

The Factuality of Genesis 1-3

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My View

- I am a follower of Christ
- Genesis 1 describes special works of God in time and space
- Adam and Eve supernaturally created
- Created morally good
- Father and mother of the whole human race
- Why? Biblical teaching

Alternate View

- How do you account for the world existing?
- How account for scientific ability?
- Nobility and horror of human nature?

Major Issues

- Kind of literature (genre)
- Later support
- Relation to other ancient literature
- Mesh with science?
- Special authority?
- Nonfiction narrative
- Confirmation in OT and NT
- True versus polytheistic
- Variety of interpretations
- Divine authority

A. Kind of Literature in Genesis 1-3

Two Classifications

By Content

- Creation
- Major groups of things (Gen. 1)
- Purposes (Gen. 2)
- Results (Gen. 3)
- Ps. 104; 8; Col. 1:15-17

By Form and Style

- Prose or poetry?
- Narrative or exposition?
- 1-2 Samuel

Genesis 1:1-5

narrative
tense

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Classification of Genesis

- Prose (poetry in 1:27 has parallel lines)
- Narrative (time in focus)

Nonfiction versus Fiction

And he said, "I may not return with you, or go in with you, neither will I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place, for it was said to me by the word of the LORD, 'You shall neither eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.'" And he said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him. So he went back with him and ate bread in his house and drank water. – 1 Kings 13:16-19

Genesis as Nonfiction

- Integrated with Exodus through 2 Kings
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph as real
- Ancestors of the people of Israel
- Customs match ancient environment
(Abraham marrying his half sister)

Genesis 1-3

- Part of a continuous narrative
- Organized by "these are the generations of ..."
(Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; etc.)
- Genesis 1 has repetitions (exalted prose):
 - "And God said"
 - "And God saw that it was good"
 - "And there was evening and there was morning"
- But also repetitions in Num. 7

B. Confirmation from OT and NT

OT Back References: 1 Chronicles

Adam, Seth, Enosh; Kenan, Mahalalel,
Jared; Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech;
Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (1:1-4)

OT Back References: Ps. 8:6-8

You have given him dominion over the works
of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

OT Back References: Misc.

- Creation
- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
- Esau
- Sodom and Gomorrah
- Sojourn in Egypt

Jesus' Endorsement of the OT

He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh'?" – Matt. 19:4-5, with quote from Gen. 2:24.

Jesus' Endorsement of the OT: 2

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." – Matt. 5:17-18

Jesus' Endorsement of the OT: 3

And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

But he answered, "It is written, '" Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" – Matt. 4:3-4; quoted from Deut. 8:3

Reality of Adam

- Rom. 5:12-21
- 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 44-49
- Acts 17:26
- Luke 3:38

C. Other Ancient Literature

Contrasts

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ● One God | ● Many gods |
| ● no opposition | ● fights |
| ● complete control | ● limited control |
| ● dignity of man | ● man as slave to gods |
| ● sober prose | ● wandering poetry |
| ● comparison with providence | ● comparison with providence |
| ● true | ● forfeit |

Similarities

D. Genesis 1-3 and Science

Different Focus

the Bible

- Redemptive: God, Christ, sin
- To all peoples
- Common language
- Focus on persons
- Ordinary experience
- Sparse description

science

- Informative
- To specialists
- Technical
- Focus on mechanism
- Hidden structures
- Massive detail, mathematical precision

Implications

the Bible:
common language

- Framework for all
- Truth, even in detail, but not technical
- Easy to overread in a scientific direction

science:
technical

- Fit into biblical frame
- Current state of “knowledge”
- Easy to overread larger human implications

E. Bible and Science in Harmony

Issues

- Days of creation: 10 views
- Adam and Eve: miracle
- Fitting in with the rest of the world ("solidarity")
- Analogy: Jesus as true man
- Water into wine

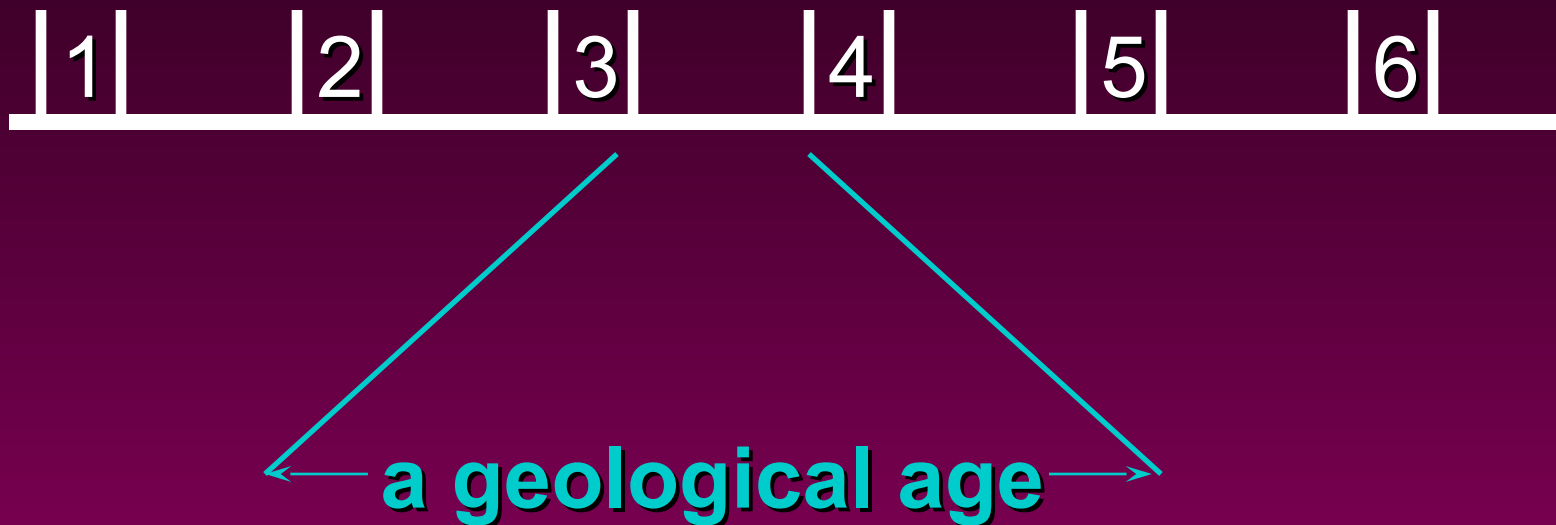
F. Views of the Days of Creation

Intermittent Day



By Christliches
Medienmagazin pro -
John Lennox, CC BY
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- 24-hour days have gaps between them.



God's creative activity is spread out between 24-hour days, rather than occurring during them.

24-Hour Days



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DI5njmOMN_U



Straight-forward

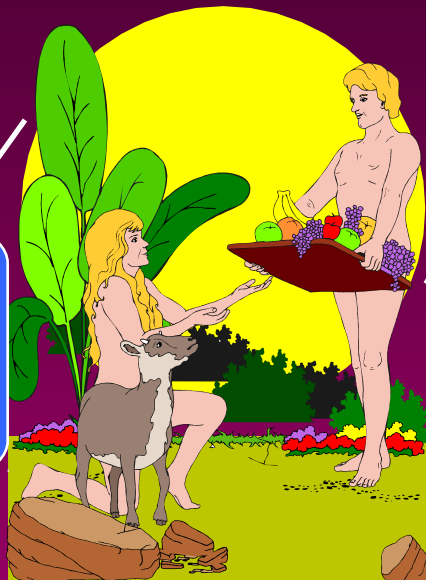
Mature Creation



http://creationwiki.org/File:John_Morris.jpg

Also called “ideal-time” view.

- God creates in place Adam and mature plants and animals. Subsequent scientific inspection would see “appearance of age.”



plant looks
6 months old

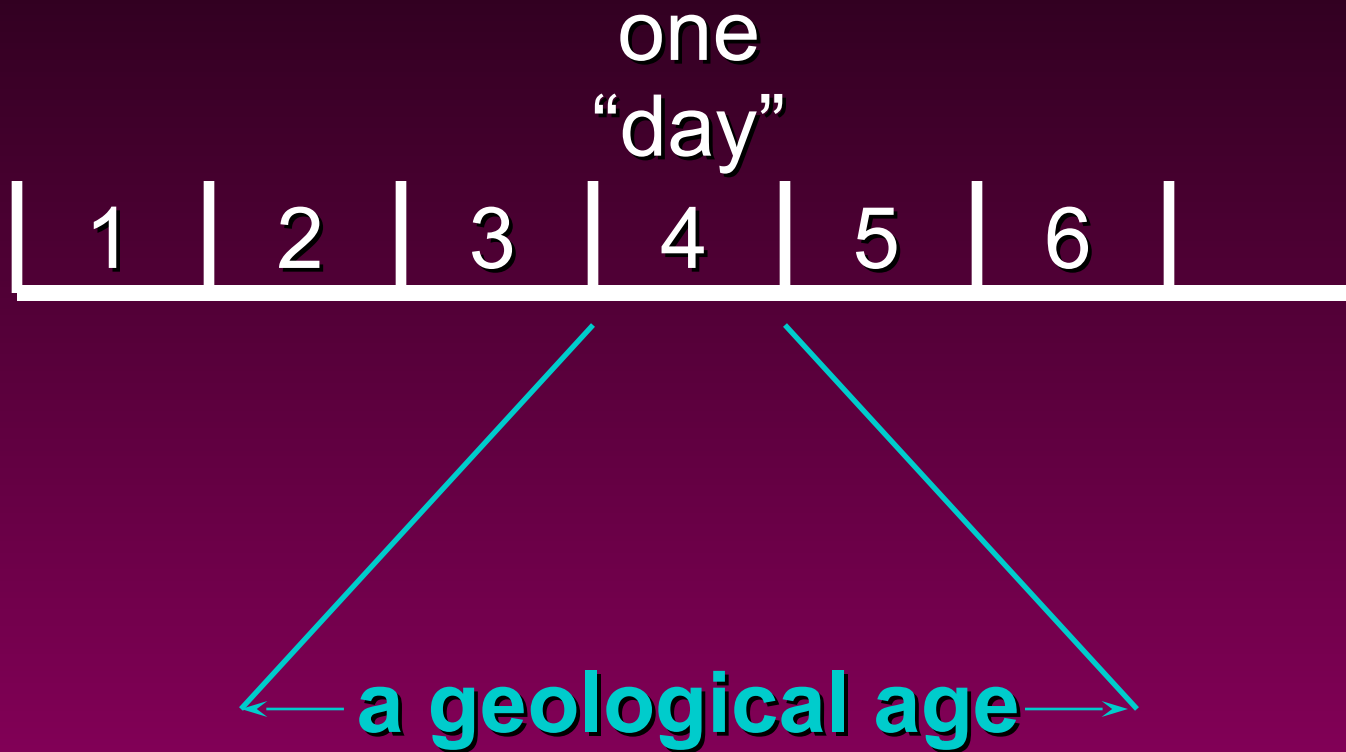
Adam looks
20 years old.

grapes come
from a vine that
looks 5 years old

Age-Day Concordism



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Analogical Day



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God works and rests



analogous

Man works and rests

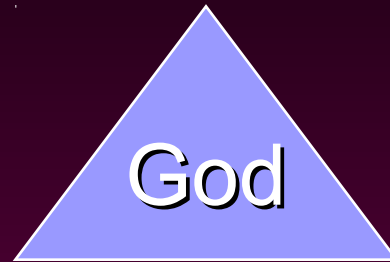


G. Positive Evidence on Man

Positive Homologies

- Anatomical
- Genetic
- Developmental

God As Origin of Life



image

Imaging
here



Adam



Then God said,
"Let us make man
in our image,
after our likeness."
--Genesis 1:26-27

God As Origin of Life

When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. --Genesis 5:3

God

image

Imaging
here

Adam



(Gen. 1:26-27)

image,
reflection

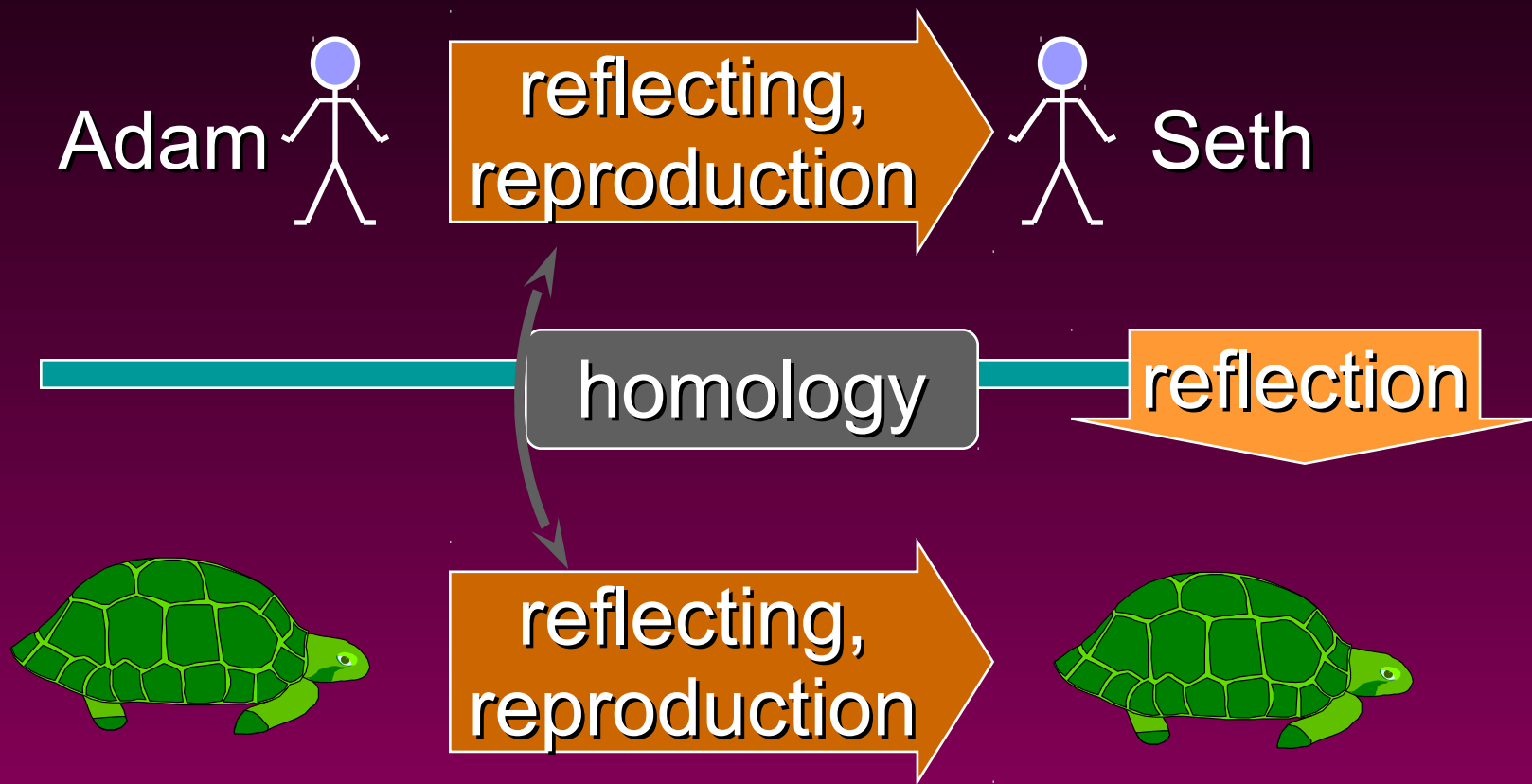


Seth

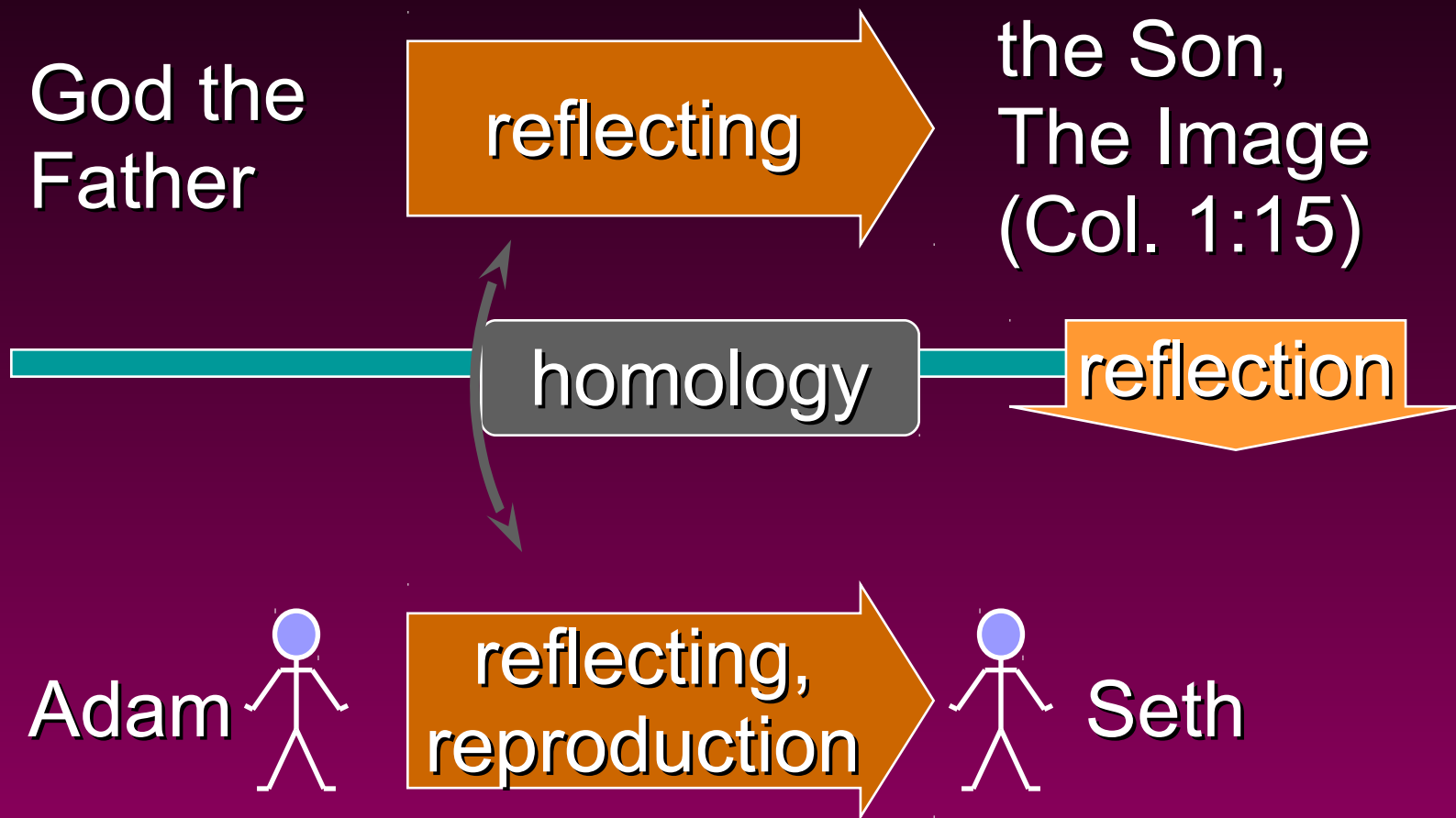
(Gen. 5:3)



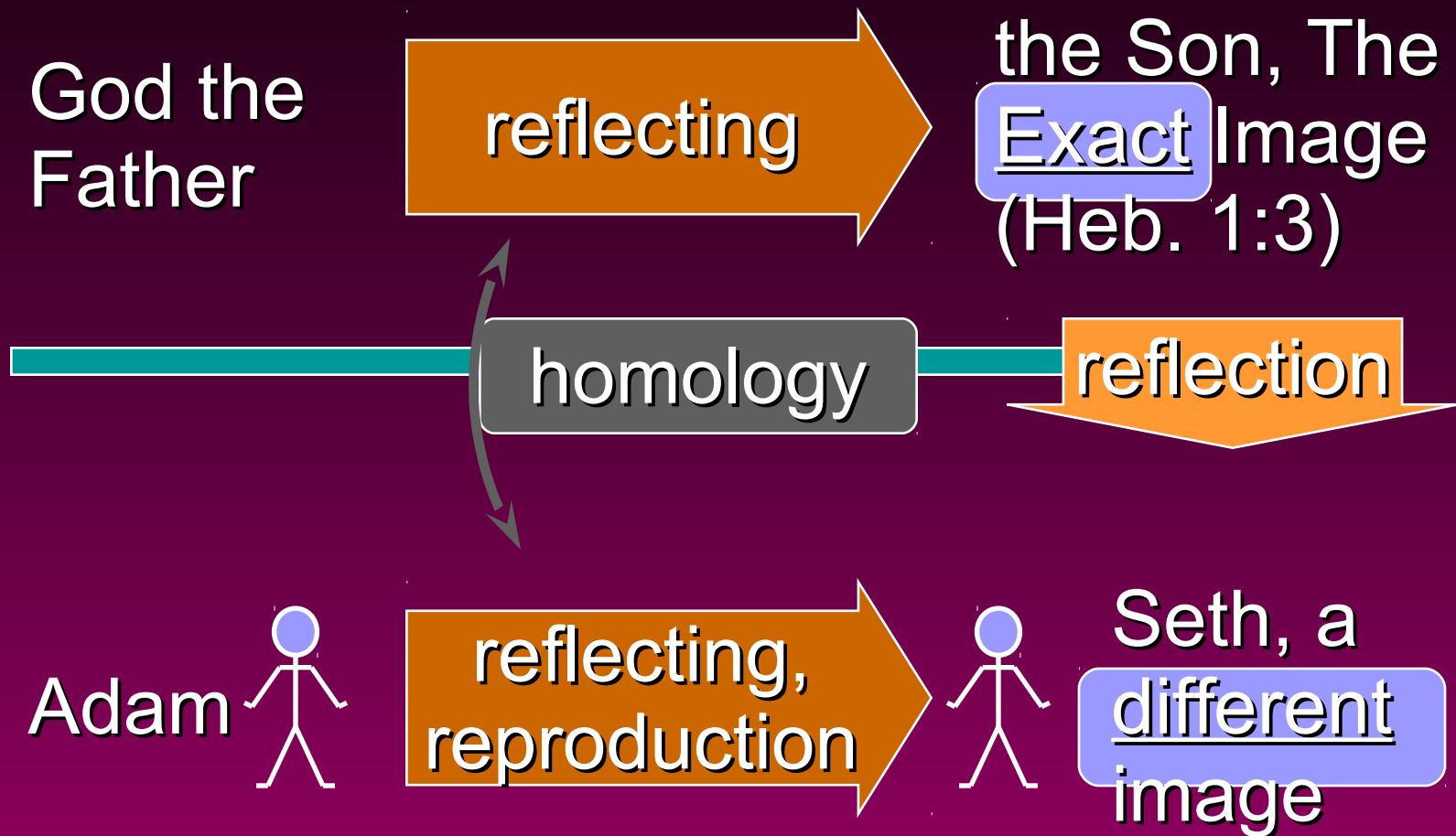
Life Imaging Humanity



A Divine Archetype



A Divine Archetype Different



Christ as Origin of the World

John 1:1-2: allusion to Genesis

"In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and
the Word was God. He was in the
beginning with God.

Christ as Origin of Life

John 1:3-4:

"All things were made through him,
and without him was not any thing
made that was made.

In him was life, and the life was the
light of men."



source of life on earth

Spirit as Source of Life

Psalm 104:30:

When you hide your face,
they [animals] are dismayed;

when you take away their breath,
they die and return to their dust.

When you send forth your Spirit,
they are created,

and you renew the face of the ground.

Conclusion on Homologies

- Darwinism appeals to homologies
- But there is an alternative explanation:
centrality of Christ

Basic Problem

ideologically induced blindness

Evaluation of Hypotheses: Eve

- Adam's rib represents discontinuity
- Figurative? No.
- Compatible with genetic continuity
- A good test of whether supernatural is allowed

Evaluation of Hypotheses: Adam

- A radically new Adam
- Silence about details

Resources

Vern S. Poythress, *Redeeming Science: A God-Centered Approach* (Crossway, 2006)