



Growth Group Curriculum Winter 2021
The Songs We Sing - Psalms in the New Year
Week 2 – January 17, 2021 - Psalm 8

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at church. In this time of the virus and social distancing, please meet safely outside or online. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

In the book of Psalms, we find the full spectrum of human emotion being brought into holy conversation with God. Psalm 8 is no different as its writer expresses praise, awe, and wonder toward the Creator. This praise is coupled with curiosity, as the question “what is mankind that you are mindful of them” gets raised. This Psalm was written purely to give praise, but in doing so we also learn the purpose of humankind: to steward God’s creation to its fullness.

In Genesis, we read about God’s creation of the cosmos. His act of creation was an act of placing boundaries and limitations on what his creation could and could not do. We are told God made humans in the image of God and called us to “fill the earth and subdue it.” (Gen 1:28) It is important to note that we are made in the image of God, not in the essence of God. We should also note that Psalm 8 affirms that our image bearing continued after “the fall,” and our responsibility to creation persisted.

In Psalm 8, we read that we are “a little lower than the angels and crowned...with glory and honor...everything is under (our) feet.” This place of power and authority on Earth is not something to be wielded for our own benefit, but rather serves as an opportunity for us to become more Christ like in our love for creation. If we want an example of what it means to have “glory and honor” on Earth we should look to the humble servant Jesus Christ.

Psalm 8 also raises our gaze toward the Creator. The rich imagery showcases the involvement of God in each step of creation. The line, “the work of your fingers”, gives us a personal glimpse into the detailed care God has for what he has created.

Like David, after looking at the vastness of the cosmos, we wonder why humans are privy to such an invitation? We have done nothing to deserve such an invitation, yet God includes us. He comes down for us in Jesus Christ and gives us purpose. We are to serve as stewards of God’s creation and live lives that are honoring of Him.



Exploring the Text

Read Psalm 8

¹ LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. ² Through the raise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. ³ When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? ⁵ You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. ⁶ You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet: all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, ⁸ the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. ⁹ LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) Have you ever had an experience in nature where you sensed the presence of God? If so, what was that like?
- 2) How do the heavens reveal the glory of God? What do you think David meant when he wrote that?
- 3) Psalm 8 is all about praising God. It begins and ends with the same phrase, “O LORD our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.” What is the significance of praising God? What do you praise God for most often? (healing, provision, protection, etc.)
- 4) David seems to allude to the idea that God creates as an artist. David talks about the fingers of God and one can imagine God sculpting or painting. Is thinking about God as an artist helpful for you?
- 5) Verse 5 talks about how humankind is crowned with glory and honor. What does that mean?
- 6) In light of what we read in Psalm 8, should we see ourselves as insignificant or significant? Why?
- 7) Pastor Paul talked about the importance of humankind stewarding relationships and stewarding God’s creation. Do you believe that you are called, as a human made in the image of God, to care for creation? Why or why not? How does this play out in your life?
- 8) What does it look like to be a good steward of relationships? What does it look like to treat others as people who have been crowned with glory and honor?

