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July 5, 1998

Who are you Impressed With?
Psalm 8

In 1993 the alternative rock group Pearl Jam enjoyed huge record busting success with its second album, entitled "Vs." Within five days of its release 950,000 records were purchased shattering the former record held by Guns N' Roses for their 1991 album "Use Your Illusion II" which sold 770,000 copies in 5 days. Pearl Jam's lead vocalist Eddie Vedder made the cover of Time magazine, interviewed on the TV shows. You would assume that all this success and money would make Eddie Vedder feel significant and great about himself. This was not so. In one interview Vedder mentioned, "I'm being honest, when I say that sometimes when I see a picture of the band or a picture of my face taking up a whole page of a magazine, I look at the picture and think...I hate that guy." Success, fame, wealth, a family, maturity, good looks, security, even a good family upbringing....none of these things guarantee a feeling of worth and significance.

In fact many things in this world scream to us that we are worthless and insignificant. If you are in your late 50's or cruising into middle age, you can feel your company already pushing you out the door. They care little of your loyalty for the past 25 years, they want new technology rather than your stable experience. They want the hungry tireless young bucks. Maybe you have felt like much of your worth has come from the way you look, but now the years are not being kind and your beauty is fading. Everytime you look in the mirror you are tempted to say, I'm not beautiful as I was...I don't like myself, I am worthless. Maybe your husband or family or sister causes you to feel worthless. Maybe you feel your memory is going and the joints are failing, you feel put out to pasture or ignored. Maybe you are young and feel like nobody takes you seriously or can see the value of what you have to offer. Maybe you feel like you are talent challenged, beauty ignored, muscle deprived and mentally dull. The world will remind you that you are an insignificant nobody that always is messing up and blowing it. Have you

ever felt low? worthless? My guess is that if you are one who struggles with a low self esteem, a low self image you are probably consumed with yourself. The arrogant ego trippers and the I'm a worm self denigrators are two sides of the same coin. Both are consumed with themselves. We slide to either extreme when we become more impressed or depressed with ourselves instead of becoming more impressed and amazed with God our heavenly father. That is the key to our problems with self image, we have a low view of God...so that creates a low self image of ourselves. How can we begin to see ourselves correctly. How can we see ourselves as God sees us? First we need to know something about God and how God sees us. The bigger view we see of God the better picture we will see of ourselves because we will begin to look at ourselves as God Himself looks at us.

Turn in your Bibles to Psalm 8. Psalms the biggest and probably most popular book in the Bible found very near the center focuses on God, who He is what He has done and what He will do. The focus of worship is no mistake, as in worship we direct our thoughts on the priority of God's person, Who He is what he has done and what He will do. The better more realistic picture we have of God the better more realistic picture we will have of ourselves. Psalm 8 is a descriptive praise Psalm. Laments, thanksgiving and Praise. A descriptive Praise psalm describes some aspect of God. The basic structure is a call to praise, The cause for Praise and then a renewed call to praise. While man's character may fluctuate, God's character never changes.

For those who struggle with sometimes feeling insignificant read with me what God has to say in Psalm chapter 8. (READ)

Ist thing we need to know is that God is great. Sounds pretty basic doesn't it. God is great. Look at the first line that is also repeated in sandwich form at the end of the Psalm. O Lord our Lord. Literally O Yahweh our Adonay. Our God is great and the Psalmist, David is the author, states great truth in such simplicity. O Lord, God you are great and awesome, but then couples to that the word our. Wow. Our what a personal connection. Our is a personal possession word that says, God can be a close part, a family member, a personal intimate connection. Our Lord. O lord. Omnipotent Sovereign. Our Lord, imminent, personal. O Lord Transcendent , majestic, Above all. Our Lord..close transparent,

intimate, relational personal. Our God is great. Only He could pull this one off. So far above all and great, yet readily personal our. Our you impressed with a God who can be so great and yet so close?

When I approach God's work of creation I am blown away by the order, the intricacies, the delicacies the care, the thought the planning the creativity the beauty, the immensity. I look and observe the creation of such an artist and just stand amazed. Wow. I could never possibly compete with that. I am not even close to that league. Of all the human painters and author's and entertainers none even come close to what God is able to sculpt, in fact the humans have in fact all been sculpted by Him. Looking at the great artist, it would be very easy to feel intimidated. God's work is far more impressive than me. God is great.

Then I think about myself, some of the flaws I would like to change. It's easy for us to think I wish I had that person's looks or personality or talent or skills. God you basically blew it with me. God you job to make me happy was not successful...it's not working. I'm not very impressed with myself. Folks that is not God's job to try and help you look around and see yourself as impressive. He wants you to open your eyes long enough to be impressed with Him. The more impressed with Him, the more impressed you will be with His creation and you and I are His finest creation. The creation is not to be worshipped, but the one who created it is. It doesn't matter what value the world around you places, but what really matters is what a great God says about you. God is great and He delights in His creation, we are therefore very significant as being hand-crafted my God.

His name is majestic, regal supreme over all the earth. His name refers to all God's character. All His words and deeds. . Through creation, God has pulled back the curtain to his art gallery. Look what I can do. See my brilliant splendor and creativity. Just take a look around and still deny that there is a God. Look up at the stars on a clear night. Look at the moon. Look at an infant. Hold the tiny finger of a baby and tell me that God is not great, creative and powerful. What a creation. God's creation from baby to shooting star is a slam dunk on the doubter, the skeptic the evil rebellious enemy of God. Even the simple words of a child will silence the foe and avenger of God.

O Lord..Our Lord. God is great and transcendent. and God is ours personal relational and loving. We tend to one of two extremes. We say that God is either all powerful or all loving. He cannot be both. Some see the O Lord but say God could never be the our Lord, personal. He may be the our Lord, loving but then He cannot be the O Lord Omnipotent, because if He truly was all loving and all powerful how could such a God allow all the evil and hurt and pain that continues to go on in this world. We take our experience and our standard of what is loving and apply it to Almighty God. God may allow evil, may even use it to change us for good, but He is never the author of evil and I believe He in his wisdom could stop it at any time. If no evil then why would we need God? We would never see a need for God or heaven or help. We would assume that somehow we've worked life out on our own and solved our own problems. God would not be loving to create a bunch of self diluted humanist. He did not create us to become more impressed with ourselves. He wants us to become greatly impressed with Him. God is great. Our God is impressive.

The largest animal on earth is the blue whale. Just the flippers on this animal are bigger than most of the other animals. It has been known to exceed 80 feet in length or longer than this room. Huge. But a blue whale isn't even near as big as a mountain. If you put one hundred blue whales in a huge jar you could put millions of whale filled jars inside a hollowed out Mt. Everest. But Mount Everest isn't anywhere near as big as the earth. If you stacked one hundred Mount Everest's on top of each other, from the space shuttle it would stick just look like a whisker on the face of the earth. Now the earth isn't hear as big as the sun. You could fit one million earth inside of our sun. But our sun, which is really just a medium sized star isn't anywhere near as big as a red supergiant star named Antares. We could fit 50 million or our suns inside of Antares. But Antares isn't anywhere near as big as the Milky way galaxy. Billions of stars, including supergiants like Antares, comets, asteroids make up the Milky way. But the Milky Way galaxy isn't anywhere near as big as the universe. Billion of other galaxies isn't the universe which is almost totally empty. The distances from one to the next are way beyond our ability to even imagine. And the Creator of this vast universe is God who with just a word spoke it all into being. God at this very time

is present everywhere in this universe and beyond. He spoke it into being with His very word and a point of His finger. He upholds it all with his mighty power. O Lord our Lord How majestic is your name in all the earth. It's pretty easy to feel pretty insignificant in the face of such immense creativity. That would be the first brush feeling you would expect. Look at the psalmist. When I consider your heavens the work of your fingers....What is man that you even bother to think about him.

If you are struggling with feeling insignificant first it is important to realize how incredibly great God is. Second. It's important to know that this incredible God values us. Point one God is great. point two God values me. Verse 5 You have made him a little lower than God or the KJV follows the Septuagint reading, a little lower than the angels. Both readings are acceptable. We are definitely lower than God and will never attain to that level. That would be impossible. We as humans per Hebrews 2 notes that we are lower in position than the angels, but in many ways crowns with great glory and honor and in the future will be in a position to even judge angels. We are significant because God who has created this entire universe has chosen to value us. This is not humanistic. We are great only because God has said so. It was God's sovereign choice to honor man. He has crowned us with being made in God's own image. Nothing like the angels. Genesis 1. He has granted us access and privilege and even joint heir ship with Christ. Ephesians 1.

For some reason God has chosen the weak, dependent things, humans to strengthen His praise. I Cor 1:27 God loves to make foolish the worlds best wisdom by making the weak strong. That is why we can give Him great thanks. Even young children can represent the slam dunking truth of God. Jesus quotes this Psalm in Matt 21 after his triumphal entry children are waving palm branches and yelling Hosanna. meaning save us Lord. Glory to God in the highest. The religious authorities took exception to the children's comments. They saw their kingdom power was being threatened and challenged. Jesus quoted out of the mouth of infants and nursing babes, God has established praise for Himself. God did not choose to create a set of robot humans that praise Him when they push a button. He chose to create a being with a will and choice to praise or rebel. When God's creation praises Him voluntarily non coerced what strength of God is established.

Our devotion to God explodes open when we see a God who cares and values me. We are of great significance not in what we do, the check we bring home, the lists we complete. We are significant because Almighty God says so. Jesus loves me this I know...for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to Him belong. We are weak, but He is strong. We are significant because of the One who says You are of great value to me.

Point number 3. We are significant because God has included us as vital to His plan. Verse 6 Gods plan was to put all things under the authority of man. This comes from Genesis 1:26. We are to be the wise stewards over the creation of God. animals, birds, even the fish we are to rule over. There must be some Biblical justification there for fishing...I think God may want me to rule over a few more steelhead. Yet, this is not the case. I do not catch fish every time I go out. That dominion has not yet been fully realized because of sin. Hebrews 2 ;9 also quotes this Psalm saying that because of the sin of man, not everything is subject to him. But there will be one day when the lamb and the lion will lie down together. When Jesus himself who humbled himself, to a position a little lower than the angels. The son of man who came and was crowned with glory and honor and taking the form of a human, suffered in death. One day this Psalm will be filled in complete. Man will walk with lion. The order of God's plan will be full and complete.

You see, God does not need to force himself on anyone to establish His strength. He is god. Even infants can establish his strength. One who is truly strong does not need to cling to power, but instead is strong enough to empower others. He didn't have to choose humans to be a vital part to His plan on earth...but He chose us anyway. The psalmist walks away totally amazed that God would want to use men and women and teens and boys and girls in his plan. O lord our Lord. How majestic is your name in all the earth. If you are struggling with a self image problem this morning..may I suggest you have instead a God image problem. You have become self consumed, more impressed with yourself, or more depressed with yourself instead of being incredibly impressed with the creator God of the universe who chose you, values you and has made you vital to his plan. God doesn't need man...but He chose to love and need us and use us.

Maybe some this morning have felt like because they have been rejected by the world that they have been rejected by God. Do not confuse the two. God loves and cares for us so much that even while we were rebellious, yet sinners. Christ died for us.

Ken was a factory worker for the largest manufacturer in Illinois. He was a faithful and loyal employee for 24 years. The wages and benefits at his factory were double what the average factory job paid in America. He had steady work, 44 years old, never attended a union meeting. In 1992 Kenneth was a very contented middle class worker. But from the summer of 1992 to 1994 you could see Kenneth at the end of each day shift parading up and the down the factory lines holding up an American flag and chanting, no contract, no peace, no contract, no peace. leader about 100 middle aged workers.

What had turned a contented worker into a major managerial pain in the neck? The turning point came in 1992 when the union had been on strike for almost six months and threatened to replace it's striking workers. That did something inside of Ken. It turned him bitter against His company. Ken said He finally realized when they threatened to replace us that as far as they are concerned, I am nothing to them. Ken's whole attitude changed when he had no worth to the company , that he was replaceable, that they didn't care about him as a person. Even the toughest, manliest, laborer in America loyalty, love, care and significance. There is only one place where we are assured of that. God values us. He cares for us so much that even when we "went on strike" instead of rejecting us and hiring us with new replacements, instead of rejecting us, he sent his son. The son of man to die for our sins. The God and creator of the universe loves us that much. Now who are you impressed with?