

Confidence in Lonely Times

Psalm 139

Greetings to those joining us face to face for our 3rd week since re-opening:

***One couple emailed:** *"We have been attending New Hope the last couple weeks. We cannot thank you enough for **opening the doors** of the church."*

And greetings to our friends who continue to worship with us online, even on vacation:

***One family traveling to the Rockies last Sunday sent this email:**

*[My wife] and I were packing Friday...and BOTH simultaneously stated: "**we are going to MISS New Hope this Sunday**" as we would be traveling to the Rockies. Fast forward to Sunday...on 94 West near Bismarck ND. 10 AM EST arrives, and I mention we would be watching our almost 3rd month of New Hope LIVE... and [my wife] said: "try to get New Hope on your iPhone!" So, **GOD Present EVERYWHERE**, we find and watch NEW Hope...Clear as a bell...the **Power and Message of the Holy Spirit fills the truck** as we crossed ND...What an Amazing Privilege to have the LORD's Message with us during our journey, during **these most tumultuous times on Earth.**"*

During the last 12 tumultuous weeks we have opened God's Word to the Psalms for Confidence.

*Last Sunday, Ps. 121 was a **great Psalm for the nation of Israel & America: The Lord is our Keeper.**

*One family emailed how desperately they **leaned on Ps. 121 for a hedge of protection.**

*"My husband and I visited New Hope this morning...We are **so hungry** for "normal" worship that we decided to come. What a blessing it was!!...**How fitting Psalm 121** is right now...On Friday evening [our son] had fainted and was unresponsive...your message was my hope on Friday...I have always prayed for **a hedge of protection** over [our sons]. On Friday, when I did not know what the situation was and had absolutely no way of being with my boy, I knew **God was with him**. I knew I had **the power of prayer**. I knew **my help came from the Lord**. I **clung to Psalm 121!** I texted and called anyone and everyone and told them to PRAY! I grabbed my Bible...**opened to Psalm 121**...and I prayed, I called out to God...I was filled with such peace...Thank you for your **message of hope!**"*

*Every single message in this Psalms series has given **hope...and Ps. 139 is no different:**

*"The most **intimate and personal Psalm** in the Bible."*

*"The most **glorious and excellent Psalm**." "The **sublimest composition** in the world."*

*"The one Psalm which it were well if Christians would **every morning and every evening repeat**"*

*"It draws the reader to God's Heart much like **the lure of a warm fireplace** does on a cold night"*

*It tells us about a personal God who formed us in the womb, knows us perfectly, thinks about us intensely, numbers our days from birth to death, and longs for a relationship with us.

*If true, our choice: **run and hide (unsuccessfully), or yield to Him in worship (I'm yours).**

1. **The Lord knows us fully,** (v.1-16)

- Everything we do.
- Everywhere we go.
- Every day we live.

*Ps. 139 reveals truth that is **impossible to wrap our minds around.**

*It's such BIG news that David admits: *"Such knowledge is too wonderful" (I can't take it all in.)*

- **Everything we do (v.1-6)**

*"O Lord, you have **searched** me and **known** me!"* (to dig; explore; investigate; examine w/ care)

v.2-6 reveals just how fully God knows us...*"Sit down, rise up, path, lying down..."*

Omniscient. He knows us inside/out; top/bottom; up/down; backwards/forwards.

*He knows every **wound of the heart** and **scar on the body (7 on mine).**

*He knows **every emotion** we feel; **every thought** we have; **every desire** we crave.

*The bottom line. God is *"**acquainted with all my ways.**"*

*That's a **very vulnerable** statement. The all-seeing EYE who knows everything of you.

*When we have **morning coffee**, he knows what worries us.

*When we have an **argument at work**, he knows our words before we do.

*When we **lay down to sleep**, he knows the frustrations of our heart.

*When we **gather in church**, he knows why our heart is heavy.

***Last week, God met one couple at New Hope with the perfect help:**

*"My wife and I had both felt **extremely heavy** throughout the week and that was **the perfect word** for us. No matter if someone was 'right/left,' angry/sad, that pushed it all to the side and **pointed to Jesus.** Thank you."*

*Here is a **perfect word** for you: **God fully knows you and He fully loves you.**

- **Everywhere we go. (v.7-12)**

"Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence?" (v.7)

*These two questions are rhetorical to show: **you can't escape God. He is Omnipresent.**

*Some may wonder: **"Where is God?"** David would say: **"Where is He not?"**

v.8-12 reveal the truth that anywhere we travel on the planet, God is THERE!

*If you take a **plane to Timbuktu: God is there.**

*If you **take a boat across Lake MI: God is there. (Jonah found that out)**

*If you **take a hot air balloon to Canada: God is there.**

*If you **change time zones** by train or horseback, **God is there.**

*If you **fear the dark or feel alone at night**, even the darkness is not dark to God.

***3 weeks ago, I told you a story of a New Hope girl learning to overcome fear at night.**

***Her dad writes:** *"[Our daughter] had a nightmare that caused her to be afraid to do anything by herself in the basement, where her bedroom was...it terrified her. We offered to let her sleep at the foot of our bed, on the couch, or in her sister's room. Her response: "No, I'm **praying for Jesus to help me not be scared**, so I am going to keep sleeping down there until He does." It took a couple of weeks, but **the fear is going away...**"*

*Listen: God **works the day shift, night shift, third shift...24/7/365** and an **extra day leap year**.

- **Every Day we live (v.13-16)**

*13 For you **formed** my inward parts; you **knitted** me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for **I am fearfully and wonderfully made**. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you, when I was **being made** in secret, **intricately woven** in the depths of the earth.*

*This is the **absolute best place in all literature** to describe the **Value and Worth of a Human**.

*From **conception to death**, God **weaves your life together** in a perfect design.

*He is **Omnipotent**. He knows **the end from the beginning**; He plans our days.

***Notice how David views Human Life:**

- **Designed:** *"Formed; Knitted; Made; Intricately Woven."*

IOW: We have been uniquely designed by a creative God who put us together perfectly.

***Tammy** – Born **26th week; 4 pounds**; ICU for 1 month struggling to live.

***Jackie** – Born **23rd week; 2 pounds**; lived 4 days; parents donated body to UofM

***Victor** – **After mom laid flat 9 months, almost 11 lbs.** *"I didn't ever want to do it again"*

***Craig** – Best pregnancy; but required **emergency C-section** because the baby thought it would be fun to wrap the umbilical cord around neck & cut off his oxygen.

*Mom felt the entire incision, woke up, and said: *"Am I dying?"*

*When I asked Mom about her pregnancies, she said: **"God has a plan for each one."**

- **Valued:** *"I praise you Lord for I am **fearfully and wonderfully made**."*

*What a value statement! What an identity to declare! And not many believe it!

*How often instead do we **look in mirror: "Fearful and wonder why we were made"**

***Have you ever played "MadLib" where you fill in sentences with words/adjectives.**

*What words would you fill in: *"I am _____ (adj.) and _____ (adj)."*

*All our life, the world sends us messages: *“You are unwanted; unloved; worthless. ...stupid; fat; disgusting; ugly; worn out; worthless; broken.”*

*Most of us face a **daily battle** of **self-condemning** thoughts; accuse us; shame us.

*Yet David goes above it all and believes what God says: **“Made in the image of God.”**

- **Planned:** *“in your book were written, every one of them, **the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.**”*

*One **New Hope lady** has endured a **lifetime of hardship** by clinging to this one truth:

“God, you knew this would happen!”

*“Psalm 139 - my favorite psalm, especially verse 16 which has gotten me through some of **the lowest times in my life**. In 2000, due to devastating circumstances, I was in **deep depression**...God brought Psalm 139 to me through a friend who said: “Even if you can’t read anything else, read this psalm.” When I got to verse 16, I realized that **God knew this time would come**, every day of my life was written in His book, and that He was grieving with me – **it brought great comfort**. I memorized that verse and recited it **SEVERAL** times a day when I could hardly believe what was happening...Through the years, as things have happened that **totally catch me off guard**, verse 16 is my go-to verse, it reminds me that **NOTHING takes God by surprise and He has a plan.**”*

2. ...and thinks highly of us - (v.17-18)

17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.

***About 15 years ago, a man (ironic: David) prayed this verse over me...and I wept in worship.**

*It was one of the first moments I truly believed that the Lord **treasured me as His son**.

*As David considers the amount of **love that God has**, he is in awe.

***Try to number God’s thoughts of love that He has for you...and you will fail trying.**

*Think of **how much a man thinks of a woman when he is madly in love**.

*While they **date, they never stop thinking of each other**.

*They **long for each other; anticipate seeing each other; they hate departing**.

*And finally when they **marry, they wake up in the morning...still with each other!**

*Listen to what David says: ***“I awake, and I am still with you.”***

*Let that sink in: This **manly man** David is in love with the God who made him, knows him and never leaves his side.

***Is that the way you view God?** Is there a **desire in your heart to be with Him each morning?**

*He thinks of you with **innumerable thoughts of love**. Do you think of him each day?

3. – give Him your heart!

(v.23-24)

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! 24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

*This is *“a bold ask; an impressive prayer; a beautiful prayer to start each day.”*

*Most of Ps. 139 is an **Admission: God knows us...is with us...loves us...thinks about us...**

*These last two verses are David’s response...He gives **Permission:**

David surrenders his heart to God and says: *“Since you know me, you can have me.”*

“Know me more!” *“Search me, know my heart, try me, know my thoughts!”*

***IOW:** “God, you have permission to keep digging, inspecting, and know me more.”

David longs to **know the God who knows him.**

“Make me better!” *“See if there be any grievous way!”*

“Be cautious in using this prayer.” (Melville, 1800’s)

***IOW:** “God, show me my faults. Correct me where I’m wrong. Make me like you.”

“Lead me home!” *“Lead me in the way everlasting!”*

***IOW:** “God, I have decided to follow you. No turning back.”

*The **final verse of Ps. 139 is the choice David makes to surrender & follow the Lord.**

*The Lord knows you (fully), and thinks about you (always): **Give your heart to Him.**

Action Steps:

• **Renew your Mind**

*Here is the **truth statement:** *“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”*

*Each of us needs to **re-wire** how we view ourselves. To see ourselves the way God sees us.

*“We should all practice writing **something else upon the mirrors of our lives.** During those dark times when Satan reflects upon our gaze-in-the-mirror with **cutting, caustic comments** to us, we should immediately write in bold letters – **‘When Satan reminds me of my past, I will remind him of his future’** - then go on to read Ps. 139 and sidle up to God’s compassionate, warm, loving heart.”*

*If I took a **poll of believers**, here’s how I think **we view this statement:**

- *“I believe it and it has transformed my life.” 2-5%*
- *“I don’t believe it.” 5-7%*
- *“I believe it intellectually, but still feel like I am junk. 90+%*

*Truth: We are wonderfully made in the image of God...**no matter our looks, size, shape.**

*God is the Master Designer, and when He made you He didn’t make junk.

- **Live innocently, God is present.**

- *A famous man in Sweden had this phrase **painted and hung above the door of his library.**

- *How much more important to have it **hung upon the doorposts of our heart.**

- *Consider that God knows everything, is everywhere, and is ***acquainted with all our ways.***

- *Would it not make sense to live each day knowing Christ is present.

- **Take comfort:** *“God knew this day was coming.”*

- *He is in control of life...from birth to death; from conception to resurrection;

- *He knows the end from the beginning. His plan is unfolding.

- **Give Him your Heart**

- *It's a bold and dangerous ask...but He invites you to make it:

- “Search me; know me; try me; correct me; lead me...”*