



GOSPEL-SHAPED CREATIVITY

What is a Theology of Creativity?

A theology of creativity is simply a _____ look at _____ teachings on creativity and aesthetics in order to understand how it all fits into _____ big picture.
(It is how we reconcile the disconnect between our hearts and our heads.)

God as Creator | **Man & Sin** marred creativity | **Christ** redeemed creativity | **Our Response**

For more on the Gospel, go to: hopechurchtw.ca/gospel



GOD

THE CREATOR

(GENESIS 1 & 2)

1. CREATION & BEAUTY

A. GOD IS THE ORIGINAL CREATIVE

GOD'S 'CREATING ACTIVITIES' IN GENESIS 1:

God's creativity brings His _____, _____ and _____.



OUR RESPONSE

Our creativity should bring God's order, beauty and purpose.

B. GOD IS THE PRIMARY BEHOLDER

I. Beauty is in the eye of the _____.

II. _____ beholding.

"All the arts come from God and are to be respected as divine inventions."
(John Calvin, Commentary on Exodus)



OUR RESPONSE

We are to always remember that God is the Primary Viewer whose opinion matters, and we are invited to share in His vision of creativity and beauty.

2. UNDERSTANDING BEAUTY

GOD'S TRIADIC GLORY

"I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you (**showing**), and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence (**telling**). I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion (**doing**)."

Exodus 33:19

TELLING	SHOWING	DOING
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

1. **TRUTH** - it must tell a true story, in agreement with God's truth.
2. **AESTHETICS** - its forms must be (to borrow from Genesis 2) "pleasing to the eyes" - pleasant sensory reception.
3. **POWER** - it must do something, achieve some goal, have power, or purpose that corresponds with God's purposes.

Divine creativity does more than _____ God's glory, it _____ a _____.

OUR RESPONSE

We must use God's standards for beauty (content, form and purpose - truth, aesthetics and power - telling, showing and doing). We must realize that God's glory demands a response.



MAN

MARRIED CREATIVITY

(GENESIS 3)

1. IMAGO DEI

MANKIND - GOD'S SPECIAL CREATION (GENESIS 1:26-29)

"Man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself."

(John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1:1:2)

We are all _____ of God's glory. We cannot help but _____ God.

"...every act of creativity, in its essence, is an act of worship, a doxological expression of your true humanity and purpose."

(Thomas Terry & Ryan Lister, Images & Idols, 15)

Your creativity - _____ - is _____ to God.

OUR RESPONSE

The use of your creative talents images God and reflects His glory because they come from Him. Rightly aimed, it is worship to God.

2. SIN - CREATIVITY'S CORRUPTION

GENESIS 3: OUR CORRUPTED VISION

"So when the woman **saw that the tree was good for food**, and that it was a **delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was to be **desired to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."

Genesis 3:6

THE CORRUPTED TRIAD:

- **Truth, telling and content are corrupted:** God's word is distrusted.
- **Showing, aesthetics and form are corrupted:** God's declaration of good/beautiful is supplanted by Eve's own opinion.
- **Doing, Power and Purpose are corrupted:** Eve now wants to determine her own purpose and to have power by gaining the 'wisdom to determine good and evil.

Sin's corruption has marred our _____, our _____ and our _____.

ROMANS 1: OUR TRIFOLD EXCHANGE

- **Verse 25** - exchange the truth for a lie (telling | truth | content)
- **Verse 23** - exchange God's glory for images (showing | aesthetics | form)
- **Verse 26** - exchange natural sexual relations for unnatural (doing | power | purpose)

CREATIVE IDOLATRY:

- **A. Becoming enslaved to creativity's** _____
- **B. Creativity becoming a creative's** _____
- **C. Creatives becoming** _____

Your creativity, _____, will lead you into _____. Our sinfulness makes us mix up representing God (imaging God) with replacing God with our artistic endeavors.



OUR RESPONSE

The use of your creative talents images God and reflects His glory because they come from Him. Rightly aimed, it is worship to God.



CHRIST

REDEEMED CREATIVITY

(JOHN 1)

1. THE TRUE IMAGE (JOHN 1:1-3, 14, 18)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE _____ OF GOD'S TRIADIC GLORY.

A. The _____ of God (cf. John 14:16, Heb. 1:2) - Truth | Content | Telling
Jesus tells us the truth about God.

B. The _____ of God (cf. Col. 1:15, 19; Heb. 1:3) - Aesthetic | Form | Showing
Jesus, God in human form, shows us the beauty of God.

A. The _____ of God (cf. John 1:3, Col. 1:16; Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 1:24) - Power | Purpose | Doing
Jesus is the power of God, fulfilling His purpose.



OUR RESPONSE

Look to Christ! *He corrects our vision as being the perfect image of God.
He corrects our sinful trifold exchange and frees us from our creative idolatry.*

2. TRUE SALVATION

A. CHRIST, THE SECOND ADAM (MATTHEW 4)

In the first garden, Eden, we find **Adam**: whose **defiance** to God under a tree, **enslaves** humanity to the curse of sin and death.

In the second garden, Gethsemane, we find the **Second Adam**: Jesus Christ, whose **obedience** to God upon a Tree, **frees** humanity from the curse of sin and death.
(cf. 1 Cor. 15:22 & 45-49)

B. CREATIVE REDEMPTION

The Gospel is God's glory, so beautiful and unexpected, that when we behold it, it captivates our hearts, and we are changed and must respond.

C. FUTURE CREATIVE RESTORATION

Create like you're in the new creation. Use your creativity to help the light of the better world that we hope for break into the darkness of today's world.

WHY CREATIVES NEED A "THEOLOGY OF CREATIVITY"

True religious affections are not all heat without light...
(Jonathan Edwards - paraphrased)

3. ART FOR GOD'S SAKE

*"As each has **received** a gift, **use it to serve one another**, as good **stewards** of God's varied **grace**..."*
1 PETER 4:10

TWO BIG TAKE AWAYS:

1. Create for the love of _____ and the love of your _____.
2. Consider: Who is the _____ of our creativity?
For whom do you create?

"A Christian should use these arts to the glory of God, not just as tracts, mind you, but as things of beauty to the praise of God."
(Francis Schaeffer)

RECOMMENDED READING:

- Images and Idols: Creativity for the Christian Life by Thomas J. Terry & J. Ryan Lister
- Art for God's Sake: A Call to Recover the Arts by Philip Graham Ryken
- A Redemptive Theology of Art: Restoring Godly Aesthetics to Doctrine and Culture by David A. Covington

For more resources, check out our Learning Archive at hopechurchtw.ca/learn

