

WEEK ONE

Fingerprints of God

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.” (Gen. 1:31) This is so because “all that He had made” reflected God’s own personal goodness. The Apostle Paul echoed this divine contemplation when he pointed out that God’s marvelous visible creation clearly displays His even more marvelous invisible qualities. God designed the observable world to help us envision with our hearts what we cannot see with our eyes.

Samuel Longfellow, the lesser known but equally poetic brother of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, leaves evidence that he’d caught this kind of glimpse of the invisible God. Samuel loved the seashore. He often surveyed the glorious ocean with its mighty surges, its mysterious depths, and utter vastness. Perhaps the sight of a delicate coral reef left him awash in God’s tenderness and beauty. A dancing sea horse or squirming jelly fish likely brought to mind God’s astonishing creativity. He could not have missed the expression of God’s majesty and power so clearly portrayed in the crashing waves and thunderous billows. But then, I wonder too if he beheld a different image of majesty when he glanced at his own reflection during his walk along the puddled shore? Longfellow’s prose resonates with the words of the Apostle Paul from centuries earlier... “Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities ... have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made” (Rom. 1:20).

Imagine that you too are at seaside and consider this heavenly object lesson. If you’ll look with your heart’s eyes, you’ll easily observe God’s splendor there. You’ll distinguish His unbounded influence and His unspoiled law. You’re even likely to notice, maybe for the very first time, that you and I are represented there too. For we are His very image and have been imprinted with His unmistakable likeness.



Touch Stones

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.
For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm." Psalm 33:6,9

"My salvation and my honor depend on God;
he is my mighty rock, my refuge." Psalm 62:7

DAY ONE

Handcrafted

Have you stood before a magnificent ocean, feeling its majestic power and misty thunder as it slaps the shoreline and drags the sand into its lair? I have, and when I do, I feel very small. I feel vulnerable as a twig, ungrounded as a feather, diminutive as a dust particle. My size compared to the vast ocean is not unlike the miniscule size of the earth compared to the vast expanse of the heavens.

If you consider just our own Milky Way galaxy, it contains over a hundred billion stars. Genesis 1:1 points out this comparison when it says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Consider how God accomplished His creation.

Complete the following from Psalm 33:6,9:

"By the _____ of the Lord were the heavens made,

their starry host by the _____ of his _____.

For he _____, and it came to be;

he _____, and it stood firm."

What did God use to create the universe? (This is not a trick question.)

☐ His voice ☐ His hands ☐ evolution

Read the creation account in Genesis 1:3-26. What does the fact that God spoke all creation into being tell you about Him?

How amazing that God could have used any means to initiate creation, yet He simply spoke and it appeared. But even more amazing is that when He created man He didn't use His voice; He used something far more personal.

Read Genesis 2:7,21-22. What did God use to create man and woman?

☐ His voice ☐ His hands ☐ a subcontractor

The universe began with God's spoken word. All the grandeur, majesty, and wonder of a creation beyond our comprehension began with His voice. In Genesis 1:3 God said, "Let there be light." From there, He spoke His vast creation into existence. Planets and stars. Mountains and oceans. Forests and animals. Birds and sea creatures. Towering trees and tiny flowers. All creation was initiated by God's word. All except man.

God could have spoken us into existence, too, but He chose to use His hands. His touch separates us from all other created things. His unseen hand defines and honors us above all other created beings.

Does God, a Spirit, truly have hands as we have hands? I'll leave that one for the theologians. I only know that Scripture differentiates the way God formed man and woman from how He created every other thing. It wasn't business as usual. I don't know exactly how He did it, but I do know a special touch was involved.

Can you wrap your mind around that idea? Read Isaiah 40:22. Imagine we're standing at the edge of the Atlantic, in the shadow of Mount Everest, or on the floor of the Grand Canyon. Does the magnificence of creation make you feel like a grasshopper? Describe how you feel in relation to the surrounding grandeur.

David felt the same way. He was merely a boy, lowest in the family pecking order, when the prophet Samuel proclaimed David would one day rule Israel as king. He must have felt ridiculously undersized when King Saul sought to dress him in the royal armor to fight the

giant Goliath. Years later, as a middle-aged king himself, the gentle psalmist must have felt the frailty of his stature as the man after God's own heart broke God's heart by choosing Bathsheba rather than battle.

I wonder what life was like for David as a shepherd boy resting in the cleft of a rock and plucking his harp strings in the cool of the evening. Perhaps he looked across the surrounding Judean hills at dusk and thought of his smallness. Perhaps he gazed into the soft light of a star-blanketed sky and once again felt his size.

"The LORD has sought
out a man after his
own heart."

1 Samuel 13:14

Read Psalm 8:3-4. After David considered the grandeur of God's handiwork, what amazed him?

Does the fact that God is mindful of us blow your mind? It does mine. We seem such a small part of God's creation. Yet, He esteems us and honors us above all His handiwork.

According to Psalm 8:5-6, what does God do for us as the crowning jewel of His creation?

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

Based on these four things that display God's honoring touch on your life, write a prayer of thankfulness.

DAY TWO

Broken Yet Valuable

During my college years, a friend of mine gave me a very special gift of a beautiful Lladró® porcelain figurine. Her slender lines were adorned with a graceful hat and a vase of flowers. For the first seven years of our marriage, this delicate figurine moved from city to city and from home to home. It was one of my most treasured possessions.