



Outside Prayers

# “Creation & Witness”

Saturday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

□ Go on a walk, sit outside, or look out a window. If at all possible, get out on a trail, to the beach, a river, or the forest for this one.

The Bible is clear, the natural world is created to praise God for who God is. Creation witnesses to humanity of God’s goodness. The psalmist tells us that the sea resounds, the forest sings for joy, the rivers clap their hands, the mountains sing together for joy before the Lord, all creation rejoices before the Lord who comes to judge the world in justice and the peoples in equity. (Psalm 96:11-13; 98:7-9; Psalm 65:9-13). The Psalms end with a call for everything in creation to sing a “hallelujah chorus”; the sun, moon, stars, rain, sea creatures, ocean depths, lightning, hail, snow, clouds, wind, mountains, hills, fruit trees, cedars, wild animals, cattle, small creatures, and birds all praising God. (Psalm 148). Jesus told the Pharisees that if his disciple’s voices raised in praise were silenced, that the rocks would cry out in praise (Luke 19:39-40). Over and over Jesus used examples from creation to help people grasp who God is.

The apostle Paul wrote,

*“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities- his eternal power and divine nature- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)*

Paul and Barnabas introduced the people of Lystra to the living God by showing them the witness of creation. They said,

*“God has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.” (Acts 14:17)*

God has created the natural world to be a witness to God’s goodness. But what happens when humanity damages God’s good earth? Some Christians think that the promise of a new earth offers a justification to treat creation as a commodity to be used and abused rather than as a witness to God. When rivers are polluted, they cannot raise their full voice to God (Psalm 98:8-9). When the sky is clogged with smog it struggles to declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1; Psalm 96:11-13). When the forest isn’t properly cared for how can it sing for joy to the Lord (Psalm 96:12; 98:8; 1 Chronicles 16:31-33)? When humans don’t fulfill the command to be stewards and cultivators of creation, the earth’s ability to praise God is diminished (Genesis 2:15). We squelch the witness of creation. Revelation 11:17-18 depicts God’s final judgement against those who “destroy the earth”.

As you are outside, pay attention to creation speaking its witness of God’s goodness to you and the world. Reflect on how you can be a good steward of this earth that witnesses to God’s goodness.

“Let the whole earth sing to the LORD!  
Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.” -1 Chronicles 16:23

