

Father, may these spoken words be faithful to your written word and lead us to the living Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Psalm 139 tells of our comings and goings. It focuses on the marvellous handiwork of an artist who takes great delight in his creation. "O Lord, you have searched me and known me....It was you who formed me in my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made....In your book were written all the days that were formed for me."

The psalmist imagines the extreme places we might go to escape God's presence – the depths of the ocean, the farthest reaches of space. But according to the psalmist, God is near and intimate. It's an amazing thought and perhaps a little overwhelming. The creator knows everything about his creation. God knows everything. Hebrews 4:13 tells us, "And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account." There is no question God cannot answer, no problem that confuses him. He's never surprised. He's never shocked. He never says, "Oh, really?" There's no escaping the reach of this God!

There is nowhere that we can escape this God who resolutely loves us, his creation. The Psalm is clear that none of us are an accident or a mistake. Each of us is known to God, willed by God, loved by God unconditionally. There are over seven billion people living on earth, and each of us has been carefully formed, knit together by our Creator God. God has counted every hair on every head and knows the intricate details of each and every fingerprint. There is something intrinsically good about every human person, even the most troubling, we are willed and loved by God. Our dignity rests not in our usefulness to others; nor in our abilities; nor whether others want us or do not want us. Our dignity rests in the truth that we are willed and loved by God.

So here is a God who knows every one of our thoughts, words, feelings and actions in the past, present and future. We are completely known by this God and have been all our lives. There are two possible reactions to such a God: terror that we are so exposed, or joy that we are known and understood completely. Remember, we have a friend who is closer than a brother. He who knows us, and because he knows us, he knows exactly how to help us change our thoughts and attitudes. He longs for us to ask for his help. It is he who knows us, and because he knows us, he knows exactly how to help us repent of every

sin in thought and deed and attitude. Ask him to show you what needs to change and give you the power to do so. He longs to have us ask that he may help.

If the first six verses remind us of the all-seeing God then the following six verses speak of his omnipresence; his ability to be everywhere at the same time. "Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?" But why would we want to flee from God? Perhaps, we have been rebelling against God's call on our lives or just living as if he doesn't exist, God's knowledge and his presence might feel like a terrible threat. This is the "fearful expectation of judgment" that we read about in Hebrews 10:27. For us as believers, however, we can know that wherever we may be, God is there to be our refuge.

The final six verses portray God's lavish love and care with respect to human beings. Look at the words David uses to describe God's work. "Curiously wrought" or "intricately woven", this is how a master craftsman might carefully make a beautiful tapestry for the tabernacle. What is made as an act of worship to God is used to illustrate the exquisite work of God in crafting us his creation. He brings out of the "unformed substance" a symphony of bones, muscles, nerves and blood vessels regulated by all sorts of organs and glands, exactly in accordance with his plan.

Tradition holds that the writer of this particular psalm was King David. David, the innocent little shepherd boy who defeated Goliath with a sling. He went on to become the greatest King in Israelite history, celebrated and revered through the ages. The prophets said the Messiah would come from David's line. Indeed, David was a bright and shining King, but he also had his weaknesses, didn't he? Remember the story of David and Bathsheba? David lusted after this beautiful woman, so he sent her husband into the front lines of a battle so that he might be killed and David could have Bathsheba to himself. That's pretty bad. David knows that there is nowhere he can go that God will not know where he is and what he is doing. God knows every detail of David's life, good and bad, and still David celebrates God's handiwork, the depth of God's knowledge, and the inescapable reach of God's grace. Are any of us able to do that?

"How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!!" David rejoices that God has thought so much about him, cared so much about forming him and planning for him. He delights in this. Think about the life you have been given and what it took to bring you into existence. Think about all the events that have brought you to this present moment. What is in your heart right now? Do we offer God our praise in the same manner as David as we realise God's loving care for us?

The Christian experience of God then is of one who chooses “to dwell among us”, to share human life, even its end in the grave. God on the cross and God in the grave endures human suffering and death which gives us grounds for hope in our own living and dying. This faith arises out of the experience of a God who is not remote and distant in some far off heaven, but with us in every dimension of life. God’s presence is here with us this morning whether we’re aware of it or not. He wants us to know him. He wants us to feel his love. If you’re not sure you know him this morning, why don’t you just say in your heart, "God, I’d like to know your presence in my life." Jesus said in Revelation 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Jesus says, I’m knocking at the door of your life. If you’ll open it up I will come into your life and live with you and you with me. So just say, "Jesus Christ, come into my life right now." In Jesus’ name. Amen.