

“JUST A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS.”

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First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA

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Text for the Sermon: Psalm 8

Psalm 8.

You have heard me mention on occasion something being cause for worship. I will see something God has done and pause to give Him the honor, praise and glory that's due His name.

Do you think about it, are you on the lookout for it? What in your life is cause for worship? Well, everything is, of course. But just saying that leaves it too general and nebulous. What specifically is cause for worship? Do you see it just in big things or do you see it in the little things, the countless little evidences of God's love and kindness and presence with you?

Psalm 8 is David noticing what is cause for worship in great big things and in small insignificant things. This is his celebrating the glory and grace of God. It's David overwhelmed at who God is and what He has done. Do you hear his awe and the joy?

It begins and ends with God, “how majestic is your name in all the earth.” And in between he attributes everything to God, the strong and the weak, the spectacular and the insignificant, the many and the few, infants and enemies, angels and men, beasts and birds, above the heavens and beneath the sea. It's all from God and it's all cause for worship.

In 174 words he says what will take me almost 3,000 words just to start to unpack and draw out. And as I do we will see connections to the sanctity of human life on this Sunday set apart to acknowledge that.

First, God has created life and has given us life.

God is God. God is the creator of all that is and His glory and majesty are displayed in His creation. In all the earth and in mankind, the crown and glory of all His creation.

God is the one who breathes life, who gives an eternal soul, who forms and fashions us in the womb, who makes each one of us uniquely who we are.

This great God who created everything is intimate and personal, He is our God. He has made Himself known to us, and He has made us so we can know Him.

Babies and infants are cause to worship the creator of life. God doesn't wait until we are all grown up to reveal Himself and glorify Himself through us.

When you hear a baby cry what are you hearing? You are hearing a mouth and tongue formed and fashioned by God to speak and to praise Him. You are hearing a voice created to communicate, something no other creature on earth can do. Speech is a miracle.

Though they only coo and cry, their language is eloquent and is worship in God's ears. A baby is enough evidence to confound and confute the arguments of those who set themselves up to deny God.

There is more wisdom and truth over in the church nursery than there is in many university classrooms. Professors mock those who believe in a God, babies show us there is a God.

Before God's throne they will be without excuse. What will God say to them? "Why didn't you believe in me and give me the honor and glory due my name? Haven't you ever seen a baby, and the miracle of birth, the miracle of life and breath, the miracle of a beating heart, those little hands, eyes that see, ears that hear, mouths that speak?"

"How is it that at the moment of birth a baby is able to breathe air? How is it that at the moment of birth nourishment is made ready for the baby? How is it at the moment of birth the baby has the instinct to receive that nourishment? Is it not by my miraculous power and providence? How could you be so blind and deaf to my glory in creation and in little babies?"

Who would dare to rise up and say the little ones among us are not of God? When God decides to do battle with His foes, His army is infants and babies, they are enough to prove His glory. When God sets out to overthrow the ungodly, the mouths of children are sufficient for the task.

Romans 1:19-22 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools.

How is it possible to not see God's handiwork, God's fingers in the creation of a baby? So how has it even entered the mind of a human made in the image of God to take the life of a helpless human made in the image of God? It is a horror and an abomination, it ought not to be done, ever. It ought only be cause for worship.

Second, God has created us just a little lower than the angels.

Humans are radically different from the rest of creation. They are just a little lower than the angels. And they are crowned with glory and honor. If this isn't cause for worship what is?

There are two words for man in Hebrew. One is *adam* which is man as taken from the dust of the earth. The other is *enosh* which is man in sin. Either way it would be perfectly understandable for God to have nothing to do with us. That God should not only stoop but then adorn us with so many blessings and such goodness as He does, serves to magnify His glory all the more.

We have incredible dignity and honor in God's creation. Even the littlest and smallest of humans, even those still in the womb, display God's splendor and majesty and are crowned with His glory and honor.

God doesn't wait until they are born or until they can breathe on their own or until they are rational and independent to say this about them.

Notice David's astonishment, that God actually is mindful of us and that God actually does care for us. How can this be, how is this possible, but it's true, our creator God knows us intimately and attends to every detail of our small and insignificant lives.

Third, God has created us in His image and likeness.

Being crowned with glory and honor means being made in the image and likeness of God. God shares His glory with us.

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

27 So God created man in his own image.

Even the babies and infants, even the unborn babies at the earliest stages of life are created in the image of God and are just a little lower than the angelic beings in heaven.

Being crowned with dignity and honor shows in many ways.

The ability of reason and distinguishing good and evil.

The ability of communication with each other and God.

The innate sense of religion, of discerning spiritual realities.

The ability of conscience, and of guilt and shame, knowing right and wrong.

The understanding of governing principles and laws.

The place of dominion, of being kings over creation, of having authority and responsibility over all creatures on earth.

This is cause for worship, that God would bestow such honor and glory on us.

You cannot worship and honor God and give God glory and at the same time treat with contempt any member of the human race, not matter what their size, level of ability or independence, reasoning capabilities, handicaps, skin color or ethnic background.

Fourth, God has redeemed us.

The author of Hebrews uses these verses from Psalm 8 to point to Jesus:

Hebrews 2:9 We see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Jesus is the infant. Jesus is the Son of Man, the one who becomes small and weak to take dominion over the enemies of God and the forces of evil in the earth.

Out of the mouths of babies God silences His enemies and out of the insignificance of man He rules the world, He takes dominion over the earth.

So the glory of God is seen in creation, in the glory of God in mankind, and in the glory of God in the redeemer. In one sense, this makes us higher than the angels, because God has not redeemed the fallen angels. They have no redeemer, no savior. More cause for worship.

Implications and Application.

44 years ago today, January 22, 1973 the Supreme Court of these United States ruled on the case of Jane Roe verses Henry Wade, District Attorney of Dallas. By a vote of 7-2 the highest court of our land ruled that a woman had a constitutional right to end the life of her child in the womb and rejected that the child had any right to life.

Since that decision there have been nearly 60 million children killed in the United States and over one billion in the world. That does not include the countless millions killed by chemical methods and other abortifacient devices. 9/11 happens every day for children in America.

It is truly a holocaust against children, especially minority children in our country. Abortion in America is one of the most racist institutions there is. 30% of abortions are done by white doctors on black women and 20% on Hispanic women.

I know many people wish the abortion debate would just go away. They are tired of the polarizing political debate and protesting and name calling and harsh rhetoric. But of all people, Christians cannot be silent or silenced. If we fail to speak up for the lives of the least, the lives of the defenseless, who will?

Proverbs 24:11-12 Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. 12 If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?

A nation that does not protect its most vulnerable, the youngest, the oldest, the weakest, the most needy is a nation on a path to self-destruction.

The truth that we must take away from this biblical vision of both God and man is that all human life is God's, it is from Him, it belongs to Him.

God values human life because He created it, He created it in His image just a little lower than the angels, He crowned it with glory and honor and He gives it eternal value by sending His Son in human flesh to redeem our lives.

We have been crowned with glory and honor. This is a staggering miracle worthy of more worship than we could give in a life time. Eternity will not be long enough.

We cannot worship and glorify God and treat His crowning creation with contempt. We are not free to take that life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. We must stand and say no to suicide, abortion and euthanasia.

"There are no expendable or disposable people, every life is worth honoring, protecting, and saving" (R.C. Sproul).

I want to be very clear to hold out hope, comfort, forgiveness and peace to any who need it.

I am well aware that in a gathering this size I may be touching on a very personal and painful issue for some. For some of us on this issue, our consciences are not clear. We have sinned, we have fallen into sinful practices and choices, we have done what is evil in God's sight. We struggle with shame and guilt. But the good news is that there is a solution.

Jesus loves you with a very great love and to prove it He died for you. Jesus offers us forgiveness. We must come to Him, confess our sin to Him and He will set us free. Jesus died to show us the greatness of our sins including the sin of abortion. And Jesus died to forgive us for the greatness of our sins, to show us the greatness of His love for us.

I urge all of us to intensify our prayer for each other and for the soul of our nation. We must pray against hardness of heart and coldness of conscience, we must pray for an end to the slaughter of the innocent and helpless. We must be salt and light and not give up.

God's glory is revealed in all life. Let us honor all the life He has given us. It is cause for worship.

Psalm 8:1-9 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

Prayer: Almighty God, have mercy on us as a nation and turn aside your wrath against us. We have shed innocent blood because we do not trust you and do not fear you. Almighty Father, convict our hearts of this great wickedness that threatens the very soul of our nation. Give us a great love and compassion for the littlest ones among us, especially those in their mother's wombs. Change the hearts of Christians everywhere to no longer be silent and passive. Jesus, you conquered death on the cross and delivered us from death, come now and conquer this death and deliver us until there is life, liberty and justice, not just for some, but for all. I pray for those who have had abortions that you silence the lies of Satan that there is no forgiveness or relief from guilt. This morning break down those barriers to your love and forgiveness. You died to set us free from all our sins. Come Holy Spirit, come, have mercy and help us we pray.

Finally Father, I pray for your blessing upon all the families of our church, upon those with children still in the home, and also on those who desire children and are waiting on you. And for those who desire to be married that they might have a family. Father, hear their prayers and answer according to your best wisdom and will and give us patience as we wait on you. Come Holy Spirit, come, have mercy and help us we pray. Amen.