

Soli Deo Gloria

Ge 2:7ff

God is Love

His love is shown in man's creation

His love is shown in the garden

His love is shown even when it is rejected

Intro: **"God is love."** The apostle John declares it twice in his first epistle, the fourth chapter. Throughout the Bible and throughout history that fact is clearly declared. It is evident already in the earliest chapters of the Bible, in man's earliest history. Already in Eden this fact is made clear: God Is Love. 1) His love is shown in man's creation. 2) His love is shown in the garden. 3) His love is shown even when it is rejected.

**I. His love is shown in man's creation (7)**

**A. Man's body**

1. human body is wonderful
  - a. **"I am fearfully and wonderfully made"** the psalm writer declared in Psalm 139
  - b. we can declare that with even more certainty in our age of technology
  - c. the human body is a fascinating, remarkable, complex, and intricate thing isn't it
  - d. as it works so effectively, efficiently, and regularly
2. due to loving Lord God
  - a. this is due to the fact that the loving Lord God took great care and showed great love in his creation of it
  - b. when Moses tells us that **"the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground"**
  - c. he used the Hebrew verb  $\Upsilon X Y$  which gives the picture of a potter taking great care and showing personal interest in shaping his vessel
  - d. the loving Lord God lovingly created man's body

**B. Man's life**

1. breathed into him his life
  - a. then, after taking great concern in forming man out of the ground,
  - b. he took further care in bringing the man he created to life
  - c. Moses informs us that the Lord God **"...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."**
2. an act done in love
  - a. unlike the animals which the Lord God animated by a divine command
  - b. the loving Lord God made the man he had created a living being
  - c. with this loving act of breathing life into him
  - d. the loving Lord God made man both body and soul

Trans: God is love. This is shown in man's creation. Furthermore...

**II. His love is shown in the garden (8-9,15-17)**

**A. Beautiful home**

1. the garden
  - a. all of us want a nice place to live
  - b. we want a nice place to spend our time away from work and with our families and loved ones
  - c. and to that end we spend good money to make our homes as aesthetically pleasing as possible both inside and out

- d. after the loving Lord God lovingly created man and gave him life
  - e. he created for him a fine home in which to live
  - f. Moses informs us that the Lord God **"...planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed."**
  - g. an early Greek translation of the Hebrew OT, the Septuagint, names it Paradise
2. its dual purpose
  - a. in this Paradise the loving Lord God **"...made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground..."**
  - b. these trees served two purposes:
  - c. they were **"pleasing to the eye"** making man's new abode aesthetically pleasing to him
  - d. and they were **"good for food"** giving man the means to sustain the life the loving Lord God had given him

**B. Work**

1. take care of the garden
  - a. now that man had a fine home the loving Lord God gave him work to do
  - b. he was **"to work"** and **"take care of"** the garden the loving Lord God had given him
2. but not a burden to him
  - a. for man this work was not a burden as work is often viewed
  - b. on the contrary it was a blessing to him
  - c. ask many retired people and they will say that inactivity is only fun for so long
  - d. human beings need work to keep them busy; in addition, it makes them feel productive and gives them a sense of fulfillment
  - e. man's work was given to him to make him happy and blessed
  - f. and it was an opportunity for him to put all of his God-given faculties of body and mind to use for God

**C. Loving command**

1. a loving warning
  - a. at this same time, the loving Lord God gave man a command
  - b. he was not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil under the threat of death if he did so!
  - c. it was a command, a warning if you will, given in love
  - d. much the same as when we warn our children in love to avoid behaviors that will harm and endanger their lives
  - e. the loving Lord God did not want man to die
  - f. and he wanted to make man aware of evil and its terrible consequences
2. an opportunity to worship him
  - a. furthermore, the loving Lord God was giving man the opportunity to show love back to God who had shown so much love to him
  - b. by being obedient to the loving Lord God's command
  - c. Luther puts it beautifully when he states, **"This tree was Adam's church, altar, and pulpit. Here he was to yield to God the obedience he owed."**

Trans: God is love. This is shown in man's creation. It is shown in the garden. And finally...

**III. It is shown even when it is rejected (3:1-7)**

**A. Devil's temptation**

1. the serpent is the devil
  - a. rather suddenly and emphatically in the Hebrew, a serpent appears on the scene in the garden
  - b. the serpent is described as being **"...more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made."**

- c. right away we know we are dealing with more than a serpent
  - d. here is a rational creature with a moral responsibility
  - e. of course, we know this is the devil here to tempt the woman to sin against God
2. his temptation
- a. as he addressed the woman you will notice a shift in the use of the divine name
  - b. Moses consistently used the name Lord God to stress the activity of the God of free and faithful love
  - c. when the devil addressed the woman he left off the Lord part, failing to acknowledge God as the God of free and faithful love
  - d. this was Satan's purpose: to convince the woman that God's will and plan were not good
  - e. that somehow God was bad and mean
  - f. that by his command he was holding something back from her, crushing her independence, and restricting her freedom
  - g. that's Satan's big lie: that man's happiness lies in following his own will and not clinging to God and trusting his will
- B. Woman's choice
- 1. the woman faced a choice
    - a. the woman now faced a choice
    - b. would she follow the loving command of the loving Lord God who had only showered her with love
    - c. or would she reject that love and follow her own will and desire?
  - 2. the woman's choice
    - a. unfortunately, the woman decided to forsake the loving Lord God and follow her own will and desires along with her husband who was with her
    - b. and what was the result?
    - c. both of them became sinful
    - d. we know because they felt shame when they realized they were both naked
    - e. their thoughts were now sinful; they couldn't control them; they were no longer in line with God's holy will
  - 3. death came to them and to all
    - a. and now that they had become sinners they were now subject to death-physical, spiritual, eternal death-as God had warned them
    - b. and not only them but all who followed them as Paul points out in the Epistle Lesson appointed for today, (Ro 5:12, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.")**
    - c. because Adam and Eve sinned we, too, are sinners – each of us – every day rejecting God's love and following our own sinful desires
    - d. subjecting ourselves to death like our first parents, physical, spiritual, eternal death!
  - 4. God still showed love
    - a. yet even when Adam and Eve rejected his love, the loving Lord God still showed them love
    - b. promising to send them and all fallen mankind a Savior
    - c. and the loving Lord God kept that promise and sent his own Son to be fallen mankind's Savior
    - d. God's Son defeated Satan's temptations as is demonstrated in today's Gospel Lesson
    - e. God's Son gave up his life as a payment for the world's sin in every sinner's place as we see during Lent
    - f. to rescue all, even us, from death

- g. and, finally, God's Son rose to life assuring that those who believe in him, even us, will live forever with him in heaven
- h. (Ro 4:25, "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.")**
- i. and all those whom he has justified, even us, will show their gratitude and love to him
- j. by being obedient to his commands given in love

Concl: Even in man's earliest history this truth is clearly evident: God is love!