

13

God Is Love

Remember this: God loves you.

There is no greater gift in this world that I can give you than in sharing with you the good news of the life-transforming gospel, the good news of Christ Jesus and what He accomplished for you on Calvary's cross. God loves you so much that He sent His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, to earth to be the atoning sacrifice for your sins and to offer you hope, salvation, reconciliation and life eternal. By His sacrificial death on the cross, He forgave you of all of your sins – past, present, and future and is now reconciling you to God; opening the way into the presence of your Creator by demonstrating to the world the indispensable and glorious fact that God loves man and wants to have that relationship with man. This is why God created us in the first place before sin and spiritual death entered into the picture when Adam and Eve were deceived by God's adversary, Satan, into disobeying God.

Does religion matter? Well, not really. God did not come to this earth to start a religion. He did not create us to start a religious following. As God, He needs nothing. He did not create us to be His servants as God has all the angels in heaven to look after and administer to all of His needs. The plain truth is: God doesn't need us! He existed in perfect love and unity before He even created time. So why did He create us? What was His purpose for creating you and me? Scripture clearly tells us in Revelation 4:11 that God created man for His pleasure, for His fellowship, so that we can have an intimate relationship with Him – it's called love.

Yes, God created us for His pleasure and so that we, as His creation, would have the pleasure of knowing Him. God can choose to live anywhere in the universe and He chose your heart. God created you

and loves you so much that He wants you to get to know Him and to spend eternity with Him. There's really no "religion" to it! Just true faith from your heart in Christ Jesus and what He accomplished for you on Calvary's cross. It's all of what He did for you and not anything you can do – you can just cling to His righteousness. It's not about buildings, rules, priests, ceremonies or traditions. It's all about a relationship and not a religion.

God is our Father

The world is not just a haphazard set of circumstances. It is not just a plaything of materialistic forces which no one can understand or control. We are more than just machines. We are more than just impulses. We are living, breathing human beings, created in the likeness of God who loves us and cares for us and wants to be our Father. Behind everything in this world is not just some inanimate force, some mysterious power, but an eternal, living being, and He is our Father. He is in control. He created the world. He created us. He put us in the world. We are here because He put us here. That makes all the difference in the way we feel about life, about the world, about situations and circumstances. We don't need to be lonely. We don't need to be insecure. Everything is in the Father's hand.

Let me explain further:

God did not create human beings because He needed them. As God, He needs nothing. In all eternity past, He felt no loneliness, so He was not looking for a friend. He loves us, but this is not the same as needing us. God created us for His pleasure so that we, as His creation, would have the pleasure of knowing Him. God is love (1 John 4:8), and because of that love and His wonderful creativity, He made us so we can enjoy all that He is and all that He's done. God did not keep His life and love to Himself, but He shared it. He breathed into man the breath (spirit) of life, and man became a living soul. God created humanity because He is love, and not for what humanity could do for Him.

Example: As a healthy couple is to birthing babies, so is God to creating humanity. It is an unhealthy couple who says, "Let's have babies so we will have someone to love us." "Let's have children so

they will serve us." "Let's have children so we can boss them around." "Let's have children so we can get praise from their success."

On the other hand, it is the healthy couple who says, "Because we have an abundance of love in our marriage, let's share it." "Let's have babies who will look like us, have our life within them, and love like us." "Let's have babies so they can enjoy an intimate love relationship with us." It is this couple's pure love that motivates them to give children life.

In eternity past, I imagine God having a holy huddle and saying, *"We have such a great life together and an overabundance of love, let's share it. Let us make humanity in Our image so that they can love like us. Then they can enjoy an intimate relationship with Us."* In the great love chapter, the apostle Paul says that true love *"does not seek its own."* This means that love is not selfish or self-centred. God did not keep His life and love to Himself, but He shared it with His creation. He is our heavenly Father and we are His children.

God also created us to fulfil His eternal plan. I could write pages and pages about this, but suffice it to say that God, in His infinite wisdom, chose to make us a part of His eternal plan. What part do we play in His Plan? Well, the Bible is full of instructions for how we should live our lives. But here are a few key verses to remember:

1. *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength (Deuteronomy 6:5)."*
2. *"Love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39)."* (This takes care of all the Ten Commandments and more.)
3. *"We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10)."*

We're also part of the war between God and Satan and God's ultimate plan to defeat Satan. However, by putting our faith in God, we can defeat Satan and his lies (Ephesians 6:10-18). Finally, perhaps the most important part we play in God's eternal plan is to point people to eternal life with God through His Son Jesus Christ. The Bible calls this our *"ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)."*

That's why we're here and that's why I want to share this book with you. But it's also important to note that we have a choice in all of this. When God created us, He didn't make us pawns in some cosmic chess game. We are not His toy soldiers. God gives us freedom of choice.

Bottom line:

God may not need us, but we certainly need Him. I hope you've made the choice to put your faith and trust completely in Him and play an exciting part in His loving, eternal plan.

With Love, Oscar

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