

From the Pastor's Desk

2011

Every year I am thrilled when March rolls around. It's not just because spring is approaching and hopefully the weather will begin to turn warmer. I get excited for the month of March because it means the start of the NCAA basketball tournament. As much as I enjoy watching the basketball games during the regular season, the tournament is that much better. I'm especially looking forward to this year's tournament and hoping that Duke can repeat as Champions.

In fact, the college basketball tournament is affectionately called March Madness by those rabid basketball fans that look forward to it each year. It's madness because anything could happen and because the fans are crazy. This year, it all begins with the Selection Show on March 16. I, like thousands of others, will watch as the teams are narrowed down from over 300 to sixty-eight teams. From that point, teams are gradually eliminated during each ensuing round.

The sixty-eight become sixty-four. The sixty-four turn into thirty-two. Thirty-two transform into the Sweet Sixteen. The Sweet Sixteen morph into the Great Eight. The Great Eight result in the Final Four. The final Four pare down to the Championship Two. Finally, the Champion is crowned. Throughout the tournament, fans will be cheering on their team and proudly wearing their colors. As the camera pans over them leading into commercial, they will hold up their index finger proclaiming that their team is #1.

I must admit that I get caught up in all of this excitement. Yet, it also causes me to do some reflecting on God. Many times we can get caught up in the excitement and proclaim that our God is #1. Yet, this is not what the bible teaches. God does not compete against others. The God of the Bible does not claim to be the #1 God over 300 others. The God of the Bible is repeatedly called the only God. One of my favorite passages proclaiming this truth is Isaiah 45:18-25. Over and over again this passage says about God – **"he is God, and there is no other."** In these verses, we see reasons why he is God, and there is no other.

God is the one and only creator. He spoke and brought into existence the heavens and the earth. Take a step outside and look around at nature. All that we see comes from the caring, powerful, creative hand of God. His creation extends to us, as well. The same God that created the trees, birds, and sky lovingly created each individual person in His own image. All of creation owes their existence to God.

Furthermore, God can be trusted above all others. He is not a secret God that requires a special code to understand. Nor does he hide from us. God tells us to seek him and he will be found. God can be found throughout the pages of Scriptures, especially in the incarnation of his Son, Jesus Christ.

Finally, this one and only God is the ultimate salvation. In Isaiah 45:22, God tells all people to **"Turn to me and be saved."** Everyone is encouraged to come to God and receive the salvation that God alone provides. Which is better, to serve the idols of this world, to pursue our own prestige, and wage war against God or to worship the God of creation, the God of truth, the God of Salvation? Let us worship and serve God together. Let us worship and serve God for who he is. The one and only God.

Pastor Scott