



When was the last time you said to yourself, "I am glorious?" What would you say if I told you that Psalm 8 says you have been crowned with glory? Is that hard to believe? Do you believe that you deserve such a description?

Today as we look at Psalm 8, I'm going to show you how there is a crown of glory bestowed on you when the Majestic Lord is known.

Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory in the heavens.
Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.
When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?
You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.
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,
the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.
Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 8 begins with a verse that's been made famous through hymn writers and singer Michael W Smith in the 1980's. "LORD, our Lord, How majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens" (v. 1).

Specifically, LORD, our Lord is translated Jehovah, our Adonai, meaning the great God of everything, the One we are submissive to.

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show called *From the Edge with Peter Lik*. His photos reveal the majesty of God.

In verse 3 it says, "with your fingers you made the heavens." That means he did it easily. It was so easy for him he didn't even have to use his whole hand or an arm, just his fingers. God is majestic.

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place.

In verses 7-8 it says "with your hands you made the animals and fish." This made me think of my recent fishing trip to Canada. Remember I told you I had high expectations for catching lots of fish! I brought some photos. Here is one of Michael's fish. Not very majestic, is it? Now here's one of mine—now that's majestic! In the handiwork and creativity of animals and fish we can see the majesty of God's creation.

All flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the sea.

What does the word "majestic" mean? Lofty dignity, grand, superior to mundane matters. The Hotel Majestic in San Francisco is timeless elegance, sophisticated service. Romance thrives at the Hotel Majestic. We reserve the use of the word majestic for something truly spectacular. When Psalm 8 describes the creation of God, his creation is described as majestic because he is majestic. He stands alone, outside creation, as the truly glorious, holy and perfect being.

In light of the majesty and the wonder and the glory and the holiness of God, what's the place of mankind in everything? It's a fair question, isn't it? When we look at the amazing, diverse, unique creation of God, where do we fit in?

This is one of the central questions of life: Who are you and how do you know? The answer to this question swings from extreme to extreme. Some people think way too much of themselves. They think their opinion, instead of God's, is the best. We all know people like this:

- The co-worker who always asserts their opinion
- The boss who bosses but never listens
- The spouse who criticizes
- The parent who always knows best
- The fisherman who caught the biggest fish

These are all examples of people who think way too much of themselves.

This last week I was talking with a surgeon in our church—Joe Roberson—who operates on the brain, the inner ear and the skull. He was telling me how different he was from fellow surgeons because of his faith in God. It's most common for a surgeon to think too much of themselves. In fact, they think of themselves as god-like. As a Christian, Joe recognizes that there is a Majestic God and he is not it. Perhaps you know someone who thinks too much of themselves. Perhaps you think too much of yourself.

On the other end of this extreme, in contrast to this group of people are people who think way too little of themselves. They think they offer next to nothing helpful to others or the world. We all know people like this:

- The co-worker who's tearing themselves down all the time
- The boss who's so insecure they never give direction
- The spouse who's lost himself in self-pity
- The parent who questions every rule and lacks the fortitude to enforce the ones that exist

These people have a voice that whispers in their ear, "You are dumb. You're a failure. You're worthless."

I bet all of us can relate to both of these extremes to some degree. There have been many times when I was completely sold on my opinion; at times when I've struggled with self-doubt. What's the answer? Who are we and how do we know? In attempts to find an answer if we only look at one another and ourselves we're like a balloon blowing in the wind, shifting according to our immediate circumstances.

With all of God's majestic creation in mind verse 4 says, "**What is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?**" The crucial question, "what is man," occurs elsewhere in the scriptures. "**LORD, what are human beings that you care for them, mere mortals that you think of them?**" (Psalm 144:3); "**What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes**" (James 4:14); "**What is mankind that you make so much of them, that you give them so much attention?**" (Job 7:17).

Thankfully Psalm 8 answers this question in a very surprising way in verses 5–6.

You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.

You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet.

In answer to the question, "Who are you and how do you know?" God answers, "Although you are mere specks in my universe, you

have been created with a significance and honor above everything else that's been created."

David makes this point in two striking ways in these verses. First, he uses the word *glory* when he says in verse 5, "**We have been crowned with glory.**" This word *glory* is the same word used to describe God himself in verse 1, "**You have set your glory in the heavens.**" Secondly, David emphasizes the importance of mankind by speaking in verse 6 of his role as *ruler* over the world and its creatures. Rule is normally something ascribed to God and here it's saying that God is sharing this rule with us.

Can we just pause for a moment to contemplate this? God has a glory that is spectacular, so breathtaking that he is described as majestic. So vast that with all the advances in science and medicine and art, we are barely scratching the surface of understanding his creation. And his rule is complete. There is no one, ever who escapes his sovereign rule. And God has crowned you with his glory and made you a ruler.

Consider the implications of this. While we are nothing in comparison to God, we are also the most important creation that God has made. If this is true, why is there so much despair in the world? Why are there people overly prideful? Why is anyone confused about his or her identity? It seems that we don't have glory. It seems that we don't really rule over much.

The theme of confusion and pointlessness is prominent in the hit song, *Some Nights* by the band Fun. This song hit #3 in Billboard's Top 100 and hit #1 in the United Kingdom. Listen to these lyrics and consider how confused this singer is.

Some nights, I stay up cashing in my bad luck.

Some nights, I call it a draw.

Some nights, I wish that my lips could build a castle

Some nights, I wish they'd just fall off

But I still wake up, I still see your ghost

Oh Lord, I'm still not sure what I stand for oh

What do I stand for? What do I stand for?

Most nights, I don't know anymore... oh woah, oh woah, oh woah oh oh.

Oh woah, oh woah, oh woah oh oh

In concerts, crowds of thousands will boisterously sing this song. It's like their anthem that resonates with their souls. "What do I stand for? What do I stand for? Most nights, I don't know anymore." How does this attitude of futility and hopelessness reconcile with the truths of Psalm 8? How can verse 5 say that we are crowned with glory and honor? How can verse 6 say that we rule over all creation? And yet, so many experience the opposite?

The answer is sad and sobering. Although God made mankind in his image and crowned us with his glory and shared his ruling power with us, men and women turned their backs on God. Mankind indeed was crowned with glory and honor at creation. He was given dominion over the earth. But the entrance of sin turned the tables, placing man under a curse. That curse is experienced through death, destruction, deceit and an utter hopelessness in our souls. Sin works as a block against the glory and honor God gave mankind. Sin works as a block against the rule that God gave mankind. So in order to regain these, sin and the curse from sin must be eliminated.

Before I talk about the implications of this on our lives today, let's gaze into the future and think about a time when sin will be completely eliminated. At the end of time, when Jesus returns he will completely eliminate sin. Revelation 20 tells us that death and hell will be thrown into the lake of fire and destroyed forever. At that time, the full majesty and glory and holiness of God will be seen, without filter. Everyone who calls Jesus Christ their Savior will experience the full glory and honor that God bestowed on mankind at creation. That will be an amazing time.

Until that time, we're living under the curse of sin. This curse has robbed us of our glory and honor and muddled our role as rulers. But it's through a relationship with Jesus Christ that a person can partially undo the effects of this curse. It's only through a relationship with Jesus Christ that we can know the Majestic God of the universe. It's only through a relationship with Jesus Christ that we can know who we are and what we were designed for. It's only through a relationship with Jesus Christ that we can know what being crowned with glory and honor is like.

Doesn't that sound amazing? A relationship with Jesus Christ remedies all of that. Then why do so many reject a relationship with him? I think the answer is hinted at in verse 2.

Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

In this verse children and infants are praising God. This seems to be a disconnected concept to include in a Psalm about God's majesty and the questions of mankind's identity. But it is connected. Children are often used in scripture to serve as an example to adults of how to know God. While adults are trying to figure everything out on their own, children will quickly turn to someone else for help. While adults are sure about their independence, a child's entire existence is defined by being dependent on someone else.

God is telling us in verse 2 that if you want to experience the majestic creator God of the universe, if you want to partially reclaim

your glory and honor, then be like a child. Look to him for help. Stop living independently and lean on him. This bristles against our pride and attempts at being independent.

Let me close with a story. I showed you some pictures earlier of my Canadian fishing trip. The fuller story of that trip is that we didn't catch very many fish. It was frustrating and disappointing. On our first day, after standing and casting for seven hours, I still hadn't caught a keeper. I was tired and my back was sore so I went to the boat to lie down. While I was lying down our guide, Hans, got a fish on his line, a good one. Everyone was excited. I wasn't. Who cares if Hans catches a fish? I want to catch one! I decided the polite thing to do was to walk down there to be part of the experience. People were taking pictures with the fish. We started texting the pictures out, creating the illusion to our friends and family that we caught the fish. Then Hans said to me, "This fish is for you."

I told him, "Thank you but you don't have to do that. You caught it." He insisted. So I accepted, but I wasn't excited.

At the very end of the day I was wondering why I wasn't more excited about taking home a great Spring Salmon. You know what bothered me? I didn't catch it myself. The whole point of the trip was to catch my own fish. I was a complete failure and the only fish I had was a gift from someone else. I didn't want his gift; I wanted my own fish. I didn't want to be a charity case; I wanted to earn it myself. That's what was bothering me.

And then it hit me. That's just like the love that Jesus offers. Each person is a complete failure and the only salvation comes as a gift from Jesus. Each of us tries to earn this in various ways but we're striving vainly.

You can try to do life on your own but it will never happen. You can try to figure out your purpose on your own but it will never happen. You can try to build your own glory but it will never happen. You only experience all of this amazing stuff through a relationship with Jesus. And the first step to knowing Jesus is admitting you are completely dependent on him doing all the work for you. Have you done this? Have you turned to Jesus? Are you trying desperately to find your identity on your own? In your career? In your marriage? You will never find it there. We can only understand our inherent glory and honor by submitting to a glorious God, Jesus Christ.

This manuscript represents the bulk of what was preached at CPC. For further detail, please refer to the audio recording of this sermon.

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