

First Baptist Church Merritt Island

Out of the Mouths of Babes

Psalm 8

January 20, 2019

Main Point

The glory of God is displayed through the honor He has placed on people. So, we glorify God when we honor every human life at every stage of life.

Getting Started

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Has observing or experiencing something in creation ever made you feel small? If so, share your experience with the group.

Have you ever struggled to believe that God cares about you personally? Why?

What is the basis for the sanctity of human life? Why is it important that we believe that every human being has value?

In Psalm 8, David praises God for revealing His majesty in a surprising way—through people and, perhaps even more surprising, through infants (v. 2). We will see that all human beings have worth and value not because of what they do or how they live, but because God made them and has bestowed honor on them. The earth is filled with the glory of God and God’s creation of people is a surprisingly profound display of His glory.

Observation

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Have a volunteer read Psalm 8:1-2.

The term “LORD” in verse 1 refers to the divine name Yahweh, “I am who I am,” that God told Moses in Exodus 3:14. What does this term imply about the nature of God?

God is the ultimate being. He has no beginning because He has always been and always will be God. He depends on nothing in order to exist, while everything in creation depends on Him for its existence. This name implies that He is above all things—He is wiser and more beautiful and wonderful than everything everywhere. All creation exists to praise Him.

How is God’s majesty revealed in creation?

How might holding a newborn in your arms move you to worship God?

What is peculiar about the picture of infants triumphing over God's enemies?

Why does God use infants to triumph over His enemies? What does this prove or accomplish?

God's majesty is highlighted in verse 2 in that God not only stoops to care and provide for infants, but that He makes them the means of His triumphs. God could conquer His enemies in any number of dramatic and powerful ways, but He instead chooses to overcome them through the praises of children and nursing babies. This is an incredibly important theme in the Bible—God triumphs not through grand displays of power but through profound and mysterious displays of humility.

Have a volunteer read Matthew 21:15-17.

How did Jesus fulfill Psalm 8:2 in this story?

This episode with the chief priests and the experts of the law came about shortly after Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Babies and children represent weakness and vulnerability. Babies do not have strong voices and wise words with which to make their wills known. In other words, God has chosen to exercise His rule and power in the world through the praise of babies and children because He wants to make crystal clear to the world that this is a work of God, so that "no one can boast in His presence." The cross is the ultimate example of how God has chosen to bring redemption through humility. The God who is majestic over all the earth chooses to become man and dwell among us. He then humbles Himself even further by dying on the cross for our sins.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:27-29. Why does God choose weak and lowly things to shame the strong?

What does this emphasis on children in Psalm 8 and Matthew 21 tell us about what God values? If God has chosen to bring redemption by humbling Himself, what does that tell us about how we should live?

Have a volunteer read psalm 8:3-9.

What motivated David to ask, "of what importance is the human race, that you should notice them?"

Who gives human beings value (v. 5)? How does God display that value to us (vv. 6-8)?

How does knowing that God has granted mankind "honor and majesty" change the way you think about the people around you?

Because God has granted people "honor and majesty," we know that every single person has value. That means that those we sometimes ignore, like the poor and needy,

are made in the image of God. This also tells us that those we consider our enemies also have value. People are not valuable because of what they do or how they live. They are valuable because God made them and bestowed honor on them.

What does the dominion God has given people tell us about Him?

God's true greatness should not be measured only by His creation of the vast universe. His greatness also should be measured by His creation of humans and His condescension to give such deliberate care to the smallest need of those made in His image and likeness. In creating men and women and bestowing honor on them, God expresses grace to us—we do not deserve such honor. Like creation, the redemption God offers us in Christ, is also an act of love and grace. Even though we have ruled His creation selfishly and recklessly, God still loved us and proved His love for us by sending Jesus to die for our sins while we were yet sinners (Rom. 5:8).

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How does knowing God has given you value and offered you redemption in Christ change the way you think about yourself?

Knowing that God made us helps us remember that we have inherent value. Knowing that God sent Christ to die for us helps us remember that God loves us and that His love for us is not based on our performance but on His love and grace.

How could you humble yourself to serve someone this week? How might doing so point him or her to Christ?

Who in your life is difficult to love? How might considering that God has bestowed "honor and majesty" on all people help you actively love that person?

Prayer

Pray that your group would praise God for showing His glory in such profoundly humble ways. Thank God for giving us value and offering us redemption in Christ. Ask God to help us point others to Christ by humbly serving them like Christ has served us.

Commentary

8:1. This hymn of praise is more specifically identified as a creation hymn (along with 19:1-6; 33; and 104) in its focus on earth and the heavens, terms describing the whole of creation (Gen 1:1; Ex 20:11; Neh 9:6). "Majesty," a synonym for "honor" or "glory," and "name," representing the person and not just the designation, are parallel. They demonstrate that God and His glory fill all of creation. This language distinguishes God from His creation (He is transcendent) but also shows that He is present (He is immanent) within it.

8:2. Even the feeblest of humanity, with their sometimes-inarticulate speech (mouths), function as firm testimonies (a stronghold) of God's glory and silence the enemy and the avenger. According to Jesus, "children" and their simple faith are the best representatives of God's kingdom (Mt 18:4). Paul also made a similar argument when he described God's use of weakness and foolishness to "shame the wise" of this world (1Co 1:26-29).

8:3-4. The vastness of creation is contrasted with the smallness and insignificance of man. This is in the form of a question: How is it that God would remember and look after (both words mean "pay attention to and care for") people? This is perplexing considering the difference between the size and scope of the cosmos and the relative puniness of humanity. The terms "man" and "son of man" are parallel and are used to describe humankind as a collective whole (146:3; Num 23:19; Isa 51:12).

8:5-8. The answer to the perplexing question in verse 4 is found in these verses, which are essentially a commentary on Gen 1:26-28. While the perception is that humans are insignificant in the grand scheme of things, the reality is found in God's purpose for creating humanity. The word translated as God (Hb 'elohim) is plural here and could be understood as indicating "gods" or "heavenly beings" instead of its usual sense of a plural of majesty emphasizing God's greatness. Therefore, the Septuagint, which is quoted in Heb 2:7, translates it as "angels." The point is the same in both cases, even if the referent is different: Because of their divinely given purpose, humans are functionally closer to God and the angels than to the animals. "We have been made ... lord over creation," expressing humanity's function of dominion (Gen 1:26). The image of everything under his feet is developed in the rest of Scripture as a picture of the reign of God's King, Jesus Christ (the second Adam), over His kingdom (1Co 15:25,27; Eph 1:22; Heb 2:8).

8:9. The psalm ends as it began, forming an inclusio (essentially "bookends") for its content.

Adapted from www.smallgroup.com.