



26 January 2024

Standing in Awe of God

As King David considered the immeasurable, incomprehensible greatness of God he sang,

“How precious also are Your thoughts for me, God!

How vast is the sum of them!

Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sand.” (Psalm 139:17-18)

Psalm 139 is a grand song about the greatness of God, emphasizing God’s knowledge of everyone and everything (the theological term is omniscience),

We see the thoroughness of God’s knowledge and searching in verse 1, and in 1 Corinthians 2:10, which tells us that the Holy Spirit “searches all things, even the depths of God.” The *all things* includes our deepest and secret things. God sees clearly even the things that to us are shrouded in darkness (aren’t you glad for that!). One little boy asked his friend, “How can God do that, know all that I do?” His friend said, “It’s simple. God uses the internet and just *Googles* you.” God’s knowledge is far beyond Google, far beyond us.

The Psalm also emphasizes God’s presence everywhere, wherever we may be (the theological term is omnipresence). Verses 2-5,

“You know when I sit down and when I get up; You understand my thought from far away. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, LORD, You know it all. You have encircled me behind and in front, and placed Your hand upon me.”

As we read in Proverbs chapter 15, “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good” (verse 3).

David’s response was to be in awe, to reverently, confidently and joyfully praise God. That should be our response as well.

*How precious are Your thoughts
for me, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the sand.*
PSALM 139:17-18

David opened the Psalm stating that God is with Him, knows and understands him always and everywhere. So the question, verse 7,

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?”

His questions do not reflect fear as many who do not know God might have, but a confident trust that almighty God cares that much for Him. He learned the truth Moses shared with Joshua,

“[God] will be with you; He will not desert you or abandon you. Do not fear and do not be dismayed” (Deuteronomy 31:8)

You see, if you are God’s child, saved by His grace through placing your faith in Christ, when you are aware of it and when you are not, when you sense it or it feels like God is a million miles away, He is with you. He knows your pain, loneliness and doubts. He is there with you to lead, instruct and comfort you. The Holy Spirit is with you, will “be with you forever” (John 14:6).

We should respond as King David did, realizing and then telling God,

“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is too high, I cannot comprehend it” (verse 6)

This great warrior-king who pursued fellowship with God, who taught others about God, realized his first priority in responding to God’s greatness was to worship Him, and to worship humbly. As one writer tells us, “humility is the virtue by which a man recognizes his own unworthiness because he really knows himself.” Then turn to the apostle Paul who wrote,

“Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him? For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.” (Romans 11:33-36)

King David closes the Psalm with a request from God,

“Search me, God, and know my heart; put me to the test and know my anxious thought; and see if there is any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way” (verses 23-24)

The king’s earnest desire was to have God lead him in the everlasting way, God’s way. As he prayed in Psalm 143, “Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground” (verse 10).

Let’s follow his example, stand in awe, worship and follow God, our great, good Shepherd.

Pastor Lyle