

## THE COMPLETE GOD (16<sup>th</sup> June 2019 Lindfield)

### TRINITY SUNDAY - PSALM 8

I had just moved to Wagga Wagga and I was driving home one night and I saw the most spectacular night sky I had ever seen. Without all the reflected, artificial light of the city it was just the moon and the stars – shining more brightly than I had ever seen. I was so mesmerised I had to pull over, get out of the car and just look up in amazement. Thousands and thousands of brightly shining stars and there was little, insignificant me, not even a spec in the vast universe. On the way home I reflected that of course none of those stars actually existed any more. I was only seeing their reflected light taking, perhaps, thousands of years to reach Earth. I was looking into history and it was spectacular.

We know so much more about the universe than the Psalmist did. Yet he, too, was awestruck by it. Yet the ancients mapped the night sky. They learned how the stars moved and could predict these movements. There were a handful of stars that did not behave the same as the others.

There were about half a dozen stars that didn't march in lock step with the others but seemed to meander all over the place. The Greeks finally called these stars the "wanderers", believing them to be errant stars that had lost their way in the universe. They even called these wandering stars "planeo" from which we derive the word, "planet". Of course we know they were not wandering stars at all but totally separate objects with worlds all their own.

We now have seen close up pictures of Jupiter, Venus, Saturn and Mars. They are just as stunning. Even though the writer of Psalm 8 knew nothing of all that he saw pin pricks of light and was still overwhelmed. It is estimated there are at least 10 billion galaxies in the universe, with each galaxy containing perhaps 100 billion stars. In other words, not only are the stars in the night sky far away, they are a mere fraction of what's really out there.

While Psalm 8 admits that the wonders of the sky are humbling we know so much more and are more deeply humbled. The universe is clothed with wonder on both the macro and micro levels. In both human and non-human creatures, the cosmos teems with life, with complexity, with music and with movement. It makes us feel very small.

Psalm 8 was not written to make us feel like nothing. Instead in a remarkably brief 70 Hebrew words it directs us to think about God, creation and their relation. In fact Psalm 8 is the touchstone for human life in the universe.

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Psalm 8 is the first Psalm that is purely one of praise to God. The writer sees this magnificent creation and rightly asked, “What is man?” Yet he realises that we are put on the earth to care for it, to live off it and to see it as God’s gift to us. When God saves his people in the Old Testament it is always about them going back to the land. Salvation is seen in terms of a bountiful land, “flowing with milk and honey”. Like the First Peoples of our own Nation, the land is seen as belonging to no-one yet to all. Tribes and Nations have the responsibility to care for the land on which they find themselves. Humankind, including Children are made in God’s image and likeness so, Like God we are to care for and protect the land for from it comes life and from it comes the ways to sustain life.

Psalm 8 acknowledges that we are special part of creation. We are “crowned with glory and honour”. The writer to the Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament quotes from Psalm 8 when he is saying that Jesus is the Ultimate Man through whom God created the world. Jesus comes to show the God who created and loves and ultimately saves His people. He sends his Spirit to be with us to remind us who God is and what God has done for us.

God – the Creator, the lover and one who cared enough to send a Saviour

Jesus the Christ – the one who shows us what God is like and demonstrates the depth of that love

The Holy Spirit – the one who reminds us of these things; who causes us to look in awe at the night sky to see how, on the one hand, how small and insignificant we are yet at the same time how special we are to the God who created it all.

Trinity Sunday reminds us of a complete God, a total God A God whose power spoke the world into being yet whispers to us of love and wonder in our own part of the Universe. In a baby’s birth we see creation in all its glory and wonder. So we Baptise them to commit them to God and vow to raise them to know something of this creating, loving, saving, ever-present Heavenly Father who always and only wants what’s best for them and for us. “Lord. Our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.’

AMEN

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