

Created in God's Image  
Pastor Paul Klopke  
St. Peter, Arlington Heights

I am the chaplain at the Lutheran Home in Arlington Heights.

Besides ministering to the aged population at the Home, I am also a chaplain for the pre-school children. The school is called Shepherd's Flock, and it is located at the home.

I decided to start a unit on creation with the children by taking them through the book of Genesis. There are three questions that I started each lesson with:

"Who made you? There was a short pause...and they responded, "God." (Genesis 1:26)

Second question: "What else did God make?" (Genesis 1:1-25)

"Flowers, trees, animals, water, air, the sky, sun and moon and stars," they replied.  
"That's right!" I told them.

The next question: "Why did God make you and all things?"

It is here that I experienced a longer pause. They had to think hard. "Why did God create me and everything else?"

The answers I got from this third question varied. "God loves me. He cares about me. God wants to be my friend. "That's right!" I praised them. "He does love you and cares about you and wants to be your friend," I told them.

I asked this question of myself. I decided to check Luther's Small Catechism. Martin Luther writes in the second article about a Christian's redemption and salvation, and also about God's relationship with us. Luther says, "That I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom serving Him in everlasting righteousness, blessedness and innocence."

Dr. Luther's explanation tells us about God's heart. A heart that wants us to be in His family (His own by Christ's redemption), including us in serving Him and others (living under His kingdom). He desires us to be His children - His sons and daughters - His family members involved with His creation and His mission activity.

God did not create us to be His mere puppets or robots but His people. He created us in His own image and redeemed us as lost and condemned creatures. He wants us to be involved in managing His creation and then, involving us in His mission of redemption and restoration.

Three questions: Who created you? What else did God create? And why did God create you? Very profound and yet simple questions that we can ask ourselves and others around us.

Let us pray: Thank You, Lord, for creating me and all things. Thank You that I am Your own child in Your family and for giving me the privilege to serve You and others in kingdom work. Continue to open my eyes, seeing the opportunities that I have to glorify You in work and service through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen