



## THE DIVINE RESOLUTION II:

# Creation by Command

... [In the progress of love] each step is a precarious step . . . , in which each triumph contains new potential for tragedy, and each tragedy can be redeemed into a wider triumph.<sup>1</sup>

In the beginning there was the One-and-Only God. God was alone; but God is love, and love longs for the “other.” In anticipation God freely chose to love the “other.” Since love is free and mutually relational, ultimately the “other” will freely choose to love God and each “other.”

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It was with these premises that God became the Creator and brought into existence a universe with infinite potential. Realizing that a universe of infinite possibilities necessarily embraced the negative, God acted to permit negative possibilities to emerge in the beginning. This was far better than to allow the negatives to occur by chance throughout eternity or to appear late in the far-distant future. It was in this context that God designed and brought the natural universe into existence by expansion and contraction, by explosion and implosion, by eruption and collision.

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:6, 9). Since God had no option but to create by command, he became the primal Dominator, and the subsistent Creation existed only in submission. However, limitless submission would have become unloving torture, and therefore God initiated death. Thus, the emergence of living forms on earth was paralleled by repeated extinctions. Life gave way to death, and death was surmounted by new life. “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit”

(John 12:24). Over the ages living forms thus progressed from single-cell to multicellular organisms, then to a wondrous variety of plants and animals, and finally to human beings.

However, all these forms emerged only under initial divine command and continued divine supervision. Because God endowed Creation with free process, the created order could counter both God and itself. Inevitably, there were negative consequences and attendant destruction and death.

It was only with God's own incarnation as Jesus Christ that the negative consequences of creative command could be openly and explicitly confronted. Thus, Jesus faced the raging elements with countermands: "And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:24-26).

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Also, Jesus successfully confronted debilitating and deathly diseases: "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house" (Matthew 9:6, 7).

Furthermore, Jesus dared to reverse death itself: ". . . [He] cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:43, 44).

Drained is love in making full;  
Bound in setting others free;  
Poor in making many rich;  
Weak in giving power to be.

Therefore He Who Thee reveals  
Hangs, O Father, on that Tree  
Helpless; and the nails and thorns  
Tell of what Thy love must be.<sup>2</sup>

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## Endnotes

1. W. H. Vanstone, *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense: The Response of Being to the Love of God* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977), p. 63.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 120.