

GOD!
Message 4

INTRO: By now, as we have considered the subject before us, have you stopped to ponder this one word: God! That is the greatest word your mind will ever dwell on. Depending on our knowledge of Him, accordingly our mind will be able to appreciate the Person that name stands for. Now before we proceed with actually looking at who God is as revealed in His attributes, I think we need to yet answer this question: Why did God make man? Why did I come into existence? Why did you come into existence? We might put the question like this: What does God want from man?

But before we consider what God wants from us, let me briefly review what we have covered so far. In the first message we simply introduced the subject of God and sought to show the magnitude of it. We said that all of life depends on our concept of God. When we bring God down from where He truly is, and we lift man up, we begin to minimize sin. We said that a true knowledge of God is eternal life and it brings a healthy fear of God. Why are so many of us so half hearted in our commitment to God? Because we have a faulty view of God.

Then in the last two messages we asked this question: Who is God? We looked at four points. The first is how we can know there is a God. Is there any proof that God exists? Well, we gave proof from nature, from the Bible, from the conscience and from reason. To say there is no God is unreasonable. Then we looked at how God is revealed. We said He is revealed through the world book, nature; and through the Word book, the Bible. Then we looked at whom we find revealed as God, in both general and special revelation. General revelation reveals that God exists and even speaks to us of some of His divine attributes, but it is special revelation, the Bible that tells us precisely who God is. He is the One and only true God, the One revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Last we considered how we can personally get to know this One true God, for we can have a personal relationship with Him. We saw from the Word of God that we are all sinners and that before we can have a relationship with Him, we must repent of our sins. Then we must receive Jesus Christ into our hearts as Lord of our life, and our Savior from

sin and death and hell. And at that moment, a personal relationship with God will begin.

Our question this morning is: Why did God create man? This morning you must put your thinking caps on. If you take your thinking cap off for one moment this morning, you may miss the message entirely.

II. WHY DID GOD CREATE MAN?

A. Answer From Speculation

So, let us turn our attention to this next question: Why did God create man? Why did He make man? Why did you come into existence? Can we know the answers to such questions? Yes we can. It is the purpose of the very first question and answer in our Catechism. But before we give the answer the Catechism gives, I want to go back even further than the Catechism does, to address another question, the answer to which is only hinted at in Scripture.

The purpose of man's creation is answered in Scripture. Let me state it very simply and then deal with it later. God created man for His own glory. But, there is another question and the answer to this will help us understand much more fully why God created man to glorify Him. I trust this question and the speculated answer will give each one of us a yet greater incentive to live our lives wholly for God. Here is the question and it is twofold: Why did God allow sin to enter the universe, and why did He not destroy the devil the moment he sinned?

Many years ago I heard a message by a Pentecostal preacher named Jimmy Swaggart in which he gave his opinion to those questions and I have never forgotten that message. Although the following is my own explanation, it is heavily influenced by that message I heard over 30 years ago. You see, we believe the world and the universe was created approximately 6000 years ago. Some theologians think it was about 10,000 years ago, but from biblical history I believe 6000 is very close.

Now let me ask you this: what was there before the angels and the universe were created? (Give time to

ponder.) As far as we know, there was nothing, except God. We do not know when angels were created; but that they are created beings and that they have not existed forever we know. So, before the creation of angels and the universe, so far as Scripture reveals, there was only one being in existence, and that was God Almighty. Scripture clearly indicates that God has no beginning and no ending, thus He is eternal. So, of course God has always existed.

So, we are back to a time when God alone existed. Later in these messages we will see what an incredible God, Almighty God is. We will see that He is perfect and good and holy and we could go on and on. But, there was no one to appreciate Him in all His goodness. He alone existed. And the only logical reason I can come to as to why God created the angels, is the very same reason why He created mankind, and that is that there would be beings with a free will that would learn to appreciate who He, God is, and that they would glorify and honor and praise Him for all His goodness and He would be fulfilled in that, and His created beings would be fulfilled as well. And so He created the angels before He created man in order to bring honor and glory to Him. They were free moral agents and learned to know this great God and when they learned what kind of God He was they extolled and honored and glorified Him just as we find them doing in Revelation 4-5. They learned to appreciate this great God and there was perfect harmony in the universe. And the more they learned to know God, the more they extolled and honored and praised Him. And so, God no longer existed all alone, and there were personal beings that appreciated the goodness of God and glorified Him of their own free will.

And then one day, as time progressed, we come to a very tragic day. One of the angels, one of the highest of angels began to desire to receive the glory that belonged to God Almighty alone. And with this desire, the very first sin ever committed in the universe was born. We find this described for us in very interesting language. Turn with me to Ezekiel 28 (read 12-15). You see, all was in perfect harmony. Angels were doing exactly what God had made them for, and then one day, Lucifer, the highest of angels, the

anointed cherub that covers, coveted God's position and glory. And with this coveting came a sad day in the angelic realm, a day when iniquity was found in the heart of Lucifer, the anointed cherub.

And what was this iniquity? Well, we turn to Isaiah 14 to find out (read 12-14). Lucifer wanted to be like the most high God. Lucifer wanted the glory that belongs to God Almighty alone. Lucifer had become selfish, and with that selfish act, he became the one we know as the devil. Sometimes the question is asked: Why did God make the devil? The answer is God did not make the devil. He made an anointed cherub, a very high ranking kind of angel, and this anointed cherub fell through pride of position and thus the devil came into being.

Why did God allow sin to enter the universe? Because for angels or man to worship Him of their own free will, they had to also have the free will to disobey God. If that were not true, they would have been robots, and no one get true glory from robots. God could not stop Lucifer from coveting His position without destroying Lucifer's free will.

Now I wonder how many of you have ever wondered about this question: Why did God not destroy Lucifer the day he became the devil? Well, let me tell you why I think He did not. You see, for God to be honored and glorified and extolled, this must come from a personal being that expresses those things by his or her own free will. You see, God could have created robots to do this, but it would have no value. If you made something very nice and you were very happy with it, and you recorded onto something these words, "Margaret, or George or whatever your name is, you are wonderful. No one is able to sew or cook or build like you. You are the greatest. You are incredible." How much would that do for you every time you turned on the recording? Not much at all. So worship from any one but a personal being with a free will that worships from the heart is of no value.

Now let us say God had destroyed Lucifer the day he sinned and became the devil, would the other angels still have continued to worship and praise and extol God of their own free will? The answer of course is,

No! If God had cast Satan into hell the very moment he became the devil, the rest of the angels would have known that the day they stopped worshipping and praising and extolling God, they too, would get the axe. So, if God had destroyed the devil the day he sinned, from that day on the rest of the angels would know that if they did not continue to extol and praise and glorify God, they too will be destroyed. So from that time on they would have to worship God, and that kind of worship would not be worship at all. You see, if God had destroyed Lucifer the day he became the devil, that day, worship by the free will of all the other millions, or more likely billions of angels would have ceased. But as long as God did not destroy the devil, this worship continued to be by the angel's free will.

Later we will learn that God is just. This justice demands that God must ultimately deal with Lucifer's sin. The devil knows that unless he can somehow foil God's plan, and thus God Himself, some day God must deal with his sin. So he tried to get Adam and Eve to his side of the battle, and he enticed them to sin. But God foiled Satan's plan for He had a way in which he would ultimately justify sinners and remain just at the same time. When the devil learned that God would do this through the line of Judah, he began to try to destroy that line. When he failed, and learned that the Messiah had been born through Mary, He then sought to kill Jesus. He failed until Jesus was about 32-33 years old, and then he finally succeeded, only to find that by killing Him he had fulfilled God's plan even further. From that time on he has set about to destroy the church. That is you and I as believers. When he fails to destroy the Church, and fail he will, and the Church is delivered at the rapture, he will then set about to destroy Israel once more. Again he will fail, and then he is cast into the bottomless pit until the 1000 years are fulfilled. Then once more he is loosed, and again he seeks to win his battle for God's position, by winning man to his side, but again he fails. I believe it is then, that God can ultimately and finally cast Satan into hell, while He remains to be glorified by the free will of angels and saved man. Such is the wonderful plan of God.

Now I realize that some of this is speculation and want you to hold it as such, but I believe that after Lucifer sinned, God created the universe and man to destroy the devil while leaving both angels and man to worship Him by their own free will. That, I believe, is why you and I exist. Through man, God will some day be able to cast Satan into hell and all the angels that followed him and every human being that did not respond to the Gospel, and still be worshipped by the free will of all the angels and all saved people who did not follow Satan. That, I believe, is the reason God created the whole universe and placed man on that one tiny planet we call earth!

You see, when Adam and Eve sinned, God was not caught by surprise. He put in motion a plan He had before He created the heavens and the earth. I want you to see this in Scripture. Turn with me to Revelation 13 (read verse 8), *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (that is antichrist) whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* You see, Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. When God created all things He knew man would sin and how He would redeem man. He knew how He would remain just while justifying sinners.

And I believe you and I are here for one major purpose; to bring honor and glory to God Almighty. And in so doing, through the process of mankind's history, God will ultimately be able to destroy the devil and all who follow him, and God will remain the One true God who is then still worshipped by the free will of all those beings that so chose Him in history. I believe every person who is born has the purpose of bringing glory to God, and every person that gets saved enters that great battle between God Almighty and the devil. The true Christian, the saved person, will help God bring everything to where He is worshipped and honored and glorified while the free will of man and angels is retained.

So, this brings us now to the point of considering from Scripture the purpose revealed for the creation of man and thus answer the question: Why did God make mankind?

B. Answer From Scripture

1. To glorify Him

So we have sought to answer the question why God made man from speculation. We did this by seeking to answer these two questions: Why did God allow sin to enter the universe, and why did He not destroy the devil the day he sinned? Now we want to answer the question why God made man from information found in the Scriptures. Most, if not all Catechisms written over the centuries have begun with that very question. Our own catechism says, "Was ist das Notwendigste, wonach ein Mensch in diesem Leben trachten soll?" The English goes like this: "What should be our chief aim in life?" The answer given is: "To live in God's fellowship, enjoy His favor, and obtain eternal happiness hereafter."

The Westminster Shorter Catechism, I believe, asks a better question and answers it better as well. The question goes like this: "What is the chief end of man?" The meaning of that question is this: What is the main purpose God made man? The answer given is this: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." We will only truly enjoy God when we live to glorify Him.

I want us to see this first from Scripture (Read Is. 43:7; 1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 11:36; Rev. 4:11; 5:12-13). Now I want you to consider man's major problem. The book of Romans is an extended tract on salvation and the first 3 chapters are given to show man's problem and it is that of sin. Now look at Romans 3:23 (read). What is man's problem? We have failed of the glory of God! When we sin, we fail of the glory of God!

So our first task is to define what glory is. I have tried using different ways to explain the meaning of glory, but I always come back to this illustration. For those who have heard it before, just play along with me. How many of you have ever made something, you colored a picture, sewed a dress or you built something and it turned out

beautifully, maybe even better than you think. And you just kept going back to look at it. How many of you have had that experience? So, when somebody comes over, when it is discreetly appropriate, what do you do? You show them, of course. And when they say, "Wow! Incredible! Who made this?" And you just shrug and say, "I did." Do you know that feeling that comes when your abilities are recognized in the thing you made? That moment of recognition is glory! Now do not lie to me, how many of you like that feeling? Well, all of us do. And what may come as a surprise to you, is that God loves it too.

So we ask, just what does it mean to glorify God? If you miss this concept you will miss something very, very important. So you must put your thinking caps on and try to grasp this message this morning. What does it mean to glorify God? John Calvin writes this: "The glory of God is when we know what He is." Bengel says, "Glory is the divinity manifest." Vines Dictionary gives a twofold answer. First, it is "...the nature and acts of God in self-manifestation, i.e., what He essentially is and does, as exhibited in whatever way He reveals Himself in these respects, and particularly in the Person of Christ... Second, it is, "Of the character and ways of God as exhibited through Christ to and through believers."

Now let me express that in my own view: First, the glory of God is the manifestation of God's character and ways TO me. The glory of God is when I recognize some new characteristic of God (Eliazar). So the first way God is glorified is when I get to know Him in some new way. The second way God is glorified is when God's character is recognized by someone else THROUGH me (Jn. 15:8). You see, when I get to know some new aspect of God, I am going to say, "Wow! Incredible!" That moment when I come to recognize some new truth about God or who He is, is glory. But then, when somebody sees some godly trait in me, and they see the work of God and say, "Wow! That's the kind of Christianity I want!" That glorifies God to others.

So, as I understand the Scriptures, God made us for one major purpose, and that is to glorify Him. So let us ask another question: If God made us to glorify Him, how can I do that? Well, let us see how Jesus did this. That will help us to determine how we may glorify God (read John 17:1-6). Note especially verse 4 (read again).

Now here we learn a great deal about glorifying God, but we learn especially that Jesus glorified God by doing the work God had for Him to do. So, how do we glorify God? Well, we need to find His work for us, and then do it.

Now determining the will of God for our lives is a big subject but let me reduce it to this. There is God's general will for us as part of the human race. It is expressed clearly in the Bible and it is how we are to live. We are not to steal, kill, lie etc. etc... That is God's general will. Let me read for you a verse that expresses what God wants for all of us in His general will for us: "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." This is God's general will.

Now let us take one moment to talk about His special will for each person. His special will has to do with what He wants us to do. Does He want me to be a housewife or stay single for Him? As a man, does He want me to be a truck driver, a farmer or a preacher etc... Where does He want me or us to live or what does He want us to buy, or what does He want me to do in the church. And then even more difficult are the questions that relate to Christian ministry. This area is the area of His special will. So there is God's general will, and there is His special will. To glorify God we need to live in His will and do the work He has for us to do.

Determining His general will is not that hard, but we have more difficulty determining His special will for us? Let me give one word of advice here. To find God's special will for your life, obey His general will, and wait for Him to

show you His special will. If you will obey the Lord in life in general, He will reveal His special will for you.

Now I want you to see where, in man, God is glorified. Turn with me to a very interesting passage in 1 Corinthians 6 (19-20). If you are using some new version you will find it is missing part of the last verse. However, the place we glorify God is in our body and in our spirit.

So consider how we glorify Him in our bodies. 1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." So we glorify God by what we do. Our actions either glorify God or bring shame to Him. In the passage we call 'The Sermon on the Mount' Jesus says in 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Paul speaks of magnifying Christ in his body, whether by life or by death (1:20).

So, according to 1 Corinthians 6, we are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit. How do we glorify Him in our spirit? Well, here we learn to know God through His Word and by going to church etc. Then we glorify Him by expressing ourselves to Him in prayer and in our thoughts. We glorify Him by controlling our spirits in such ways as overcoming our anger and jealousy, or envy etc..

CONCL: So, let us bring this message to a close. Why did God allow sin to enter the universe? Because He can only be glorified by the personal choice and free will of personal beings, whether man or angel. Why did He not destroy the devil the day he sinned? Because He would have destroyed worship by free will. If He had destroyed the devil the day he sinned, God might as well have made robots that He could wind up to glorify Him, and that kind of glory is not glory at all!

What does God want from man? Why did He make man? Why did you come into existence? The answer is that He made man for His glory, and He wants you and I to glorify Him of our own

free will. You and I are here for one major purpose, and that is to glorify God, and we must choose to do so. I cannot take the time in these messages to deal with the doctrines of predestination and election, but these two subjects are very misunderstood and work in perfect harmony with the free will of man. I know my Calvinist friends cannot accept that, nor can I accept their view. God will always only be glorified and worshipped and praised by man's free will, or it is not glory or worship or praise at all!

All the time before us, that we live, we will work together with God to further His kingdom, or we will work with the devil to further his rebellion. Every day, every moment is a choice for either one of those two options! There is a worthy thought to take into this next week.

If you notice in your outlines that there is only one point so far under point capital B. That means there is at least one more coming. Why did God make man? First and foremost, He made man to glorify Him. I feel constrained to give one more point and to give a whole message to that point, because again, I believe it is a very misunderstood subject. God made man to glorify Him, but He also made man to worship Him. I believe the chief way of glorifying God is by worshipping Him. And the worship of God, I believe, is also one of the most misunderstood subjects in the Bible. Would it not be understandable that if the worship of God is the chief way of glorifying God, that the devil would blind us on how to worship God? We will look at that in the next message, Lord willing.