

Psalm 8 – The Greatness of God (part 2) – Dressed up in glory – Psalm 8:3-9

**Intro:**

**1) Word picture – costume – playing dress up**

- a. Children love costumes
- b. For a moment it allows them to pretend to be something they are not
  - i. Superheroes – warrior – fireman – princess – pilot
- c. But everyone knows – it’s just pretend

**2) The danger in life comes when grown adults keep living in costumes**

- a. I’m no talking about adults playing dress up
- b. I’m talking about adults pretending to be something they are not
  - i. Living life outside of God’s design

**3) Psalm 8 gives us God intended purposes for mankind**

- a. To give Him glory and live in an honorable manner towards Him
- b. Royal steward over creation
- c. To live in dignity as God’s image bearers on earth
- d. Call it – transcended purpose, value, and meaning

**4) Instead of living out the identity God has placed on humanity – much of mankind plays “dress up”**

- a. We put on the costume of independence – self-sustainability – pride – rebellion
- b. We act like we can rule ourselves – but that’s just a costume

**5) Since the Fall, humanity lives in the self-made disguise instead of their true God-given identity**

- a. The tragedy of humanity is that we didn’t just wear a costume for a moment – we made it a lifestyle
- b. Humanity stopped living as the image-bearers God called us to be and we started living as imposters

**6) If we are going to understand the depth of our failure, the greatness of God, and how to live restored – we need to look well into the truth of God’s Word**

- a. Psalm 8 is a crucial passage for this
  - i. David looks at God
  - ii. David looks at creation
  - iii. David looks at mankind
  - iv. David asks one of the most profound questions – “What is man”
    - 1. Who are we really?
    - 2. What did God intend for us?
    - 3. How far have we drifted from His purposes?
    - 4. How do we get back?

**7) Psalm 8 pulls the mask off – it strips the costume away**

- a. It brings us face to face with God's truth
- b. Sermon – Dressed up in glory
- c. Text: Psalm 8:3-9
- d. Goal – understand God's intended purposes for mankind and view His greatness displayed through His grace

### **God's Rule in Sovereignty – V3-8**

#### **1) In the first two verses David expounds on the greatness of God displayed through His splendor and strength**

- a. Starting in V3-8 – we are instructed about the greatness of God as displayed in His sovereignty
- b. The picture we get in V3-8 teach us that both creation and mankind are placed in an ordered relationship under God's rule
  - i. Context reminds us that although David is speaking highly of creation and man, both exist under the God of V1
- c. In other words – the context reminds us who is ultimately in control

### **God's control over the cosmos – V3**

#### **1) It is said that our galaxy alone contains anywhere between 200-400 billion stars**

- d. A 2016 study from NASA, using data gathered from the Hubble Space Telescope, concluded there were about 2 trillion other galaxies
- e. Given our current capabilities – we have the ability to zoom in to front row seats to some of these great wonders of the universe
- f. It has been forecasted that space exploration will become a trillion-dollar industry in the very near future
- g. Why am I saying this?
  - i. Humanity has always been fascinated by the beauty of the skies

#### **2) In V3 David is evidently looking up at the night sky in serious contemplation**

- a. Consider – Ra-ah – to look at, inspect, to regard
- b. Denotes a carefully examination and pondering
- c. The picture set before us is that of David taking a deliberate mediative glance at the sky rather than a simple passing view
  - i. Fascinating – in Hebrew poetry – “considering” is associated with the gaining of wisdom (Prov. 6:6)
    - 1. In narrative – it is associated with worship (1 Sam. 12:24)
  - ii. In other words – David is not simply stargazing – he is theologizing
- d. As David looks at the cosmos he is reminded of God's control
  - i. Notice the possessive language he uses – “thy”
  - ii. It's a bold declaration that the sky's above and all that is contained in them are rightly God's by creation and authority
- e. Interestingly – this statement stands in stark contrast to the pagan worship of David's day
  - i. Many pagan religions viewed the skies as being governed by cosmic forces
    - 1. Moon, wind, rain, sun
  - ii. To the point where they would worship those forces as deity
  - iii. David's theological statement here is a reminder of God's sovereignty – He rules over it all
    - 1. It's a statement of God's greatness

**3) Listen to how David speaks about the greatness of God**

- a. "the work of thy fingers"
- b. Hand – biblical symbol of power
- c. Finger – biblical symbol of precision and ease
- d. In essence – it did not exert God to make the universe – He crafted it effortlessly
  - i. Ps. 33:6-9

**4) Not only did God create with ease, He created with order**

- a. Moon and stars represent order and design
- b. Passage takes us back to Gen. 1:14,16
- c. In Israel, the moon phases often regulated agriculture, seasons, and festivals
- d. In pagan worship – the moon was an element of worship itself
  - i. Yet here David strips it of any status of deity and points us to the real Creator

**5) Notice how he closes V3 – which thou hast ordained**

- a. Ordained – fixed, established, set in place
  - i. Word conveys an intentional structure with permanence
  - ii. Peil perfect – speaks of a perfective achievement of a result
- b. In other words – creation is not self-existent or self-sustaining, it is created, governed, and sustained by God
  - i. Col. 1:17

**6) Lesson – God's precision in creation assures us of His precision in our lives**

- a. Since God can place the stars in billions, yet call them each by name (Isa. 40:26)
  - i. Surely He knows your struggles and is able to intervene
- b. Since God appointed the ordinances of the moon and stars (Jerm. 31:35)
  - i. Surely He knows how to order your steps well
- c. Since by God's word the universe was formed
  - i. Imagine what applying that word to your life can do

## **God's Consideration of man – V4-5**

### **1) David speaks of God's mindfulness of man**

- a. Many commentators suggest that David's consideration of man is in contrast to the cosmos of V3
  - i. However – remember the statements about the skies is to reveal the sovereignty of God
  - ii. In other words – David is noticing how grand God is and how insignificant man is
  - iii. Plummer – “Man is so feeble, so frail and compared to God, so insignificant that it fills [David] with wonder that thou regardest him in any way.”
- b. The language David uses in these verses stresses the frailty of man
  - i. Man – Enosh – root = to be weak
    - 1. Word is used in contexts that stress the frailty of man
    - 2. Denotes – mortal or incurably weak
  - ii. Son of man – phrase used to stress man's dependence on parents
    - 1. Used in Scripture to emphasize vulnerability and humility
- c. Pairing both words David is highlighting how we are weak, frail, and dependent man is
  - i. Contrasting man with all the splendor he just spoke about God!
- d. Yet notice God is still mindful
  - i. Mindful – word is deeper than mere awareness – its connected to a covenantal remembrance
  - ii. It's a word used in Scripture to reference God's gracious intervention for His people
    - 1. Gen. 9:15 – Ex. 2:24

### **2) David speaks of God's mercy toward man**

- a. Notice what this mindfulness brings about
  - i. Visitest – to inspect, review, to number
    - 1. Broad spectrum term – to bless, to intervene, to attend to
    - 2. In some contexts, as Ps. 8, it carries the idea of Divine care and involvement
      - a. Cross Ref – Gen 21:1 – the LORD visiting Sarah
- b. In other words – what is weak, dying, frail humanity that You, Mighty God, would care?
- c. These questions are a literary device to give proper perspective on God and man

### 3) David speaks of God's magnifying of man

- a. David follows up the frailty of man with the dignity God has given to man
- b. Little lower than angels – although man is earthly, fashioned from dust, God has given man the highest honor of any earthly being
  - i. Man may be lower than angels (not heavenly) but he is above an animal
  - ii. Man's life is given by the breath of God
- c. This verse teaches us that God has given man a unique and exalted position in His created world
- d. Further – V5 teaches us the position God has given man is one of honor
  - i. Crowned – implies the status of royalty
    - 1. Man is fearfully and wonderfully man
  - ii. Glory and honor – royal attributes, at times even divine attributes
    - 1. Not only are we chief among creation, but we bear the image of God
  - iii. This phrase reveals the elevated status God has given to man

### 4) This positioning should render great worship from you and I

- a. This is an unearned, underserved position
- b. These verses destroy the extreme ends of the humanistic ideas that plague our culture
  - i. Pride – verses rightly remind us who we really are – dust
  - ii. Despair – verses rightly remind us we are created in God's image with transcendent purpose and value

**God's Commission to man – V6-8**

**1) These verses reach back to creation and echo the commission God gave man back in Gen. 1,2**

**2) Dominion granted**

- a. V6 expresses the settled fact that God appointed man to rule over His creation as His representatives
- b. Made him to have dominion – phrase meaning – to rule, to govern, to manage
  - i. Denotes an appointing as ruler

**3) Duty given**

- a. Over the works of thy hands – Hebrew idiom meaning everything God made
  - i. Referring to the tangible, visitable world
- b. Put all things under his feet - royal metaphor in ancient Near Eastern kingship
  - i. Symbolizes complete authority
- c. In other words – man was made to exercise dominion as the royal rulers of this world

**4) Domain governed**

- a. V7-8 speak to the arena man was given to govern
- b. Domesticates animals and life – V7
  - i. Labor, food, clothing, agriculture
- c. Wild animals – V8
- d. No sphere of creaturely life lies outside humanities original domain

### **God Redeems with Salvation – V9**

#### **1) Problem – if you haven’t picked up on it already**

- a. What we read in V4-8 doesn’t seem to be what we experience in life today
- b. Rather than an ordered world, functioning well under man’s dominion
  - i. We see chaos and disorder

#### **2) Truth – Adam and Eve may have possessed this kind of authority – but it is long gone now**

- a. You and I are not ultimately rulers over this earth
- b. We can subdue and train some animal – but our rule over animals is superficial at best
  - i. Ex – bull rider – bull does not submit to that little human

#### **3) When sin entered the world – death came so that it passed upon all men – Rom. 5:12**

- a. Sin decayed, distorted, and destroyed this great dominion we are to have
- b. Instead of man exercising dominion over the earth, mankind submits to creation over its Creator
  - i. Rom. 1:25
- c. What these verses remind us of is how frail man failed at God’s design and rebelled against our Creator

#### **4) But wait there’s more – V9**

- a. Verse 9 seems out of place, doesn’t it
- b. How can this Psalm end with the superlative of praise when it so clearly reminds us of the failure of man
- c. How can it speak of God’s glory when it seems like His plan has failed

#### **5) Truth – where man has failed, Jesus has succeeded**

- a. You will notice that the verses of Psalm 8 are applied to Jesus in the NT
  - i. Specifically, Heb. 2:6-13
  - ii. Reveals to us the messianic nature of this Psalm

#### **6) How can this Psalm end on such a high note?**

- a. Although the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam failed, Jesus has not
- b. In weakness the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam sinned, yet in coming as the “son of man” the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam gained victory
- c. The 1<sup>st</sup> Adam gave over dominion willfully, through the cross the Bible tells is – all things are under His feet (1 Cor. 15:27)

#### **7) The reason this Psalm can end in such a superlative is – the True Author, God the Holy Spirit, saw the end of the story**

- a. He knew in advance of the redemption of Jesus Christ



**8) This Psalm may speak to:**

- a. God's Splendor – V1
- b. God's Strength – V2
- c. God's Sovereignty – V3-8
- d. But it ultimately points us to God's Salvation – V9
- e. Taking the invitation presented to us – we can say with David – O LORD, our Lord