



Then and Now – Hallelujah
Sermon Discussion Questions – May 15, 2022

Scripture Passages:

Genesis 3:7–8 (NIV84) ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. ⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Genesis 3:16–19 (NIV84) ¹⁶ To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children.

¹⁷ . . . To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

Genesis 3:23 (NIV84) ²³ So the Lord God banished [humanity] from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.

Romans 7:15 (NIV84) ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.

Matthew 24:30 (NIV84) ³⁰ “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

Revelation 19:1–6 (NIV84) After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, ²for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”³ And again they shouted: “Hallelujah! The smoke from her

goes up for ever and ever.”⁴ The twenty-four elders (CHURCH) and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: “Amen, Hallelujah!”⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!”

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns

Warm Up

This week Pastor Tom started out by reminding us of a statement from a previous series: “I exist to...” What are some fun or funny ways you could finish this statement? If you finished this statement during that past series, how did you complete that statement?

Discussion

- 1) Toward the beginning of this message, Pastor Tom made this statement:
If we desire to know why we exist, we must begin with the one who provided our existence.
What are some of your reactions to this statement? What might it look like to “begin with” the one who provided our existence?

- 2) Read Genesis 3:7-8 and Read Genesis 3:16-19 and Genesis 3:23.
What is happening in these verses? What are some of the consequences of the fall that we see here? How might our understanding of these verses shape the way we see our lives?

- 3) Excerpt from Pastor Tom’s Message:
Sometimes people get caught in the specifics of the punishment. I am not so sure that is the takeaway. What really matters is things changed and the fallen world is what you and I find ourselves a part of. We raise our children in a fallen world. We build marriages in a fallen world. We try to be healthy in a fallen world.
As you think through this statement, what do you think it means to live our lives in a fallen world? How does this impact the way you see your purpose?

- 4) Pastor Tom unpacked the reality of a fallen world using these two statements:
 - War with God
 - War with each other
 - War with ourselves
 - War with creationHow have you seen these things playing out in your life or in the lives of others around you?
How does the vision of ALIVE address these realities?

- 5) Excerpt from Tom’s Message:
Let your minds reflect on what has been birthed out of these wars. Play these wars out over world wars, terrorism, racism, sexism and all the evil atrocities of humanity. Play that out over all of time in the pain produced through jacked up families, through sexual or physical or spousal abuse. Through homes of broken covenants or where betrayal happens... Now imagine, one day

all those wars end! Scripture has a word we will all express on that day and it is a word only used to describe God.

Hallelujah—Praise God

What would that look like to see all these wars end? What are some of your emotions or thoughts as you imagine the end of all these wars?

6) Read Revelation 19:1-6.

What stands out to you from these verses? Pastor Tom talked about several Hallelujahs throughout these verses – Hallelujah of redemption, hallelujah of justice, hallelujah of recognition, hallelujah of Christ’s reign. Which of these hallelujahs do you get most excited about and why?

7) Toward the end of his message, Pastor Tom shared this quote from Fredrich Buechner.

Fredrich Buechner

The whole of creation is in on the act—the sun and moon, the sea, fire and snow, Holstein cows and white throated sparrows, old men in walkers and children who still haven’t taken their first step. Their praise is not chiefly a matter of saying anything, because most of creation doesn’t deal in words.

Instead, the snow whirls, the fire roars, the Holstein bellows, the old man watches the moon rise. Their praise is not something that at the most complimentary they say, but something that at their truest they are.

We learn to praise God not by paying compliments, but by paying attention. Watch how the trees exult when the wind is in them. Mark the utter stillness of the great blue heron in the swamp. Listen to the sound of the rain. Learn how to say “Hallelujah” from the ones who say it right.

Which parts of this quote connect with you most and why? How does this quote help you understand the word hallelujah?

8) What other insights did you have from Tom’s message that you had hoped we would talk about as a group?

Next Steps:

You exist to sing “Hallelujah.” You are a people of hope who speak hallelujah into existence through your existence. Hallelujah reminds us that your current situation is not your final situation.

What do you think this means to live to speak hallelujah? Have you ever seen someone living like this? If so what was that like?

What might it look like for you to live a life that sings hallelujah?