

GOD'S TRANSFORMING RELATIONSHIP WITH MAN

Psalm 8:3-5 ... "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor."

Did you have had a childhood friend you considered your best friend? You played and went to school together, and spent as much time as possible with one another. You visited one another's homes and your parents might have seen your friend so often, they considered him or her a part of your family, and vice versa. Then one day he or she said or did something that hurt you deeply, and saw no reason to apologize to you. Your friendship was never the same after that. You continued to see one another at school, but you were never truly good friends after that. Your friendship was broken.

God's relationship with man has gone through similar breakdowns in trust and friendship. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit always existed – millions upon millions of years before God created man. God is not subject to loneliness, so he did not create us because of that. As we read in today's passage, God also did not create us because he needs us. He created us primarily to share in his glory and his presence for eternity. God created you because he wants to crown you with "glory and honor."

Jeremiah 31: 3 reads: "...I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, with lovingkindness I have drawn you." The word "everlasting," means forever without beginning or end. It means that God loved you before you were even created. If that does not make you feel humble and privileged, you may be already dead emotionally and spiritually.

The first man, Adam, had a perfect relationship with the Lord, who even walked and talked with him in the Garden of Eden. Can you imagine that? But after Adam and Eve sinned, their close friendship with God was broken, because God will not tolerate sin or be in the presence of it. After that, for thousands of years until Jesus was born in Bethlehem, God only spoke to specific righteous prophets and Jewish priests, who were responsible for giving his people messages and instructions. Most of the Bible's Old Testament contains those messages to man from God via prophets and priests.

When Jesus came to earth, the possibility for friendship with God was restored. By simply accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior and repenting of our sins, we can have the relationship that Adam had with the Lord. We can talk to him, seek his help, hear his instructions (through his Holy Spirit) and enjoy a beautiful friendship with Christ. You do not need a prophet, priest or pastor to tell you what God wants, or to be your emissary to God. That era ended with the birth of Christ. But without a restored friendship with God, you will be eternally separated from him, just as your friendship with a childhood friend might have been severed. You cannot restore your relationship with God through your priest or pastor, through your church or temple. You can only accomplish that by personally confessing your sins to him and obeying him.

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