

## **October 11th, Declaration of Dependence Part 1 in the series 'The Human Race'**

What do you remember from last Sunday's message?

What were some things that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

Can you think of a time when you were in awe of something in nature? How did you feel?

What are some ways that God's view of the universe differs from ours?

Potential Answers:

- Time is linear for us. Moves one second at a time in one direction only - from the present into the future. We can maybe look into the past, but we can't see into the future. But God has no such limitation.
- We are confined by three dimensions and five senses. God has no such limitation.
- We can only observe cause and effect, or attempt to observe cause and effect. God exists outside time and space and is not limited to the things that limit us.

Can you describe some different beliefs throughout history (and today) on why humans exist?

### **Read Psalm 8**

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet: all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"

What is the Biblical understanding of why humans exist?

Why do you think David says in Psalm 8, "what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?"

According to this Psalm, does God love us because we're the 'greatest' so to speak?

READ 1 John 4:16

“We have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”

The word translated here as ‘love’ is the Greek word ‘agape’. Do you remember the meaning of ‘agape’?

Answer: the highest form of love - love that goes beyond emotion or mere feeling; love that’s more than just a feeling of delight about something or someone, but love that involves the highest levels of commitment and sacrifice.

Why does God love us?

Why do human beings have the most potential to express God’s love (even more than a beautiful tree or an adorable puppy)?

Answer: We are created in God’s image.

What happens when we decide to not be an expression of God’s love, but rather to be an expression of our own will and wishes?

Potential Answer: God’s image is still there, and his purpose and intention for us is still there, but what it means to be a human is lost, or distorted beyond recognition.

Why does the phrase ‘I’m only human’ fall apart from a Christian perspective?

In what ways do humans sometimes behave “less than human”?

What does it mean to say that ‘human beings are God-dependent’?

How does depending on God allow us to express God’s love?