

Q4: How and why did God create us?

God created us male and female in his own image to know him, love him, live with him, and glorify him. And it is right that we who were created by God should live to his glory.

Genesis 1:27

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

Commentary

The glory of God is the first thing that God's children should desire. It is the object of one of our Lord's own prayers: "Father, glorify thy name." (John xii. 28.) It is the purpose for which the world was created. It is the end for which the saints are called and converted. It is the chief thing we should seek, that "God in all things may be glorified." (1 Peter iv. 11.)... He alone deserves to receive all glory...we give Him all honor and praise and rejoice that He is King of kings, and Lord of lords.... Where are our hearts? What do we love best? Are our chiefest affections on things in earth, or things in heaven?... Singleness of purpose is one great secret of spiritual prosperity. If our eyes do not see distinctly, we cannot walk without stumbling and falling. If we attempt to work for two different masters, we are sure to give satisfaction to neither. It is just the same with respect to our souls. We cannot serve [God] and the world at the same time. It is vain to attempt it. The thing cannot be done.... God must be king over our hearts. His law, His will, His precepts must receive our first attention.

We have all talents in God's sight.... Anything whereby we may glorify God is a talent, our gifts, our influence, our money, our knowledge, our health, our strength, our time, our senses, our reason, our intellect, our memory, our affections, our privileges as members of Christ's Church, our advantages as possessors of the Bible, —all, all are talents. Whence came these things? What hand bestowed them? Why are we what we are? Why are we not the worms that crawl on the earth? There is only one answer to these questions. All that we have is a loan from God. We are God's stewards. We are God's debtors. Let this thought sink deeply into our hearts.

John Charles Ryle (1816–1900). The first Anglican bishop of Liverpool, Ryle's appointment was at the recommendation of Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. As well as being a writer and pastor, Ryle was an athlete who rowed and played cricket for Oxford University. He also was responsible for the building of over forty churches.

From *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. Matthew* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1870), 51–56, 336–337.

Further Reading

“What is Man?” in *A Faith to Live By*, by Donald Macleod.

“Humanness” and “Creation” in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

Prayer

I pray God, for the sake of Christ...to receive me now as entirely his own, and to deal with me, in all respects, as such, whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth, I am not to act, in any respect, as my own—I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, and do not make the glorifying of him my whole and entire business.

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). A colonial American preacher, theologian, and philosopher, Edwards became pastor of his church in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1726. He is widely known for his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" as well as his many books including *The End For Which God Created the World* and *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*. Edwards died from a smallpox inoculation shortly after beginning the presidency at the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University).

From "Memoirs of Jonathan Edwards" in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Volume 1 (London: William Ball, 1840), lxvii.

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Q5: What else did God create?

God created all things by his powerful Word, and all his creation was very good; everything flourished under his loving rule.

Genesis 1:31

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Commentary

God did by his power create of nothing heaven, earth, and the sea; which he did immediately adorn and enrich with all kinds of good things. And into this world...it pleased him to bring man, to whom he did put all things in subjection.... How great our God is; how great the power of God is; how good, rich, and liberal to man, who never deserved any such thing at his hand, our God is, who hath created so great riches, so exquisite delights, and such furniture as cannot be sufficiently praised, for man alone, and hath made them all subject, and will have them all to obey man as their lord and master.... But here by the way, in the creation of the world, we have to consider the preservation and government of the whole by the same God. For neither doth the world stand and endure by any power of its own; neither do those things move and stir of their own accord.... It is a most absurd thing to say, that God hath created all things, but that he hath no care of the things which he hath made; and that his creature, as a boat destitute of a steersman, is with contrary winds tossed to and fro, and knocked and cracked upon shelves and rocks.... God...doth care for and regard the state of mortal men and of all the things that he hath made for the use of mortal men.... Therefore God hath not only created the world and all things that are in the world; but doth also govern and preserve them at this day, and shall govern and preserve them even till the end.

Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575). A Swiss reformer, and the successor of Zwingli as head of the Zurich church, Bullinger wrote both theological and historical works comprising some 127 titles. There exist about 12,000 letters from and to Bullinger, the most extended correspondence preserved from Reformation times. He corresponded with Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I of England, Christian II of Denmark, and Frederick III Elector Palatine among others.

From “That God is the Creator of All Things: The Fourth Sermon” in “The Other Eight Sermons of the Fourth Decade” in *Decades of Henry Bullinger*, translated by H.I., Volume 4 (Cambridge: University Press, 1851), 177–179.

Further Reading

“Creation” in *A Faith to Live By*, by Donald Macleod.

“Providence” in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

Prayer

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast and art to come; eternal, without beginning or end; immense, without all bounds or measure; the infinite Spirit, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost. The infinite Life, Understanding, and Will, infinitely powerful, wise, and good. Of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things. To thee be glory for evermore. All thy works declare thy glory, for thy glorious perfections appear on all; and for thy glory, and the pleasure of thy holy will, didst thou create them. The heavens, and all the hosts thereof; the sun, and all the glorious stars; the fire, with its motion, light, and heat; the earth, and all that dwell thereon, with all its sweet and beauteous ornaments; the air, and all the meteors; the great deeps, and all that swim therein: all are the preachers of thy praise, and show forth the great Creator's glory. How great is that power which made so great a world of nothing; which, with wonderful swiftness, moveth those great and glorious luminaries which in a moment send forth the influences of their motion, light and heat, through all the air, to sea and earth. Thy powerful life giveth life to all; and preserveth this frame of nature, which thou hast made. How glorious is that wisdom which ordereth all things, and assigneth to all their place and office, and by its perfect laws maintaineth the beauty and harmony of all! How glorious is that goodness and love which made all good, and very good! We praise and glorify thee, our Lord and Owner; for we, and all things, are thine own.

Richard Baxter (1615–1691). An English Puritan, Baxter served as a chaplain in the army of Oliver Cromwell and as a pastor in Kidderminster. When James II was overthrown, he was persecuted and imprisoned for 18 months. He continued to preach, writing at the time that: "I preached as never sure to preach again, and as a dying man to dying men." As well as his theological works he was a poet and hymn-writer. He also wrote his own *Family Catechism*.

From "A Shorter Form of Praise and Prayer for the Lord's Day" in "The Poor Man's Family Book" in *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter*, Volume 19 (London: Paternoster, 1830), 635–636.

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