Psalm 8: What is Man?

Zanesville, OH | September 2, 2018 | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** Psalm 8

**Intro**:

* Psalm 8 seems to be the first Psalm of praise we encounter as we study through the book of Psalms. The Psalm itself can be divided into two sections centered on one main question (What is Man?). The Psalm is enclosed in a poetic inclusio which magnifies God for who He is and what He has done. In many ways, we could say that Psalm 8 is the very antitheses of Psalm 2 for reasons we will see shortly.

**The Breakdown of Psalm 8**

1. **What is Man: Psalm 8:1-4**
   1. The Psalm commences in verse 1 with a note of high praise to God. God is gloried for the splendor above the heavens and His name is magnificent and distinguished throughout all the earth (Psa. 72:17-19; 113:2-4; 148:13; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 19:6).
   2. From the smallest of beings God is able to bring forth great strength to defeat His enemies and to put a stop to those who do evil and seek revenge (1 Cor. 1:27-29). A picture of vulnerability and humility is turned into one of might and honor according to the will of God.
   3. The author is amazed by God’s creation and the wonders He observes in the constellations. The astronomical aspects of creation that are so far and big in our eyes is described as the work of God’s fingers in verse 3 (Psa. 19:1; 136:7-9).
   4. In light of this revelation, the author cannot help but ask what seems to be an appropriate question. In light of how big and how powerful God is, who are we to fit within that picture? What is man that the all-powerful, eternal God who spoke to earth into existence should even take consideration of us (Psa. 144:3; 2 Chron. 6:18; Isa. 40:17)? Notice the author says “what” is man and not “who.”
2. **The Value of Man to God: Psalm 8:5-9**
   1. The answer to the existential and soul-searching question is revealed in the second stanza of the Psalm. The answer not only maintains but it also incorporates theme of creation which began the Psalm began with. The subject of verses 5 and 6 is not what you would expect with answering the question under consideration. “You” is used five times as the subject in reference to God in vv. 5-6.
   2. The point that is being stressed is that man has value and honor not because of anything they have done but what God has done for them (Gen. 1:26-27). God has given man the ability to rule over His very own wonders and created things including the beasts and animals (Gen. 9:2; Psa. 21:3-5).
   3. The Psalmist does not answer the question by merely stating God cares for man, but he demonstrates God’s value of man by giving them a responsible role in his vast and majestic creation (Consider kids in the household).
   4. The Psalm is ended verbatim with the first half of what was said in verse 1. God is lauded and magnified once more with a more complete understanding why this is so. God is so big and so powerful and yet He exalts man in a position of to be over His creation.

**The Bigger Picture**

1. As significant and essential as Psalm 8 is to understand what we are in relation to God, it cannot begin to compare with the cross of Christ!
   1. God’s value for man will always come back to the cross (2 Cor. 5:16, 21).
   2. What God did through Jesus cannot be repaid much less fathomed by man (Isaiah 53).
   3. May we submit to the creator of the universe, may we abide in His will and love Him forever (Jn. 15:10).