

The Godless Man

Jesus in the Psalms

Psalm 53

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I. He marveled at their unbelief (cf. Mark 6:1ff)

II. I repeat myself (cf. Ps 14; Rom 3)

III. The Godless Man

A. Diagnosis – The Nature of Fallen Man (1-3)

1. Intellectual Diagnosis (1ab & 2)

David insists that the one who truly understands himself and the world will *seek God*. As the Creator of all things, God is Himself the foundation for all things – including rationality, wisdom, etc. He not only created all things, but He also continues to sustain all things (cf. Acts 17:25). We are completely dependent upon God. Hence, to deny Him is to be a *fool*! It shows a lack of *understanding*! Theologians call this the *noetic effects* of sin. Sin affects not only our moral compass but also our intellectual capacities. If we deny the Creator as the origin of life, rationality, morality, etc. then this taints our knowledge of everything else.

2. Moral Diagnosis (1c-e & 3a-c)

So this brings us to the *moral diagnosis*. Our intellectual problem is not an isolated problem, it affects every part of our existence. So note the three parallel analyses of man's nature:

(1c) *they are corrupt* w/ (3b) *they have together become corrupt*; [HEART]

(1d) *they have done abominable iniquity* w/ (3a) *every one of them has turned aside*; [SPIRIT]

(1e) *there is none who does good* w/ (3c) *there is none who does good*; [WILL]

This is a universal diagnosis – we all are this way *by nature*. Our natural bent as fallen human beings is *against* God. *Our problem is not “out there” but “in here.”* We have a sinful nature.

Arne Vetlesen, “*The doers [of grave wickedness], we like to think, are not like us; indeed, their being unlike us is the very quality which explains that they could do what they did. Having committed atrocities so outrageous in nature and scope as to explode our faculties of comprehension, they, authors of the unthinkable, must surely be – or have been – abnormal men*” (218).

Diagnosis – Our sinful unbelief makes us _____ creatures in need of salvation.

B. Analysis – The Folly of Fallen Man (4-5)

David insists that our unbelief is remarkably foolish. God is the Lord – hence we should live in fear of Him and call upon His Name. When we don't, we are ignoring the purpose for which we were created, wasting our lives and inviting God's judgment upon ourselves. In our sinfulness we oppose those who stand for God and for righteousness, thinking that we have no cause to fear, that no one will hold us accountable. But, suddenly, God will make us aware of His Lordship and His love for His people. Opposition to God and His people is foolishness.

*“The virgin, the daughter of Zion,
Has despised you, laughed you to scorn;
The daughter of Jerusalem
Has shaken her head behind your back!” (2 Kgs 19:21)*

Analysis – Our sinful unbelief mires us in _____.

C. Solution – The Hope of Fallen Man (6)

So what hope do we have? We have no hope – unless God in His grace and mercy rescue us from our sin and folly. If we are to be rescued from our corruption, it must come from outside of us; it must come from the Lord.

1. Definitively in Christ

God's salvation has come out of Zion! Jesus went forth from Jerusalem to the hill Golgotha there to suffer and die on our behalf. That which we could not do, weak as we were because of our sinfulness, God has done. He has provided salvation for His people.

2. Progressively through the Church

Now God sends forth from Mt. Zion, from the Church, the news of the salvation that He has wrought through His Son. The Church proclaims the death and resurrection of Jesus as the only pathway of salvation and reconciliation with God.

Solution – Our only hope is in God's _____ through Christ.

IV. Conclusion