

The Formation of Humanity **2:4 – 25**

In Genesis 1 we have the initial account of creation by God. Genesis chapter two begins with the seventh day of Sabbath Rest and in our previous section we discussed the implications of that Sabbath Rest in the context of the rest of scripture (Genesis 2:1-3; Hebrews 4).

After the statement of God’s resting when His creative work was complete, there follows a second description of the creative act of God. Why is there another account of creation? Is this a misprint, a mistake? No; not at all. ***The second account of creation is designed to show that humanity is the pinnacle of God’s creation.***

Humanity is not the pinnacle of God’s creation simply because they are human. Humanity is the pinnacle of God’s creation because of *why* they were created by God. Humanity becomes the pinnacle of God’s creation because of what God communicates about Himself through this creative act. What does God tell us, what does He reveal about Himself in the creation of humanity?

The Personal History of the Heavens

Genesis 2:4-6 - ⁴ This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground; ⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

Here we are told that “**This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created. . .**” But wasn’t that what we were given in chapter one of Genesis? Well, not completely. Chapter one is the historical account of the general creation of all things. But in chapter two there is a subtle shift in emphasis. Read the above passage again and compare it with chapter one of Genesis and ask yourself, “Is God referred to the same way in chapter two as He is in chapter one?” The answer is that there is a subtle difference in the way God is referred to in these two chapters and the difference is our first clue that the emphasis is shifting from the general creation of all things to a particular focus.

In Genesis chapter two and three God is referred to as “**the LORD God**” 19 times (2:4, 5, 7,8,9,15, 16,18,19,21,22; 3:1,8,9,13,14,21,22,23). In the book as a whole the phrase “LORD God” occurs 28 times (14:22; 15:2, 8; 24:7, 12, 27, 42, 48; 28:13). This means that in Genesis chapters two and three nearly two thirds of the occurrences of the phrase “LORD God” occur. Why is this significant?

Up until this point in Genesis God is simply referred to as “God” (Hebrew ELOHIM – Strong’s #430 - אֱלֹהִים - *ēlôhîm*, *el-o-heem*). In verse 2:4 God’s name is given further detail by the addition of the word “LORD” (Strong’s #3068 - יְהוָה - *Yhōvâh*, *yeh-ho-vaw*)

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which refers to the self existence or eternal nature of God.¹ “LORD” is the holiest name of God and is referred to as the Tetragrammaton. This name for God was viewed as so holy by the priests of the Old Testament that they did not write out the complete name for fear of mispronouncing it when it was read. They removed the vowels from the name so that we are only certain that it contained the letters YHWH. Later in history the vowels were taken from the word “Lord” (i.e. ADONAI) and inserted in the word YHWH to create the word YAHWEH as a translation of the term “LORD.”

But there is more to this name phrase, “LORD God.” The name phrase “LORD God” is the personal name of God; it emphasizes His presence, involvement, and the oversight of His people. In Exodus 3:14-17 the words “LORD God” are used when God’s plan to deliver His people is given to Moses. It states:

- **Exodus 3:14-17 - ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ” ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.’ ¹⁶ Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, “I have surely visited you and *seen* what is done to you in Egypt; ¹⁷ and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.” ’**

In the context of these verses God describes Himself as “**I AM WHO I AM**” which conveys the thought that whatever God needs to be to accomplish His will, that’s what He is, He is totally sufficient and adequate for any task He wills (Exodus 3:14). Notice too that “the LORD God” is personal in that He associates Himself with the particular persons Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 3:15). “The LORD God” is the name used here to refer to God when He makes a personal appearance and when He acknowledges that He has seen the plight of His people and intends to intercede on their behalf to deliver them from their enemies (Exodus 3:16-17). The transition of referring to God as “God” in Genesis one to “the LORD God” in Genesis two is significant because it announces ***God is not going to be a distant uninvolved Being, He is going to be involved in the oversight of humanity.*** This is important because it introduces us to ***the personal history of the heavens.***

Why Did God Create Humanity?

Genesis 2:7 - ⁷ And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

¹Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H3068). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

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Why did the LORD God create human beings? Why are we here? That's a big and fundamental question of life isn't it? Answering that question properly determines the kind of life we end up living.

It would be wrong to say that God created humanity because He had a need of some kind. ***God is totally self sufficient.*** God does not ***need*** us (Isaiah 40:13-31). Some say God created humanity because He "needed" fellowship. This is absolutely wrong! God has all the fellowship in His Triune nature that He needs (e.g. Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 48:16). So why were we created? (cf. Psalm 8 where the psalmist asks a very similar question.) This answer cannot be answered apart from God's revelation of Himself in the scriptures. What does the scripture tell us about why we were created?

First, God created humanity as an expression of His will and for His pleasure. In the book of Revelation it states:

- **Revelation 4:11 - "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."**

God simply created humanity as an expression of His sovereign will. No more explanation is necessary, but God does elaborate in His word (Daniel 4:34-35).

I like the King James translation of this verse when it states:

- **Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.** ²

I like this translation because it tells us that God created "**for thy pleasure.**" ***God simply created because it gave Him pleasure to do so.*** And when you think that God in His foreknowledge knew what creating humanity would cost Him, it makes Him all the more incredible (Ephesians 1:4ff.).

Second, God created humanity for Himself. In the New Testament the role of Jesus in the creation is discussed and when it is, it states that what was created was created for Him:

- **Colossians 1:16-17 - ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.**

Sinful humanity are under the mistaken notion that they exist for themselves and as they try to find fulfillment in self-seeking ventures all they find is emptiness, frustration and futility. Fulfillment comes in knowing God through faith in Christ (John 10:10). God created humanity for Himself to bring glory to Himself not glory to humanity (Romans 11:36). This is all the more

²The King James Version, (Cambridge: Cambridge) 1769.

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true once we realize God has purchased us from our unredeemed state through the sacrifice of His only son Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Third, God freely created humanity for fellowship. God did not need humanity to fellowship; God experiences perfect fellowship in the Triune Godhead (e.g. Genesis 1:26). But God created humanity with the capacity to fellowship with Him. Sin broke down that fellowship (Isaiah 59:2). But the redemptive work of Jesus Christ makes a way for that fellowship to be entered into again (1 John 1). God created fellowship to serve as a means and instrument to manifest His love.

Fourth, God freely created us to show His love. God did not have to create us in order to experience love; He could do that amongst the Triune Godhead (Matthew 3:16-17; John 3:25; 5:20-29; 14:31). But He freely created us to show His love. The apostle John was inspired by God to write about God's loving nature when he penned:

- **John 3:16 - ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**
- **1 John 3:1-3 - Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.**
- **1 John 4:7-21 - ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us. ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.**

God loves the world and all people in it (John 3:16). Sin has hidden the love of God from the sinner but God has made a way through Jesus Christ to experience that love once again (1 John

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3:1-3). God is love and when you know God in a saving way His love rubs off on you and you begin to love too (1 John 4:7-8, 16). God's greatest expression of love is His sending Jesus His only Son into the world to redeem it (1 John 4:9, 14-15). Love is not a creation of humanity, it is a creation of God (1 John 4:10). It is through God's love that we see Him best (1 John 4:11-12). The Holy Spirit is the Agent of God's love (1 John 4:13). God is the initiator of love (1 John 4:17-19). Without love we don't know God (1 John 4:20-21).

How Did God First Express His Love to Humanity?

Even though the term "love" or similar terms are not found in Genesis two, when we examine this chapter we see clear evidence of God's love. That is because love is an action and as we look at the acts of God, we see the presence of His love. When we look at the creation account in Genesis 2 we see some very clear expressions of love by God to Humanity. What are they?

First, God showed His love by giving humanity a beautiful place to live (2:9-14). In Genesis 2:9-14 it describes a beautiful habitat for humanity to live:

Genesis 2:9-14 - ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹ The name of the first *is* Pishon; *it is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. ¹² And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. ¹³ The name of the second river *is* Gihon; *it is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel; *it is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

There were trees to eat from and to appreciate for their beauty (2:9a). There was a beautiful garden (2:9b). The tree of life was there to give life to Adam (2:9c). The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was there that would later be the instrument by which the first humans could either prove or disprove their love for God (2:9d). There was a river that flowed into four other rivers which watered the vegetation and kept it fruitful and to refresh Adam (2:10-14).

Second, God showed His love by giving man responsibility (2:15). We don't always realize it, but giving someone responsibility is saying, "I trust you," and that is an attribute of love (1 Corinthians 13:7). In Genesis it states:

Genesis 2:15 - ¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

God trusted Adam to tend and oversee the beautiful garden He had made. God didn't worry that Adam would mess up His beautiful garden. He didn't worry that Adam would dig up the plants or ruin the trees. He trusted Adam with the oversight of the garden and that was an act of love.

Third, God showed His love by helping Adam to understand what love involves (2:16-17). It goes on in Genesis to state:

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Genesis 2:16-17 - ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Here is the first command of God to humanity. Notice the generosity and freedom of the Lord in that Adam was given freedom to eat of every tree in this garden except one. The only tree Adam was forbidden to eat from was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God explains Himself and His prohibitive command to Adam very clearly saying, **“for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”**

There is more significance to this command than that God simply did not want Adam to not do something. God instituted His command to teach Adam about the nature of love. There are two components of love, *reciprocity* and *volition*. Love involves response. You can't truly love an inanimate object. You may say you love your car or you love your home, but it is only a one way thing and is not true love. Love is fulfilled when two parties respond to each others loving overtures. A relationship ends when one party decides they will not return the love of the other. God showed His love by acting in a loving way toward Adam; He provided a garden for him and put His trust in him to take care of it.

Love also involves volition or choice. Love is voluntarily given. A robot cannot love because it has no other option. For love to exist there has to be the option of not loving. Love involves an act of the will. For true love to exist there has to be a choice to love, a decision to love. Adam as well as Eve were put in a position by God to decide whether or not they would respond to His love. God gave them an instruction which they would have to respond to. Either they would obey and trust God which would show they loved Him, or they would disobey Him and show they did not love Him.

Jesus pointed out the connection between love and obedience when He said:

- **John 14:21-24 - ²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?”²³ Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.**

We express our love for God by way of our obedience to God. And what is the commandment of God and His only Son Jesus? It is **“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends”** (John 15:13; cf. also John 13:34-35). This has been true from the beginning. When God put Adam and Eve in this situation He was teaching them what love was all about and testing them so they would discover the nature of love and the nature of the absence of love.

Fourth, God showed His love by seeking to protect Adam (2:17). We also see in God’s first command His loving nature and the nature of true love. ***God’s love is protective and seeks the***

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welfare of its object of love. God loved Adam and so He sought to protect him from the danger of death. While God created Adam with the capacity of choice, He gave him clear warning meant to protect him from the danger of death.

The loving protection of God is a theme that runs throughout the Bible. God's commands are aimed at preventing pain and suffering and harm and instead leading people to a place of peace and safety and the outpoured love of God. God always provides us with a way of escape in the face of temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). He promises His presence and strength to be victorious in fulfilling His calling on us when we make His word the meditation of our hearts (Joshua 1:1-9). The Bible says God is a hiding place for those in danger (Psalm 32:7; 46:1-3), a secure Protector who does not slumber in His protective role (Psalm 121; 91:3-7; 57). He hears our cry for help and beats off our enemies (Psalm 56:9). He will always be close to us to offer a reassuring word (Isaiah 41:10). When it is necessary that we go through trials, God is with us to help us through (e.g. Daniel 3:22-27; 6:13-24; Acts 18:9-10). Truly with God as our Protector we need not fear (Psalm 124; Hebrews 13:6). God's grace is always sufficient to meet our needs (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). In the Last Days God has promised to provide the escape route of the Rapture to those who obediently have persevered in their faith (Revelation 3:10).

God has given His word as a preventative measure to keep us from peril and danger in life. If we obey His warning in His word it will spare us much harm in life. If we keep and obey God's word we will experience all that He has for us and live fruitful lives (e.g. Joshua 1). In the book of Deuteronomy when the Lord through Moses is speaking to the people instructing them about going into the Promised Land, God states that obedience leads to blessings, but disobedience leads to the curse of sin's consequences (Deuteronomy 28). This is a principle of life (e.g. Galatians 6:6-7). God has given His word to us to lovingly direct us to His blessing and lovingly warn us of the dangers outside the parameters of His word.

When we realize that God's commandments were meant to protect us, it puts a whole new light on them. When we realize that God gave commands to spare us harm and keep us in the reservoir of His love and blessing, then keeping His commands becomes easier. God's commands are given by God with our best interests at heart. The apostle John stated, **"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome."** (1 John 5:3). God has shown His love to us by the commandments He gave to us and knowing this enables us to keep them with it being a burden to do so. In this sense truly, **"Love is the fulfillment of the law"** (Romans 13:10).

Fifth, God showed His love to Adam by giving him a helper (2:18). In Genesis it states:

Genesis 2:18 - ¹⁸ And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

When God said, **"It is not good"** (2:18) He did not mean, "It is evil" but only that "it is incomplete" or unfinished. God was looking out for Adam and seeking the best for him. This is what love does (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). God taught Adam this by parading the animals before him in pairs to get him to think about who his mate would be. It is possible to be single and be in the will of God (1 Corinthians 7:8-9). But singleness is not the norm for humanity. Marriage is the

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norm. If a person is to remain single for their lifetime it is because God has gifted them to do so. If you are single and still have a desire to be married, then it is likely God has someone for you. Keep praying and God will bring the perfect “helper” to you, just don’t forget to wake up and receive the one God has brought your way (cf. Genesis 2:22 and 23-24).

Sixth, God showed His love by providing a “helper comparable to him” (2:19-22). It states in Genesis:

Genesis 2:19-22 - ¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. ²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. ²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

God paraded the animals before Adam probably impairs so that he would see that he had no comparable “helper” (2:19-20). God designed woman to be the perfect complimentary human for Adam; the perfect teammate and co-laborer in life; the perfect life mate (cf. Ephesians 5:21ff.). God in love went to great lengths to provide a helper that was just right for Adam.

God put Adam into a “**great sleep**” (2:21). This must have seemed like the cessation of life to Adam. He did not know the full extent of what death was at this point, but this sleep preceded the creation of life in Eve. Similarly, a good marriage requires two people willing to die to self. Jesus passed through death to give us life (Matthew 16:21; John 19:34-36). God showed His love for Adam through a painless procedure that led to the life of Eve, Adam’s perfect companion. The best things in life require death to some degree.

Seventh, God showed what love is all about when He created the institution of marriage; Love requires commitment and loyalty (2:23-24). God created marriage to show that love was a life commitment. It states:

Genesis 2:23-24 - And Adam said: “This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.”²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Love takes time to learn and humans will fall short of perfect love frequently, but it is only in that trusting commitment that an environment is provided that love can grow freely. Unless a person has that commitment, they will live on pins and needles wondering if a mistake or offense will end the love relationship. Life commitment relieves the pressure and opens the door to learning love and at times reconciliation.

The marriage relationship is the highest human relationship and requires that all other human relationships be subordinated to it. For a marriage to work as God designed it to work two people must come together in love and put aside as secondary all other relationship. Potential husbands

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and wives must leave their parents and look to their relationship with their spouse as the number one relationship. Even relationships with children must be subordinated to that with their spouse. When relationships with parents or children or others is allowed to compete with the primary marriage relationship, the marriage will be negatively affected and could end up failing. Marriage requires total life commitment. For a marriage to work there has to be a commitment to work on it, cultivate it and work through inevitable problems. All of this is done in the lasting loyal love that God provides and that He knew would be learned in such a relationship.

The marriage commitment is a picture of Christ's commitment to His Bride the Church (Ephesians 5:21 ff.). Just as a husband and wife must put each other first in marriage, we must put Jesus first in our relationship with Him. He has demonstrated His full commitment to us by giving His life for us. This is a big lesson in the class of love.

Eighth, God showed His love by creating a shamelessly intimate relationship for humanity (2:25). It states:

Genesis 2:25 - ²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

They were naked and unashamed which points to the gift of sexual intimacy as an expression of love (Hebrews 13:4). Sexual intimacy in marriage is a great gift of love from God. God created sex and when it is used in the context of God's order and the parameters of His prescription for use, it is beautiful. But when sexual activity occurs outside of marriage it is cheapened and actually works to counter what it was intended to produce. God created sex to produce closeness aimed at solidifying a life commitment and trusting relationship necessary to experience a beautiful relationship in life, marriage. Marriage is can be the closest thing to heaven. Marriage is a human relationship God ordained as an illustration of His love for His people (see Hosea and Ephesians 5).

But not everyone opts to obey the Creator of marriage and sex. No matter how much or how hard the secular world or alternative religions try to convince and propose that sex outside of marriage is "okay," there will always still be an element of guilt and shame associated inherently with sex entered into outside of the marriage bond. God has built that awareness into humanity. Sex experienced God's way is shameless. Sex experienced outside the parameters of God's way is shameful and produces guilt. That is because sex outside of marriage, for whatever reason or rationalized excuse, is sin. God calls sex outside of marriage "fornication" and it is unacceptable to Him (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). If you have bought into the lie that sex outside of marriage is okay, you need to repent and leave that sin behind you and ask God to forgive you. He will forgive the one who sincerely desires to leave their sin behind (1 John 1:9). The sin of sex outside of marriage is like a plague of locusts that brings devastation, but God is able and willing to restore people and marriages (Joel 2:25). That is the truth.

Love is an action (1 Corinthians 13) and God showed us His love by His many provisions for us. His greatest act of love is sending His only Son Jesus to redeem us from the penalty of sin (Romans 5:8). That is the greatest expression of love God ever created and the one that determines our eternal destiny.

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A friend sent me this anecdote by an unknown author entitled *A Love Story*. It has to do with our love for God and His love for us. I pray we all take it to heart.

*** A LOVE STORY ***

One day, I woke early in the morning to watch the sunrise. Ah the beauty of God's creation is beyond description. As I watched, I praised God for His beautiful work. As I sat there, I felt the Lord's presence with me. He asked me, "Do you love me?" I answered, "Of course, God! You are my Lord and Savior!"

Then He asked, "If you were physically handicapped, would you still love me?" I was perplexed. I looked down upon my arms, legs and the rest of my body and wondered how many things I wouldn't be able to do, the things that I took for granted. And I answered, "It would be tough Lord, but I would still love You."

Then the Lord said, "If you were blind, would you still love my creation?" How could I love something without being able to see it? Then I thought of all the blind people in the world and how many of them still loved God and His creation. So I answered, "It's hard to think of it, but I would still love you."

The Lord then asked me, "If you were deaf, would you still listen to my word?" How could I listen to anything being deaf? Then I understood. Listening to God's Word is not merely using our ears, but our hearts. I answered, "It would be tough, but I would still listen to Your word."

The Lord then asked, "If you were mute, would you still praise My Name?" How could I praise without a voice? Then it occurred to me: God wants us to sing from our very heart and soul. It never matters what we sound like. And praising God is not always with a song, but when we are persecuted, we give God praise with our words of thanks. So I answered, "Though I could not physically sing, I would still praise Your Name."

And the Lord asked, "Do you really love Me?"

With courage and a strong conviction, I answered boldly, "Yes Lord! I love You because You are the one and true God!"

I thought I had answered well, but God asked, "THEN WHY DO YOU SIN?"

I answered, "Because I am only human. I am not perfect."

"THEN WHY IN TIMES OF PEACE DO YOU STRAY THE FURTHEST? WHY ONLY IN TIMES OF TROUBLE DO YOU PRAY THE EARNEST?"

No answers. Only tears.

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The Lord continued: "Why only sing at fellowships and retreats? Why seek Me only in times of worship? Why ask things so selfishly? Why ask things so unfaithfully?" The tears continued to roll down my cheeks. "Why are you ashamed of Me? Why are you not spreading the good news? Why in times of persecution, you cry to others when I offer My shoulder to cry on? Why make excuses when I give you opportunities to serve in My Name?"

"You are blessed with life. I made you not to throw this gift away. I have blessed you with talents to serve Me, but you continue to turn away. I have revealed My Word to you, but you do not gain in knowledge. I have spoken to you but your ears were closed. I have shown My blessings to you, but your eyes were turned away. I have sent you servants, but you sat idly by as they were pushed away. I have heard your prayers and I have answered them all." "DO YOU TRULY LOVE ME?"

I could not answer. How could I? I was embarrassed beyond belief. I had no excuse. What could I say to this? When my heart had cried out and the tears had flowed, I said, "Please forgive me Lord. I am unworthy to be Your child."

The Lord answered, "That is My Grace, My child."

I asked, "Then why do you continue to forgive me? Why do You love me so?"

The Lord answered, "Because you are My creation. You are my child. I will never abandon you. When you cry, I will have compassion and cry with you. When you shout with joy, I will laugh with you. When you are down, I will encourage you. When you fall, I will raise you up. When you are tired, I will carry you. I will be with you till the end of days, and I will love you forever."

Never had I cried so hard before. How could I have been so cold? How could I have hurt God as I had done? I asked God, "How much do You love me?"

The Lord stretched out His arms, and I saw His nail-pierced hands. I bowed down at the feet of Christ, my Savior. And for the first time, I truly prayed.

God has demonstrated His love so abundantly to us; we ought to show our love in obedience to Him and His word.