

Could There Ever Be Another Ewe?

Over the past few months we have heard about the scientific ability to clone a sheep. Fr. Demetrios Demopulos, one of my former students at the Seminary, is a brilliant priest who holds a Doctorate in Chemistry. He has commented recently, both as a theologian and a scientist about the cloning of “Dolly”, the ewe. Fr. Demetrios has stated:

“They have shown that a differentiated cell could be de-differentiated and direct the development of an adult organism in mammals. So, that’s exciting news. However, we have to couple that with the religious position that human life – and especially in the Orthodox Church, that’s all human life – is sacred and is given to us by God; and as such needs to be treated with dignity and respect, as every human deserves to be treated.”

“And I would not want to see research even on embryos being conducted, because an embryo is a few cells that develop from a zygote – however that zygote is created. And that zygote is then committed to becoming a human person, capable of entering into a relationship with God and expecting the possibility of salvation. To treat even that potential human person as an experimental animal is just not acceptable.”

In “Dolly’s” case there are two ewes. As your priest, I’m concerned about the real YOU. Do you realize the value and precious gift God has given to you in your life – in your very person? While we consider cloning as a very delicate ethical issue, what about the importance and significance of YOU as an ethical being? No two people are alike, each person possessing a particular uniqueness. This is part of the wonder of God’s magnificent creation...billions of people, yet each one special and unique.

In Orthodoxy our main goal for humanity is not only salvation, but also the deification of humanity, that is, to become a part of God in His eternity. We believe that God dwells within every person - believer and unbeliever alike - while He also is everywhere and fills all things. God dwells in us to empower us and sanctify us that we may dwell in Him, forever and forever.

Each one of us is an insignificant grain of sand in the vast beaches of humanity. Yet, because of God’s magnanimous love, He knows, cares for and loves each and every one of us. Our seemingly insignificant lives take on new meaning, becoming purposeful and fulfilled in His Presence and in His merciful, compassionate love. As creator, His love has already made us His children. Did you ever ask yourself how it is that you can care about, cry about, pray for or be upset by the plight of suffering persons whom you have never ever met, nor do you know them except for your knowledge of their sad story as seen in the media? How we all prayed for the victims of the bombing in Oklahoma City. We respond to charitable needs of persons who we learn are ill or suffering. We ready do are about others...even when and if we don’t know them.

But God...He knows every person’s story, every situation. He cares a googolplex to the googolplex power ...more than you and I could ever care. If we were insignificant why didn’t He just plain duplicate us as well, just spill out a creation of cloned zygotes that would develop into identical beings? Why go to the trouble of making each person so special and unique?

God does not 'clone' around. He is beyond wonder, beyond greatness, beyond love, beyond any human terminology's we so vainly attempt to use in describing Him. As incomprehensible and indescribable as God is, so wondrous, incomprehensible and indescribable is His love for all humanity. In other words, I simply want to tell you that God loves you more than the entire universe. That's exactly how important you are to God!

No, there will never be another you...because He loves you in your uniqueness with a love that can never be duplicated. Maybe its time for us to stop 'cloning around' and return our openhearted love back to our wondrous, magnificent God...where it truly belongs.