

In It Together

God's Perspective

John 19:17-19

May 21, 2016

Today

For the past several weeks we have been discussing the importance of Jesus to Christianity, but what about God the Father? I often hear from people who are completely comfortable with Jesus, but who are terrified of God the Father. Well, if Jesus is God and God the Father is God, then somehow, we have to reconcile these two polar views.

So, lets get started.

From all of eternity They have been together - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was a perfect, others-centered love relationship. They lived for each others happiness.

They loved to create together: Galaxies, solar systems, stars, planets

They said.....and it was.... And it was GOOD!

All of heaven was in perfect harmony.

Then one day something went terribly wrong.

Jealousy, envy, hatred, and self-centeredness entered that perfect place. One created being suggested that They could not be trusted and led many other angels to question... Are They really holding out on us??

At that moment began the greatest war ever to be fought. It was not a war over land or nations, but a war over loyalty –

Who is telling the truth?

Are They right?

Is he right?

Despite this great conflict They still loved to create and in a distant corner of space there was a blank and dark spot, so they said

- Let there be light.... And there was light
- Let there be land...and there was land
- Let there be plants and trees....and there were plants and trees
- Let there be birds and animals...and there were birds and animals.
- **Genesis 1:26** - Then They said to each other “**Let Us make man in our image and after Our likeness**” and God created man from the dust of the earth and breathed into him the breath of life and that dust became a man.

When everything was completed, They looked around and said: This is **GREAT! FANTASTIC! AWESOME!**

They loved man and man loved them

I wish that was the end of the story. I wish the Bible were only 2 chapters long, but it's not and one day the angel who started all the ugly in heaven convinced Adam and Eve, that in spite of all the perfection and joy around them - **God was holding out on them.**

Immediately everything changed (**Gen 3**) and the once beautiful and perfect planet earth was plunged into evil and we have been living with it ever since.

God could have left them to suffer the consequences of their choice – which would have been a life of misery and ultimate eternal separation from Him, however:

“But divine love had conceived a plan whereby man might be redeemed”.

- **John 3:16** - For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- **Romans 5:6-10** - For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17-21** - Therefore if any man is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- **Colossians 1:13-14** - For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Have you ever thought of God the Father in that way? Because He LOVED you, He sent Jesus to SAVE you. Jesus did not come here, live here and die here in order to try to convince His Father that you were worthy to be saved.

It's the other way around.

THEY decided long ago that should sin arise, they would have a plan in place by which those who chose God could be saved – because THEY thought YOU were worth it. **THEY WERE IN IT TOGETHER**

The angels in heaven did not understand why their Beloved Commander had to suffer – there had to be another way. Couldn't one of them instead? There was no other way. Only the Creator could redeem the created.

- **Ellen White [DA 22.4]: “This was a voluntary sacrifice. Jesus might have remained at the Father's side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe”**

Jesus reassured them that they would have a part to play in the redemption of man and now **ALL OF HEAVEN WOULD BE INVOLVED.**

So, the years passed and as heaven watched as evil grew and grew and nearly blotted out all knowledge of God. Satan seemed to be winning the war.....

IT WAS TIME:

- Jesus was born.
- He lived and worked and experienced life on planet earth:
 - **John 8:28-30** - Jesus therefore said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. ²⁹ "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." ³⁰ As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.
- He ministered and healed and raised people from the dead.
- In everything He did He revealed God – That was part of the plan. To reveal to humanity the truth about God. **What Jesus is God IS.**

Through Jesus entire life **THEY WERE IN IT TOGETHER.**

- He was alone in the Garden.
- His closest friends were asleep.

From all of eternity He knew this moment would come. They had talked about it and planned for it..... But as the weight of sin pressed down on Him the reality of the sacrifice towered over Jesus and His humanity screams, **I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!!! Is there no other way??**

- **Luke 22:41-43** - And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray, ⁴² saying, "Father, if Thou art willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Thine be done." ⁴³ Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him.

3 times Jesus prayed that he would not have to drink the cup – that some other way could be found to redeem humanity. The conflict was so terrible that he literally sweat drops of blood.

- **Ellen White [DA 690.3]: But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish. He sees the helplessness of man. He sees the power of sin. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before Him. He beholds its impending fate, and His decision is made. He will save man at any cost to Himself. He accepts His baptism of blood that through Him perishing millions may gain everlasting life. He has left the courts of heaven, where all is purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that has fallen by transgression. And He will not turn from His mission. He will become the propitiation of a race that has willed to sin. His prayer now breathes only submission: "If this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done."**

- He was arrested and bound.
- He was tried.
- He was hit.
- He was spit on.
- A crown of thorns was put on His head
- He was beaten.

ARE WE STILL IN IT TOGETHER?

Imagine what is going on in heaven during these hours. I imagine God slouched on His throne, watching the abuses being heaped on His Son by the very people He had gone to save.

I see the hosts of angels leaning forward in horror as abuse after abuse is laid upon their Beloved Commander. Their gaze moves between the scenes on earth and the throne of mercy as the Father quivers and jerks with each blow.

The angels are crouched, ready to charge!! They wait for God to issue the command – **“Stop this and GO GET MY SON!!”** They don’t understand how God can allow this to continue. They watch as the evil angels incite the crowd to greater and greater cruelty. They see that as the evil angels work the crowd into a frenzy all reason leaves their minds.

The universe finally understands the malignancy of evil and the righteousness of God. Satan is revealed to be a liar. Everything he has said about God in a lie. Do you think God is gloating and saying, **“Yep, I told you so”** NO! This is the most miserable moment in God’s existence and it is only going to get worse.

Once again, the angels watch the Father tremble as the nails are driven into Jesus hands and feet.

- **Ellen White {DA 753}: Now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt. Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice.**

Oh, the Father’s heart as He hears the words of Jesus, **“My God My God Why have you forsaken me?!!”** For the first time in all of eternity there is a canyon between Father and Son. They had spent eternity together, never separated, never apart. They had always been connected and now that connection was severed. The Father must withdraw from His son, and He willingly did so, so that all those who love and follow Him will spend eternity with Him.

- **Ellen White {DA 754}: In that thick darkness God's presence was hidden. He makes darkness His pavilion, and conceals His glory from human eyes. God and His holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with His Son. Yet His presence was not revealed. Had His glory flashed forth from the cloud, every human beholder would have been destroyed. And in that dreadful hour Christ was not to be comforted with the Father's presence. He trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.**

Even though Jesus could not sense the presence of His Father - God was there right there beside Him.

THEY WERE STILL IN IT TOGETHER!!!

Can you imagine??

- **Ellen White {DA 758.1}: Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, "It is finished." John 19:30. The battle had been won... As a Conqueror He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost.**

That Sabbath must have been the longest day EVER! No word from Jesus. Even when Jesus had been on earth They had spoken everyday – now only silence.

Finally - It’s Sunday morning and all of heaven must have been charged with excitement and anticipation waiting for the command from God to bring Jesus home. When God issued the command, Gabriel must have set every known universal speed record. **He was on a mission!!** Like a lightning bolt he sent every Roman guard flying to the ground. With a flick of his wrist he moved the massive stone as if it were a pebble.

- **Matthew 28:1-3** - Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. ² And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. ³ And his appearance was like lightning, and his garment as white as snow;

With a mighty voice he cried, **“Jesus come on... your Dad wants to see you”**, and out from that tomb came a Conquering King. Jesus waited just long enough to comfort Mary when she came to the garden and then He was off. Can you imagine THAT home coming celebration?

- **Psalm 24:7-10** - Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! ⁸ Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle. ⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates, and lift *them* up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! ¹⁰ Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Can you see the God of the Universe as He jumps off of His throne, hikes up His robes and runs to embrace His Son? “Welcome home!!! You did it!! Thank you!!”

It was through Jesus that God found a way to be merciful and righteous at the same time.

THEY ARE STILL IN IT TOGETHER!

The next time you look at the ugliness of our world and you are tempted to say, “Where is God and why doesn’t He DO SOMETHING” – Think of the cross. He did DO something that day – every genocide, every murder, every theft, every broken marriage, every lust, and every sin He carried on that cross – oh the weight of the cross..... He took it all – Heaven took it all. Make no mistake – From beginning to end THEY have been in it TOGETHER.

What Jesus IS God IS – and HE loves YOU!!