

Dear Friends,

At Wednesday morning prayer (You are invited to join us for all or part of the 6-8am time of prayer.) we prayed through Psalm 111. Verse two in the English Standard Version reads, “Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.” Three things jumped out at me as I meditated on the verse. First, the works of God are great. In fact, there are no superior works than those performed by God. His works of creation are great. He makes all the stars and calls them each by name. He made this vast universe. He makes every creature that exists and sustains their lives, giving them the food they eat. He gives each of us life and breath and everything else. No angel or human has ever created something out of nothing by merely speaking. No angel or human is able to give life and sustain life. God alone creates and nourishes his creation.

His work of salvation is better still. The eternal Son of God became a man and lived among us for some thirty years. The eternal God took upon himself human nature and a human body while still remaining fully God. He willingly suffered and died to bear God’s wrath. He rose from the dead on the third day. The Holy Spirit has been sent into the world to convict people of sin and to reveal the glory of Christ to sinners like us. We trust Christ and love him because of this gracious work. There is no greater miracle in the universe than when a hardhearted enemy of God loves God. This miracle is entirely a work of God. It is no wonder that the apostle Paul exclaims in 2 Corinthians 9:15, “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” This saving work of God is beyond our wildest imagination.

The second thing that struck me is that some people, but not all people, feel about God’s works the kind of respect and exhilaration that they deserve. There are people who delight in God’s works of creation and redemption. While all people have the greatness of God’s works blazing in front of their face every moment of every day (Psalm 19:1-3, Romans 1:20), not all people take pleasure in them as they warrant. One of the chief evidences that a person has become a Christian is that the works of God in Christ and in creation are attractive to them. “Though you have not seen him, you love him and even though you do not see him now you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1: 8-9)

Finally, those who see and value the magnitude of the works of God study them, ponder them—seek to learn more about them. The connection between delighting in something and then seeking to know more about the object of your delight is infallible. The way you know that you truly delight in something is that you invest time and energy in learning more about it. I think of several friends who play fantasy football. They enjoy playing fantasy football. Therefore, they spend large quantities of time learning about and tracking the performance of the NFL players they “draft” as part of their team. I think of other younger friends who enjoy certain musicians about whom I am ignorant. When I ask them to tell me about their favorite performers they can recount all kinds of details about the musician’s life and music and even know the words to their songs. They have studied the artist and their work because they delight in the artist’s work. It is true for every one of us, when we admire the works of others or when we enjoy something we spend time learning more about the object of our pleasure.

Here is the reason to learn the catechism questions and answers and the Scriptures that support them. This is the reason to read the Bible and attend a small group. This is why we should take walks or look at the stars through a telescope. To be a Christian is to be a person who has come to delight in Christ and his works on our behalf. Since we delight in him, then we are eager to think about him and his work for us. Like connoisseurs of fine food or fine wine we love to “partake” of him. Learning about Christ through his word and through his creation are what we do because we take so much pleasure in him and his works on our behalf.

Pondering for pleasure,