
THE WONDER OF GOD

STUDY NOTES FOR CARE GROUPS – PSALM 139:1-18

The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, January 3, 2010, by Pastor Arnold Wong at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/series.html>.

January 3, 2010

Context:

“*You know me*” (vv. 1, 2), “*You know me through and through*” (v. 14). This is the theme of this astonishing psalm. The theme is elaborated in great detail:

- It is a mystery beyond human grasp (vv. 6, 17-18).
- Whatever the Psalmist’s (the writer of this psalm was attributed to King David) journeys (v.3), whatever his speech (v.4), all is known to God.
- He cannot escape from God—God is in heaven and in Sheol (the grave, v. 8), in the East and beyond the Western Sea (vv.9-10), in the darkness of the night as well as the brightness of the day (vv.11-12).
- Before his birth, from the moment of his conception, God is there, forming his life “*before it had come into being*” (v. 16).

We know far more about the beginnings of human life than did the Psalmist, yet the more we know, the greater is the mystery of God’s foreknowledge and of His purpose. We share the Writer’s sense of awe and wonder when we read this psalm but over the passing of time, many of us begin to lose this wonder of God.

Where is this awe and wonder leading us to?

I. The wonder of God’s limitless knowledge—God is omniscient(vv. 1-6)

“...SEARCHED...ME” “...KNOWN ME...”

God’s knowledge is

- intuitive (Isa 40:13-14)
- comprehensive (Psalm 147:4)
- personal (Psalm 139:1-5)

.....We cannot know everything, only God can...

II. The wonder of God’s limitless presence – God is omnipresent (vv. 7-12)

THE AUTHOR ASKS QUESTIONS: (V. 7)

- Where can I go from your Spirit?
- Where can I flee from your presence?

Refer to Solomon’s prayer, “*The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!*” (1 Kings 8:27)

Yet Solomon cries out in the next verse, “*Give attention to your servant’s prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day.*” (1 Kings 8:28).

.....God is everywhere...His presence *will* be with us in our difficult moments...

III. The wonder of God's limitless power—God is omnipotent (vv. 13-18)

GOD IS INVOLVED IN OUR LIVES (VV. 13-16A)

- our birth (Psalm 139:13)
- our life (Jeremiah 40:28)
- our death (Jeremiah 32:17)

God is involved in these events of our lives (v.16b)

- sometimes we do not understand (Isaiah 55:18)

The Psalmist responds the only way he knows

- from pondering on the wonder of God, he moves to *act*—the work of God.

Discussion:

The central idea in today's study is that ***God knows you through and through and there is no escaping from Him.*** What is your view of God's limitless knowledge, presence and power? Does it overwhelm you and cause you to re-evaluate your life? Which of the following do you identify with?

- a. If (perhaps from some idea of Him given to us in childhood and never fully thrown off) we think of God as something of a tyrant, ready to snatch the carpet from under our feet, then the idea of an all-knowing God is enough to scare the wits out of all of us.
- b. If, on the other hand, we have come to think of God as essentially love and whose design for us is to make us like His Son, then the concept of God is one of immense comfort and assurance.

Reflection:

- How should we face 2010?
- Refer to 2 Corinthians 5:19-20.
 - Live your life according to who God is; not who you are.
- What prompted William Carey, a missionary to India, to pen this phrase?
 - “*Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God*”

Application:

1. Individually, let each of us renew our pledge to re-discover the awe and wonder of God; and to re-evaluate our life afresh in 2010.
2. As a Care Group, let us commit to hold one another accountable to a life that reflects God's presence; encouraging one another to respond to God's leading us in 2010.

Prayer: *Examine me, God, and know my mind; test me and understand my anxious thoughts; watch lest I follow any path that grieves you; lead me in the everlasting way. Amen.*