



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Community Group Material:

Bible Reading: PSALM 148:1-5, 7, 9-13

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

Sermon Summary:

The Cosmic Temple: From Eden to Eternity

The church is God's Temple today, where He dwells & is worshipped. The church as Temple fits in the Bible's overall narrative arc. Eden was the initial cosmic temple for God to dwell among his creation; Revelation ends with the ultimate Temple. Creation as God's cosmic Temple implies that, not only humans, but also, all God's creatures were made to worship God. Psalm 148 reflects this theme; Revelation also portrays all creation united in songs of praise to God & the Lamb (Rev. 5:13). If the whole creation—animals, birds, fish, etc.—worships God, so should we. This realization ought to affect our appreciation of nature and our care for God's creation.

Discussion:

Please read Psalm 148:1-5, 7, 9-13. (If you have more time read the whole Psalm)

1. What are the different categories which are called upon to "praise the Lord"? [Think about heavenly vs. earthly, living vs. non-living (rocks, etc.), plant vs. animal, etc. Even within these categories what are the subcategories/examples? Among humans what are the various sub-categories/examples?]
2. What are the reasons suggested by the Psalm for different categories to praise the Lord?

3. Other Psalms also call on creation to praise (thank, worship) God. Have different group members read some of the following: Psalm 65:12-13; 69:34; 96:9-13; 98:4-9; 1 Chron. 16:29b-33. What categories are called to worship? According to the Psalm, why should they worship God?
4. ? Some people assert that “only humans have a ‘spirit,’ so only humans can worship God.”
 - a. Do you agree or disagree with the statement above? (Why or why not?)
 - b. What does Psalm 148 (& the references above) suggest concerning this issue?
 - c. Read Rev. 5:13-14; what does this suggest about this issue?
5. Read Rom. 8:20-24. Here Paul says that “creation groans under the bondage of corruption” (Rom. 8:22-22).
 - a. Does this mean that today creation/the creatures can’t worship, they can only “groan”? (Why or why not?)
 - b. Or do they both “groan” & worship/praise? (If so, what might cause them to ‘groan’ less & worship more?)
 - c. Rom. 8:23 says that we also “groan;” does this mean we can’t worship? Or do we both ‘groan’ & worship?
6. We humans can praise God with prayer & song using our (human) voice & words. Thinking about animals, birds, fish, etc.—for them, what (do you think) constitutes worship/praise of God?

End with Prayer.

- Pray for a deeper relationship with the Lord that brings the real peace.
- Pray for any needs of people in your group.