***Big Questions: Looking to God’s Word for Answers
“…always being ready to make a defense…” I Peter 3:15***

**Why Do I Exist? Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 139:13-18**

**Overview of Prior Questions**

**I. God Is**

**II. God Created All Things for His Glory**

**III. God Reveals His Glory by Demonstrating His Attributes through His Creation**

**IV. Humanity Receives the Message that God Exists and He Is Glorious**

**V. However, Humanity Rejects the God Who Is and Replaces Him with a God in Our Own Image**

**Exposition of Genesis 1:26-27 and Psalm 139:13-18**

**I. Humanity is the Unique, Purposeful Creation of God, Genesis 1:26**

**II. Humanity is Unique within the Creative Purposes of God, Genesis 1:27**

* **Normal Human Value Statements: Gender, Beauty, Athleticism, Fame, Wealth, Popularity, Work Success, Education/Intellect**
* **God’s Value Statements**
	+ **Instrumental Value: We exist to give God glory**
	+ **Intrinsic Value: We exist to bear the image of God**
* **Each Person is God’s Creative Work, Psalm 139:13-18**
	+ **You are not a mistake. You are not an accident. You are not the product of chance plus time.**
	+ **You have been hand crafted by God Himself to reflect His glory.**

**Conclusion: We are unique in all of creation in that we possess infinite value and infinite purpose, having each been created by God for this reason.**

**Next week, “Does My Behavior Matter?” Genesis 3, Romans 5**

**Genesis 1:26-28**

 **26**Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **27**God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Psalm 139: 13-18

  **13**For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.
    **14**I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works,
         And my soul knows it very well.
    **15**My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;
    **16**Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
         And in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.
    **17**How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!
         How vast is the sum of them!
    **18**If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand
         When I awake, I am still with You.

**I. Scripture Reading**

* **Read Psalm 139:13-18 (Slides)**

**Overview of Prior Questions**

**I. God Is**

**II. God Created All Things for His Glory**

**III. God Reveals His Glory by Demonstrating His Attributes through His Creation**

**IV. Humanity Receives the Message that God Exists and He Is Glorious**

**V. However, Humanity Rejects the God Who Is and Replaces Him with a God in Our Own Image**

**Exposition of Genesis 1:26-27 and Psalm 139:13-18**

**I. Humanity is the Unique, Purposeful Creation of God, Genesis 1:26**

* **Read Genesis 1:26 (Slide 2)**

**II. Humanity is Unique within the Creative Purposes of God, Genesis 1:27**

* **Read Genesis 1:27 (Slide 3)**
* **Normal Human Value Statements: Gender, Beauty, Athleticism, Fame, Wealth, Popularity, Work Success, Education/Intellect, Ethnicity**
* **God’s Value Statements**
	+ **Instrumental Value: We exist to give God glory**
	+ Examples: Hammer, Nails, Screwdriver, etc.
	+ Humans possess instrumental value with reference to God, we exists to praise Him and to give Him glory
	+ **Intrinsic Value: We exist to bear the image of God**
	+ Value within itself not for what it can do but simply for the inherent value transferred by a creator
	+ **Examples: A painting by Monet – (Slide 4 Painting)**
	+ Little instrumental value (I guess you could cover over a hole in the wall with it), but high intrinsic value because of the artist, the time period of the painting and its historic setting within the history of art
	+ Humans are the only part of creation that possess both instrumental and intrinsic value
	+ **Read Genesis 1:27 (Slide 5)**
	+ Example from money and a volunteer
	+ **Picture of Emanuel (Slide 6)**
* **Each Person is God’s Creative Work, Psalm 139:13-18**
	+ **Read Psalm 139:13 (Slide 7)**
	+ **You are not a mistake. You are not an accident. You are not the product of chance plus time.**
	+ Recapture the wonder reading from Ravi (see attached)
	+ **You have been hand crafted by God Himself to reflect His glory.**
	+ **Read Psalm 139:14 (Slide 8)**
	+ Here again is the unique nature of humanity, “wonderful are your works.”
	+ The uniqueness of each person, the incredible beauty in each person as we bear the image of God produces worship, a reflection on the glory of God

**Conclusion: We are unique in all of creation in that we possess infinite value and infinite purpose, having each been created by God for this reason. (Blank Slide – Slide 9)**

**Next week, “Does My Behavior Matter?” Genesis 3, Romans 5**

Excerpt from Recapture the Wonder by Ravi Zacharias where Ravi tells of a couple from Connecticut who several years ago read of a little boy in Romania who was born without arms, not even an appendage on either shoulder.

“When he was about one year old they visited the orphanage where he was being cared for because his parents were unable to, and their hearts went out to him. Most of the caregivers in that orphanage would have no more than minimal contact with him because they feared the “evil eye” represented by his deformity and the bad luck they believed he would bring them.

Through discussion and contacts, this couple asked if they could adopt this little one. The boy’s mother, as well as many others, questioned the motives of anyone who would take him into their lives and spend themselves in this way, caring for one in such need of nurture and assistance. She asked, “Are you taking him to America so you can use him for experiments? I have heard that they do that in America.” Mike and Sharon assured her that this was not their intent at all. They just wanted to give him a home and a chance at life.

“But why would you want a baby like him?” the mother asked. Sharon had had the foresight to bring a Romanian Bible with her, and opening it to Psalm 139, she gave it to the Romanian mother to read for herself:

“For you created my inmost begin;
You knit me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you when I was made
In the secret place. – Psalm 139:13-15

As the mother read from God’s Word, tears started to stream down her face. Finally she looked at Sharon and said, “If this is what you believe about my son, you can have him as yours”

Sharon and Mike brought him back home, where they have loved him and raised him. He learned to use his feet to hold his spoon and feed himself. In every restaurant he and they became the topic of conversation as people marveled at the gift given to him in these parents, the fascinating skill in his feet, but most of all, at his lovable face and sweet personality.

Here is the sequel. Young George is now eight years old. Sharon decided to have a caring Christian teacher train him in playing a classical instrument. You can imagine the hard work and the patience demanded by parents and teacher in such a venture. Naturally, he had to learn to play it with his feet. Some time ago came the first recital and they wondered whether to put him on the program with all the other students. The teacher said she would want him in the program and she would sit next to him as he played. May I just quote the words the father sent to me in a letter? I wept when I read it and I suspect you will, too.

 *The big night came, and George was nervous and telling us he wasn’t so sure if he wanted to do this…to make matters worse, there was a much bigger crowd of people than normal for one of these events…many of whom had never seen George or met George before. Several students went up to the front and played their various pieces, and very soon it was time…George’s name was called. You could have heard a pin drop as the teacher walked up with him, carrying his instrument, a chair and a large pillow that she placed on the floor to lift up the neck of the cello. She arranged everything as he needed and nodded for him to go ahead.*

 *There was a feeling of wonder and tension in the room and at this point my only thought was, “Please Lord, let him just get through this…” George began, and the very first note he struck was sour as could be! He stopped playing, got red in the face, shrugged his shoulders, broke into a huge grin and looked up at the teachers. She warmly smiled back and nodded to him that he should try again.*

 *Well, George then proceeded to play the entire song without a flaw, and it sounded marvelous. When he finished, there was moment of quiet, and then one of the older students (who is the most advanced student in the group) simply stood in his place and began to clap. Many others in the audience stood to their feet and the applause went on for a very long time…my wife turned to me and said, “George has never once, before tonight, made it through that song without many mistakes!”*

Then Mike added these words: “What a great picture of our relationship with our Heavenly Father! We are weak, nervous, afraid and flawed and yet Christ stands beside us and warmly says, ‘And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.’ God does not hear our sour notes but only the unflawed musical perfection of His perfect Son.”

Story from Ravi Zaccharis book on the child with no arms in church newsletter

My facebook debate over the nature of good and evil

Valley Baptist video from kate keslers facebook page