

Being Thankful for Animals

Genesis 6:17-20

PW Emerson – 11/25/2018 – Ten:27 Ministries

SERIES

This is the fourth week we've been looking at things in the bible we are thankful for.

- 1st week, how we show thanks to God – in part thru praise & worship
- 2 weeks ago, thankful for family
- Last Sunday, thankful for friends

Today we are looking at being thankful for animals

ASK

- How many people here have had a pet?
- Why did you have a pet/animal in the first place?
- What kind of animals did you have?
- Why that pet/animal?
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- When you think of God using animals in the Bible, what comes to mind?

God made it very clear that animals are very important

Genesis 6:17-20

¹⁷ I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. ¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹ You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. ²⁰ Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.

God is furious. He's going to destroy the world with a massive flood.

- Yet he wants to keep the animals safe.

I'm sure there was incredible beauty on land

- Mountains
- Waterfalls
- Canyons
- Great trees

It all got destroyed. God could have chosen to preserve them

God chose to preserve the animals.

God cares about the animals.

Matthew 6:25-26

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air;

they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Our heavenly father feeds the birds.

Matthew 10:29

²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.

God CARES for the animals! It makes sense that we should too!

Thinking about animals & pets, it made me wonder,

- Why are they here?
- Is there something we can learn from the animals we see in the bible?
- Is there more than just something that is cute and furry?
- Is there something more than just food, fun and beauty?

Numbers 22:21-31

²¹ Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Moabite officials. ²² But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³ When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road.

²⁴ Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. ²⁵ When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat the donkey again.

²⁶ Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. ²⁷ When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. ²⁸ Then the LORD opened the donkey's mouth, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?"

²⁹ Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now."

³⁰ The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?"

"No," he said.

³¹ Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown.

We see here one of the best characteristics of a pet that I wish all people had:

I UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Balaam's Donkey was

- Loyal to him
- Served him well
- Loved him unconditionally

PEOPLE AREN'T THAT GOOD!

ASK

- Who here has had a dog?
- Would you say he/she had unconditional love?

You can come home

- Having had the worst day at the office or school
- Be in a really bad mood
- Not want anything to do with anybody

And the dog will come right up to you!

Knowing that we live in a sinful world, I believe that God created so many animals with this characteristic on purpose!

- Life in this world is not always fair
- Things sometimes will NOT go our way

Dog will still love us.

I've been saying dog because I was thinking of Roscoe when I wrote this

- Cats
- Rats
- Rabbit / bunny
- Donkey
- horse

- MANY OTHERS!

In this piece from Numbers, Balaam

- Yelled at his donkey
- BEAT his donkey

And yet the donkey was still looking out for the master's best interest. LOVE!

One thing I learned with my first dog is that dogs can sense our emotions.

- I remember being on the phone once
- It was very stressful
- It was very emotional
- It was draining

Dog was by me the entire time, loving me.

Jonah 1:17 – 2:1

¹⁷ Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. ¹ From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.

II GOD USES ANIMALS TO PROVIDE FOR OUR NEEDS

We often think of animals as serving human needs as

- Food
- Beast of burden
- hide

BUT we see in the Bible that they are much more than that!

When Jonah was thrown into the sea, God sent a whale to rescue him and keep him safe.

I Kings 17:2-6

² Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: ³ "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁴ You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there."

⁵ So he did what the LORD had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

Ravens are scavengers – they feed on dead carcass leftover by other kills.

- From a Jewish ritual perspective, that makes them unclean.

Yet God used these animals that would have been considered UNCLEAN

God uses animals to provide for our needs!

Animals not only provided for needs in the bible but still today!

In today's world, we can easily think of dogs being used for security

- Police dogs
- Dogs used to sniff out drugs & explosives

WHY – because of their incredible sense of smell!

More recently dogs are used as service animals

- Help the blind
- Help wheelchair bound

Dogs can be trained to do all sorts of incredible things!

In fact I once saw a picture of a group of dogs, sitting at a table and playing poker!

I heard they weren't very good because whenever they got a good hand they wagged their tails

Not only dogs

The US Navy has trained dolphins to use their natural sonar abilities to detect mines and alert ships! They use a technique called echolocation.

CONCLUSION

ASK

When talking to someone who has never had a pet before, what would say to help them see why they should have a pet?

For thousands of years, animals have been beasts of burden ...

- Horses
- Donkeys
- Mules
- Oxen

And more.

Animals have been loyal, members of the family ...

- Dogs

They are a companion, always there to provide comfort, silliness and joy.

Many animals have intentionally sacrificed themselves to save a person ...

This Thanksgiving season, be thankful for animals