

Trends

A recent survey indicated that the cutoff for the wealthiest 50% of the global income distribution was \$2,138; for the top 10% and 1% the cutoffs were \$61,000 and \$510,000, all measured in 2000 U.S. dollars...the bottom 10% of the U.S. income distribution falls in the upper 30% of the global income distribution...According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the poverty line for an individual in the United States was \$10,830 in 2010...someone at the poverty line in the United States is in the top 14% of the global income distribution.

- via U. S. Department of Health and Human Services

1 Timothy 6:17: "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share" (ESV)

Sentence Sermons

Philippians 4:11b-13: "I... for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

News & Notes

- Pray for the African brethren. They are suffering due to riots, loss of property, persecution, etc. Please consider donating if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17 Also, one dear brother (Isaac) was recently killed in a highway crash. Please remember his family in your prayers!
- Pray for sister Wilma Cardwell. She is still recovering from her recent fall. She's such a great encouragement to all!
- Please pray for Lana May. She is getting better but still needs our prayers for her health issues.
- Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to give them words of encouragement!
- Pray for the all our young people. They too face many trials and temptations.
- There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



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God Is Our Glorious Creator

Craig Thomas

Psalm 89 consists of 52 verse; hence, there are several themes worthy of exploration. I will limit myself to one quite simple, yet extremely profound theme. Note verses 5 and 11:

*"5 And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD;
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints."*

*"11 The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours;
The world and all its fullness, You have founded them."*

God as Creator is a prominent theme in the Psalms; it is mentioned dozens of times, for example Psalm 19:1-4:

*"1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament shows His handiwork.*

*2 Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge.*

*3 There is no speech nor language
Where their voice is not heard.*

*4 Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world."*

Man constantly denies or minimizes God's role as our Creator. There are many reasons that could be cited; however, I believe the primary and most obvious reason is to avoid accountability to Him. If indeed He is the "Potter" and we are the "clay" (cf. Isa. 64:8) we are answerable to Him and He is not answerable to us.

"20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, 'Why have you made me like this?' 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay . . ." (Rom. 9:20-21)

Men, in general, hate accountability of any form, but most especially to God. A phrase in Luke's account of the "Parable of the Minas" (Lk. 19:11-27) precisely sums up the attitude most have toward divine authority: "We will not have this man to reign over us." (Lk. 19:14) This parable ends (v. 27) with a stern warning for those seeking to avoid accountability to their Creator: "But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."

Atheistic, materialistic scientists claim the Universe created itself from nothing ~13.77 billion years ago. They also claim the Earth has been around for about 4.5 billion years and man evolved from apes several million years ago. This is totally at odds with the Genesis account. Sadly, many “Christian” apologists try to reconcile the Biblical account of creation with atheistic evolution by caving to this “deep time” concept. These folks advocate for several versions of “theistic evolution.” In this false paradigm, God supposedly got the Universe started some 13.77 billion years ago as claimed by their atheistic, materialistic allies and then He allowed natural processes to “take the ball and run with it,” so to speak.

Such theories are impossible to reconcile with the biblical account without creating many insurmountable difficulties. Also, there is a vast body of solid literature which argues for the veracity of the biblical account of creation and a “young” Earth and Universe. This literature points out many solid scientific reasons for such a conclusion. As a trained scientist I admit the scientific evidence for the age of the Universe has some confusing aspects. But as a scientist I also know that as man’s limited knowledge advances, we consistently “peel back another layer of the onion” as new scientific discoveries are made. To base one’s faith and eternal destiny on the vacillating views of godless scientists is folly. Tomorrow’s scientific discoveries invalidate today’s “truths.” I want my faith firmly grounded in God’s Word! ¹⁷ *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Rom. 10:17)

That is not to say that science is not of value. However, the most important evidence supporting the biblical record of a “young Earth” is the biblical account and the words of our Lord and Savior. Jesus believed in the Genesis account of creation. He believed in the veracity of the stories concerning Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, Noah and the Flood, Jonah, etc. If one reduces such stories to myths and doubts their historical and chronological accuracy it reflects on the character of our Lord. Such “old Earth” conclusions can only be held if Jesus was mistaken or a liar. Neither one is true! Neither can be acceptable to a faithful Christian!

The Bible clearly states: ¹ *In the **beginning** God created the heavens and the earth.”* (Gen. 1:1) And, ¹¹ *For in **six days** the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day.”* (Ex 20:11) And, Jesus said: ⁶ *But from the **beginning** of the creation, God ‘made them male and female.’”* (Mark 10:6) When did God make “them male and female”? *“from the beginning of creation”!* When did God create “the heavens and the earth”? *“In the beginning”!* Case closed!!

Whether it is the atheistic, materialistic, evolutionist or a “Christian” who believes in some form of theistic evolution (e.g., “Day-Age Theory”); either case denies the Lord knew what He was talking about! He ought to know! And, so should we if we claim to be His disciples!

¹ *In the **beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ² *He was in the **beginning** with God.* ³ *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”* (Jn. 1:1-3)

Blessings During Adversity

SWORD TIPS #2127 (NOVEMBER 24, 2020)

Joe R. Price

¹² *Blessed is the man whom You instruct, O LORD, and teach out of Your law,* ¹³ *That You may give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit is dug for the wicked.* ¹⁴ *For the LORD will not cast off His people, nor will He forsake His inheritance.* ¹⁵ *But judgment will return to righteousness, and all the upright in heart will follow it.”* (Psalm 94:12–15, NKJV)

God blesses us in many ways. His care of the earth and humanity testify of His power and presence (Acts 14:17). God gives spiritual blessings and assurances to His people. Today’s passage reinforces the faith of the righteous person when it seems the wicked triumph (Psa. 94:1-11). Briefly consider the blessings God gives the righteous in our text. **(1)** *Who receives God’s blessing* (v. 12)? It is the person who accepts God’s instruction from His law (Psa. 25:4-5). Spiritual blessings elude the person who fights against the rule of God’s truth. **(2)** *When is this person blessed* (v. 13)? Rest comes in the “days of adversity” to the one who patiently and faithfully endures the pressures of the wicked. Christians know the Lord will bring the wicked to justice (2 Thess. 1:3-10). **(3)** *Why does God bless His people during trials* (v. 14)? Because He is upright and keeps His word (Heb. 6:13-20). Our hope remains secure because God is always faithful. **(4)** *How will it all end* (v. 15)? God’s judgments are “true and righteous altogether” (Psa. 19:9). Therefore, God’s people keep following His righteous ways, trusting the Lord will correct every wrong and give rest to those who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12-13). Be comforted today in your spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3).

Be Strong in the Lord

SWORD TIPS #2126 (NOVEMBER 23, 2020)

Joe R. Price

¹⁰ *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.* ¹¹ *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* ¹² *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* ¹³ *Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”* (Ephesians 6:10–13, NKJV)

We need the Lord’s strength to “stand against the wiles of the devil.” We are in a battle over our souls. This fight calls for faith in the Lord’s power instead of ourselves as we struggle “against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” And so, let us equip ourselves with “the whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:13-18). The Lord’s armor is tried and true, powerful to defeat our foe. But beware. Our adversary, the devil, will try to use our sense of self-reliance against us, tempting us to believe we can overcome the devil on our own. Do not attempt to go into this battle alone. “The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him” (Psa. 28:7).