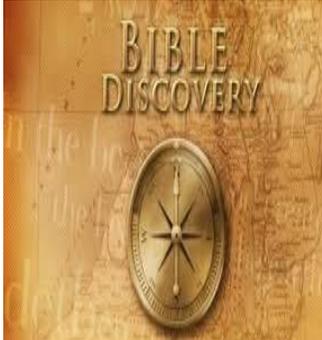


May 10, 2015

Psalm 139:1-16

## *And God Created Them...*



"When the Good Lord was creating mothers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when an angel appeared and said, "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one." And God said, "Have you read the specs on this order?" She has to be completely washable, but not plastic. Have 180 moveable parts...all replaceable; run on black coffee and leftovers; have a lap that disappears when she stands up; a kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair, six pairs of hands, and the three pairs of eyes that mothers have to have - that's on the standard model!" One pair that sees through closed doors when she asks, 'What are you kids doing in there?' when she already knows; another here in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn't but what she has to know; and of course the ones here in front that can look at a child when he goofs up and say. 'I understand and I love you' without so much as uttering a word. Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick...can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger...and can get a nine year old to stand under a shower."

The angel circled the model of a mother very slowly. "It's too soft," she sighed. "But tough!" said God excitedly. "You can imagine what this mother can do or endure."

"But can it think?" Not only can it think, but it can reason and compromise," said the Creator. Finally, the angel bent over and ran a finger across the cheek. "There's a leak", she pronounced. "I told You, You're trying to put too much into this model."

"It's not a leak," said the Lord, "It's a tear." "What's it for?" "It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness, and pride." "You are a genius", said the angel. Somberly, God looked at the mother He'd created and said, "I didn't put it there." — Erma Bombeck, *When God Created Mothers*

Of course Erma Bombeck's description lacks theological soundness but it describes fairly well our experience with our mothers, doesn't it? Certainly, there's something special in a mother – and God created them. I was raised in a household where I instinctively understood the presence of God was manifest in the loving hands and arms of mothers. My mother's kitchen was a theological laboratory where she taught me how to love people just as naturally as she taught me to cook, bake and take out the garbage. I watched and listened as she cared about her own kids, listened to every neighbour kid we dragged home, and in addition to her hours at work and caring for elderly parents, always had time to sing in the church choir and teach Sunday School. Therefore my first impressions of God come from witnessing my mother. Hers is a quiet faith – yet a faith that has never wavered.

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In many ways when we consider the compassionate, loving and caring character of our merciful God, we think more of mothers than fathers. For instance, as a father, when an accident happens, my instinct is to ask what happened, how did the child get hurt, where is the bruise, was one of the other children somehow responsible? However, the first act of a mother is to just pick them up and give them a cuddle and let them know they'll be okay. Since God created the world, is it any wonder He should feel the same intense degree of warm love and care towards His children that He has instilled in

mothers? Yet God's love is greater than any mother's. In today's multifaceted society, it's conceivable that a mother may neglect, even abandon her child, but never the Lord! Why? Because of what happened on the cross when He engraved our names on His heart. According to God's Word, Jesus acted to repair the relationship with the Creator and freely offers the resulting reconciliation as a gift. And Jesus is the Messiah; the One who is the visible image of God, He is (God's) Son who *"is the radiance of his glory, the very image of his substance"* (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus shows us not only what God is like, but that God cares about us and is with us.

Of course the key to recognizing God in the midst of all of us is that God created us and is always with us. All our lives we've heard that we're *"made in the image of God."* It's a nice thought; probably the thought we've held to many times when we need a reminder of our own value. Yet to be fully human is to fully reflect God's creative, spiritual, intelligent, communicative, relational, moral and purposeful capacities – especially in our interaction with one another. Even more than our mothers, God knows all about us, and loves us anyways and asks that we therefore love one another.

When David writes, *"You have searched me and you know me"* it reflects much more than a mere knowledge of our existence. He refers to how God has studied us or examined us in detail, from within a covenant relationship. A covenant is formed when two people or groups join together under a binding agreement. It demonstrates God agrees to love and help His people and they agree to love and obey Him. That's a personal relationship!

Yet the Psalmist, David, presents the presence of God in a universal sense as well. Yes, the Lord sees every part of us, even knows what we're going to say before we know ourselves, but there is also the sense that God's power is beyond the scope of what happens in this world – it's like climbing a very high mountain – it's too high to reach the summit.

The Psalmist suggests we can't hide from God. Verses 7 through 12 describe the futility of running from God. Remembering "Spirit" is also who God is, then the psalmist is saying if you go to heavens or to the depths of the earth God will find you. If you go to the east or the west, you cannot hide from Him. His hand (indicating His power) will always be with you, acting as a guide and a help. David saw it as a good thing that God was always with him. He had God as a guide and someone to give him help.

**We can't run  
from God though  
our Lord knows  
we try...**

Like David, we can't see in the darkness, when there's no light. We cannot see when it is dark ... but God can! And God brings the light – Jesus is our light.

No we can't run from God though our Lord knows we try. Jonah perhaps is the most famous example of running from God. Jonah Chapter 4 verse 2 says, *"He prayed to the Lord, O Lord, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."* Say, what an attitude! Jonah didn't want the Ninevites to be saved. There wasn't any question about it. I think he felt that the way the Ninevites had treated God and in particular had treated Israel – meaning his own people and therefore him - they didn't deserve to be saved, and God would be better advised and get a lot more glory out of just wiping 'em out; and so he says in his mind, "I know what'll happen if I let God tell me what to do. I'll go to Nineveh and share this message God's given to me and that whole place will repent. Well, I'm not going!"

Now, if that's your attitude toward God's call on your heart; if that's your response to the rubbing shoulders with the unclean around you, than just like Jonah, you're hurting – you're hurting bad. There's no question. Jonah felt the Ninevites deserved judgment, not salvation, and he had his own little plan for them despite what God wanted; and so he took off in the other direction; and he's not

really much different than a lot of us today who've been called by God to go to the mission field or called by God to pursue ministry; or called to love their neighbour in tangible ways but instead of going the way God has called them, they get very, very involved in something else, they move in different directions.

What I want you to consider at the heart of the problem is that when you think like Jonah, when you judge others and decide they're not worthy of God's grace, you're saying that God did not create them. But God made us, God made *all* of us. Further in Psalm 139, the psalmist tells us of praising God because he is fearfully and wonderfully made – made in the secret place, his inmost being knitted together in his mother's womb. It's an affirmation of God's creative work in our very being. Because we're created, created in His image, created by the Lord, He knows when we sit or rise, discerns our going out and coming in, knows the words we're about to speak. And He knows that for each and every one of us.

First as a child, and always through the depth of our spirits, we instinctively understand that God is the creator of all things, because we're all made in the image of God. Because God created us - mothers and fathers, boys and girls; because God truly loves us the way a parent loves a child, then naturally God has all the attributes we find displayed in those around us. Biblical passages describe the image of God found in our mothers, including the image of God as a *nursing mother* (see Isaiah 49:15; Numbers 11:12); God as a *midwife* (Psalm 22:8-10); and God as *one who gives birth* (Isaiah 42:14). This does not make God feminine but rather shows the attributes of God which are predominantly (but not exclusively) displayed in women. God is first and foremost Creator and Sustainer. God is Protector and Defender. If we are humble, we recognize that throughout His Word, God has used many metaphors to describing the majesty of who He is. God is not to be pigeonholed into any particular part of His created work.

Only as we age do we hesitate to believe that God has created us – that God has created them. But let us become retrospective for a moment and together with the Psalmist, David, remember that He has made us – He has laid His hand upon us and directed us. That should change the way we think about ourselves, and others! We have been fearfully and wonderfully made – By God! This mother's day may we be grateful for our mother's love, her gentle teaching and encouragement. But remember too that nothing shall separate us from that love any more than anything can separate us from the love of God. Therefore let us be grateful for the God who has created us in His image so that we can share that love, that teaching, that encouragement with one another and with all whom our Lord sends across our path.

If God's great love for you is a new concept; if you have never comprehended how high, how deep, how wide and how long is the Father's love for YOU, then I pray that today you have understood that God loves you. He loves you so much that He gave His One and Only Son to die in your place, paying the awful price for your sins. Give us a call at 1-519-317-8659 or use the contact on our website to let me know that you know JESUS LOVES YOU!

Blessings,  
Pastor Dave

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