 17:24-31 for more insight.

And as we touched on earlier, **Israel**, God's chosen nation through whom the \_\_\_\_\_ Word of God would come and the Word of God \_\_\_\_\_, the Redeemer-Messiah, would come in the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4-5). God will use Israel to bring in His literal **Millennial Kingdom** after the Great Tribulation.

**E.** Finally, we will see at the end of the conference the great mystery of the Old Testament, **the Church**. At the day of \_\_\_\_\_, after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God would call out a people from the saved \_\_\_\_\_ and the saved \_\_\_\_\_ who would be made into \_\_\_\_\_ body in Christ as its Head. God is using the Church today in this dispensation of grace to spread the \_\_\_\_\_ of grace to a lost and dying world until God raptures His Church before turning back to using His earthly people, the nation of Israel, in the tribulation period. The Church will return to rule and to reign with Jesus Christ in His 1000-year kingdom.

**III. The foes of these divine institutions.** God intended the divine institutions to protect humanity and to prepare for the redemption of the world, for all those who would believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, there is a simple statement of the threefold enemies of God given by the apostle John toward the end of the first century, when he wrote to the fathers, the young men, and the little children of the faith (I John 2:12-17) concerning the three great enemies that we all face, and the divine institutions will also face. The **wicked one**, or the \_\_\_\_\_; the \_\_\_\_\_, that is, the cosmic system that Satan has built to oppose God and His divine institutions; and finally, the \_\_\_\_\_, that wicked nature of fallen man which we all pack, even if we are children of God. All of the enemies of these divine institutions arise out of one of these trinities of evil, and sometimes more than one of these.

**A. The institutions of marriage and family** are under attack by the \_\_\_\_\_, that is, our sensuality and our lust, sacrificing that which is pure and holy for that which is ugly, empty, and selfish. The world and the devil have attempted to destroy the family and marriage by pornography, infidelity, easy \_\_\_\_\_, homosexual unions, and many other perversions. A generation of children are growing up without \_\_\_\_\_, without families, and without faith.

**B. Human government and nationalism** are under attack by \_\_\_\_\_, communism, socialism, anarchy, multiculturalism, and \_\_\_\_\_. **Israel** has been under attack for thousands of years from Egypt, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Amalekites, the Moabites, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Seleucids, the Ptolemies, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Goths, the Gauls, even the Roman Catholic Church, the Spanish, the Moslems, the Germans, the English, and a future \_\_\_\_\_ who will try and destroy the nation. Even now, the flames of Antisemitism burn in our colleges and universities.

**C. The Church** of the Lord Jesus Christ has been under attack by the Jews of the time of Christ, the pagans, the Romans, the Muslims, and the Roman Catholic system. Its message has been attacked by infidelity, by \_\_\_\_\_, by materialism, by secular humanism, by theological liberalism, by neo-orthodoxy, by baptismal regeneration, by lordship salvation, and many other \_\_\_\_\_ of the faith. But regardless of the attacks on all these divine institutions, the words of the apostle Paul ring clear:

“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”” (2 Timothy 2:19, NKJV)