

NO ONE CARES

“Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life” (Ps. 142:4).

David is thought to have written this psalm when he was in a cave hiding from King Saul. Deception often comes with discouragement. David was obviously deceived. The devil, who is a liar and the father of lies, tricked David into thinking that nobody cared for him (Jn. 8:44). Actually, a lot of people cared for David. David had a family that cared. David had 600 loyal men under his command that cared (1 Sam. 23:13). Of course God cared more than anybody else! David was God’s anointed and God scheduled every day of his life before he began to breathe (Ps. 139:16). When David forgot about God, however, discouragement clouded his vision. Here are some of the problems that discouraged David:

- King Saul, the most powerful man in the nation, tried to kill David, but failed (1 Sam. 19:10).
- Saul then sent 3,000 chosen men of Israel to search for David (1 Sam. 26:2).
- Truly, there was but a step between David and death (1 Sam. 20:3).
- David was so discouraged that he not only thought of himself as a “dog”, but as a “dead dog” (1 Sam. 24:14). In his delusion David saw himself like an annoying flea or a defenseless partridge (1 Sam. 26:20). His thoughts, however, were a distortion and not reality!
- **GOD DID CARE FOR DAVID! DAVID WAS A MAN AFTER GOD’S OWN HEART! (ACTS 13:22) THE LORD WAS HIS SHEPHERD! GOD PROMISED TO WALK WITH HIM THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH (PS.23:1-6). DAVID HAD NO REASON TO FEAR! DAVID WAS NOT FORGOTTEN. SOON HE WOULD BE KING AND SITTING UPON THE THRONE OF ALL ISRAEL JUST AS GOD HAD PROMISED!**
- When David was more rational he wrote the 139th Psalm. **“You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain” (Ps. 139:1-6).** Please read the rest of this psalm as it is a beautiful tribute to God’s loving care!

GOD ALSO CARES FOR YOU

- You do not have to be a king in order for God to care for you! God cares for everyone!
- God even cares for sparrows and not one sparrow falls to the ground apart from the will of God. You of course, are of more value than many sparrows (Matt. 10:29-31).
- In fact, the very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matt. 10:30).
- God knows the name of every star (Ps. 147:4), and he also knows your name. Names are important to God.
 - God called the little boy Samuel by name (1 Sam. 3:4).
 - God called Hagar, a slave woman, by name (Gen. 16:8).

- God called Moses by name even though he was wanted in Egypt for murder (Ex. 3:4).
- God called Mary by name in spite of her humble estate (Lk. 1:26-38).
- God called the apostles by name even though not one of them was famous (Lk. 6:12-16).
- God called Zacchaeus by name even though he was a hated tax collector (Lk. 19:1-10).
- Lazarus was a beggar lying in the street with dogs licking his wounds, and yet God knew his name. When Lazarus died the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom (Lk. 16:19-31).
- God called Saul of Tarsus by name even though he was killing Christians (Acts 9:4).
- Yes! God certainly knows your name!

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

- God not only knows your name, he also has a plan for your life!
- David wrote: **“All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (Ps. 139:16).**
- Before Jeremiah was born God set him apart to be a prophet to the nations (Jer. 1:5).
- God also called Isaiah to be a prophet before he was born (Is. 49:1-5).
- Generations before Cyrus was born God determined that he would rebuild Jerusalem (Is. 44:28).
- Before Samson was born God determined that he would deliver Israel from the Philistines (Judges 13:5).
- Before John the Baptist was born God determined that he would go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah and prepare the way for Jesus (Lk. 1:17).
- God even knew that John the Baptist would be born hundreds of years before it came to pass (Mal. 4:5-6).
- Jesus was destined to die for our sins before the creation of the world (1 Pet. 1:19-20).
- Paul was set apart from his mother's womb to be an apostle to the gentiles (Gal. 1:15).
- Is it not exciting to realize that God has a special work for us to do. No matter what happens God is capable of orchestrating everything that happens to work together for good (Rom. 8:28).
- No one becomes a part of Christ's Body by accident. It is God who calls us and adds us to his church (Acts 2:47). By his Spirit are we all baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13).

GOD CARES ABOUT YOU AND DETERMINED WHERE YOU WOULD BE BORN

- **“From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27).**

- God even gave you a family so you wouldn't be lonely! **“God sets the lonely in families” (Ps. 68:6).**
- God chose a good family for Jesus. Even though Joseph and Mary were poor, under their guidance Jesus advanced in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man (Lk. 2:52).
- God is all powerful, however, and can even use bad families to shape his plan for your life:
 - The world's first murder happened with Cain killed Abel his brother, yet Abel still speaks a message of faith (Heb. 11:4).
 - Jacob's father in law was a liar and changed his wages ten times (Gen. 31:41).
 - Joseph's brothers tried to kill him but God used his bad family for good (Gen. 45:4-8).
 - Jephthah's mother was a prostitute and his brothers drove him away from the family. God, however, used this adversity to turn Jephthah into a mighty warrior to deliver Israel (Judges 11:1-33).
 - Abraham came from a family of idolators (Josh. 24:2).
 - Hosea married a harlot (Hos. 1:2).
 - Timothy's father was apparently an unbeliever (Acts 16:3).
 - Etc.
 - Even if you come from a bad family God can use it for his glory!

THE CHURCH IS GOD'S FAMILY

- God is our Father! (Matt. 6:9).
- Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers (Heb. 2:11).
- We also call one another brothers (2 Pet. 3:15).
- Paul told Timothy: **“Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity” (1 Tim. 5:1-2).**

Please consider this prayer of Paul as God wants to give you more than you can ask or imagine: **“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (Eph. 3:14-21).**

Every living thing needs an environment to survive. Fish cannot survive without water and animals cannot survive without air. Flowers cannot survive in the snow and polar bears cannot survive in the desert. Every living thing needs a special environment to survive.

When someone is “born again” they become a “new creation” in Christ Jesus: **“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17).** God created the church to be that special environment for this “new creation” to survive and grow! Like members of a body we work together for the common good. **“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ On the contrary those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable” (1 Cor. 12:21-22).**

Please remember that when Jesus was on the earth he only **“began to do and to teach”** (Acts 1:1). What Jesus began to do in the body, the body continues to do in Jesus! Jesus is in heaven at the right hand of God but the church on earth is the body of which Christ is the head (Col. 1:18). Therefore the church continues to do now the very things that Christ began to do during his earthly ministry!

You are therefore important! Every member of Christ’s Body is important. Every member has a ministry to perform. If you do not do what God designed you to do you are handicapping the Body of Christ! Please consider this admonition to grow to maturity in Christ: **“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:14-16).**

OUR FATHER CARES

Of all the parables that Jesus told many consider the parable of the Prodigal Son to be the most famous. It is one of three parables found in Luke 15. Each of these parables emphasizes the importance of something which was lost. The first parable is of a lost sheep, the second is of a lost coin, and the third is of a lost son. When the shepherd found the lost sheep and rejoiced it reminded Jesus that there is rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents (Lk. 15:7). When the woman found her lost coin and rejoiced, this again reminded Jesus that there is also rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents (Lk. 15:10). The point is that God cares. God loves the whole world and does not want anyone to perish but for everyone to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

Almost everyone can relate to the prodigal son. He thought he could run his own life, but he was wrong. He failed miserably. He wasted all his money in wild living and was destitute. When a severe famine came he was at the point of starvation. In desperation he hired himself out to feed pigs. This was the most humiliating job a Jewish boy could imagine. He was so hungry that he longed to fill his stomach with the pods the pigs were eating. It was at this point that he “came to his senses”. It was as though he had been temporarily out of his mind. When he “came to his senses” however, it dawned on him that the workers his father hired were better off than he was. Consequently, he decided to return home and beg for the privilege of being a servant in his father’s household.

A dramatic change had taken place in his life! When he left home he told his father “give me”, and when he returned he said to his father “make me”.

Even with this radical change of mind he was not certain that his father would receive him. His father, however, saw him when “he was still a long way off”. His father really did care. His father was apparently anxiously watching for the son he cared about to return. The loving father **“saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him” (Lk. 15:20).**

Further, **“The father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate” (Lk. 15:22-24).**

DON’T MAKE JESUS CRY

Jesus loved Jerusalem, but they did not return his love. Jesus really does care! **“As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.” (Lk. 19:41-44).**

When people repent Jesus rejoices!

When people don’t repent Jesus weeps!

JESUS HAS SUFFERED ENOUGH! DON’T MAKE HIM SUFFER ANY MORE!