

Sunday, December 29, 2013

# The Ministry of Salvation (1)

## You, as a Lover of mankind, created me, a man

This will be a series of questions and answers regarding our Christian faith.

### The Creation:

The relationship between God and man started when God created man. Thus, in order to talk about “The ministry of salvation” we must discuss the subject of “creation”.

The reason behind why God created man caused many people to ponder throughout the ages. Some had the wrong idea that God created man to worship him! Therefore, we will start our topic by explaining the real reasons for which God created man. The Holy Bible is keen to mention in details how man was created in the image of God and His likeness. This is what distinguishes man from the rest of the creation. Man has many talents as a result of this unique privilege.

Finally, we will explain the correct meaning of why God rested on the seventh day after creating the world.

### 1- Why did God create man?

I would like to begin answering this question from the Gregorian liturgy: “Who, for the sake of goodness only, formed man out of what existed not, and put him in the paradise of joy.” (The liturgy of St. Gregory).



God is good, and he created man from nothing (out of what existed not), and his goodness is related to his love. We know from the fundamentals of Christianity that “*God is love*” (1John 4:8), and out of His abundant love, He created man to enjoy His love and goodness. Therefore, God created man in His image as an expression of His love towards man. Thus, love has become the normal interaction between God and man, who carried His image. “We love Him because He first loved us.” (1John 4:19).

This meaning is very evident throughout the Gregorian liturgy:

“Holy, Holy are You, O Lord and Holy in everything, and exceedingly elect is the light of your essence. And inexpressible is the power of Your wisdom. No manner of speech is able to define the deep expanse of Your love for mankind. You, as a Lover of mankind, created me, a man. You had no need of my servitude. Rather, it was me who was in need of Your lordship. Because of the multitude of Your compassions, You formed me when I had no being. You set up the sky for me as a ceiling. You made the earth firm for me so that I could walk on it. For my sake You bridled the sea. For my sake You have revealed the nature of the animals. You subdued everything under my feet. You did not permit me to lack anything from among the deeds of Your honor. You are He who formed me; And placed Your hand upon me. You wrote within me the image of Your authority; And placed within me the gift of speech. You opened for me the paradise, for my delight; And gave me the learning of Your knowledge. You revealed to me the tree of life...” (The Liturgy of St. Gregory)

It is clear from this great passage of the Liturgy that God created mankind because of His love towards us, “You, as a Lover of mankind, created me, a man.” God created man not because He needed him for anything, but rather because He loved him. This was emphasized in Proverbs: “*Rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men.*” (Proverbs 8:31). The one who speaks here is the Wisdom who is the Hypostasis of the Son. We can understand from this divine word, “my delight was with the sons of men”, how much God loves mankind, that he created him in His image and likeness.

So God created man in His image and likeness not because He needs anything from him but only because of His goodness and His unlimited love for him.

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