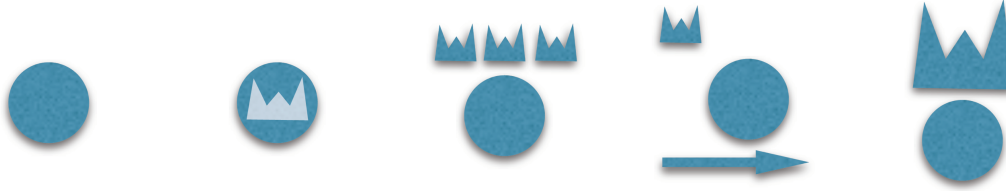


In the beginning, God...

The distinction between Creature and Creator is fundamental to the nature of reality

- Genesis 1; John 1; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 11:3
- God is personal, distinct from the creation, the source of all life and light



The Big Bang theory is better news for Christians than for atheists

The kalam cosmological argument (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6CulBuMCLg0>)

PREMISE: everything that begins to exist has a cause

PREMISE: the universe began to exist

CONCLUSION: the universe has a cause

But how old is the earth?

Perhaps the “days” of Genesis are 24 hour periods, about 6,000 years ago

- The sun is created on the fourth day? But the verb עשה “made” in Genesis 1:16 can mean “appointed”

Or perhaps they are figurative, as e.g. in Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8

- The second century Christian writers Justin Martyr (*Dialogue with Trypho*) and Irenaeus (*Against Heresies*) and Clement of Alexandria thought so, as did Augustine in the fourth century. The fact that this view is historical doesn't make it true! But it does mean that it's not just a fudge to get round modern science.
- What about Exodus 20:11? The Sabbath was a 24 hour day. But the point could still be that the Jewish calendar is *pattered on* the Creation timetable. Analogical language is normal in scripture – we read of God's eyes, his arm etc. but they don't mean exactly the same for God as they mean to us. Later in Scripture the Sabbath is an eternal day (Hebrews 4:9)
- Is there animal death before the fall? I think possibly:
 - o There is plant death, and plant death is death (e.g. John 12:24)
 - o Were there carnivores whom God fed (cf. Psalm 104:21) or were they originally vegetarian (cf. Genesis 1:30)?
 - o Only God has intrinsic immortality (1 Timothy 6:16). So does that mean that the first animals didn't?