
The Story of Jesus

Published By Evangelist Van Billingsley

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An Excellent Name

“O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.”

— Psalm 8:1

We know LORD refers to the name Jehovah, the name of God. Is the

true and living God your Lord and master? The psalmist speaks of the excellence of His name in all the earth and goes on to describe His strength, His creation and man’s place in this creation. This edition’s sermon looks at the question of man’s place in this creation.

“Who Am I”

by Evangelist Van Billingsley

Through the centuries philosophers have pondered the question of our purpose and our destiny. Man made religions have been built on variations of these ideas. Many people struggle through life bouncing from one endeavor to the other trying to find themselves. As with any meaningful question about life and existence, God’s Holy Word, the Bible, lays this out in divine detail; in fact, God’s Word is devoted to answering the question, “Who am I?”

At the writing of this article I am just completing the preaching of a series of sermons entitled “Who Am I?” In the near future I would like to put this series in print with detail, but with the brevity required for this newsletter, I’ll have to summarize these sermons in a few words.

This question must first be considered in relation to our creation and our very existence.

Psalm eight details this aspect greatly as it says, “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (v.4). Why would God give any concern to man at all? We know the Bible tells of times when God would simply erase man from existence, but God’s grace toward man proves he is special to God in some way. The Psalmist goes on to say, “Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour” (v.5). This Psalm tells us that man is the crown of God’s Creation. Genesis tells us God breathed into man the breath of life and he became a living soul. The world views man as just another animal but God says man is something very different. The Psalmist wrote, “Thou madest him to have

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Our Ministry News...

From the Desk of the Editor



After a slow winter, we are excited as we enter a busy spring schedule.

With about six straight weeks of traveling, we need your prayers that our needs will be met. For Many of the trips ahead I do not expect a love offering, so we trust God to meet those needs. I also must be back home every weekend to fulfill the responsibilities at our mission church.

The work at the mission church has been a struggle through this cold wet winter, but we are hoping to get much done for God as we press forward in the months ahead.

We've begun our "Camp Countdown" in which we promote our trip to Living Waters Baptist Youth Camp in June. During this time we raise

money to pay for the camp fees of our children who would not be able to attend without this financial help. Please let us know if you can help in this area. More information will be on our website throughout this time.

We continue to work on the various internet sites God has placed before us, including sojministries.com, and ifbsermons.com as well as those of several other missionaries and ministries we are helping in this area. We hope these are a blessing to others.

I'll have to cut this portion of this newsletter short to allow room for a longer sermon in this edition.

Please pray for us as we endeavor to do all our Lord places before us.

A Servant of Christ,
Evangelist Van Billingsley

(continued from cover) -- **"Who Am I?"** dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas" (vs.6-8). A true Bible perspective of God's creation requires a balance in man's position on earth. He's not some beast that must share a planet with an owl or a whale with equality. The same humanist that portrays this attitude toward man also reduces the unborn child to a mass of tissue. The scripture places man above the beast of the earth with dominion over them and this does put a responsibility upon man to care for God's creation, but God placed man over His creation, not under it. With

this said, we see in the creation that God created man as a companion for himself, and this is very important to the question, "Who am I?"

Though man was created as a companion for God, we find that this fellowship was broken in the fall of man. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). In the fall of man we see that man fell for the bargain of sin. Satan lied to Eve in the garden when he promised they'd become as gods. Satan's bargains are always lies. Though he has much power in this present world, he has nothing to give to man that man truly needs or even wants. Even the pleasures of sin are only for a season as Moses knew when


he forsook the royalty of Egypt to follow God's paths. David knew his bargains were lies when Goliath promised the Philistines to be slaves to Israel; David killed Goliath, but the Philistines fled and continued to be the enemy. Man's fall also meant he fell into the bondage of sin. This bondage means man is born a sinner with a sin nature. It also means he has a distorted view which is distorted by sin as described by the prophet saying, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20). In the words of the Psalmist, "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted" (Psalm 12:8). We see this among politicians, among the music stars and film industry and even in our local society. Just consider the popularity of the stars who have molested children, lived and died by drugs and promote vulgarity and ungodliness. All this is the result of the bondage of sin, but sadly man also fell under the burden of sin. The burden of sin brought a curse upon man, both the male and the female. The curse described in Genesis is only the beginning; it's not just toil and labour to make a living and suffering in child birth, but it's the destruction sin brings to man in this life as well. Sin destroys the body physically; I've seen strong healthy men and beautiful young women become wretched, sin worn cases in a very short time. It is sad what sin will do to those who do not find refuge with God. After a life in a sin cursed body which becomes destroyed by sin, the burden of sin then

requires judgement. All this because man fell under the burden of sin. We now realize one resounding answer to the question, "Who am I?" is the hard truth that "I am a sinner!"

Now we see the condition of man which Job very poetically describes man in Job 19 as one already convicted, guilty of sin without a daysman, or mediator. He also said, "Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God" (Job 13:3), and "O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour!" (Job 16:21), which reveals man as not only convicted of sin, but conflicted with God. Man who had fellowship with God in the garden, now is in conflict and enmity with God because of sin. In Job 33:19-24 he describes man as condemned because of this sin.

Though Job knew well the condition of man, he knew there was hope as he proclaimed, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:" (Job 19:25). This is because of the love of God toward man. When considering the question, "Who am I?" we can rejoice at the answer that "I am loved by God." As one who is loved, Job said I have a redeemer in God. He desired a daysman or mediator and Timothy said, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). Job longed for the day when the words could be said, "Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom"

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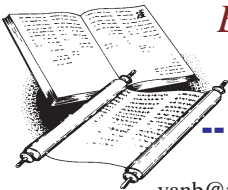
(Job 33:24). Not only does Christ redeem us, but he takes our place to pay our debt becoming our very ransom for sin. Being loved by God, we have a Redeemer, a Ransom and now a Relative in Him; "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

Up to this point, we have seen man as one group; how he was created, what he has become on earth and what God has done for him. Now we come to a fork in the road where there becomes two kinds of people. Jesus describes these as the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25:31-46. He explains that he will one day divide these two groups, but until then we have opportunity make the choice that will decide our position, or what kind of person we are. We've seen what God has done for man through love, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The effect this has on the individual depends on that

person's choice to believe on Christ or not. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). A change takes place which makes us this new kind of person which Christ pictures as a sheep. This new creature becomes a child of God, as already mentioned, with a home in heaven, but there is a destination for both. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

I do not have space to say much about this new people in this edition, but as a child of God, the response to "Who am I?" becomes a different answer. We are His people. We represent Him. We should desire to please Him and obey Him. We should show forth our love toward Him. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

In light of all God's Word has to say on this subject, ask yourself this question, "Who am I?"



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