



A LETTER FROM YOUR PASTOR: AUGUST 2020 *by Lee Shipp*

CREATION'S GOD

God is glorious. He is so very great. He is clothed with honor and majesty. He is full of glory, covering Himself in light as with a garment. It is the Lord, mighty and powerful, who has stretched out the heavens as a man who would throw open a curtain. With meticulous care He has designed the works of His hands that His works may blend into such an array of beauty and splendor, causing all of His creatures to celebrate His creative genius.

He has designed the creation and the creature to both admire the beauties of His creation as well as be a part of the very beauty they admire. He fashioned the creature to appreciate the color of a blue sky or the redness of the setting sun. He caused the creature to feel the awesome power of a storm or the peace of a quiet stream. He designed every facet of creation to contribute to every component. Nothing has been overlooked, no corner has been cut, each part serves the whole.

It is the Lord who sends rains into the valleys to give the animals drink. He waters the hills to satisfy the earth, causing the grass to grow. From the earth springs forth vegetation for both cattle and man. He not only brings sustenance from the earth, but He produces delights for the man: wine for the man's joy, oil for the man's health, and bread for the man's heart.

He has garnished the trees for the birds to nest. He has formed the high hills for the goats to lodge. The moon marks the seasons of months and years. The rising and setting of the sun marks the ending and beginning of each new day. As the sun rises, men go out and work. As the sun sets, animals go forth to hunt. With the rising of the sun, the animals return to their dens as the men return to their labor.

How great and marvelous are the works of God. In wisdom He has made it all and filled the earth with treasures. Just consider the vast riches of the sea. It is filled with an abundance of life and resources. In the depths of the earth are the treasures of gold and precious metals. Within the creation are the provisions for every living thing.

God is the director of the vast creation. He has not vacated His works but rather watches over all things. As the director of a great symphony, God orchestrates the cosmos as well as the atom in each cell. Everything waits for the Lord. He hides His face and creation is troubled. God controls the life and death of every creature. He sends His Spirit to creation and revives it.

The glory of the Lord endures forever! The Lord rejoices in the work of His hands. With one look God causes the earth to tremble. He touches the earth and the hills smoke. So, what shall we do in the face of this Creator? What should be our response? As for me, I will sing to God as long as I live, I will sing praise to God. I will find my delight to dwell in His presence and to meditate upon Him.

MISERABLE PEOPLE

Have you noticed the misery of people who have no faith in the Creator? They cannot see the beauty of the Lord. They do not live praising Him and their hearts are full of darkness and gloom.

Many times, life events cause us to question the goodness and help of God! But faith sees Him and takes hold of Him! Faith rests in His goodness. The person of faith knows that if I will believe and not faint, I will see the goodness of the Lord in this life and in the one to come.

The enjoyment of God is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. The Creator never intended creation to be our joy and pursuit. His handiwork in creation is pointing us to something even more spectacular, the glory and beauty of His Son. To go to heaven and fully enjoy God, is infinitely better than pleasant accommodations here. If you could compare what you have in creation as to what you can have in God, then you would do everything to have God. Creation

is the shadow, but God is the substance. Creation is simply the feeling of heat, but God is the Sun. Creation is merely the streams in the wilderness, but God is the ocean.

Creation's purpose is to point us to God. *"[T]he heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of His chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and His circuit to the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof"* (Psalms 19:1-6).

God means for us to be stunned and look at the wonder of creation and say, *"What must God be like?"* How absolutely shallow is the man who is so stunned at creation that he is not provoked to know the Creator. How ignorant is the one who can be so enthralled with creation's wonders, the complex beauties of math, the splendors of scientific investigations and not set these aside to search out the incomprehensible glory of the Creator.

Not long ago a minister spoke in our church on the subject – Is Jesus Worthy? Oh, it was glorious. He spoke of His power and authority, His love to redeem us through His own death, and His desire to share everything with us. He spoke of the horrific suffering of this Creator on a cross. At the end the minister asked everyone, *"Is He Worthy?"* and called us all into the altar to praise this God. I was stunned ... shocked at the numbers of people who remained in their pew without moving in a posture to honor the worthy King. Oh, the faithless eyes that have no ability to see past religion. Why could these men not bring their families to the altar to stand in the presence of the worthy King to give Him honor? How will these same parents respond when their children do not have the admiration to stand for Jesus later against the pressures of temptation and sin? Why would the youth not stand for the King?

IT ENDS WITH JOY

It is not the seas, mountains, canyons, and galaxies that fill our hearts with raptures and wonder – it is the glory of the Creator. Sadly, tragedies have emboldened many to disregard the Creator. Many who have lived through life's painful experiences have shut the Creator out of their lives. Others, who have suffered abuse and injustice, conclude that if there is a God, He is cruel and not worth knowing.

Though I am moved by your tragedy and regret the pain you have suffered, I am stunned by your audacity to think you are in any position to judge the Creator. You, with your finite mind – do you really think you have better understanding than He? What have you ever created? *"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the cornerstone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy"* (Job 38:4-7).

Beloved, consider God gathering the angels together and saying to them, *"Watch this ... look over there."* God commands light and instantly the explosions of all varieties and colors of light appear. Worlds appear. Galaxies appear. And the angels shout for joy. They are beside themselves at the wonder they are beholding. Only a few seconds earlier they were surrounded with a world that was empty, void and full of darkness; then suddenly, God changed it all with a word, and all they could do was shout with joy. That is God's intention for you.

Maybe your world is filled with darkness and gloom. You are empty. Your world is empty. Your life is void of anything meaningful. That is not the way God wants to leave your world. He wants to make you shout for joy, but you are not looking, you are not praising Him. Your murmuring has shut Him out of your life. Turn to Him, praise Him, look at Him and He shall speak, and you shall joy. *"The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him. But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue His enemies"* (Nahum 1:7-8).

In a moment the Lord can change your darkness, gloom, emptiness, and meaningless life into something so glorious that you live the rest of your life shouting with joy. He can do it – He is the Creator! It is what He does. And that is what God is declaring to you through His creation. Look at the devastation of a volcano. It destroys everything in its path. Upheaval is all that is left. But eventually vegetation springs forth. Life returns. People come to visit because it possesses a beauty never attainable without the destructive forces it lived through. Likewise, it shall be for the one who praises the Lord. Out of the disaster and destructive forces something beautiful will spring forth. Life will return. People will come to see you because of the beauty God has produced out of your suffering.

Do you not hear this God shouting to you from His creation? Day and night are saying, *"God is glorious, God is glorious ... today is a new beginning."* It is obvious from scripture that this is creation's purpose. Oh, that you had eyes to see and ears to

hear. So much that can be known of God is manifested in His creation. The things you see from the creation are declaring to you the things you cannot see. God is not visible to us at this moment; however, His power, His beauty, His wisdom, His kingdom can be known, to a degree, by the things seen in creation. Creation is telling us a message – it is the fingerprint of God!

For the invisible things of God are clearly seen and understood by the things God has made. Even God's eternal power and Godhead are revealed in creation, leaving all men without an excuse (Romans 1). In other words, men have no excuse to claim they cannot know God, or that God does not exist – God has established His testimony in creation. No wonder evolution is so popular; it is Satan's way of silencing God's voice. And ponder the chaos that has ensued upon mankind since the demonic doctrine of evolution has been embraced. The despair of life is everywhere. *“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Romans 1:21-22).

THERE IS A GOD OF CREATION TO BE PRAISED

Creation is to praise the Creator. Sun and moon, praise Him. All ye stars of light, praise Him. Heaven of heavens, praise Him! Let the waters praise Him. Praise the Name of the Lord for He commanded and you were created! Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps: fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind fulfilling His word, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl, kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the Name of the Lord. For His Name is excellent. His glory is above the earth and heaven (Psalms 148).

We can see how the sun, moon, and stars praise God, but notice, sea monsters, creatures of the deep are also praising Him. Deep in the recesses of the earth, where no man can see, creation is praising God. The rain that falls to the earth, where no man is; the wilderness, wherein there is no man (Job 38), is praising His glory. God alone sees the phenomenon as the rain falls in the desert. Even in the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, the leviathan, that are made to play therein, are to the praise of His glory (Psalms 104). Therein they are made to play, and in the act of playing they praise God. Psalms 148 gives us insight into how God is praised. He is praised by His creation fulfilling His word. By functioning in our creative purpose God is praised! Praise is being what we are created to be. It is for God, it is for God to see, it is for God to enjoy.

For example, consider the European water spider that lives at the bottom of a lake. It lives underwater but breathes air. God created the spider this way. In order for the spider to survive, it comes to the top of the water, does a somersault on the surface and catches a bubble of air. Then it holds the bubble over the breathing holes in the middle of its body while it swims to the bottom of the lake and spins a silk web among the seaweed. The spider must regularly go up to the water's surface and then back down to the lake's bottom, securing bubble after bubble until a little balloon of air is formed under its silk web where it can live and eat and mate. This praises God. However, what if the spider were to act like a dog? Imagine if the spider thought it knew better how to live than God. What if the spider decided, *“I'm tired of this. I'm exhausted gathering air and bringing it to the bottom of the lake. I breath air; therefore, I am going to stay on the land from now on; I do not need to live underwater.”* This would upset God's glory in creation. This would insult God rather than praise Him. Yet, every day humans live this way before God. Humans think they know better how to live than God does. They do what is right in their own eyes. And just look at the world because of the insanity of man: chaos, murder, abuse, war, depression, suicide, to just name a few.

THERE IS A GOD OF WISDOM TO BE TRUSTED

Not only is God to be praised because He is Creator, He is to be praised for He is wise. He has established a masterpiece which flows in continuity and grace. What part of creation would dare try to upset this work? What piece of clay could ever instruct the potter and question what he is doing? The human body is a phenomenon that scientists cannot duplicate. The heart is a hard-working marvel that can keep on beating automatically even if all other nerves are severed. The human heart beats an average of 75 times a minute; this is 40 million times a year, 2.5 billion times in a lifespan of 70 years. With each beat the average adult heart discharges 4 ounces of blood, that is 3000 gallons a day, 650,000 gallons a year. That translates into filling 81 cargo trucks with 8000 gallons of blood each. In 1 hour, the human heart does enough work to lift a 150lbs man to the top of a three-story building. In 12 hours, the human heart expends enough power to lift a 65-ton tank car 1 foot off the ground. In 70 years, the human heart exercises enough power to lift the largest battleship completely out of the water.

Consider this marvel. Unseen to the human eye are 10,000 species known

as diatoms. In a teaspoon of ordinary lake water there may be a million of these invisible plants. What are they doing while entertaining God with their microscopic beauty? They are making tons and tons of oxygen so that the animals in the water can breathe.

THERE IS A GOD OF POWER TO BE FEARED

Not only is He to be praised because He is the wise Creator, He is to be praised for He is Almighty. Years ago, I traveled with my family out west. I remember one late night drive through New Mexico, the stars seemed close enough to touch. They filled the sky in abundance. Such majesty made me feel so insignificant. We were on a remote highway and found a spot to pull off the road. We all got out of the car and laid on the hood, we just stared in awe of the vastness and magnitude of the heavens. We felt so small. We felt so weak.

The powers of creation were declaring the magnificent power of God Almighty. God is so great. He made all of the heavens. He designed and fashioned every galaxy, every solar system, and every heavenly body. His power is unmatched.

Though the universe is uncharted and is ever expanding, God encloses it. He is bigger than the universe. His power is greater than any cosmic convulsion. Just ponder the enormity of God for a moment. Our Milky Way galaxy is composed of millions of solar systems. It would take light 1.5 million years to reach the Great Nebula, which is our neighboring galaxy, and yet God measures the universe with the span of His hand! God is big!

But whether it is the microscopic beauties of diatoms or the enormous heavenly bodies, everything is pointing us to the glory of God. God's glory, power, wisdom, and beauty transcends what we can and cannot see. God is so much better than creation that there is no comparison.

How can you compare a love poem to actual love? Would you rather hug the shadow of your lover or hug your lover? You tell me, would you rather a picture of the ocean or would you rather be at the ocean? The marvel of God, as compared to His creation, is transcendently superior as the marriage is to the engagement ring. How horrid for a woman to love the ring more than the lover. Yet humans are fixed more on the painting than the landscape; the painting being creation and the landscape being God.

THE JOYFUL CREATOR

Before you go, He also created joy. He created us with the capacity of joy, love, pain, suffering, healing, contentment, happiness, gentleness, patience, goodness, and peace. This is excellent for these emotions make us human, they make us like Him.

Job said, the sons of God shouted for joy. God's children are joyful. He wants His people to be joyful, that is why He wants us to live praising Him. Our creator is joyful. *“To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? Saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth”* (Isaiah 40).

The Father loves you with an everlasting love. You are more precious to Him than all of the things His hand has made. For you, He gave His only begotten Son so that if you would just believe on Him you could have everlasting life. He sees you. He knows where you are. *“Why sayest thou, my way is hid from the Lord ... Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, The Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is not searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”* (Isaiah 40).

Rejoice in the Lord. Praise Him and your life will be overwhelmed by His beauty. Be amazed at the intrinsic beauty and loveliness of the Lord every time you are stunned at the redness of a sunset, the roundness of the moon, the whiteness of snow, the wetness of rain, the blue of the sky, the unending crashes of the waves of the sea, the radiant colors of the flowers. Go ahead and praise the Lord – He made it for you to be impressed!

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