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In Mark 12:30, we're told to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind & strength. Today, we're going to focus on loving God with our minds by thinking through creation, asking ourselves the question, "Is this world really all here for us?"			

(This material is largely derived from [UnveilingGLORY's YouTeach](#) series.)

This is the final Sunday of our 3rd miniseries, Cat & Dog Theology. Today we're talking about loving God with our minds. We've said life isn't about us & want to think through the ramifications of that. We've been comparing Christian views on theology with Cats & Dogs. Dogs live with a passion to glorify God with their lives, believing everything's from, through & to Him - everything revolves around God. Cats live like a selfish bride. Life's about them. God did everything for them. The world, created for their enjoyment & pleasure. Which is a cancer eating away at our relationship with God & the church. A crooked doctrine at best. Cats hold on to this view, despite the overwhelming evidence life isn't all about us.

In Mark 12:30, we're told to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind & strength. Today, we're going to focus on loving God with our minds by thinking through creation, asking ourselves the question, "Is this world really all here for us?" If you were going to Create the world, what percent of the planet would you make habitable for humankind? Would you only have people live on 2%, or 25, 50, 75, or 100% of the planet? Most people would maximize space, creating a planet on which we could inhabit 100% of the space. But that's not what God did.

He created it in such a way that we only live on 25% of the planet. If it's all about us, why only 25%? If we were to grade Jesus on His Creation work, we might give him an 'F' since we're only allowed to exist on 25% of the planet! He didn't maximize resources for us! Let's explore other areas of Creation! If it's about us, why did God create so many brilliantly colored fish in the water where we don't live, many of which we've yet to discover? We don't get to enjoy their beauty, at least on a regular basis. So what kind of a grade does the Lord get for making beautiful fish in the sea where we can't enjoy them, since we don't inhabit the ocean? If Creation was all about us, and if the fish were created just for us, we might give him an F, since we can't even see them!

Why does the eagle have better eyesight than we do? If it were all about us, don't you think God would give us the better eyesight? Why can a baby horse walk at birth, but humans take 9 months just to learn to crawl?! If life were about us, why'd God do that? If it were about us, why can elephants & dogs hear sounds people can't? Why would God allow that if it's really all about us? Why did God create us to sleep 8 hours a day, not being able to do a thing, when the giraffe only sleeps about five minutes at a time, totaling just under two hours a day? God could have created us like that, but he didn't. For us 'doers' that's sort of a raw deal, imagine everything we could get done with that time!

Why are there entire galaxies we can't even see? At best, with the naked eye we can only see a tiny fraction of the stars that make up our universe. There's a ton of beauty out there we can't see. Why can't we change our appearance like a chameleon? He changes colors to adapt to his environment. See someone you don't like coming, just meld into the brick wall, that'd be helpful - kinda like a super power! If He lets the chameleon do that, why can't we?

When a starfish loses an arm, it grows right back! And that lost arm can even grow into a whole new starfish itself. The world would be a lot better place if I could just hack off limbs & populate the earth with armies of Jason Clones! We can at least all agree on that! If God did that to the starfish, why couldn't He have done that to us? Why do we have to go without an arm or a leg the rest of our lives when we lose one? Why can't we say, "Hey, I really like myself, I think I'll cut off a leg & grow a whole new me?"

Why can the hummingbird hit up to 60mph when it flies full speed, but a human tops out at 28? If life was all about us, what kind of a grade should God be getting? If we're using our minds & life were really all about us, we might give God an F. But the good news is life isn't about us, it's about God! And we see this clearly in two passages found in the books of Romans & Revelation.

Let's start with Romans 11:36 which says...*"For from him, and through him, and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen."* From God & through God & to God are ALL things! Everything revolves around God. It doesn't say *some, or most* things, rather *all* things. Everything - every pencil, chair, cloud, star, person, bird - everything, is from Him. In other words, God created them. And everything's through Him. Meaning it's all held together by God. If He withdrew His power, everything would be gone. Everything's to Him - all things designed to point us to God. Every tree's to point us to God. Every hair on our head is to point us to God. Every cell in our bodies, every fish, sunset & sunrise was created to point us to God. Everything revolves around Him!

Now let's look at Revelation 4:9-11. Here we catch a glimpse of heaven through John's vision of the throne of God...*"Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor & thanks to him who sits on the throne & who lives for ever & ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne & worship him who lives for ever & ever. They lay their crowns before the throne & say: You are worthy, our Lord & God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created & have their being."*

In the original Greek, the phrase 'by your will' can be easily translated 'for your pleasure'. God created everything for His pleasure. Everything has its being for His pleasure. We're here to please Him. *This is why Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:9... "...so we make it our goal **to please him**, whether we are at home in the body or away from it."* That's our goal & purpose, to please God, created for His pleasure! Everything was created for that purpose!

A Dog will say, “Cat, this is what I’ve been trying to tell you. Life isn’t about us! It’s about God & what God gets to do! You’ve got to love God with your mind & ask these questions in order to fully comprehend why you were created - what life’s all about!” So, yes, the earth is covered with three quarter’s water, because maybe God likes it that way! Maybe it was necessary for all things which He delights in, not just us. **And He made the beauty of the fish for Himself to enjoy, not just us since it’s about Him. He enjoys things other than just a relationship with us, He enjoys the fish of the sea!**

He gave the eagle better eyesight than we have because He likes it! **It brings Him pleasure to have elephants & dogs hear sounds we can’t hear. He loves that diversity.** He created us to be asleep for one third of our life maybe to remind us that we’re not God! He wants us to learn to be dependent upon Him, not independent from Him constantly doing things in our own strength. **He enjoys the galaxies we can’t even see, they were made for Him.** He has the chameleon change colors & not us, maybe so we won’t be so preoccupied with what we look like on the outside. **We’re not like starfish because God didn’t want us to have multiple versions of the same person.** One Jason, believe it or not, is enough for this world! **So what if the hummingbird flies faster than we can run, it’s not about us. Life & everything which exists, points to God & His glory.**

*“For from him and through him and to him are all things! To him be the glory forever! Amen.” (Rm 11:36) “You are worthy, our Lord & God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and **for your pleasure** they were created and have their being.” (Rv 4:11)* Knowing all this holds tremendous ramifications. **In Psalm 115:3, we read... “Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.”** God does whatever pleases God. And most of what He does was thought up before the beginning of time. **Let’s look at the passages which point this out. While walking among us Jesus spoke many parables. Matthew quotes Psalm 78 to explain why Jesus did so. The text tells us in Matthew 13:35... “So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: ‘I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.’”**

What’s *hidden since the creation of the world* refer to? It’s telling us God had many things in His mind before He even created this world. Before the first electron was put together, God had a plan. Before the first angel was created, God had a plan. Before Adam & Eve were put on this earth, God had a plan. And it wasn’t simply that we’d be created. It was far more in-depth. **Look at what we learn from 2 Timothy 1:9... “He has saved us & called us to a holy life - not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose & grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.”** We received grace through Christ before the beginning of time, not just 2,000 years ago. God had it in His mind to have His Son die & redeem the world before the world was created. Revelation 13:8 refers to Jesus as, *“the lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.”* Knowing this helps us see a huge difference between Dog & Cat thinking.

Eternity past & future extend out beyond human existence of about 5-6000 years! You may argue a lot longer, but for argument sake, let’s say civilization’s about this old. A Dog looks at those passages which say this was done before the beginning of time &

says, “All of this was thought up & worked through before time began. God thought us up. He thought up his Son’s death on the cross. Therefore he had to know about sin. God must have known about everything before it happened. And therefore, made a plan for everything!” It would make sense when God says in Revelation 21:6, “I am the Alpha & Omega, the beginning & the end.” Note the present tense: ‘I AM the end’. God knows the end from the beginning. He knows all things. He had a plan for it from the beginning.

But Cats don’t think like that. They think, “No. God must’ve seen Adam & Eve sin, and thought, ‘What am I gonna do now? I guess I’ll have to send My Son down to fix things....’” And so He somehow worked with us on how it was going to take place. The Cat would be wrong & the Dog right, which makes a huge difference in how we look at life.

And here’s the key - God did NOT consult us when He imagined creation. We aren’t equal partners. Our wants & wishes weren’t first considered. Everything’s running according to God’s plan & wishes. You may be thinking, “Then God knew about evil & suffering!” And I would counter by asking would it have been better if nothing was created? Is all the wonder & suffering worth the beauty of it all, including the love & relationship we have with the Creator? Would we know love & beauty without suffering?

But the sentiment of American culture is, everyone’s wishes & desires have to be consulted & considered. Everything fair to everyone, or we’re somehow being insensitive & hurtful. Which is absolutely impossible! **Existentially & ontologically humanity must come under one God. When human desire is set loose it destroys even itself. That’s why God gets to be in charge. He sets the standard & gets to do what He wants & we are to fall in line. And we realize, if we’re patient enough, our obedience is best for everyone & all things - that unity & obedience to Christ’s Lordship saves from the tyranny & destructive nature of our own sinful nature - it’s true freedom to live in healthy community & renewal for our environment!**

**God gets to do what God gets to do - He’s in charge.** This is what God says through Isaiah 40:13-14...*“Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?”* The answer is no one. If God didn’t consult us before creation, then God simply did what He wanted to do, therefore it’s easy to conclude: Life is NOT about us. It’s about God & what God gets to do.

Let’s look at three passages which we can now understand in a new way by adopting this line of thinking. Our first is found in Ephesians chapter 2:6-7 which gives us a new understanding of heaven...*“And God raised us up with Christ & seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that...”* Stop there for a moment & notice the words, ‘in order that’. That tells you there’s a purpose clause. There’s a reason why we’re saved & here is where we find out what it is...*“...in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in*

*Christ Jesus.*” Look at verse 7 - count all the times God refers to himself & all the times God refers to us.

Counting Jesus, there are four references to God & one to us. And the Cat cries out “Praise the Lord, it’s all about us! Heaven is all about where we get to go! Praise God! He does everything for us!” Whereas the Dog cries. “NO! It’s 80% about God, 20% about us! Heaven’s more about what God gets than about what we get?” A Dog sees that the Greek verb ‘show’ means, “to put on display, demonstrate, or live out.” What this tells us is that God put us in heaven for one primary purpose: That HE might put on display, demonstrate, or live out his grace forever & ever! Heaven’s more about what God gets than about what we get!

But God did something very unique with Adam & Eve when He created them. He did it without consulting them, and for His own pleasure. We find it in Romans 11:32, a passage which is very hard for a Cat to swallow...*“For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.”* There are a couple of key words here. The first is ‘bound’. From the Greek it means ‘to shut up on all sides’ or ‘to enclose’. What it means is, whether you go forward or backward, left or right, up or down, you’re going to sin. God doesn’t force you to sin, you do it of your own free will. But we’ve been put in such a position that we **will** sin.

A Cat looks at that word ‘bound’, thinks about his struggle with sin & yells at God saying, “THAT’S NOT FAIR!” Because for a Cat everything has to be fair. A Dog looks at it & bows in humble submission quoting Job 13:15, *“Though he slay me, I will still trust in him.”* “Yes, it’s hard,” says the Dog. “Yes, it hurts when I sin. But I know it’s not about me. And God made me like this so he could have mercy on me. And if that’s what he wants to do, then so be it. He’s in charge, not me. He didn’t consult with me, nor should he have. And when God shows His mercy, it puts His glory on display, not just now, but forever. And that’s what life’s about! So I’m OK with this. And even if I wasn’t, it doesn’t matter. It’s not about me.”

Another passage a Cat has a hard time wrapping his mind around is Romans 9:22-23...*“What if God, although choosing to show his wrath & make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath - prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory...”*

“What?” says a Cat. “Objects prepared for destruction? That’s not fair. That’s not right. That doesn’t make me feel good.” If they focus on that passage, they go into shock. But, they simply skip over it & go to verses they like refusing to think deeply about what God has wanted to do before the beginning of time. They can’t even fathom working in a paradigm where people aren’t consulted - or don’t have an equal say with God. Cats do read Romans 11:36, that everything is “from him and through him and to him,” but they’ve never thought through the implications of what it means because their theology translates that verse as...“For from **us** and through **us** and to **us** are all things!” They may read it correctly, but in their heart they live it out quite differently.

When we understand everything revolves around God, we gain a new appreciation for what it means to call Him Lord. He didn't consult us. He's in charge. He calls the shots. He's totally & absolutely in control. And that drives home the concept once again...Life is not about us. It's about God. Some of us have lived in a 'boxed in theology' which has caused us to view life from a distorted angle & as a result, we've not seen clearly.

This ends our 12 weeks talking about the whole story of God, but it doesn't end our devotion to it. It's our call to reach the nations for the glory of God. From our own Jerusalem, the Eastern MainLine, to our Samaria, the Philadelphia area with its international population, to the ends of the earth, in Morocco, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Syria, Lebanon, or wherever our focus as a local body falls (Acts 1:8).

I hope we've seen the difference between a God-centered vs a people-centered theology. I hope we're becoming more aware of what it means to live for God's glory daily in practical ways. Much of which starts with placing God in the center of all things, where He's supposed to be - the Supreme Ruler & Creator of all things, worthy of all our worship & praise!

We've seen the task of the Church of God to reach all nations is traced from Abraham's call in Genesis 12, all through Scripture, reiterated by Christ in Matthew 28, the Great Commission, and culminates in Revelation when all tribes, tongues, peoples & nations worship God at the throne! God is king with the right to establish this purpose for us. Jesus said in Matthew 24:14, *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*

So as grateful obedient dogs, who've found a treasure in Jesus, we willingly give our all in life to gain that treasure - when Christ is glorified at the center of our lives we can say with all integrity, "I will go anywhere, do anything, and say anything for the sake of your glory, Lord Jesus!" If we can do that, we'll see the day which Revelation 5 refers to in their singing about Jesus.

Let's end today by praying sentiments found in Chapters 5&7 of Revelation...(Ch 5) Lord Jesus, You are worthy to take the scroll & open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchase for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. Making them to be a kingdom & priests to serve our God, who'll reign on the earth. Worthy are You, the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!

(Ch 7) We look forward to that time when there'll be a great multitude no one can count, from every nation, tribe, people & language, standing before the throne & before You, the Lamb, wearing white robes & holding palm branches in their hands, crying out in loud voices...salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb....Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power & strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen! Never again will we hunger, never again will we thirst. The sun will not beat down on us, nor any scorching heat. You, Jesus, the Lamb at the center of the throne will be our shepherd, You'll lead us to springs of living water & wipe away every tear from their eyes! AMEN!