

Word Notes Sunday 17/07/16
Clare Reed: Real Life, Real God. Week 4

Summary (*read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday, listen to the podcast if you missed the talk <http://www.newmarketcommunitychurch.co.uk/podcasts.htm>*)

Psalm 8

This is the last in our series on Psalms and how they relate a real God to our real lives. You may have noticed when reading through some Psalms that whatever the subject there is usually praise, either at the beginning or the end. Psalm 8 marks the end of a set of psalms from 3 to 8 where psalms 3 to 7 have all been pleading to God over one problem or another – healing, rescue from enemies etc. Psalm 8 brings this to an end with some perspective, seeing these from the vantage point of God in His greatness.

Note how the first line (verse 1a) is repeated again at the end. It makes the emphasis that Almighty God, is my God (“LORD” is the modern translation of “Yahweh” while “Lord” is “Adonai”) – the God who reveals to me His name and whom I adore, follow, worship, is majestic above all things.

In verse 2 psalmist David goes on to declare the power of praise – the kind that comes from infants being simple and over the top – which silences the enemy. What a contrast to the dark moments in preceding Psalms. It is a general principle that praise or worship is powerful against God’s enemies (eg 2 Chronicles 20:13-24).

To further bring that into context David then considers the insignificance of Mankind compared to the things of God. Just looking at the stars and even with his primitive bronze-age understanding David sees there is no comparison. Consider modern scientific understanding of an earth that is 4.5 billion years old and yet mankind as we might recognise them only features in the last 50,000 yet God made it all by His spoken word! Why is Man so important to God to have put so much in our hands?

And so, having firstly expressed the power of praise, even the simple praise of children, to silence the enemy, then seeing that we are such a tiny part of God’s creation, and yet he has gifted us the opportunity to rule in his creation but under his watchful eye, we return to the focus of this psalm:

God, who I know personally by name, who belongs to me and I to him, is far above everything in the whole world.

Application (*this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points*)

What characterises your praise? Is it full-on or emotionless? Reverent or noisy? Complicated or child-like? Or is it a mixture of these at different times. Discuss how praise works in you life.

What is man’s “value” to God that he would give him dominion over all the works of His hands? Can we ever answer that question? Even if not what does that say to you about how God views His relationship with you and His care for you?

How does you last answer inform and affect your approach to God, life and to problems?

“Have we made our God too small?”

Witness (*this is the bit where the cell talks, plans and prays about how to share the Good News*)

Summer is coming – make plans to get out and interact with your neighbours.