



The Personal God

God's thoughts of us give us significance.

Note: The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

Psalm 139:17-18 - How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You.

What does the Psalmist take as precious?

In context, the Psalmist acknowledges, with wonder and thankfulness, the care God has had for him all his life. A better translation would be, "*How precious also are Your thoughts of me, O God!*"

What kind of thoughts does God have of us?

God's thoughts toward us are thoughts of love, of good, and not of evil...

Jer 29:11 - For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Why does God have thoughts of peace and not of evil toward us?

God wants to give us a future and a hope.

What is the future and hope God wants to give us?

Spending eternity with Him in a glorified body that will not die.

What thoughts of evil could God have of us?

He created us and is in control of all things, He could easily make our lives miserable, destroy us or condemn us to hell.

Matt 10:28 - fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Does God have grounds to have thoughts of evil toward us?

We have had thoughts, said things, and done things that deny God's authority over us; certainly he has grounds to have thoughts about us in kind.

How often does God have thoughts about us?

All the time, "How great is the sum of them"

What does the sand represent in this verse?

The thoughts of God about us are more numerous than we could count. We cannot conceive how many of God's

thoughts have been of us, how many good turns He has done us, and what variety of mercies we have received from Him.

Psalm 40:5 - Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

We cannot conceive the multitude of God's compassions for us...

Lam 3:22-23 - the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

What are we talking about when we say God is faithful?

God is faithful to His Word. We can count on God character not changing...

Heb 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

How do we know that God's mercies are new every morning?

- God's compassions for us are not used up, they are refreshed continually.
- God constantly has mercy on us. We see His protection of us in a myriad of ways just coming to work in the morning. If you stop to think about all the hazards in the world, all the things that could go wrong to harm you but doesn't, you can begin to see God's continuous protection in your life.

What do you have to be thankful for?

All of us have many things we can be thankful for, our families, our health, a good job, the freedoms we have by being born in this great country, certainly the revelation God has given us of Himself and His provision for eternal life.

What kind of attitude should we have about God's provisions for us?

None of us are kings over a nation but pondering God's blessings on us should give us the perspective David had as he considered what God had done for him...

2 Sam 7:18-22 - Then King David went in and sat before the LORD; and he said: "Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far? And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord GOD; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord GOD, know Your servant. For Your word's

sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know them. Therefore You are great, O Lord GOD. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

How do we know that God thinks about us personally?

- Psalm 139:17 says that God has thoughts about “me” – this is personal..
- Jesus spoke about our personal significance to God...
Matt 10:29-33
29 "Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin?
And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.
30 "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
31 "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.
32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.
33 "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

How much is a sparrow worth?

Not very much, two are sold for the smallest denomination of coin they had in Jesus day. Sparrows were very common and there wasn't much demand for them hence their low price.

What is a sparrow worth to God?

Enough that God has thoughts about each of the sparrows, so that none dies without it playing some part in God's plan.

Isn't this an awesome thing, that the Almighty Creator of the Universe has thoughts for a sparrow? If God considers a sparrow to have a role to play in His plan, what more thoughts does He have for us?

God provides for His creation... He directs birds of the air to food and even brings food to the lilies of the field...

Matt 6:25-30 - Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

God's thoughts for His creation go beyond the living creatures...

Col 1:17 - And He is before all things, and **in Him all things consist.**

I believe that God is actively at work sustaining the universe, providing the force that even holds the molecules together...

Heb 1:1-3 - God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and **upholding all things by the word of His power**, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

What else did Jesus say in Matthew 10:29-33 which shows that He has very personal thoughts about us?

He said, "*the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*" As you can tell, God has had more thoughts of some than he has of others (you have permission to laugh).

What did Jesus mean by saying, "*the very hairs of your head are all numbered?*"

- God has concerned Himself with even the smallest details of our life. It can not even be counted all the details God has concerned Himself with for each of us.
- It further amazes me that modern genetic science has shown that these words of Jesus are not just illustrative, they are literally true. We each have unique DNA which defines our characteristics down to the smallest detail. Scientists have just begun to understand everything our DNA describes but it is no longer a stretch of the imagination how our hair can literally be numbered. God programmed our genes while we were being formed in the womb. No two of us are alike. Even identical twins have differences that can not be explained by their environment.

We are not taking the time to look at the rest of Psalm 139 but a couple verses in this Psalm is used to point out that abortion is murder...

Ps 139:13-14 - For You formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.

How does Psalm 139:13-14 argue that abortion is murder?

We are God's creation even from the womb.

How would you respond to the argument that "a fetus is part of a woman's body and she can do with it what she wants?"

Unborn babies are not part of a woman's body, they are a separate person that has different DNA.

Some abortion advocates acknowledge that unborn babies are human but deny that they are a person yet... but at what point does a human being become a person?

There are only four criteria that could be used to make this determination: (1) size, (2) level of maturity, (3) environment or location, (4) dependence. When you drill down on each of these it becomes apparent that none is justification for failing to recognize a human being as a person from conception.

What would you say to someone who admits that God is busy sustaining the universe, but this does not mean He has personal thoughts about us?

Not only does the Bible say so, but it has been my experience that God does have personal thoughts about us. Jesus addresses this in Matthew 10:32-33.

How does Matthew 10:29-33 show that God has personal thoughts about us?

Jesus will confess us before the Father if we confess Him before men.

What will Jesus confess about us?

The same that we confess about Him before men, that we have a relationship.

How does Matthew 10:32-33 show that there are only two types of people in the world?

There are either those who confess Jesus before men or those who denies Jesus before men.

What is the difference between the two types of people in Matthew 10:32-33?

Those that confess Jesus will be presented by Him to the Father as having eternal life, those who deny Jesus will be denied the presence of God and will thus face the wrath of God to spend eternity in hell.

What would you say to someone who admits that God considered us personally at our creation and will consider us personally at the judgment but does not have thoughts about us in the here and now?

I would have to ask, upon what basis do you have that opinion? You would have to base it on something because it does not follow logically. Indeed, if God had personal thoughts about us at our creation and will do so at our judgment, it follows that He has personal thoughts about us in-between.

Why does Jesus have personal thoughts about us?

God desires a relationship with us so that we may glorify Him...

Eph 1:5-6 - having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure

of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

He has provided a way for our sins to be forgiven to make a relationship with Him possible. He created us in His image (Genesis 1:26-27) giving us a will, the capacity to make choices so that we may chose to have a relationship with Him.

Why did God give us a will? Wouldn't it have been a whole lot less painful if He didn't give us a choice about our relationship to Him?

God desired a deeper relationship with than is possible if we didn't have a choice. If God didn't want to have a personal relationship with us, He wouldn't have given us a will, we'd have been robots without a choice to be in a relationship with Him.

Will most people respond to God and be saved?

No, most people will reject God...

Matt 20:16 - For many are called, but few chosen.

Those who respond to God by letting Jesus into their lives are the ones chosen by God to be in an eternal relationship with Him. All relationships are a two way street. It takes both parties actively participating for there to be a true relationship.

So since few are chosen, what does this tell us about the importance of our relationship with God.

Our relationship with the Lord is not a common thing. While God has thoughts about all His creation, those in a personal relationship with Him are special and His thoughts about us are significantly greater than those who wouldn't give God the time of day because He can use us a part of His plan to further His glory.

How do you know God is having personal thoughts about you in the here and now?

I have seen it in answers to prayer. It was very vivid shortly after I was born-again... as I made the transition from the world's view to the Christian perspective, I remember praying about things that I did not understand and the Lord gave me the answer in miraculous ways. Many times I would hear the answer in a passage of Scripture that a preacher was using in regard to an entirely different subject. I recall over hearing a piece of a conversation in a public place that gave me the answer to one question. God used these methods to get me in church, to begin giving to His work, and serving Him. He also help me to make better decisions like staying at my job rather than changing to another company

The Lord's answers to my prayers continue daily and I have become so used to it they are not as dramatic as at first but they are still a wonderful reinforcement of our relationship together. For example, this past week I was considering

pulling my essay on the Demon in Diversity from my website. This article is about the sin of homosexuality and it has drawn a lot of hate mail in the past. I am about to promote BibleTract.org and I thought that if I was going to pull it, now would be the time. I have plenty of other content and I certainly don't want to turn people off with emotionally charged issues. But this week, I heard about Judge Roy Moore's courageous stand for truth and the Law in Alabama's Supreme court from James Dobson's Focus on the Family program. Judge Moore wrote comments about a custody case where the mother of the children was a lesbian and how the law has historically show such a mother to be unfit. This has drawn a lot of fire from those who hate God's Law. But Judge Moore is doing the right thing and so will I. I am confident that God will use this stand for truth to extend His kingdom...

1 Pet 3:12-14 - For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."