

Children of God
Romans 8:12-17
July 12, 2020

How much planning went into the Triune God's decision to make everything? Being God, does He even have to plan? When we plan, we are weighing the benefit for us in the long run. We don't want to make mistakes that could cost us so we plan, weighing the options. So if God really didn't need to create to be God, His creating, must not have been for Himself but for His creation.

It is a little hard to wrap our minds around it but what need would God have of creating us? Being the perfect God, He couldn't "NEED" anything. But what if He wanted others, His creation, to know of His love for them?

We've experienced love from our parents, when we were young, being scared or crying over spilt milk, what was it like to know of the love of a parent who would kiss that owhie, and make it all better? What about that girl you really liked and she returned the favor? What about your spouse? What is it like to know that love from the one you pledged your life to? We experience all these "loves" and yet when we think of the love of God for us, and the fact that there is nothing that can keep Him from loving us, what does it feel to experience that kind of love from Him?

God equates His love for us as that of a parent, the best parent ever. He wants to us to experience His love, much like a parent, exactly like a parent. In being that perfect parent though, does a parent ever discipline their children who decide they want have their own of doing things or not doing anything when they are supposed to? What happens if they don't do as required by their parents? The child heads down the wrong road because their flesh seeks to rule their lives and if left without some check on it, the child is headed for even greater problems.

Even though we are God's creation, sin caused a separation from Him, He talked of it being death. Yes, He told Adam and Eve that if they were to eat from that tree in the middle of the garden, they would die. The first to die was their innocence. Hiding from God, He came and sent them out of the area where the other tree lived, the tree of life because of their sin. No way did He want them to live their sinful lives forever, unable to have what they had before, had what they had before.

Yes, eating from the tree caused a death, the death of the relationship they had had with their creator. It also set in motion a life where their actions would haunt them every day of their comparatively long lives. Yes, they looked at those hands that took

and as they used those hands to survive, they were so sorry but what they did, didn't stop God from loving them for He told of the way out and that was the coming of another in the flesh, a son, born of a woman who would fix things for them, and for all.

Without that hope, what would their lives have been like? They didn't see Jesus in person but they knew of the promise of a God that loved them, He created them, didn't He. Yes, they had hope, they experienced the love of God all the days of their lives through hardship and sorrow, they knew the Lord loved them and He would give a man that would make all things new.

They eventually died. We don't know how long Eve lived, Adam lived over 900 years. They eventually came to the fulfillment of God's promise of physical death but when they died, they held on to the promise, the promise of that son to come.

That physical death has been handed down even to us. Yes, that flesh, that sinful flesh, the flesh we live in each day is alive for now. It will not last as long as Adam's flesh as mankind tends to live in the flesh to such and extent, God had to send a flood to wipe it out one time and only 8 were spared and then later He had to come and confuse the language of the people to get them to do as He commanded Adam and Eve, to be fruitful and multiply and fill the land.

People have been multiplying and filling the land ever since. Sin, has contaminated that flesh ever since as well and everyone born, is going to have a death of the flesh. Some would say, how could God be so unloving and yet it is because of love that He promised Adam and Eve the future, after a time, after death.

The Triune God decided on a plan, a plan where Jesus would become one of us. God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son for us, to give us that certain hope we have that when this life is over, we will be alive, with Him forever.

The thing of it is, it wasn't enough to do all this at a distance but He became one of us but then as a loving God would do, He went one step farther, He didn't just want to be a foster parent but He wanted us for His own, He adopted us through the water and the Word in our baptisms.

He adopted us, made us His own through His Son, Jesus who paid the adoption price of His body and blood on the cross. He brought us out of slavery to the flesh to be heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. Even though we are heirs, we are still in the world, where sin is so prevalent. Because of that, even though we are heirs, we will be called on to suffer in this life because of the hatred of Jesus.

We are part of the family of God. It is a big family but God wants an even bigger one. There are so many who do have a Father like Him. They are orphans, alone, living their lives thinking this is all there is. This all they know. They are blind to what is available, what is desired for them by the one who truly cares for them. They only have what they can see with their clouded eyes.

They may have the love of a parent or maybe of a spouse but it can't compare to the love of God for them. They may have heard of Jesus or of Christians but their understanding is all wrong. He didn't come to condemn the world but came that the world should be saved through Him. You don't save something of no value. You don't sacrifice your life for someone unless you love that person and you surely don't take punishment for anyone, specially if they are an enemy unless you know how much it might possibly mean to them in the future.

Jesus paid the price for all people. He went to that cross to pay the adoption fee for all to be brought into the family of God. He makes what we have to go through in this life bearable. A person can go through a lot if they have hope in something better to come. We have that hope because our Father promised it to us.

How many times do we turn our backs on that hope though? We, like many before, are tempted to go our own way. It is not that God has abandoned us but that He is allowing us to have some skin in the game. It is not that somehow God will look at us more lovingly because we suffer on account of Jesus. No, these trials just keep us looking to Him and what He has done for us.

The Holy Spirit that dwells in us to create faith is still in us to sustain that faith no matter what trials we have to face in this life. He convinces us that we are the children of God and are loved by Him.

The flesh tries to imitate that love of God our Father. It tries in so many ways calling things by familiar terms, terms used God but they are just a covering up for the thing to make it seem like it is from God but it is from the flesh. It is a spirit of slavery that seeks to rule your life, to bring you down to the level of this sinful world.

The Lord wants more than what this sinful world can offer. He has better plans for us. The Lord spoke of those plans to Jeremiah. He had Jeremiah write: **Jer. 29:11-14** For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and

gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

The Israelites were sent into exile so that they would think about their sin and look once again, not to the world around them but to the one who gave them life.

If you have a medical problem, how far would you be willing to go to get the cure, especially if the ailment is going to kill you? You would do all you could to get it taken care of, healed. There may be some pain involved but knowing what it will be like later, you can put up with until then.

We have been given so much. We know of how much the Lord loves us. We are grateful to God for what He has done through Jesus, our brother. Jesus rose bodily to heaven, just as we will one day. He looked past the suffering, knowing when He rose again, He would be seated at the right hand of God.

Jesus is there but He wants all of us there too, including all who do not believe. Some would say that He loves everyone and they would be right, He loves everyone and yet even though He loves everyone, not everyone understands what that love entails. He went to the cross, died and rose again but He is still involved here and now through His Holy Spirit that proceeded from He and the Father to come into lives here on earth.

Flesh gets in the way of His love or maybe I should say of our love with one another and with Him. The Lord has His view of love and how it is to be expressed. Yes, we are to love everyone too but our sinful flesh can make it seem like love when it is contrary to His will for us. Too many times we taint His will for us and others saying it is love when instead of what we are looking to do is to satisfy our lusts, our desires, even those times when many would say what we are doing is "good."

We think of Paul's last line of how we are going to suffer with Him. It is not only the physical suffering but what about the suffering in our minds, in our hearts over what we think we need, deserve, desire? This flesh of ours seems to want things that aren't always what He wants. He will have things happen at the right time, at the right place so that just as those in Jeremiah's day, we get to the point where we are ready to listen and not resist His will for us.

We led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. He was given, so that we wouldn't fall back into the spirit of slavery, slavery to sin where fear reigns, not knowing if you have done enough or thinking you haven't done anything that bad. Thanks be to God He has made us heirs with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.