“Christ in the Psalms: God’s Image in Man”

**Psalm 8**

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 2/6/22)

Have you ever been awestruck by the wonders of creation on a clear night when the Milky Way is spread out across the starry sky? Have you ever felt that man is just a speck in the vastness of God’s creation? People all over the earth see these stars and proclaim that there is a Maker, One of infinite greatness. Our Lord, our Master, the One True God, the Creator of Heaven and earth made all this as a sign pointing to **HIM**. Read Rom. 1:20. (Q1) God has preached this visual message about Himself to all people, every day of their lives. Ps. 8 is bookended by praise to God, but the psalm is really about men. Its meaning? If you are to rightly understand your significance and your relationship with others, you must rightly understand your relationship with God.

Between the bookends of praise (Ps. 8:1 & 9), today’s passage conveys two themes: man’s **dignity** and man’s **dominion**. Man’s **dignity** is based on his relationship with God. We were made to be a reflection of His image. Read Gen. 1:26. (Q2) The triune God created us in His image. Our purpose is found in God Himself- we are made for communion with God Himself. We are made to reflect His attributes. The question is, do you know God, or do you just know about God? Ps. 8:4- God is mindful of men- He cares for you. Ps. 8:5- Humans are the crown of God’s creation. So how should we treat our fellow humans? Have you ever responded with gossip or hate or slander or indifference? Other people, no matter how unlikeable, are made in the image of God. Their sin is just different from your sin!

Ps. 8:6-8 teaches us about man’s **dominion**. Man was created to rule over God’s creation. Look again at Gen. 1:26. He has made the world for humanity and humanity for the world. The life and work and purpose of man is to bring glory to God. (Q3) Does Ps. 8:6-8 describe the world we experience in 2022? Of course not. Why? Because sin has corrupted things. Man’s depravity has wrecked God’s original intent. Man’s dignity and dominion are **distorted** by sin (see Rom. 5:12).

We inherited this dignity and dominion from God Himself, but we ruin things with our **depravity**, choosing to serve ourselves instead of God. Creation is no longer in submission; it is in chaos. So why is this psalm joyful, instead of lamenting what might have been? First, this psalm has to do with a specific Man, Jesus. He is alluded to all throughout this psalm. (Q4) Second, all of creation proclaims God, even a new baby. Truly, we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14). I marvel every day at the complexity of our eyes, our immune systems, our digestive system, our cellular power plants, and on and on.

Now read Ps. 8:4 again. “Son of Man” was Jesus’ favorite self-appellation, reminding everyone that God visited mankind (see Phil 2:5-11). Jesus became everything the first Adam failed to be. He exercised dominion over creation as no other man did or could. Read Heb. 2:8-11. Jesus was born into humanity to deal with our humanity. He came to destroy the greatest enemies: sin and death. Jesus came for man’s **deliverance**. Jesus has dominion over death as well as life. He reigns now from Heaven, restoring dignity and dominion to his people.

So here is man’s **destiny**:

* In Christ, man’s dignity is restored.
* In Christ, man’s dominion is restored.
* In Christ, man’s depravity is conquered.
* In Christ, even death itself is conquered. (read 1Cor. 15:22-26)

God’s redeemed people will reign with Christ for eternity, and enjoy rich fellowship with Him and other saints forever. Jesus is the bridge between sinners and their Creator. Let us live joyfully with the hope of this full restoration! Amen. (Q5)

**QUESTIONS**:

1. As a group, list God’s attributes that are clearly seen in creation.
2. I think there is a huge difference between “made in God’s image” and “children of God.” If you agree, what is the difference?
3. It’s important for each of us to ask this question as we enter each new season of life: “How can I bring glory to God in this new season?” Any takers?
4. Where do you see Jesus in Psalm 8?
5. My favorite phrase in “Be Thou My Vision” is “heart of my own heart”. How does this phrase relate to Gal. 5:25?

“Be Thou My Vision” (Byrne)

 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

 Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise;
thou mine inheritance, now and always.
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,
Ruler of heaven, my treasure thou art.

 High King of heaven, when vict’ry is won
may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heav’n’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.