

## Doctrine of the Soul Creationism

1. Concerning the origin of the soul the following question arises: “*Are souls created by God, or are they propagated?*”
2. Although there are various opinions of theologians and philosophers about the origin of the soul, yet principally there are two theories to which the others can be referred: one asserting the creation, the other the propagation, (*traducem*) of the soul.
3. The creationist holds that God immediately creates all souls. Each soul is produced from nothing and without any pre-existing material. When this creation of the soul takes place is uncertain. It might take place at the moment of conception. It might take place when the first breath of air is taken.
4. In contrast to creationism, the propagationist maintains that souls are propagated in the sexual union of a man and a woman.
5. The creationist position is the opinion of many of the Reformers.
6. The propagationist position is embraced by Lutherans and some of the early church fathers such as Tertullian (c. 155-230).
7. Tertullian was the author of propagation (*traducis*, lit. *to transfer*) in *Treatise on the Soul*.
8. Augustine (AD 354-430) suspended his judgment on the origin of the soul because he found the topic too complex to fathom conclusively.
9. The creationist position is argued primarily from the law of creation and the testimony of *Scripture*.
10. Argument from the law of creation.
  - The creation of each soul by God should be embraced because the origin of every soul is the same as that of the soul of Adam. Our souls bear God’s image. *1 Corinthians 15:47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.* Adam’s creation serves as an example of the whole species.
  - The soul of Adam was created immediately by God. As God “*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*” (*Genesis 2:7*), God breathes into each body a soul of His creation.

- It is evident Adam's soul was not produced from anything material but came to him extrinsically through divine creation and was infused into the body by the breath of God Himself.
- As the soul of Adam was created out of nothing so also are the souls of his posterity. Therefore the soul could not be created through the act of procreation.

#### 11. Argument from the testimony of *Scripture*.

##### *Ecclesiastes 12:7*

*"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was:  
and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."*

- In Ecclesiastes 12:7 God is spoken of as the author and Creator of the soul in a peculiar manner distinct from the body.
- A manifest difference is made between the origin of and destruction of the body and the soul. The body is said to return to the dust whence it was taken; the soul, however, returns to God who gave it.
- As the body returns to the dust of its ultimate origin, so the soul returns to God, the source of its ultimate origin.

##### **Zechariah 12: 1**

*"The word of the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens,  
and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him".*

- In this passage God is said to form the spirit of man within him; therefore the Lord ought to produce it immediately without the intervention of man.
- The formation of the spirit is joined with the stretching out of the heavens and the founding of the earth, as of the same order and grade. Since the heavens and the earth are works of omnipotence, made immediately by God and without second causes, so the soul is made immediately by God and without second causes.
- There are several passages in the *Bible*, which speaks of the production of the soul. The *Scriptures* do not use the singular as if referring to the one soul of Adam only, but the plural as referring to individuals.

##### **Psalms 33:15**

*"He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works."*

**Isaiah 57:16**

*“For I will not contend for ever,  
neither will I be always wroth:  
for the spirit should fail before me,  
and the souls which I have made.”*

**Hebrews 12:9**

*“We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us,  
and we gave them reverence:  
shall we not much rather be in subjection  
unto the Father of spirits, and live?”*

- Hebrews 12:9 is a classic passage to support the creationist position.

**1 Peter 4:19**

*“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God  
commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing,  
as unto a faithful Creator.”*

- In this passage Peter calls God in a peculiar manner a *"faithful Creator of souls"*.

**Numbers 16:22**

*“And they fell upon their faces, and said,  
O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin,  
and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?”*

**Isaiah 57:16**

*"For I will not contend forever,  
neither will I be always wroth:  
for the spirit should fail before me,  
and the souls which I have made.'*

- Why should God be called *"the Father of spirits"* unless it is in contradistinction to being *"the fathers of the flesh"* and the origin of each is different?
12. If God does create each soul apart from the formation of the body through the act of procreation then the question is when? When does the soul enter into the body prepared?
  13. One option is that the soul is created at the moment there is a unity of the male sperm with the female egg. Life would then begin at the moment of conception.

14. Another option is that the soul is created at the moment of birth when the first breathe of air is taken.
15. Unfortunately, there is no consensus on this matter.