

God Thinks About You Every Day Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

The 139th Psalm is one of the most beautiful and enlightened bits of human words about God. It reveals an understanding of God's deep connection to us - from our rising in the morning to our sleep at night. I have to admit, though, it is almost embarrassing to read this. The connection is so close it almost feels like we are looking in on something we shouldn't be. Part of the reason for that is in our appropriate talk of God we talk about God's transcendence, how God is so much different and so much more than us. We read of great miracles like creating the universe and parting the Red Sea and we understand God as the Great "I am." And we should talk about God that way, but that is only half of the story.

The most amazing thing about God in our tradition is that God is simultaneously, at all times and places, both the great I am - transcendent and majestic and powerful above even our ability to perceive AND closer than every breath. Literally the wind beneath our wings - not always visible but always closer than we can imagine. It is wonderful that the writer of this Psalm reminds us of this. I love the last section where God thinks about us so many times a day, we can only count it by counting the grains of sand on a vast beach or the desert.

As we try to understand just how much God thinks about us, we may be able to get some idea of it by remembering the times in our lives when we are so focused on someone we literally think about them all the time. When in the life of a human being does this happen?

The first time may be our best friend. That person that we meet at school or play group who we want to be with. Maybe we don't know why. Whether they say funny things or like to play what we play, somehow they make us feel good about ourselves. And we think about them even when we are not together. Wondering if they would like this new game we are playing or liking this cool place we go to on vacation. Remembering how we thought about our first best friend, gives us a glimpse of how God thinks about us.

The second instance that gives us a glimpse of how God thinks about us is that first romantic crush. We call it puppy love with a wink, and as adults we know it is temporary, but it is among the most intense time of thinking about another person we have in life. I myself wrote a beautiful song for my person. "Michelle, I love you, your the coolest chick around." Of

course I never sang it to her. Every waking hour of a crush we think about that person, we try to do things to draw them to us. Much like God does with us ever trying to bring us nearer.

A Third time of intensely focusing on another person comes when we are in love with the person with whom we want to spend our life. What a magical and wonderful time. Jude and I will never forget that spring time in Kent Ohio when somehow the lilacs on Lilac lane were more intense and vivid than ever before. We thought about how we might live together in partnership, what ways we complemented each other. Remember that wonder and intensity, it is a part of how God feels about us every day.

Another time of laser-like focus is when children enter your life. The thought of being responsible for another human being breaks open your whole soul. It is wonderful and frightening and amazing. I remember still driving our son, Jackson home from the hospital, going about 10 miles an hour on a 35 mile an hour road. I remember too being a part of “coming home” parties for family and friends who adopted children, and those moments were full of that same sense of wonder and life. That kind of connection and concern and even worry about a child, gives us another picture of how intensely God thinks about us.

The final example is with grand-children or God-children. How many of you are one of these for a child? How many of you have a picture of that child. How many of you can show me that picture right now on your phone or from your wallet?? Though I have yet to be blessed with this role, it is clear to me that Grand or God Parents are free from so much of the worry and concern that parents have, and they can truly enjoy the child. They see them with an unalloyed joy, that easily forgives mistakes or problems because they know that these things are just part of growing up. The endlessly affirming love of Grandparents and Godparents are so very important for children. And that too, is the kind of love God has for us. Even when we sin, even bold and big sin, God looks at us with tender and merciful eyes, and God’s love never falters.

This table and this Holy meal reminds us that God thinks about us all the time. So much so that God sent the Christ to come and to give himself up to death in order to show us true life! On the night when he was betrayed Jesus gathered with his disciples to share the Passover Feast - the celebration of God’s liberation of God’s people - and during the supper he took the bread,

and after giving thanks he broke it saying, “This is my body broken for you.” Then after supper he took the cup, and after giving thanks for it he said, “Take drink, all of you, this is my blood shed for many. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you remember me until I come again.” Come now and know how much God thinks of you and about you. This is an open feast, all who seek to remember God’s love for them are invited to share in it.

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

O God, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue,
O God, you know it completely.

You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written

all the days that were formed for me,
before they existed.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!

I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end--I am still with you.

Benediction:

Author, speaker, and contemplative Brennan Manning tells the story of an old Irish priest who, on a walking tour of a rural parish, sees an old peasant kneeling by the side of the road, praying. Impressed, the priest says to the man, “You must be very close to God.” The peasant looks up from his prayers, thinks a moment, and then smiles, “Yes, he’s very fond of me.” Take these words with you this week for yourself For God is indeed very fond of you.