

FRANKENSTEIN AND THE GOSPEL

Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Psalm 100:3 (ESV)

In 1818 Mary Shelley published her world-famous novel **FRANKENSTEIN**. Most people are only familiar with movie versions and have never actually read the book. Frankenstein is not the name of the monster. It is the name of Dr. Victor Frankenstein, the young, arrogant scientist who created the monster. Throughout the book the creature is only called "the monster"; he never has a name. The book concerns man's hubris, and asks the question "Does the creator have any obligation to his creation?" Prideful arrogance, the lust for fame and wealth led Dr. Frankenstein to create the monster. When the monster comes to life his first act is to lovingly smile at his creator. Dr. Frankenstein has the complete opposite reaction: he recoils in horror and disgust at his own creation. The monster is shaken to the core by Dr. Frankenstein's reaction, eventually flees. The monster pursues Dr. Frankenstein with the hope that the scientist would create a mate, a companion for the monster so that he would not be alone. When Dr. Frankenstein promises to do so and then reneges on his promise the monster sets out in vengeance to destroy every person Dr. Frankenstein loves.

The Gospel is the opposite of the book **Frankenstein**. God created man and woman and announced His creation "very good." God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful, pristine environment created especially for them so that all their physical needs were met. He gave them to each other so they could experience marital intimacy and companionship. Moreover, God regularly fellowshiped with Adam and Eve so that they knew Him and recognized His voice. Despite God's loving presence, provision and care, Adam and Eve sinned, Eve through gullibility

and Adam through willfulness. The rest of the Bible is about God's unfolding efforts to redeem mankind to live with Him for eternity. The creation story shows man pitting himself against God, and God continually reaching out to man. Despite God's lovingkindness, man responds with suspicion, disinterest and rebellion. It is the exact opposite of **Frankenstein**. "God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes." *Ecclesiastes 7:29 (ESV)*

When God created man and a wonderful environment for man, He had no obligation to man whatsoever. God is a debtor to no man. *We* are the monster. God is the Creator, and His actions toward us are always motivated by abundant, unending love and mercy. His passion to redeem man led directly to the incarnation and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. God could have simply written a book, thrown it down from heaven and told us to read it. Instead, in the incarnation God became flesh and dwelt among us. Although He led a perfect life, He did not come to show us how to live or to be a great example for us. He came to die for us so that all our sins (past, present and future) would be nailed to the cross in His own body.

Unlike Dr. Frankenstein God does not turn away from us in disgust, although He could. He does not run away from us, but instead through His Divine Incarnation He became flesh and dwelt among us. He continually pursues relationship with us. This is unfathomable love. God does not love us because we deserve His love. We don't. He does not love us because we are cute and adorable. We aren't. God loves us because He *is* love. Love is His very nature. The sun gives light and heat. God loves. Were it not for the incarnation and crucifixion, we would never believe such love to be true. Christ came so that we would be able to live through Him. Christ *is* our life. God has put our eternal welfare onto His own omnipotent shoulders. *He* accomplishes our salvation by the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is what it means to be saved by grace. Christ proves that God is not only *with us*, but He is also *for us*.

"The LORD your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing." *Zephaniah 3:17 (ESV)*