

## Does All Creation Come from God?

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### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Creation, Theology, Evil, Divine Origin, Human Freedom

*Received :* 10 October

*Revised :* 15 November

*Accepted:* 30 December

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the theological question of whether all creation truly comes from God, a topic that remains central to Christian doctrinal discourse. It explores classical and contemporary perspectives on divine creation, the problem of evil, and the relationship between God, nature, and human freedom. Using qualitative, literature-based methods, the paper analyzes biblical texts, systematic theology, and modern scientific debates to identify coherences between God's goodness and the presence of suffering in creation. These findings demonstrate that creation is inherently good, yet affected by the fall of humanity, and that Christian theology affirms God as both Creator and Sustainer. This study offers theoretical enrichment and contributes to a deeper understanding of contemporary creation theology

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The question of whether all creation truly comes from God remains one of the oldest and most debated issues in Christian theology. In the Christian tradition, God is affirmed as the Creator of all things, both visible and invisible (Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16). However, modern scientific developments, particularly the theory of evolution and the Big Bang model, have created a tension between faith and reason in explaining the origins of the universe (McGrath, 2022). At the same time, philosophical questions about the existence of evil and suffering in a world created by a perfectly good God continue to challenge theological reflection. Contemporary discussions of the problem of evil demonstrate that the issue cannot be reduced simply to free will but must be understood through a synthesis of philosophical, biblical, and theological insights (Meister & Moser, 2017).

Historical theologians such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas emphasized that everything God created is inherently good, and that evil is not a created substance, but rather a "loss of goodness" arising from the abuse of free will (McCluskey, 2017; Wetzell, 2012). Augustine explicitly stated that evil has no positive nature, but is simply a loss of goodness. (Oredipe, n.d.), while Aquinas builds on this by asserting that evil is the absence of the proper goodness in a creature, not the creature itself (Haratine, 2023). This perspective is also accepted in contemporary Indonesian theological discourse, which interprets evil not as a positive act of creation from God, but rather as the absence or lack of goodness in fallen creation due to the abuse of the creature's moral freedom. This understanding of *privatio boni* is used to explain the current phenomenon of natural evil, for example when interpreting the suffering in the COVID-19 pandemic as the absence of the goodness that should be present in the created order (Sulistio, 2021).

More broadly, the development of theological-scientific discourse also emphasizes the need to revisit the doctrine of creation to maintain its relevance to modern challenges. The study of theodicy in relation to modern science demonstrates that the dialogue between faith and science does not diminish God's role as Creator, but rather enriches understanding of how evil, contingency, and natural processes operate in creation (Roszak & Horvat, 2021). Furthermore, theological reflection on suffering, including the suffering of animals, as examined through a reading of the book of Job, highlights that the presence of suffering is not evidence of God's weak creative action, but rather part of the dynamics of creation, which has its own freedom and limitations (Gasser, 2021). These perspectives help explain that the problem of evil needs to be understood in dialogue between creation theology, biblical hermeneutics, and scientific findings, thus providing a richer foundation for understanding the relationship between God and creation in a complex world.

This study contributes to the enrichment of contemporary theology by integrating classical doctrinal insights, modern philosophical debates, and contextual ecological issues in the Indonesian context. It provides theoretical enrichment by re-articulating creation theology in dialogue with modern science, the problem of evil, and Christological perspectives. Based on these discussions,

this article aims to explore how Christian theology explains the origin and goodness of creation, how it explains the existence of evil and suffering, and how the doctrine of creation shapes the ethical and spiritual responsibilities of believers in the modern world.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. *Creatio ex nihilo* in Biblical Theology & Church Fathers

The text of Genesis 1 begins the biblical narrative of the origins of the cosmos with the explicit statement that God created the heavens and the earth, and after each act of creation it is recorded: "God saw that it was good," until the conclusion that all creation was "very good" (Gen. 1:1-31). In the Hebrew-Christian tradition, this reading is not simply an ancient cosmogony, but a theological recognition that the world has an origin and purpose stemming from divine will; a point further emphasized in the New Testament when Hebrews states: "By faith we understand that the world became the word of God, so that what is seen did not come from what is seen" (Hebrews 11:3). The combination of these two texts forms the basis for the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* – the belief that God brought all things into existence not from pre-existing matter, but from nothing, and at the same time affirms the fundamental *goodness* of creation as a reflection of the Creator's nature. This interpretation, developed by the Church Fathers and critically examined by contemporary studies, makes Genesis 1 and Hebrews 11:3 the hermeneutic foundation for understanding the ontological relationship between God, creation, and the moral purpose of creation.

The understanding of *creatio ex nihilo* as the basis for the doctrine of creation has been discussed in depth in various international academic studies and in Indonesian theological contexts. Chambers, in his dissertation, explores the relationship between Genesis 1 and the development of the doctrine of *creation out of nothing* in the early Church, asserting that the concept of "God creating out of nothing" is not merely a later metaphysical construct, but is rooted in a historical reading of the biblical text (NJ Chambers, 2020). Another brief study by Gunawan, which shows that *creatio ex nihilo* remains relevant in modern theology-science dialogue, especially in bridging the creation theorem with the theory of evolution. Gunawan asserts that creation out of nothing affirms God's sovereignty and maintains the understanding that the world had no autonomous existence prior to God's creative act (Gunawan, 2020). The combination of these studies demonstrates that *creatio ex nihilo* remains an important foundation for understanding the origins of creation and its relevance in contemporary theological conversations.

Irenaeus of Lyons stands out in patristic theology as offering an optimistic and creative interpretation of theodicy: for Irenaeus, suffering and evil in creation are not simply post-fall chaos, but part of the process of human formation as children of God, through moral and free experience (stepping-stones) toward spiritual maturity. This view asserts that creation is a progressive project in which humans are imperfect and left in an "unfinished" world in order to develop. Athanasius of Alexandria adds a crucial Christological dimension: in his doctrine, the Son (Logos) participates in the act of creation, making creation Trinitarian, the joint action of the Father and the Son illustrating the eternal unity

of the Trinity and demonstrating that creation is deeply intertwined with the relationships between the divine persons. Augustine of Hippo, in turn, translates this understanding into a powerful metaphysical framework: all creation proceeds from God as an act *ex nihilo*, and evil arises later as the privation of goodness (*privatio boni*) when creatures endowed with free will undermine the potential for goodness given by God.

## 2. Theodicy and the Origins of Evil

The concept of *privatio boni* has become one of the most influential theological contributions in explaining the origins of evil without placing God as its cause. In Augustine's framework, as re-explained by Pasati, he states that everything created by God is fundamentally good, because God himself is the source of all goodness. Therefore, evil has no substance or ontological existence; rather, it is the "absence of good that should exist" (privacy of good). This view is closely related to Augustine's idea of human free will: free beings can choose to move away from good, and this action is what gives rise to moral evil. Thus, God does not create evil; evil arises from the deviation of creatures' free will, not from God's creative will (Pasati, 2021). Aquinas deepened the idea of *privatio boni* with a more systematic metaphysical approach. For him, all creation contains ontological goodness because its existence originates from God, but the limited nature of creation opens up the possibility of corruption and flaws that give rise to forms of evil. In the *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas asserts that evil is not a created entity, but rather a flaw – an imperfection or deficiency in a nature that should be good. Thus, evil appears as a "hole" in the created order, rather than as a positive reality created by God. Aquinas's view reinforces the classical theological conclusion that while all things originate from God, evil does not, as it is a distortion of the goodness of creation, not a product of creation itself (Aquinas, 2013). Modern studies revisiting the theory of *privatio boni* show that this concept remains relevant in discussions of theodicy. Contemporary research sees evil as a privation of goodness, helping to explain moral phenomena and natural suffering within a classical theological framework. From a philosophical perspective, this theory allows for dialogue with modern science and ethics, as it views evil not as an independent metaphysical element, but as a result of the structure of creation that can be corrupted or fail to achieve its good purpose. Thus, *privatio boni* provides a coherent model for theodicy, consistent with the monotheistic view of a good and loving God (Boucher, 2025; Pasati, 2021).

In contemporary theodicy literature, approaches to evil develop not merely as a metaphysical problem or moral metaphor, but as a complex dialectic between justice, suffering, creaturely freedom, and social structure. Pane, for example, in "*Exploring Contemporary Theodicies*," reviews various models, from *free-will defense*, *soul-making*, to process theology, for understanding evil in an often unjust and traumatic world. This approach considers social, structural, and existential impacts, making theodicy relevant to the contemporary context (Pane, 2024). On the other hand, classical theories such as *privatio boni* remain in modern discourse, despite criticisms, such as those from Haratine, who points out that suffering and natural evil challenge the limits of these theories (Haratine, 2023).

The view that evil is the lack of good remains an important theological alternative that maintains the consistency of the doctrine that God is the Creator of all good.

In the Indonesian context, theodicy is developed pastorally and contextually to address the real experiences of Christians facing natural disasters, pandemics, poverty, and social suffering. Sulistio emphasizes that natural evil does not originate from God, but is a consequence of a fallen creation awaiting restoration. By combining Trinitarian theology and a pastoral approach, he asserts that God is present not as the cause of suffering, but as a Companion and Healer for wounded humanity. This perspective expands theodicy from a mere philosophical argument to an ecclesial praxis emphasizing solidarity, healing, and ethical responsibility, enabling the church to manifest God's love in Indonesia's complex social context (Sulistio, 2021).

### **3. Faith and Science Dialogue on the Origins of Creation**

In modern discourse on the origins of the universe, the two most frequently invoked scientific frameworks are the Big Bang hypothesis as a cosmological origin and the theory of evolution as a mechanism for the development of life. These two ideas challenge a literal reading of the creation narrative but do not automatically erase the theological dimension of creation: many contemporary theologians assert that the acceptance of the results of natural science (e.g., the Big Bang, evolution) actually forces theology to rearticulate the meaning of "creation" not as an alternative to faith, but as an opportunity to deepen our understanding of how God acts through natural and historical processes (Roszak & Horvat, 2021). In this perspective, the doctrine of creatio shifts from a mere mechanistic explanation of the "how" to a theological attempt to understand the "why," namely, the purpose, value, and moral direction of creation, while science provides a causal and chronological narrative of the development of the cosmos and life.

The theological enrichment approach developed in recent literature highlights the need for a critical yet constructive dialogue between faith and science. Roszak and Horvat assert that theodicy and the problem of evil must be considered alongside scientific findings; they advocate a dialogue in which theology uses scientific findings to enrich doctrinal interpretation, while science is balanced by theological reflection on meaning and ethics (Roszak & Horvat, 2021). Specific cases, such as the suffering of living creatures in evolutionary history, are treated analytically by Gasser, who examines the implications of animal suffering through the narrative of the book of Job and the scientific study of suffering—demonstrating that recognizing the scientific facts of natural history does not necessarily lead to atheism, but rather demands a more hermeneutic, responsive, and contextual theology (Gasser, 2021). Thus, the faith-science dialogue opens up space for a reconstruction of the doctrine of creation that remains faithful to biblical revelation while being sensitive to empirical evidence and contemporary ethical dilemmas (Roszak & Horvat, 2021).

#### 4. Christological Perspective on Creation

Colossians 1:15-17 presents one of the New Testament's most powerful Christological statements regarding Christ's role in creation. The text affirms that Christ is the "image of the invisible God" (*eikōn tou theou*), who was not only present at the beginning of the world but also the ultimate mediator of the entire creative process: "all things were created through him and for him... in him all things hold together" (Col. 1:15-17). Paul's language positions Christ not as a created being, but as a pre-existent Person with divine authority equal to that of the Creator. Creation is thus understood not simply as a monotheistic act of God, but as a Trinitarian Christological act, in which the Son (*Logos*) is the divine medium through whom all things originate, are sustained, and are directed toward their eschatological destiny. This perspective enriches the doctrine of creation because it demonstrates that the relationship between God and creation is personal, incarnational, and redemptive: creation has value because it is "in" Christ, and the providence of world history is never separated from his cosmic work and presence.

Contemporary academic studies reinforce the understanding that Paul's Christology in Colossians 1:15-17 is the foundation of a holistic theology of creation, connecting the origin, providence, and ultimate destiny of all things. Hurtado asserts that this text is crucial evidence for the "devotion to Jesus" in the early church, explicitly placing Jesus in the function of cosmic creation and providence, something that can only be attributed to God himself (Hurtado, 2016). Colossians 1:15-20 presents the "firstborn of all creation" not in the sense that Christ is a created being, but as the One who possesses the supremacy of creation and providence. This theological analysis is crucial in framing Christ as the Creator and Sustainer of the cosmos in modern monotheistic theology (Mangoli & Rembang, 2025). Furthermore, Lolinga, through his exegesis of Colossians 1:15-23, emphasizes that Jesus' divinity is essential and creative, so that the growth of the congregation's faith depends on the recognition of Jesus as the divine Creator actively involved in cosmic relations (Lolinga, 2022). All these studies confirm that the Christological perspective is not just an additional aspect in the doctrine of creation, but is the key to understanding the origins of creation, the structure of reality, and the ultimate goal of the cosmos.

Christ as *Logos* & center of creation in John 1:3 explicitly locates the origin and continuity of the created order in the person of the Word: "All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." This claim of John places *the Logos* at the ontological center of creation, not merely as an occasional agent, but as the ongoing medium of divine creative activity. Reading John 1:3 in conjunction with the rest of the Prologue suggests that the Gospel writer intended to identify the pre-existent Word with the agent of creation and revelation, thus breaking down the strict separation between God's transcendent causality and the Creator's immanent presence in the world. Such a reading has profound theological consequences: it grounds the goodness and purpose of creation in the personal and relational *Logos* (rather than an impersonal principle), and it frames the cosmic scope of redemption: what Christ creates, Christ also redeems, so that Christ's creative activity is inseparable from his reconciling and sustaining work.

The idea of Christ as *Logos* in John's Gospel is well supported by both classical scholarship and more recent, accessible studies that place John's Prologue within the context of its Jewish-Hellenistic reception and the early church. An analysis of John's *Logos* (Makarios et al., 2023) shows how John adapts Jewish wisdom traditions and Hellenistic concepts to present Jesus as the divine agent of creation, while contemporary studies highlight how the Prologue was read in light of various early translations and theological debates about the mediatory role of the Word (Sakitey & Van Eck, 2023). Together, these studies demonstrate that John's Logos-Christology is not an abstract metaphysical claim, but rather a theological statement with ethical and soteriological implications: the Creator-Word who called the cosmos into existence is the same Word who entered history, became incarnate, and called creation to its eschatological fulfillment.

### **5. The Ethical & Ecological Dimensions of the Doctrine of Creation**

Understanding the doctrine of creation demands a concrete ethical responsibility: as *imago Dei*, humans are called not to exploit, but to care for and restore creation. A Trinitarian reading of the doctrine of creation affirms that the relationship between God, humanity, and creation is interconnected; consequently, Christian ethics must integrate social justice, concern for the victims of environmental damage, and concrete practices of care, such as pro-environmental policies in the church and local communities, as concrete expressions of faith. This ethical perspective is emphasized in contextual studies that emphasize that theology of creation must respond to ecological injustice (*climate injustice*) that most harms the poor, so that human responsibility for creation becomes both a moral demand and a form of practical faith (Dolamo, 2019).

In the pastoral and practical realms, theology needs to adopt an interdisciplinary and trauma-informed approach to responding to the ecological crisis, combining an understanding of faith, knowledge of environmental science, and pastoral practices that address the psychological and dynamic impacts on affected communities. This practical approach includes liturgies that foster gratitude for creation, church programs for habitat restoration/disaster management, and theological education that integrates environmental science so that congregations are able to act ethically and sustainably. This combination of theological reflection and practical action is well captured in contemporary practical-theological literature that examines how the church can be an agent of recovery amidst the environmental crisis. (Dolamo, 2019; McCarroll & Kim-Cragg, 2023).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach because it focuses on the analysis of theological concepts regarding the origins of creation, the role of Christ in creation, and the ethical and ecological implications of the doctrine of creation. A qualitative approach allows researchers to interpret theological ideas in a historical-biblical context and understand the conceptual meanings contained in church texts and traditions. The primary method used is a literature review, which prioritizes in-depth analysis of theological and hermeneutic literature to produce a comprehensive theological synthesis (Suhartini, 2016) . The primary data sources for this research include the Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers, and works of classical and modern systematic theology. This primary data is used to examine the structure of the doctrine of creation from historical, biblical, and dogmatic perspectives. In addition, this research also utilizes various secondary sources such as theological journal articles, contemporary studies on theodicy, theology of science, and Christian ecology studies to support the argument. The analysis was conducted using thematic-comparative techniques, namely identifying the main themes in the doctrine of creation (e.g.: *creatio ex nihilo*, cosmic Christology, theodicy, the relationship between faith and science, and ecological ethics), then comparing them with the views of modern theologians to produce a systematic and relevant argumentative integration. This technique is in line with the recommendations of Booth, Colomb, & Williams on argument-based literature analysis, so that the research is not only descriptive but also evaluative (Booth et al., 2003) . This method allows for strong and accountable conclusions in contemporary theological academic discourse.

## **RESEARCH RESULT**

### **1. God as the Source of All Creation**

The results of this theological study confirm that God is the ultimate source of all creation, where all reality depends on His will and creative action. The Genesis 1 narrative and New Testament testimonies such as John 1:3 and Colossians 1:15-17 demonstrate that creation is not merely an initial act, but an ongoing relationship between the Creator and creation.

This finding demonstrates that God is not only the *prima cause* who initiated existence, but also the *causa continuans* who sustains all creation at every moment. A study of the thought of the Church Fathers, such as Augustine and Athanasius, supports the conclusion that the existence of all things is not autonomous, but originates from and is directed toward God. Thus, this research finds that the doctrine of creation contains an ontological foundation that affirms that God is the source, goal, and sustainer of all creation (N. Chambers, 2015; Sakitey & Van Eck, 2023) .

## 2. The Fall and Distortion in Creation

Research findings indicate that the fall of humanity in Genesis 3 had cosmic consequences that distorted the entire order of creation. From a classical theological perspective, the fall is not merely an individual moral issue, but an ontological shift that altered the harmonious relationship between humanity, God, and nature. As a result of sin, creation experiences disorder, suffering, and corruption, as Paul affirms that "the whole creation groans together" awaiting restoration (Rom. 8:20-22).

This finding demonstrates that the evil and corruption of the world do not result from God's direct action, but are a result of *privatio boni*, the loss of the inherent good, resulting from the abuse of freedom by rational creatures. Contemporary theological studies also emphasize that the Fall has ecological, social, and spiritual consequences, so that the corruption of creation cannot be understood without addressing the theological roots of sin.

Therefore, this study concludes that the distortion of creation stems from the rift in the relationship between humans and God, which results in disharmony throughout the cosmos and emphasizes the need for restoration through the work of Christ (Gasser, 2021; Sakitey & Van Eck, 2023; Sulistio, 2021).

## 3. Science as a Dialogue Partner

The research findings suggest that science is not a threat to the doctrine of creation, but can be a dialogue partner that enriches theology's understanding of the origins and dynamics of creation. From a contemporary theological perspective, a model of dialogue, not conflict, between theology and science allows these two disciplines to work in a complementary manner: science explains natural mechanisms such as the Big Bang, biological evolution, and the laws of the cosmos, while theology interprets the meaning, purpose, and metaphysical foundations of existence itself.

The results of this study indicate that many modern theologians view scientific mechanisms not as a threat to faith, but as part of a secondary causality that lies within the scope of God's will as Creator. Therefore, science can deepen theological awe of the structure of creation and help the church formulate ethical responses to contemporary issues such as ecology, the climate crisis, and bioethics.

Thus, this study confirms that the dialogue between theology and science is a productive approach in building a holistic understanding of God as the source, sustainer, and ultimate goal of all creation (Gasser, 2021; Gunawan, 2020; Roszak & Horvat, 2021).

#### **4. Christ as the Center of Creation and Restoration**

The findings of this study confirm that Christ is not only the primary agent in creation but also the center of the entire cosmic restoration process. The testimony of the New Testament, particularly Colossians 1:15–20 and John 1:3, demonstrates that all things were created by, through, and for Christ, so that the existence of creation cannot be separated from the underlying Christological relationship.

These findings reinforce the idea that creation is not simply an initial event in the history of the cosmos, but rather a relational structure rooted in the divine *Logos* that underlies all existence. The Fall brought distortion to creation, but the restoration of the world takes place through the same Christ, so that creation and redemption are part of one unified divine work. Therefore, this research affirms that Christ is the ontological, epistemological, and eschatological center of creation, leading all reality toward its reconciliation and fulfillment in God's plan (Dominggus, 2020; Sakitey & Van Eck, 2023).

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **1. The Bible's Consistency about God as Creator**

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Bible consistently affirms God as the sovereign Creator of all creation, in both the Old and New Testaments. The Book of Genesis opens with the fundamental declaration that “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1), which serves as the foundation for all theological views on the origins of reality. This testimony is reinforced by Psalm 33:6–9, which depicts God's word as the creative force that governs the universe. In the New Testament, this testimony is continued through a Christological perspective, as in John 1:3, which states that all things were made through the Word, and Colossians 1:16, which affirms that all creation came into being through and for Christ.

This cross-canonical consistency demonstrates that the doctrine of creation does not stand alone but is woven into the coherent narrative of salvation: God created, sustains, and will perfect His creation. Therefore, this study affirms that the understanding of God as Creator is central to biblical theology, shaping not only cosmology but also the ethics, spirituality, and eschatological expectations of believers. (N. Chambers, 2015; Painey & Van Eck, 2023).

#### **2. Does Evil Come from God?**

Research findings suggest that evil cannot be understood as the result of God's creative act, but as a consequence of the abuse of creaturely freedom. In the Christian doctrine of creation, God created rational beings, humans and angels, with the capacity for free choice and love. This freedom is not a flaw in God's design, but rather the condition that makes true loving relationships possible. However, this same freedom opens up the possibility of the will's deviation, so that evil appears not as a positive entity, but as a deviation from the good that creatures are meant to realize.

Thus, evil stems from the moral decisions of creatures, not from the all-good God. This conclusion is consistent with the classical understanding of

*privatio boni*, where evil is seen as a “loss of goodness,” not a creation of God, but rather a consequence of the will of creatures that reject that goodness (Gasser, 2021; Sulistio, 2021).

Historically and theologically, the Fall in Genesis 3 is understood as the moment when human will deviated from the purpose of creation, thus having cosmic consequences that affect the entire history of salvation. The Fall is not merely an individual moral act, but a relational change between humans and God that causes disintegration within humans, relationships between humans, and corruption in creation. Within the framework of salvation, the Fall provides the backdrop for God's intervention through the work of Christ, who came not only to erase sin but also to restore the broken order of creation.

This research demonstrates that understanding the Fall as part of salvation history helps affirm that God did not create evil, but rather responded to the Fall of creation with acts of restoration and reconciliation. Therefore, evil is not a “creation” of God, but rather a reality that arises from the failure of creatures to maintain a relationship with the Creator, a reality ultimately addressed through Christ's saving work (Mangoli & Rembang, 2025).

### **3. How Does Theology Answer the Challenges of Modern Science?**

The study's findings demonstrate that theology need not be defensive against modern science but can respond to it through a constructive, dialogical model. Challenges such as the Big Bang theory, biological evolution, and naturalistic explanations of the origins of life are often perceived as threatening the doctrine of creation. However, this study confirms that theology can address these challenges by distinguishing between the “mechanism” (*how*) explained by science and the “meaning-purpose” (*why*) that falls within the realm of theology.

In the dialogue model, science is understood as a partner revealing God's creative process through natural law and the development of the cosmos, not as an adversary replacing God's role. This approach is supported by many contemporary theologians who see scientific data as enriching our understanding of the greatness and order of creation, allowing theology to reinterpret the doctrine of creation in a relevant way without abandoning the content of biblical faith (Gunawan, 2020; Roszak & Horvat, 2021).

### **4. Ethical and Spiritual Consequences for Christians**

Research findings indicate that the doctrine of creation has significant ethical consequences for the lives of Christians. If God is the source of all creation, then humans, as God's image, are called to live in moral obedience that reflects the Creator's character. The realization that all things originate from and are sustained by God requires humans to develop an ethic of responsibility, including respect for others, social justice, and concern for the environment.

This ethic stems not only from moral law but also from human participation in God's mission to care for and restore the world. Thus, creation theology asserts that Christian morality does not stand alone but flows from humanity's ontological relationship with God as Creator, which demands a life of gratitude, faithfulness, and respect for life in all its forms (Dolamo, 2019; McCarroll & Kim-Cragg, 2023).

These findings also demonstrate that Christian spirituality is rooted in the understanding that the world is a gift, not a result of cosmic chance. Creation spirituality encourages believers to cultivate an intimate relationship with God through experiencing the world as a space for His presence. Spiritual practices such as gratitude, contemplation, prayer, and liturgy are not separate from daily life but are directly related to the responsibility to care for creation.

The Fall may have broken humanity's relationship with God and nature, but Christ's work, as the center of creation and restoration, invites believers to live in a rhythm of reconciliation that restores all aspects of life. Therefore, a healthy Christian spirituality is ecological, relational, and restoration-oriented, enabling believers to be agents of peace and care in a wounded world.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

This study asserts that all creation comes from God as the Creator who is both good and omnipotent, and transcendent, yet immanent in the world He formed. The doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* suggests that all existence has its ontological source in God, who created the world with purpose, goodness, and order. However, this study confirms that evil does not originate from God, because evil is not a created substance, but rather *privatio boni*, the loss of goodness due to the abuse of the moral freedom of creatures.

Thus, the presence of sin and corruption in the world does not negate the goodness of creation, but rather highlights the importance of Christ's role as the center of creation and the restoration of the cosmos. Creation theology, when read in dialogue with modern science, opens up opportunities for constructive collaboration that enriches, rather than threatens, understanding of faith. This overall analysis confirms that the doctrine of creation remains relevant and absolutely essential in responding to the philosophical, moral, and scientific challenges of our time.

### Recommendation

Theologically, the church today needs to strengthen its teaching on creation to help people understand the relationship between God, humanity, and the world within a comprehensive biblical framework. The church needs to consistently affirm that God is the source of all good, while evil is a relational distortion resulting from the fall of humanity. In the pastoral realm, the church is encouraged to develop faith formation that helps the congregation interpret suffering and the problem of evil not as God's work, but as part of a broken world being restored by Christ.

The church is also advised to promote ecological spirituality, an ethics of responsibility, and a reading of creation theology that engages in healthy dialogue with the findings of modern science. In this way, the church can become an agent of reconciliation, bringing the hope of the Gospel to a wounded world while simultaneously living out its cultural mandate responsibly, sacredly, and creatively.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study has limitations because it focuses on conceptual theological study through a literature review method, thus not exploring empirical data or faith communities' reception of the doctrine of creation. Limitations also arise from the literature's inability to encompass the full spectrum of global theological thought on the origins of creation, particularly the increasingly growing non-Western traditions. Furthermore, the dialogue between theology and science in this study is normative and does not elaborate in depth on more technical models of interaction between Christian theology and astrophysics, evolutionary biology, or quantum theory. Therefore, the findings of this study should be understood as conceptual foundations, not as final conclusions that close the discourse.

Further research can be directed at developing an interdisciplinary theology of creation that integrates the latest findings from cosmology, evolutionary biology, and ecotheology within a framework that remains faithful to the Bible and church tradition. Future research could also explore how the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* and the concept of *privatio boni* are received in the context of local churches in Indonesia, including their implications for congregational spirituality, liturgy, and ecological practice.

Furthermore, empirical studies of Christians' understanding of the relationship between creation, the fall, and restoration in Christ can enrich pastoral theology and church education. Further research can also develop a more dialogical theology of creation with contemporary issues such as the climate crisis, the ethics of technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and bioethics, thereby making theology of creation increasingly relevant and contextual for the church in the modern era.

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