



Why did God create Satan, knowing what he would do?”

This question came out of one of our many “rapid fire” question sessions in Confirmation class. (This group really keeps me on my toes with lots of deep questions. I love it!)

God didn’t specifically tell us the answer to that question in His word, so for clues to an answer, we look at some facts about Himself that He has recorded for us.

One of the many characteristics of God that we find in the Bible is that He indeed is all-knowing. That means Satan “going over to the dark side” was truly not a surprise to Him. The students got that part right. God did know what Satan would end up doing. As I’ve said before, you will never hear God say, “Huh! Didn’t see that coming!”

The Bible reveals that “Love” is God’s most basic characteristic (as the Apostle John reminds us in 1 John 4:16). Because He loves us, God created us with the ability to either return His love or reject it. (It would not be very loving to force us to love Him back.)

Of course, giving us the choice to return His love or reject it means there was the very real possibility that not only would many of God’s human creation reject His love, but that many of His angelic creation would too. Revelation chapter 12 indicates that when Satan rebelled against God, fully a third of the other angels did as well! (But what a comfort it is to know that the good angels outnumber the demons two to one!)

Another thing God reveals about Himself in the Bible is that He always has a plan. God knew that Satan would rebel and tempt us into sin - sin that would separate us from our sinless God. So, He planned from the beginning to send His Son to take the punishment for our sin, so that we could be reconciled. (God, being a God of justice, could not just look the other way. Sin had to be punished.)

That brings us back to that most-basic characteristic: love. Jesus coming to take the punishment for our sin is the greatest display of His love that God could have ever made! Romans 5:8 point-blank tells us that “God demonstrates His love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us!” The verses before and after that passage remind us that Jesus didn’t die for us, because we deserved it. He didn’t die for us because we were “loveable.” He didn’t die for us because we were God’s friends or could return the favor. He died for us in spite of the fact that none of those things applied to us. He died, very simply, because of Love!

God loves us, wants us to spend eternity with Him, but because He loves us, He’s given us the opportunity to reject His love. But He’s also given us the greatest motivation to not choose that path. If dying to forgive us - when we totally did not deserve His death or His forgiveness - doesn’t move us to return His love, nothing will.

In short, God created Satan, knowing Satan would end up rebelling and leading us to do the same, because that rebellion gave God the opportunity to reveal His love for us in a way that nothing else - absolutely nothing else! - could have.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net