

Present: Present in Creation
12.04.2022

I hope you all are starting to get into the Christmas spirit like we are here at Wellspring.

The Christmas vibes are starting to take full effect.

I am sure you all are already listening to your Christmas music, some of you have been since Halloween.

Some of you are far from excited about Christmas because you never get anything good.

Let me tell you about the worst experience I had on a Christmas morning:

moon shoes story



When its Christmas time, it's something that makes us feel a certain way. When we see and hear all the same things each year: the lights, the trees, the music, and so on, we sort of step right in where we left off the year before.

There are a lot of expectations around this season.

As we kick off our Christmas series this morning we are calling "Present", I want to challenge us all to fight of the temptation to tune out because we feel like we have done this whole Christmas thing before.

This Christmas, this month, I want to challenge you today to shift your perspective towards God's ultimate desire for us. A lot of us believe that Jesus is God's ultimate desire for us. We believe God sent Jesus and desperately wants us to put our faith in Him, and that is what it's all about.... While it is true that God sent Jesus so we would put our faith in Him, that wasn't God's original plan and desire for us, right?

The truth is that Jesus coming to earth and dying on the cross wasn't God's desire, but it was God's plan to get us back what he desired.

Church, God's desire is to be with us.

He loves us, so very much.

In all things, before and after Jesus, God's ultimate desire is to be in community with His creation. He wants to be Present with us, and for us to be Present with Him.

So, over the next few weeks, we are going to be looking at the different ways that God is present with us, but more than that we will establish over the next few weeks what our role is in God's desire.

There is a lot to learn about God in this season, but there is also a lot to learn about us. God has done His part for us to come back into community with him. He has made every effort needed to be present with us, so we now need to look at what we are supposed to do to be present with Him.

Each week in this series we are going to focus on a different way that God has made Himself present to us.

There are arguably many ways God reveals himself to us, he reveals himself to us

- 1) In creation
- 2) From within us
- 3) Through the church
- 4) And In His Son Jesus

We are going to look at each these areas of our lives and try to gain one thing, one thing that is so incredibly important always, but especially during the difficulty of the holiday season.

Perspective.

Everything is always calling for our attention but in this season there are so many things that certainly have your attention.

Prepping the house, buying the gifts, running from this party to that party, all the things you do with and for your kids, and so much more.

You know what this season holds, and we go into auto-pilot through a lot of this season, but the beauty of perspective is it slows this time around us down and allows us to see the true meaning, not just of Christmas, but of our entire lives.

We have a God who has wanted to be present with us always, from the very beginning. What does that change for us? What does it call us to?

Today we are talking about what God's creation calls us to and his presence in the world calls us to, and over the next few weeks we will look at our response to Gods activity from within us, through his son, and also in our church.

One of the cool ways.....

plug for Picture frames

Again, we'll be looking at how God reveals himself to us in the church in a few weeks, so between now and then grab this frame and get your family on our family tree.

Open up your Bibles to Psalms 148. We are going to spend a lot of our time here this morning as we look at God's presence in the world around us and His creation

I found parts of this explanation from Jon Collins and Tim Mackey, they created what's called The Bible Project and I really enjoyed the way they explained this passage, so I want to give them credit where its due, you can find much more in depth on their website Bibleproject.com, but here is what I think is great about this passage:

If you break down Psalms 148 you see that it is written In a particular way.

The passage is found in the middle of the 5 final chapters of the Psalms, which are poems that tell a story about Israel, written heavily by King David, who we have been studying the past few weeks here at WellSpring.

The Psalms show the rise and Fall of King David, and how Israel falls to the hands of other nations and are left without a King.

The Psalms, like all of scripture, point to Jesus and the truth that He, being born of a virgin, will be the King of all Kings and restore Israel and God's people back to Him.

The final 5 Psalms, where we find our passage 148, are all Psalms of praise.

A lot of us have believed they are written in a way that shows David, the writer, praising God, but this Psalm, 148, is a bit different. Read with me in verse 1:

Praise the Lord.^[a]
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights above.

Psalms 148:1

At first glance this looks like words we can say when we are praising God, but the reality is that the Psalmist is writing with another purpose in mind.

Praise the Lord

Praise Yah → Praise Yahweh → Hallelu Yah → Praise The Lord (Reveal each as said)

In Hebrew, Hallelu Yah is not something you say to God, it is something you say to others when you are inviting them to Praise God. So immediately in Psalm 148 we aren't seeing an example of worship as much as we are seeing the Psalmist *invite* the readers into a posture of worship to God.

Hallelujah means "Hey you, you need to praise God"

So, praise the Lord is an invitation and call to worship Yaweh, an invitation to praise God.

Keep reading into verses 2-4 of Psalms 148

Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his heavenly hosts.

³ Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars.

⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens
and you waters above the skies.

Then the Psalmist writes in verse 7:

Praise the Lord from the earth,
you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,

Throughout Psalms 148 you see two specific groups called to Praise God:

- The Skies
- The Land

Here is what is so cool about JUST this opening line, what does Genesis 1:1 say?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

So, the Psalmist throughout all of Psalm 148 is inviting all of creation into praising God.

All of creation, then, is called to worship: More than that though the reason we were created was to worship.

We see in this scripture and all throughout the Bible different ways that people we obedient to God, Following God, building things for God, Leading people for God, and so many other things.

But what were all of these people and stories really about? Worship.

We have a God that is present in all creation, who had a hand in all things we see, touch, hear, and love.

His very creation has the perspective we are looking for in this season: creation knows where to look in this season and always.

Creation is the very presence of God.

God did His part – He created the heavens and the earth and everything in between. He did His part to be present with us through the world and universe we live in, yet even though that's true, many of us feel more distant from God now more than ever before.

Even though all people are walking and living in His creation, so many in this world are living outside of god's presence.... how is that possible?

It's because God may have done His part to be present with us in this world, but are we doing ours?

Keep reading with me in [Psalms 148: 8-10](#)

lightning and hail, snow and clouds,
stormy winds that do his bidding,
⁹ you mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,
¹⁰ wild animals and all cattle,
small creatures and flying birds,

Here is a question for you: how does a fruit tree worship?

It worships by living out its purpose.

That tree was created to live and bear fruit, and when it does that, it walks in line with why it was created and therefore praises God.

Based off of this, in order to accept the call to praise god, in order to be present with Him as He is with us in His creation, we have to walk in our purpose. We have to live out why we were created.

We were created to worship.

Keep reading Psalms 148:11-12

kings of the earth and all nations,
you princes and all rulers on earth,
¹² young men and women,
old men and children

What we see here is incredibly important. It is not a call for some people with some gifts and from some places to worship. No, instead we are all being called to praise God

- The Young
- Old
- Men
- Women
- Kings
- Servants
- Rich

- Poor
- Sad
- Happy

All of us are called to praise God.

That is our purpose. Is to worship and praise and declare His name as great, always.

Israel, when this passage was written, had fallen to other leaders and nations. There were plenty of reasons not to worship, because Israel wasn't experiencing good things, but hardship.

I think there are a lot of people here today, in this season and others, are not experiencing goodness. Not feeling joy in this season, are instead struggling, hurting, or wandering.

But this is what is so special about our invitation to worship found in Psalms 148.

We are not being called to worship God because of how our lives look in the moment, but because of what God has done for us in the bigger picture.

Keep reading in verses 13 and 14:

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.
¹⁴ And he has raised up for his people a horn,^[b]
the praise of all his faithful servants,
of Israel, the people close to his heart.

He has raised up for His people a horn: (highlight this line within the whole passage when referenced)

Explain the horn

God has given victory to Israel, and to us, therefore it only makes sense that all creation worships Him and gives Him the praise he deserves.

Our role, our purpose is to praise God despite the circumstances of our lives.

The psalms, His creation, it all points to His Victory, and that Victory is never going to fail or falter.