

Becoming human- giving glory. 09 December_2018.

(PP1) Becoming human- giving glory x 49 Sunday 09 December_2018.

ROMANS 15: 1 – 13 especially verses 6 & 9.

HUMANS UNITED IN DECLARING GOD’S GLORY.

Last week we considered:

The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

(Psalm 19:1 and Luke 2: 1 – 20). We considered what it meant for the “heavens” to speak and sing out praises and glory to God.

It’s appropriate in the season of Advent – the season at the darkest time of the year that we reflect on the GLORY of GOD and *GIVING GLORY*.

Agreement across a range of Christians that human beings are made in the image of God with a primary purpose:

Presbyterian foundational belief: *Chief end of man (a human being) is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.*

Ignatian Society of Jesus: AMDG - *all or everything for the greater glory of God.*

I hope that through the teaching on the Sundays of this year I have developed and laid out the foundation of the conviction that it is in “becoming fully human” we bring glory to God.

To glorify (DOXAZO) comes from the Greek word for glory – DOXA which means to extol, to praise and magnify (not so much to enlarge the reality of God but to enable us to see God more clearly and so glorify God in the way we live our lives and bring our praises).

GOD is glorious, and we can bring glory to God: that’s 2 different but linked things.

Jesus teaches his disciples that they can bring glory to God by living intimately in him and bearing much fruit. (*Vine metaphor in John 15:8*) and also by uniting with others – from many different backgrounds.

But even if we did nothing God would still be glorious – God emanates glory by virtue of his being. *V9 the glory of the LORD shone over them.* (Shepherds Luke 2)

God’s glory is the self-manifestation and revelation of all that God IS and DOES (God’s being and doing).

God manifests all his goodness supremely in JESUS CHRIST and not just in creation. We can manifest and bring glory to God as people by the way we live and treat others and accept diversity of opinion about dietary practices and some who consider certain days more sacred/ holy than others.

Please note that Paul is not telling his brothers and sisters in the church in Rome to put up with sinful/ wrong behaviour but to happily tolerate differences of opinion about different foods and sacred days. *Chapter 14 especially verses 17& 18 - For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. (NIV)*

Chapter 15 Paul continues in his concern that there should be a Spirit of Unity amongst followers of Christ – whether they are Jews or Gentiles (the people of the other nations ETHNE) – whatever their cultural heritage and religious background. V6 he wants them to give GLORY to the God and Father of Jesus Christ with one heart (together) and mouth.

Verse 7 – this acceptance of one another is also for God’s glory! This is a testimony to the fact that Christ has accepted each of us who has received him – and we too are to accept one another. On this basis those who follow Jesus Christ would have to argue against any sort of racial or national superiority.

Verse 8 following Christ’s life of service was not just to fulfil his promise faithfully to the Jews but so that the people of all the other nations (Gentiles) may also rejoice and bring glory to God.

Isaiah the prophet who spoke of the Christ’s coming spoke of the Gentiles – all the nations glorifying and praising God. ***Isaiah 11: 10 (LXX) and 52: 15 (LXX).***

Page 680 (8 century BCE) A day is coming when the new king from the royal line of David will be a symbol to the NATIONS. They will gather in his city and give him honour.

Page 718 But many nations will marvel at him, and kings will be speechless with amazement. They will see and understand something they have never known.

Isaiah 11 speaks of something new sprouting forth from the old stump of the Hebrews. This is what Paul refers the Romans to in verse 13 of chapter 15.

The followers in Rome are Paul’s Brothers and Sisters whether their heritage is Jewish or that of any nation on earth.

This coming together of people of all nations through the person Jesus of Nazareth – the Christ to praise God together with one voice **glorifies God.**

TODAY – as we gather together to praise God with one voice and break bread and drink wine around this Table – we glorify God. People are to know that we are Christians *by our love for one another.* We pray they see our changed lives and glorify our Father in the high and lowly places.

It should go without saying that if we are divided and do not praise God with one voice then we detract from the honour and glory that should be given to God.

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