

Sermons
Old Testament
Psalms
8

Outline

Name: L. J. Stevenson

Assignment: 11 (exam)

Date: May 13, 1943

Homiletical Unity: Psalm 8

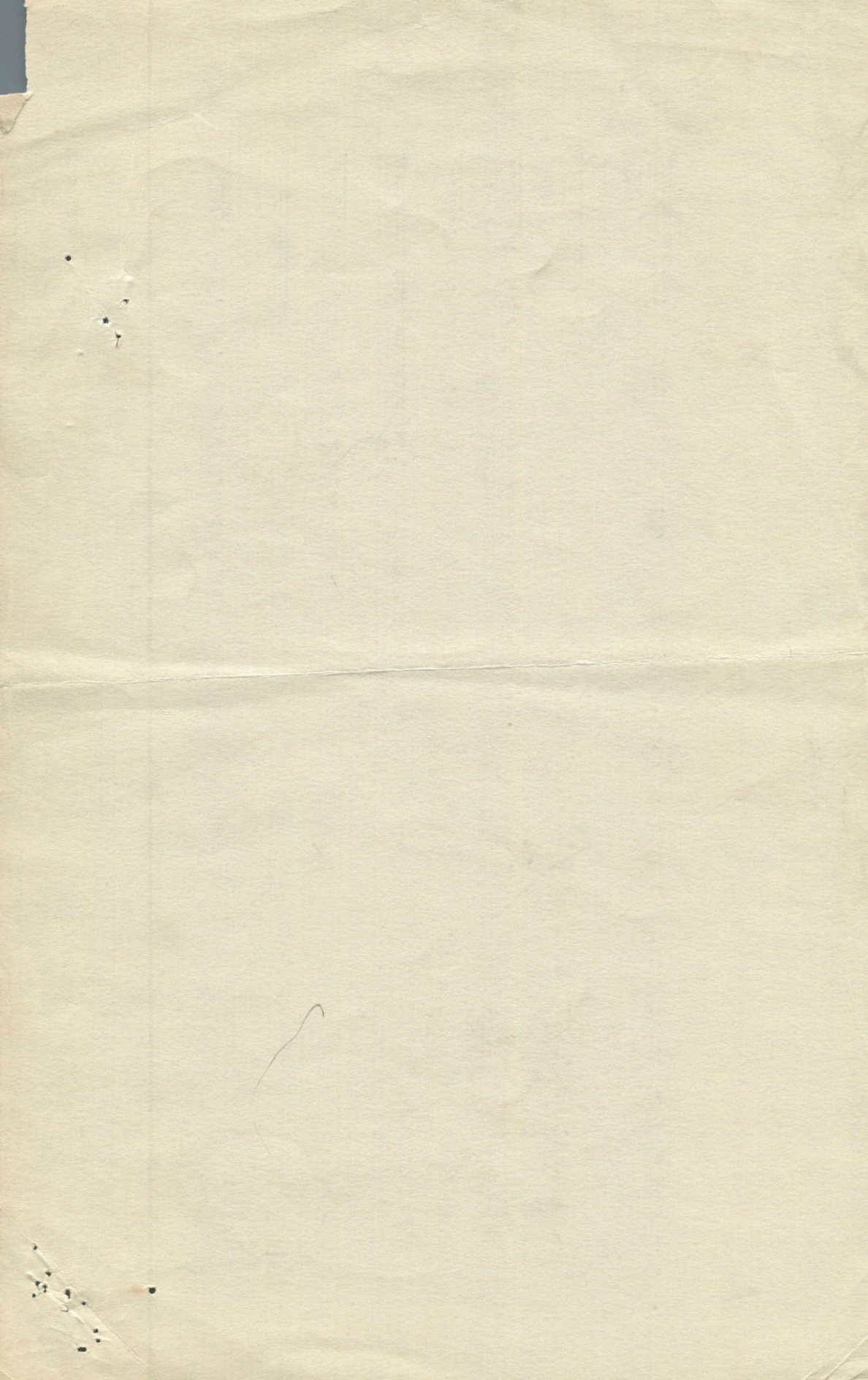
Text: Psalm 8:4

Theme: Why God is mindful of man.

Proposition: God is mindful of man because man is the crown of creation.

Audience: Average urban or sub-urban Sunday morning congregation.

S+
See notations.



1-1-1-
Homiletical Unity: Psalm 8

"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

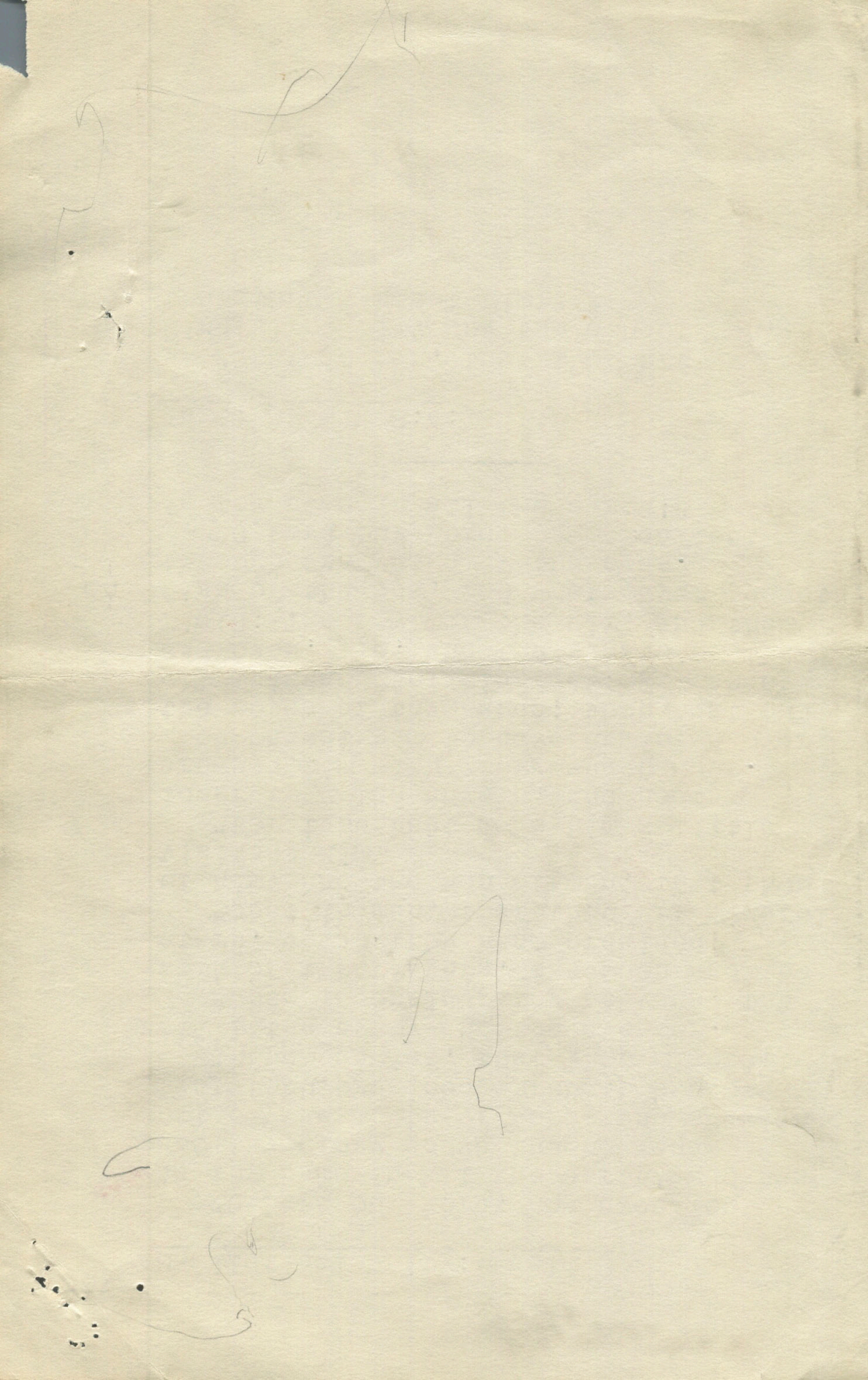
"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

Text: Psalm 8:4:

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

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Introduction:

1. When we notice our blessings we are constrained to ask "what is man that God is mindful of him?"

Springtime emphasizes our blessedness more forcibly than other seasons.

2. The psalmist, in reverent awe of the wonders of nature, is moved to ask "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" in our Scripture.

3. Evidences of our insignificance that should serve to emphasize this question to every thoughtful man.

a. Man's insignificance as compared with the universe.

(1) A non-stop trip across Virginia or Tennessee would take 8 or 10 hours at the least when travelling at the rate of 50 or 60 miles per hour.

(2) Each state is only, comparatively, 1/48 of a country which is about 1/3 of a continent no larger than three other continents, and all the continents comprise less than half the earth's surface.

(3) A man can easily become lost in one small section of any one of these states.

(4) Yet earth is only a small planet in a solar system, we think. Earth's solar system may be but one of countless other solar

Isn't this item a bit "dropped in"?

Have you gone into the views entertained by O.P. thinkers (and especially the psalmists) on this point? (you can find some good material)

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of this problem

systems which are probably thousands or millions of light years away.

(5) Man, hardly a spec in all this unimaginable space, tends to think of himself as all-powerful, all-important.

(6) Why should God be mindful of such a spec of dust as man?

b. Man's numerical insignificance as compared to other living things of earth.

(1) Blades of grass, symbols of faith, are present in countless numbers.

(2) Other living plants are likewise uncountable.

(3) Animals, insects, etc., are much more numerous than man.

(4) Man at the maximum estimate is only 2000,000,000 strong in this world, while other living things are countless.

(5) Why is God mindful of such a minority group? That mindfulness is evidenced, as we will later see, by man's dominion over these other living things.

c. Man is intellectually insignificant and incompetent in view of the knowledge available to him.

(1) Man does have the power of rationalism.

(2) With hundreds of fields of intellectual endeavor already opened to him, man can see that there are many more to be opened; for he can see that he really knows comparatively little.

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This long list of items is evidently intended to build up in your minds an awe of the spread of existence, as contrasted with the frailty of man. I might say that it is too long to read in your direction. I intend them to take

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(3) Any one of the investigations of nature, called sciences, is relatively undeveloped.

(a) Genetics, concerned with inheritance of bodily characteristics has far to go.

(b) Astronomy, one of the most useful of the sciences, is relatively a dark field still.

(c) Chemistry has room for many more developments.

(d) Any one branch of these sciences is large enough to take all the attention of a man.

(4) The human mind is capable of delving will into only one science or field of endeavor.

(5) Yet our God has favored us with more knowledge than other living things.

(6) Why is God so mindful of man?

4. In the eighth Psalm is found the answer to this question.

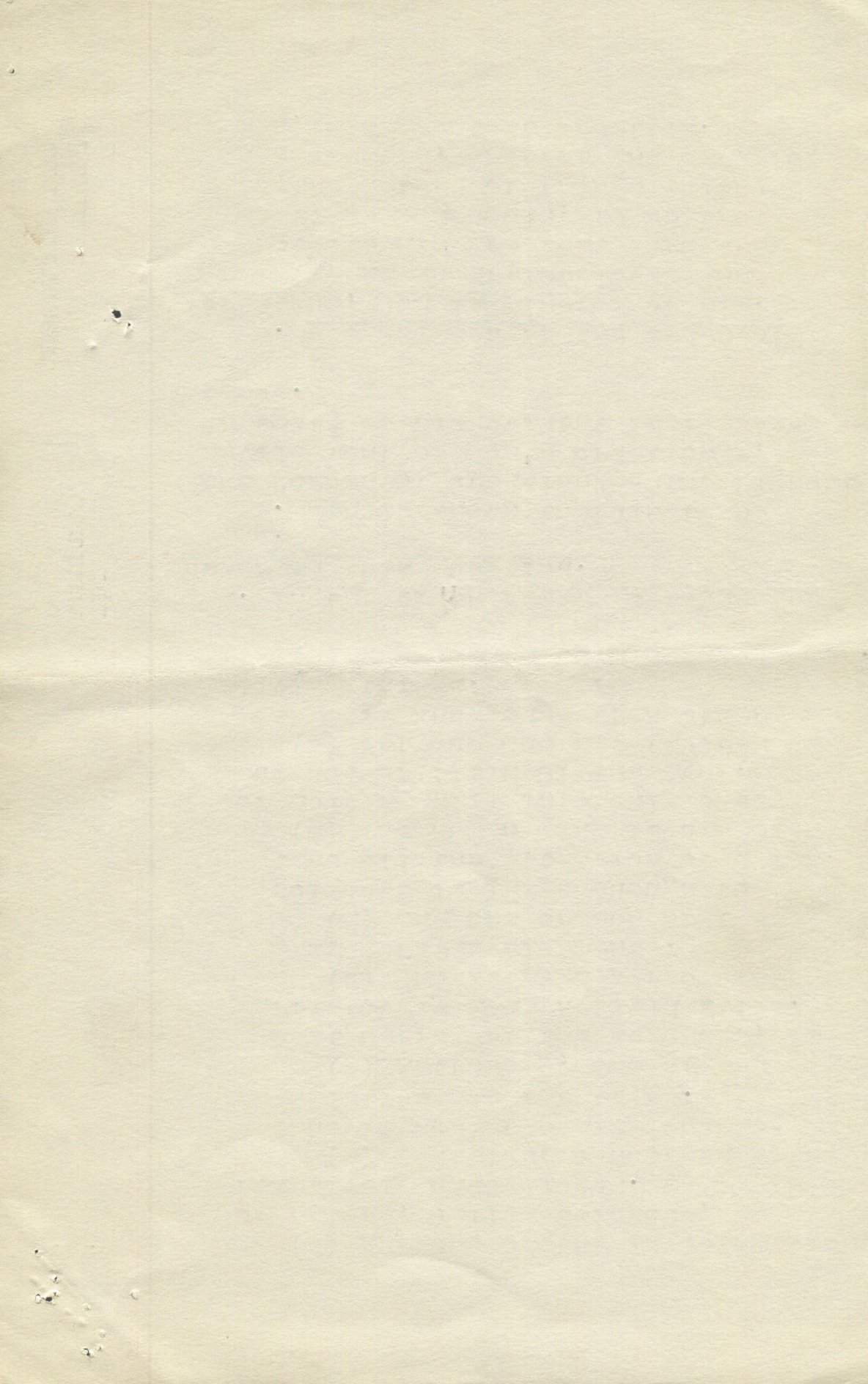
a. Man is shown therein to be the "crown of creation" - the highest development of God's creation -, in spite of his evident insignificance.

b. Because man is the crown of creation, God is mindful of him.

(1) As an artist loves and protects his greatest work the most, so God would, to be true to the nature of things which he has created, protect and care for man, his greatest creation.

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(2) As a mother loves most the child that takes most of her time and care, so God cares most for man on whom He has spent his greatest creative effort.

c. It is necessary, then, to consider with the psalmist wherein man is the crown of creation, for if he is the crown of creation, God is mindful of him because of that fact.

I. Man is made in the image of God. As the psalmist puts it: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." Evidences of man's similarity to God are:

1. Man has the power to create.

a. Animals and other living things that build, which is in a sense creating or making, do so according to certain set patterns. Only man can design - the true work of creativity - that which he makes.

2. Man has the gift of and capacity for love.

a. The most often-pointed-to earthly love is that of mothers.

b. True love, in the Christian sense, is thinking of and acting for others in terms of oneself.

And all this by way of introduction!

Room whole for sermon here.

And another sermon here.

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I wonder whether or not you have built up the picture of the significance of man now at a discussion of the "image of God" idea.

c. In possessing this type of love man is like the God revealed by Christ.

(1) Any seeming sacrificial acts of animals are instinctive rather than rational, and therefore not God-like.

3. Man has the gift of eternal life.

a.

a. Man's greatest desire is for eternal life.

b. The God of Christianity, a loving Father, would not endow man with one great desire only to disappoint him.

c. Thus we may assume that man does have eternal life.

d. In possessing this eternal life man is similar to God, and is superior to any other living things.

II. Man has dominion over the things of the earth. "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." One that has dominion over anything is usually superior to that which he dominates. Man is superior to other earthly beings in these two, and other, aspects.

1. Man, unlike other animals, has the power of reason. This shows up in all his actions, making a continual contrast with animals.

Could you not make this your basic idea, and relate other developments of your sermon to it?

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a. Reason shows in man's use of his bodily members in serving him.

(1) Story of the monkeys being unable to put more wood on the fire because they hadn't the power of reason.

b. It enables man to satisfy his curiosity with use of fewer of his sensory organs.

c. In all phases of life it shows.

2. Man, as an animal above other animals, has the ability to control his natural urges and instincts.

This distinguishes him from the animal world and makes man's civilization possible.

a. By this ability he can resist expressing antagonism to others in forms of violence.

b. By this ability he is able to establish a home, which is the basis of our Christian society.

Conclusion:

1. Man is the crown - or highest development - of God's creation.

2. Hence, God is mindful of him.

3. Man, thus, has every reason to say with the psalmist, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth."

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Preached at

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Deerwood Circuit
Waynesville Dist., W.V.

Elizabeth Chapel

Bellwood - 6-8-43

East Waynesville 6-11-43

Maggie - 7-6-43

Maple Grove - 7-18-43

Crawston Circuit
Spreading Dist., Va.

Patross - 11-14-43

Mt. Hope "

Prudence "

Independence 10-21-43

~~Mt. Hope~~ 11-21-43

Walnut - 5-28-44

Marshall Mill - 6-11-44

Rosary edd - 4-9-46

Amherst, Va., 2-2-48

Crawston, Wyo state mailed (K. Sp.) Kawmored, Wyo; Aug 13, '50