

A Real Man Would . . . Humble Himself

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Trinity Sunday

Psalm 8:1-9 O LORD, our Lord, How excellent *is* Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens! ² Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger. ³ When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, ⁴ What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? ⁵ For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶ You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all *things* under his feet, ⁷ All sheep and oxen-- Even the beasts of the field, ⁸ The birds of the air, And the fish of the sea That pass through the paths of the seas. ⁹ O LORD, our Lord, How excellent *is* Your name in all the earth!

I ran across this image this week. Here is a man doing a manly job. There is no way I would do that, and if I tried there is no way I would survive.

We often associate being manly with feats of strength or courage, to the point of foolishness. "A real man would run down that cliff. A real man wouldn't care that he has leeches all over his feet." Things like that. If we say "real men" we probably think of people like John

Wayne, Chuck Norris, the Marlboro Man. We think of manly men as brave, strong, and aloof.

The scripture however has a very different version of what a real man would do. The scripture reminds us that this is not the way that Christ acted. It reminds us that if we would be real men in God's eyes, we will be Christ-like and humble ourselves.

Psalm 8 begins with a description of what God would do. It begins by describing the glory of God. He is above the heavens and yet his name is exalted in all the earth. Even though he is above the heavens he deigns to come down to earth and make himself known here.

You notice what he did not do. He did not show off his muscles. He did not remain on his throne far above the heavens. Instead, even though earth is so small in comparison, he came down to earth and made himself known among us.

The Psalmist continues in verse 2 describing this same humbling of God.

Psalm 8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.

Not only did he come down to earth, but he chose to reveal himself through infants. This verse should be understood poetically and not

literally. God reveals himself through those things that seem lowly and humble to us. Paul explains this in 1 Cor 1:27.

1 Corinthians 1:27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

Although God sits above the heavens, he does not come to us bearing his muscles and power. He humbles himself. He comes to us in the person of Jesus. He comes to us in the word of God. He comes in water and in bread and wine. He leads us as a gentle and good shepherd.

Having thus introduced God and revealing how God interacts with us, the psalmist continues to discuss man's role: verses 4-6

Psalm 8:4-6 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? 5 For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;

God reminds us that God has given to man glory and honor. He has given him dominion over all creation. But if God himself who sits above the heavens came down to earth and reveals himself to the humble and lowly, then how should man exercise this dominion which God has given to him? The answer of course is that we should humble ourselves as God did.

When I worked at a burger/custard place in Milwaukee, the guys in the back on the grill would take sliced pickles and grill them, then slap them on their wrists, as proof of how tough they were. We will often point to feast of strength as examples of what a real man would do, but God has a very different view. The bible says that a real man is one who is Christ like, as Christ humbled himself and came to earth for us so also, we should show our strength in humbling ourselves for others.

Philippians 2:5,7 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, . . . 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

Similarly, Solomon reminds us in Pro 16:32

Proverbs 16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

He is a real man who humbles himself and lives to serves others. This is a harder thing than conquering a city. None of us have lived up to this standard, but the book of Hebrews tells us that Psalm 8 is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. We don't look to ourselves. We look to Jesus.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Man, whether you take the term to mean humanity in general or the male, has never lived up to the potential for which God created him. God created him to rule over all creation and in ruling well he would receive glory and honor from God himself. Man has sinned and brought devastation on the earth that he was meant to care for. He has not received glory and honor, instead he has received death as the punishment for our sins.

Christ has done what we could not. He came not to be served but to serve and give himself as a ransom. He humbled himself to the point of death even the death of the cross. He delivered us from our sins and has forgiven all our failures. **"Therefore, God has highly exalted him."** Through him man has received the glory and honor which we lost in our sin.

Therefore, the Psalmist ends:

Psalm 8:9 O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

The name of the Lord is excellent in the heavens because of his power and his wisdom, but his name is excellent on the earth among us because of what he did for us through Christ Jesus our Lord. He did not exalt his strength above us but humbled himself and came to die in our place.

A real man would: be Christlike and humble himself for others.