



March 19, 2021

Are Humans Much Different?

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God, from here in San Antonio, Texas. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

We've had an encouraging and inspiring pastoral visit throughout Texas so far. Although a bit weary from many late nights and a lot of driving, we're encouraged at the faithfulness of God's family!

The world is constantly bombarding us with uncertainty. I know most of us are used to that but it seems as time marches on many more are very unsettled and trepidatious.

While reflecting on the world and all its nuances during our visits and sitting on many back porches, I also watched while outside the birds scurrying here and there, building nests as they prepare for their expectant families in a few weeks, and other creatures God has created doing the same. I had to wonder, are humans not really much different at times? Animals do not "think" or ponder like we humans do, but if they did, would they be worried about things like "who might destroy their home?", or "where will their food come from tomorrow?".

It is often at times of duress, and being unsettled, we ponder more closely what is important. This last year although stressful has been good for the people of God.

One such topic related to this question posed "are humans not really much different at times?" has to do with having the faith, with Christ living in us, that produces a calm and assurance of knowing God takes care of His elect.

What do you put your faith in? Can we have faith in and trust in our political leaders? Can we trust in the wealth we may have accumulated? Can we have faith in our physical strength and our knowledge? Do we even sometimes look to "our fellowship" or pastor to keep us safe and secure?

God wants us to come to the realization that real faith must be tied to Him and to His existence and be based on confidence that He has a plan for mankind that specifically includes you and me. This physical existence is temporary. How quickly circumstances can change. A health crisis, a weather catastrophe, a financial collapse or a failed relationship can pull the rug out from us

and leave us teetering and reaching for something to stabilize us. This is when we must stand on the foundation of faith and hold on to God's promises and instructions.

Our High Priest wants us to come to Him and lean on Him and seek His stabilizing presence when we are troubled and tried. *"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. . . Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Hebrews 4:14, 16).

Yes, we offer our prayers to the Father, but we also seek the direct help of our High Priest who is also our advocate and helper. *"My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may be without sin. And if any man is a sinner, we have a friend and helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, the upright one"* (BBE 1 John 2:1)

The book of Hebrews also reminds us of this encouraging reality. *"But this priest, because his life goes on forever, is unchanging. So that he is fully able to be the savior of all who come to God through him, because he is ever living to make prayer to God for them."* (Hebrews 7:24-25)

We are encouraged and strengthened when we know that others are praying for us. Receiving a card from an individual or family or congregation when we are struggling with a health crisis means a lot. Our heavenly Father wants us to know that our Savior is praying for us too. He has the Father's ear and more. We should try to picture and visualize that when we may have doubts that assail and attack us. Humanly it is a challenge to fully put things in God's hands and exercise faith in His decision concerning how to act on our behalf.

Paul writes about faith. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* (Hebrews 11:1) The Greek word translated "substance" is *hupostasis*. The Online Bible Greek Lexicon explains it as "thing put under, substructure, foundation." It is instructive to examine verse 3: *"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."* The Universe came into existence in the past by a Divine creative act. Suddenly there is a law-abiding and orderly creation. All of the facts of the properties of the creation demand that there is a supernatural Creator and Lawgiver. Proving the existence of God is an important step in coming to conversion and building a relationship of faith with God. Our God is a being who is concerned about His creation and desires to interact with it, especially with His human children.

Paul continues to address faith. *"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."* (v.6)

Our caring God does want us to diligently seek Him and bring our petitions to His attention.

Then we must exercise patience and perseverance as we wait in faith for His answer and learn from how and when that is given. Chapter 11 recounts the lives of faithful human beings whom God contacted, instructed and led and put through trials and tests. God fulfilled His promises in His time and in His way. Some of the faithful have gone to the grave and will receive the answer to their petitions following the resurrection.

There is a wonderful summary of the faith and trust these people of faith exemplified. "*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*" (v.13)

This is one of the many lessons we can draw from observing the upcoming Days of Unleavened Bread. We can put our trust and faith in our Mighty God and faithful and compassionate High Priest. Let us continue to endure in faith...let our trust and faith be in Him.

Arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.

-Scott Hoefker

(Pastor, Church of God Ministries)

Church of God Ministries

(Ministerios de la Iglesia de Dios)

tshoefker@cogministries.org

www.cogministries.org

P.O. Box 983

Daphne, AL 36526-0983

251-930-1797 Offices / 402-250-2389 Cell