

# QUAKERS & CREATION CARE: PROBLEMS & POTENTIALS IN QUAKER THEOLOGY



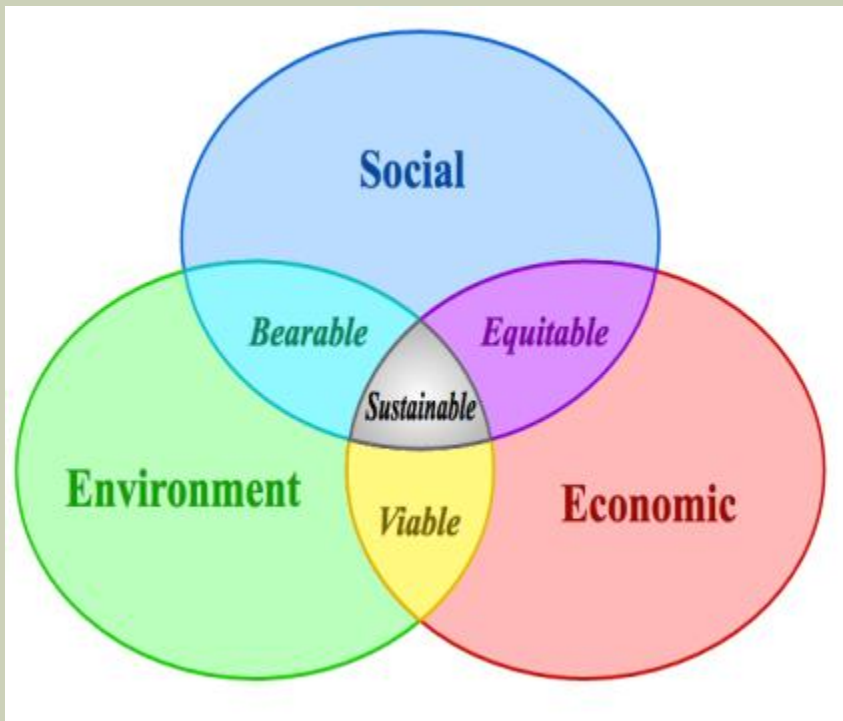
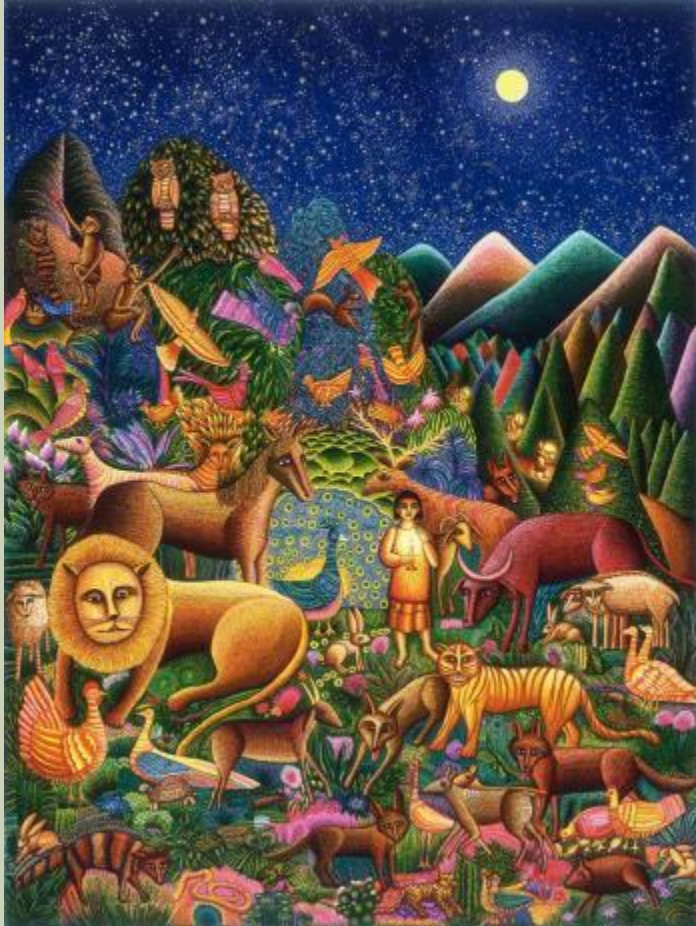
Cherice Bock

Berkeley Friends  
Church

Quaker Heritage  
Day

March 10, 2018

# ECO-REFORMATION





# DESERT FATHERS & MOTHERS, AUGUSTINE

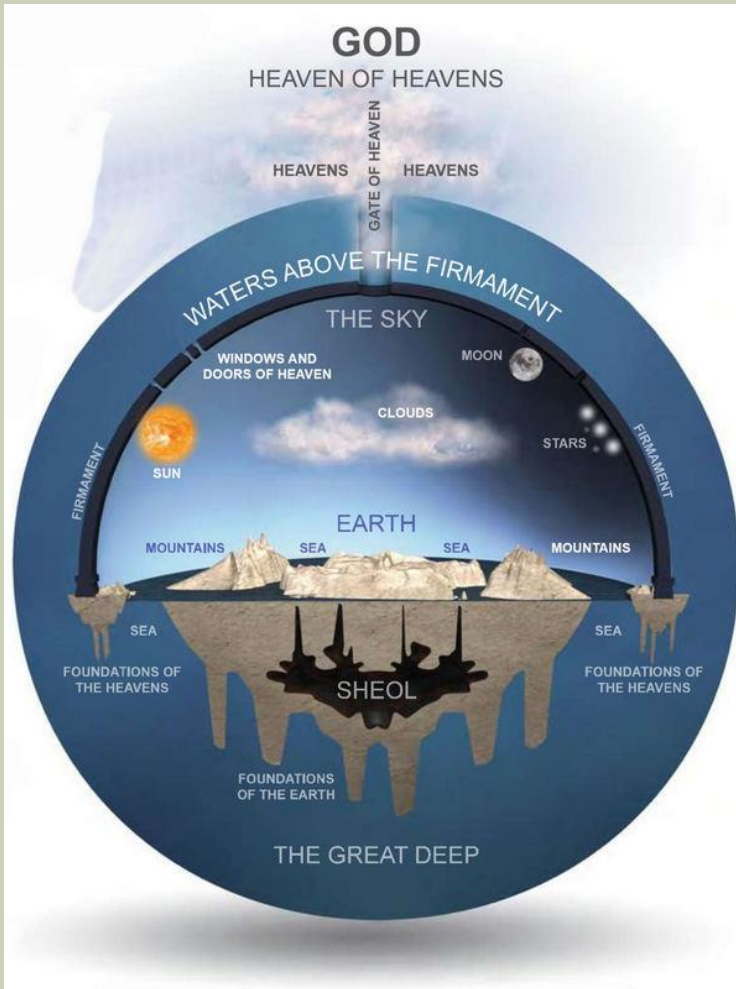


# WHAT HAPPENED?

- Universal message → Imperial interpretation
- Conflation of philosophy & theology
- Eradicate nature worship in Europe (emphasis on male leadership)
- Land acquisition, vested interest in feudal system



# HEBREW COSMOLOGY

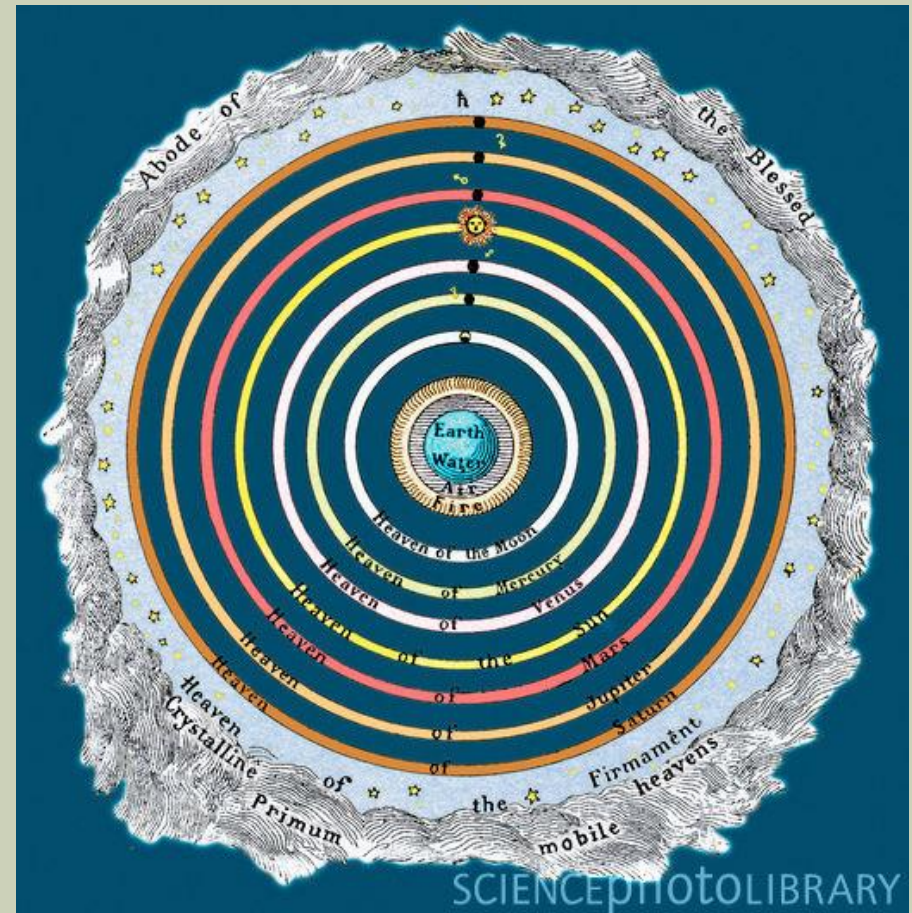


- God's in-breaking Word creates
- Positive: God created everything, and it's all "good"
- Negative: easily translates to Greek dualism (order vs. chaos, Word vs. matter)



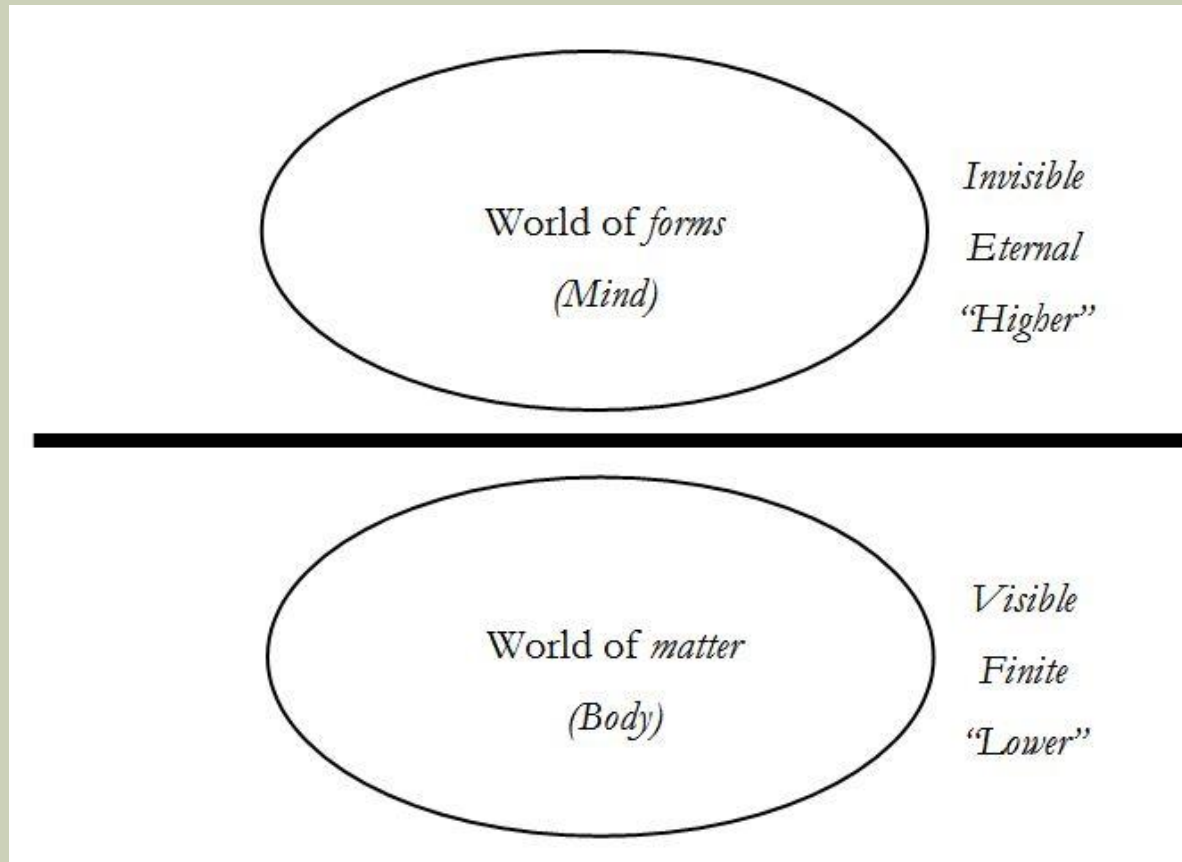
# GREEK COSMOLOGY

- Realm of the gods hierarchically separate from realm of matter

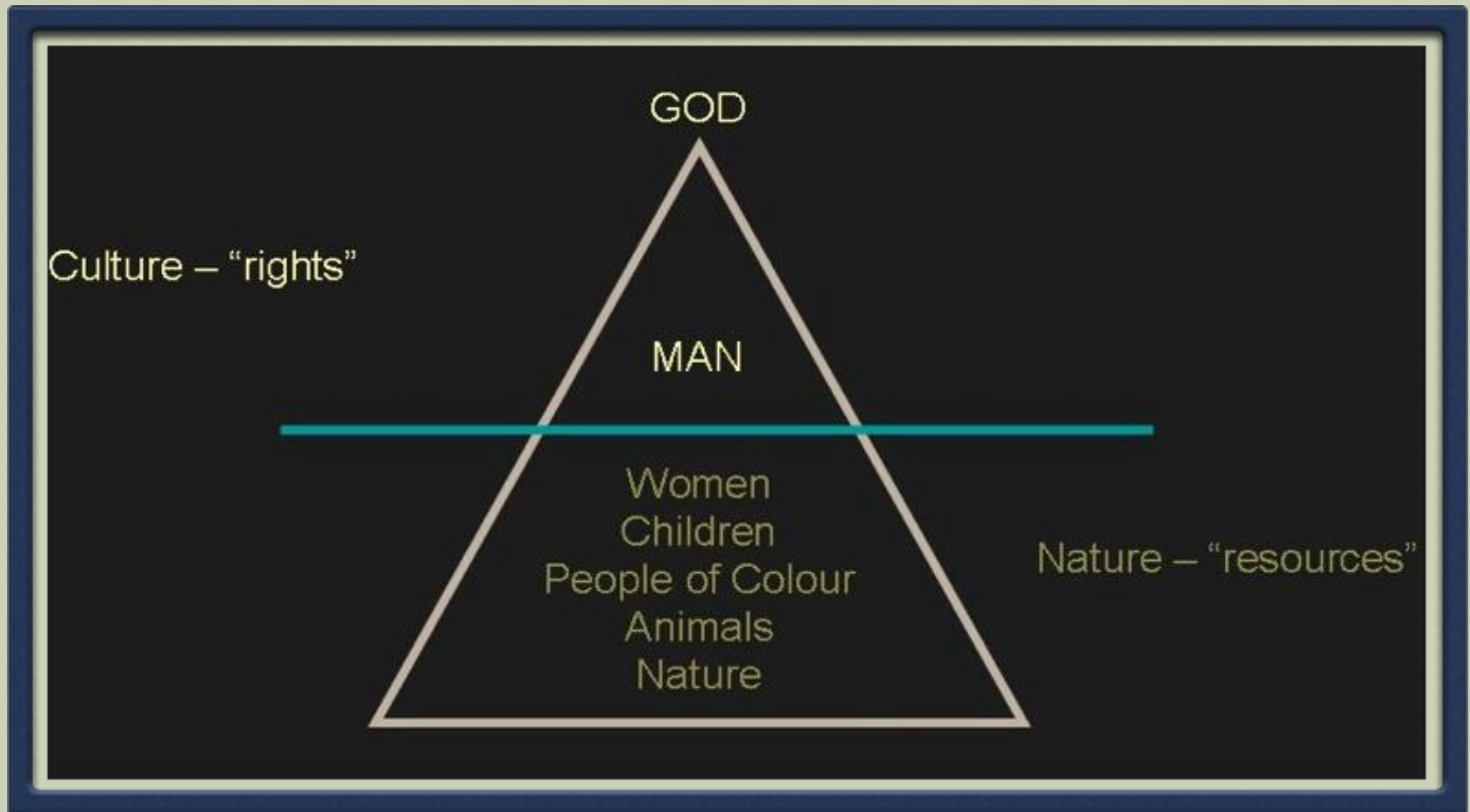


# GREEK COSMOLOGY

- Plato, Aristotle: forms, unmoved mover



# ANTHROPOCENTRIC HIERARCHY





World	God
Woman	Man
Body	Mind
Emotion	Reason
Sexuality	Chastity
Earth	Heaven
Nature	Culture
Matter	Spirit
Demonic/earthly	Divine
Inferior	Superior
Abnormal/dysfunctional	Normative
Submissive	Dominant
Darkness	Light
Evil	Good

Combination of charts from Eaton's *Ecofeminist Theologies*  
and Case-Winters' *Reconstructing a Christian Theology of Nature*

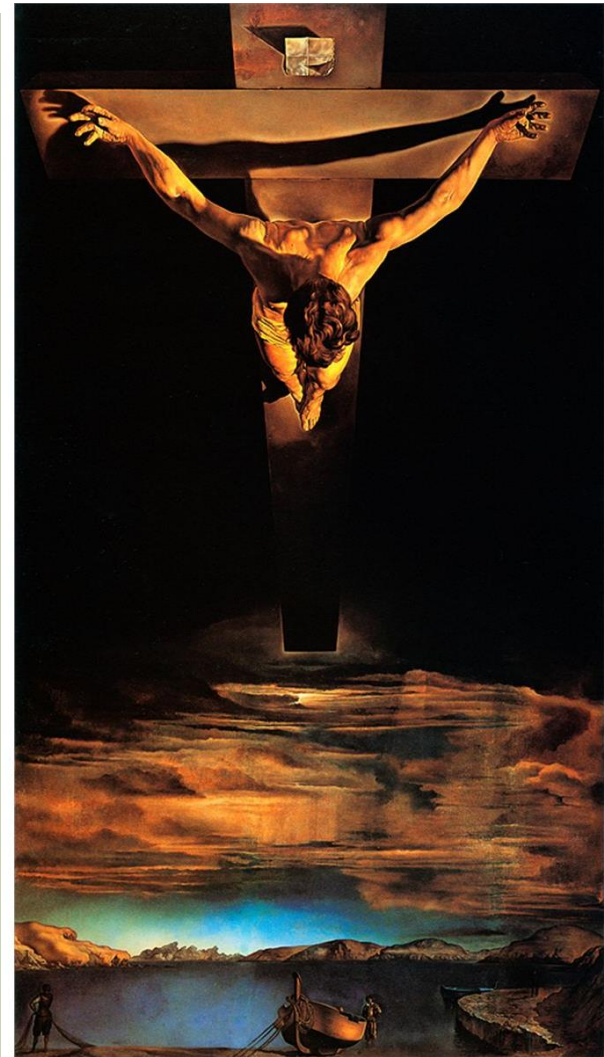
# IMMANENCE VS. TRANSCENDENCE

- God becomes human: immanent
- Jesus leaves to go be with God: transcendent
- Sends Holy Spirit: immanent and transcendent



# SALVATION: PERSONAL OR COMMUNAL?

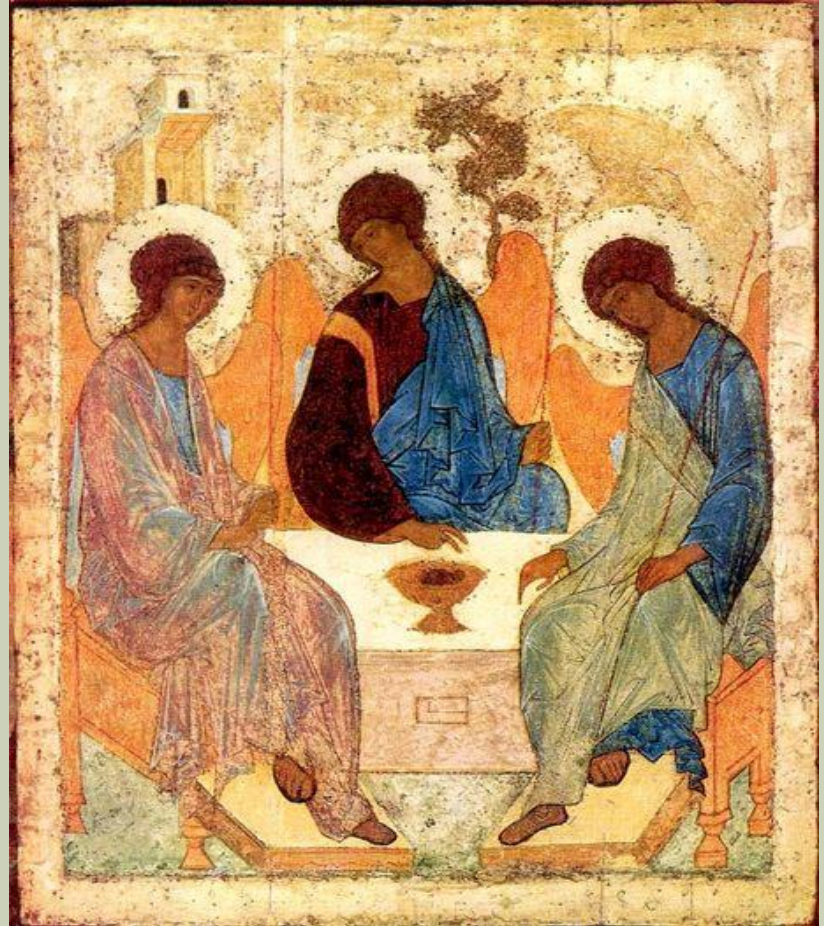
- Personal: each receives offer of grace
- Communal: available to all (not just the elect)





# TRINITY

- Individual Persons
- Co-inhering, co-indwelling
- Relational
- Radically Other





# ESCHATOLOGY: WHERE IS THE KINGDOM?



- “My kingdom is not of this world” (Jn 18:36)
- The Kingdom of God is within you/among you (all) (Lk 17:21)

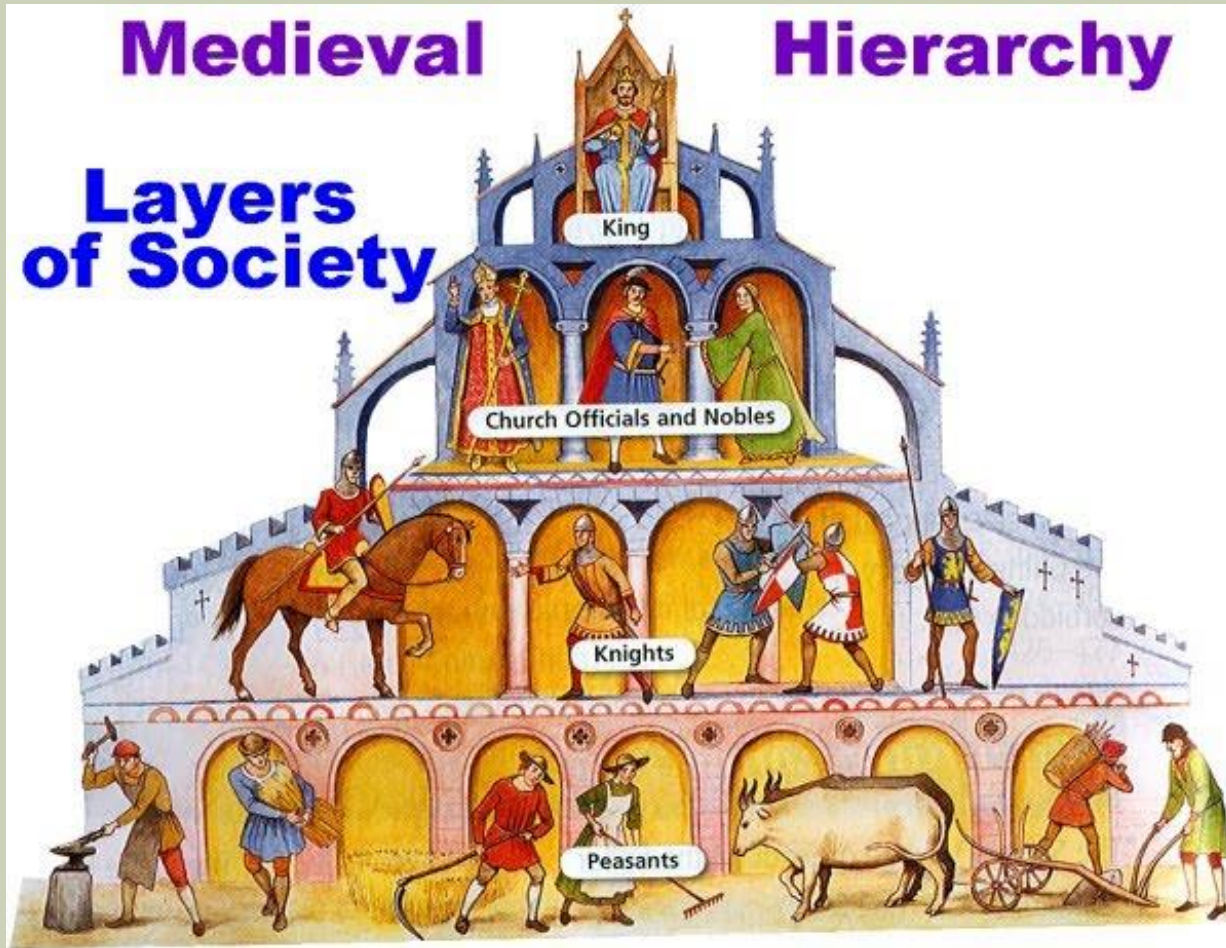
# LYNN WHITE, JR. (1967), "THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF OUR ECOLOGICAL CRISIS"

- Anthropocentrism
- Hierarchy
- Dualism
- Change in understanding of natural theology
- Failure of St. Francis' understanding of other created things being bound up in the salvation story (Rom 8:18-25)

# Medieval

# Hierarchy

## Layers of Society





# PROTESTANT REFORMATION

Indulgences





## GEORGE FOX

Hierarchy  
Found God in  
creation

# PROBLEMS

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  - Classical economics: land, labor, capital; interchangeable



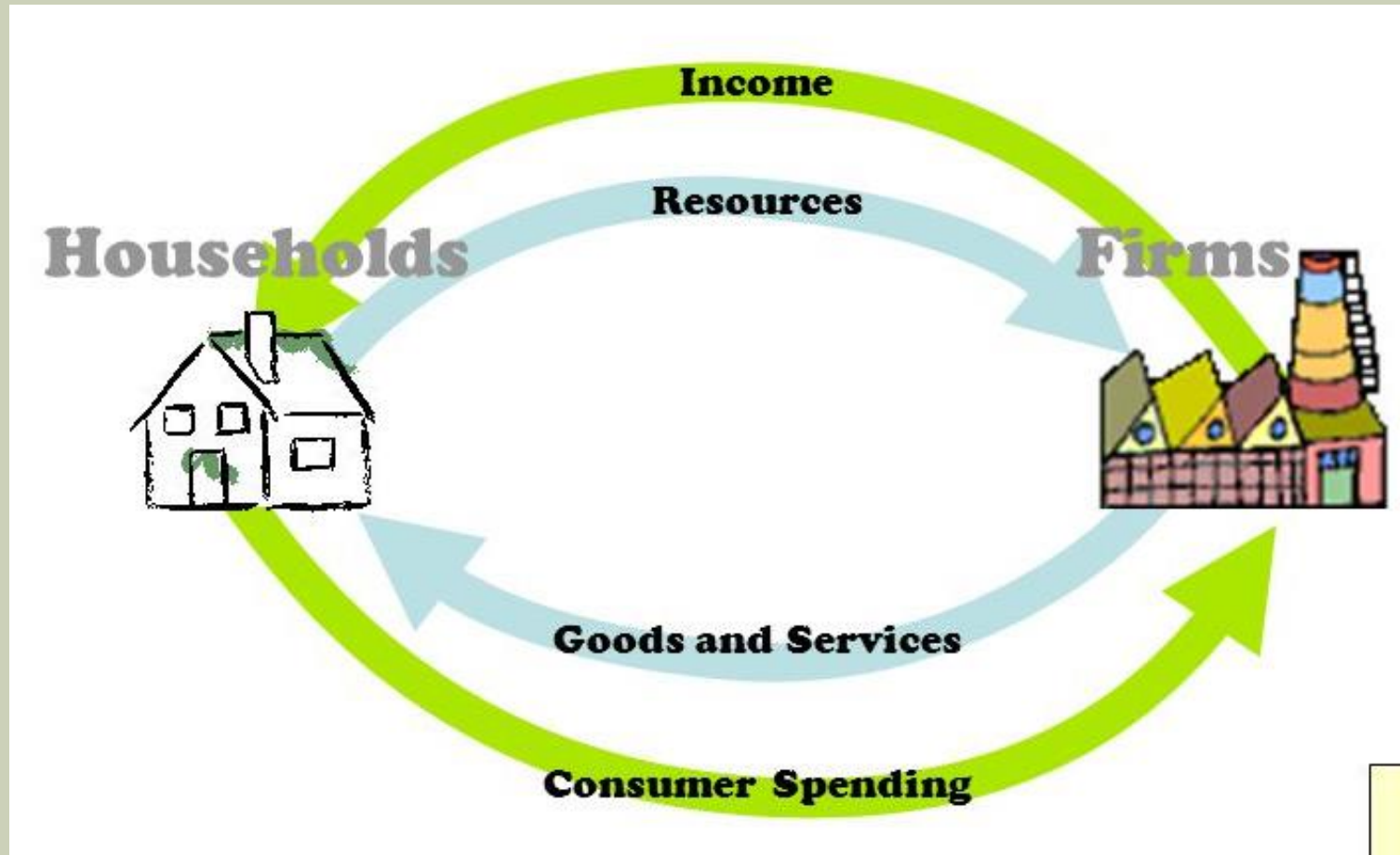
# PROBLEMS

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  - Classical economics: land, labor, capital; interchangeable
  - Unlimited growth

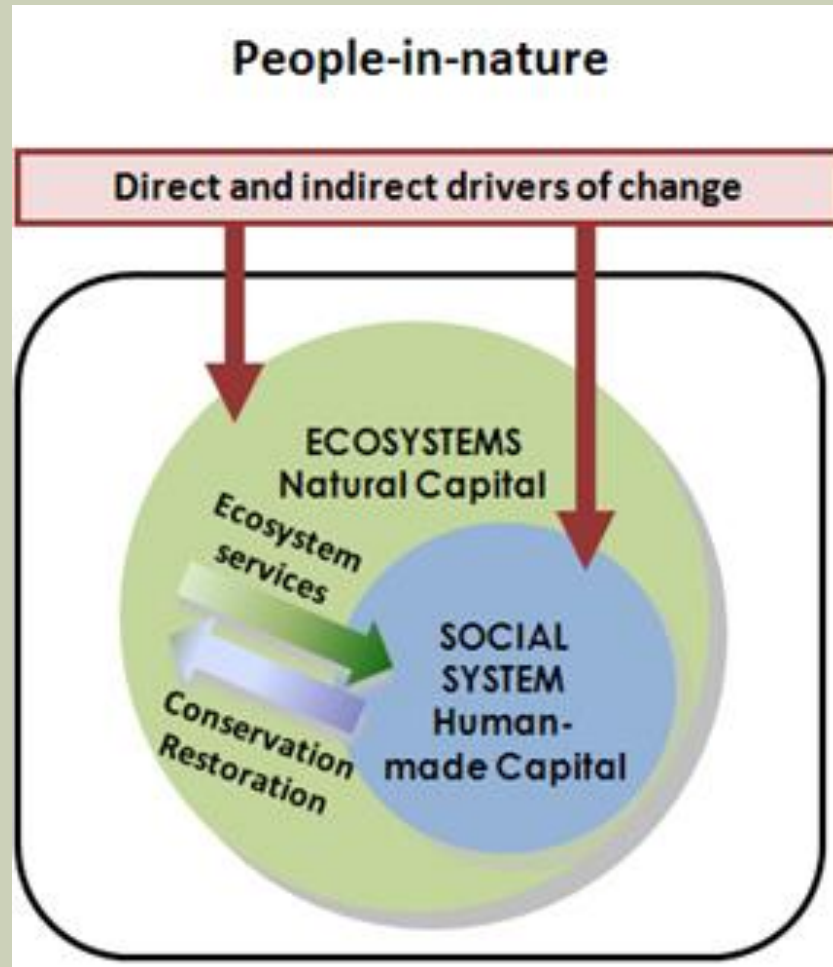




# CLASSICAL ECONOMIC MODEL



# SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM



# PROBLEMS

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- Spiritualizing



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- Spiritualizing
  - No physical sacraments





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- Personalizing
  - Inward Light



# PROBLEMS

- Enlightenment: rationality, objectivity, separation
- Spiritualizing
- Personalizing
  - Inward Light
  - Intellectualism, anti-intellectualism



# PROBLEMS

- Enlightenment: rationality, objectivity, separation
- Spiritualizing
- Personalizing
- Rituals & culture





# POTENTIALS

- Taking the Bible seriously



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- Taking the Bible seriously
- Emphasis on social justice
  - Partially realized eschatology (Kingdom of God here and now)
  - Direct actions and willingness to be counter-cultural





# POTENTIALS

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- Communalism



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  - Way open for recognition of God in creation



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- Recognizing God at work in other cultures, rituals
- No hard line between sacred and profane or secular
  - Breaks down dualism
  - Way open for recognition of God in creation
  - Interconnectedness



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- Emphasis on the Spirit



# SPIRIT

- *Ruach* (רוּחַ): Hebrew for Spirit, spirit, wind, breath, mind; that which animates or gives life
- *Pneuma* (πνεῦμα): Greek for Spirit, spirit, wind, breath; creative force of a person





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- “Prophethood” of all believers



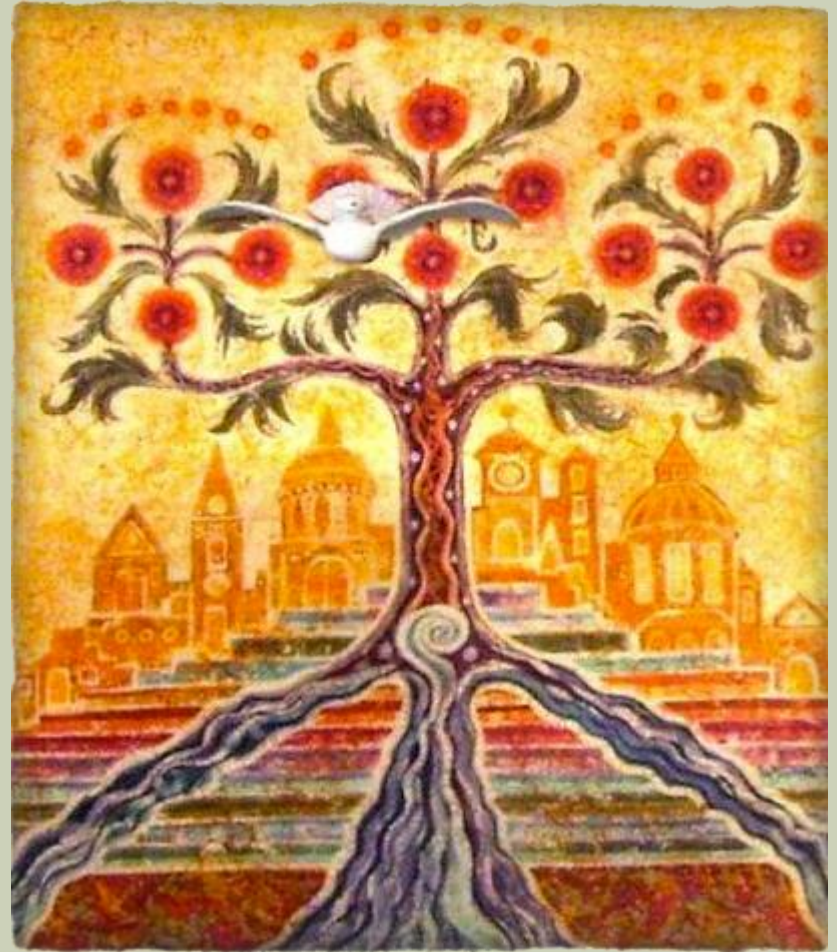
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- “Prophethood” of all believers
- Simplicity



# BOTH/AND

- Transcendent and immanent
- Body and spirit
- Kingdom is within us and not yet here (implications for place)
- God present in and separate from creation
- Interconnected = related and other
- Salvation and grace are personal and communal



# OVERVIEW

## Problems

- Enlightenment: rationality, objectivity, separation
- Spiritualizing
- Personalizing
- Rituals & culture

## Potentials

- Taking the Bible seriously
- Emphasis on social justice
- Communalism
- Recognizing God at work in other cultures, rituals
- No hard line between sacred and profane or secular
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- Prophets
- Simplicity