

God is Already at Work in You

Find Message 3 at You Matter to God -with Tammy Feil podcast (Amazon, Apple, Google, iHeart, Spotify).

2 Samuel 9:1-5

"Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became crippled. His name was Mephibosheth." - 2 Samuel 4:4 (NIV)

2 Samuel 9:6-end

- 1) We are _____ by virtue of blood line.

- 2) We are _____ and have _____ God that He did not give us.

- 3) God's kindness to us is based on _____ with us through Jesus Christ.

"Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure."

- Ephesians 1:4-5 (NLT)

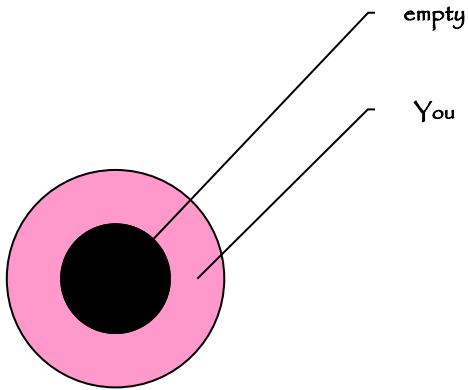
- 4) God wants _____ to us what the _____ from us.

- 5) God wants you to know the _____.

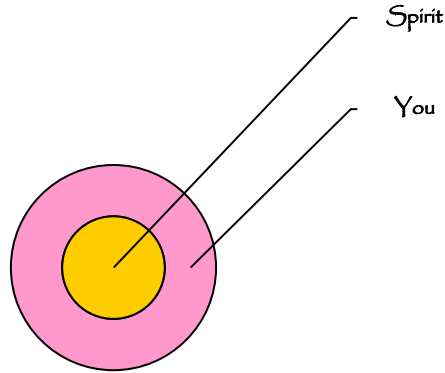
- 6) Live as _____.

Discovering the Father's Heart

Before Salvation: Dead in Sin
(Romans 5:12, Col. 2:13)

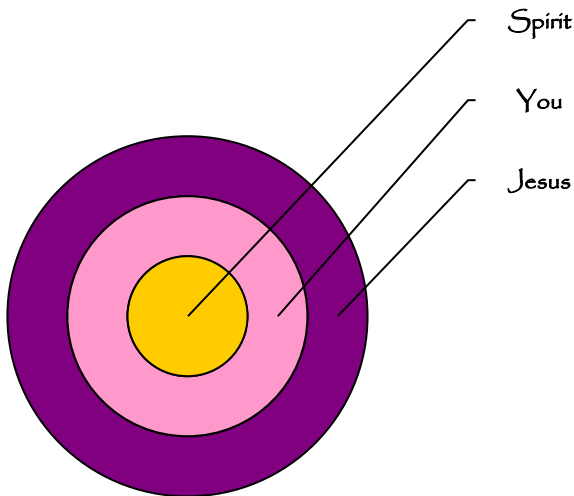


At Salvation: the Holy Spirit Enters
(Romans 8:10-11, Romans 8:26-28)



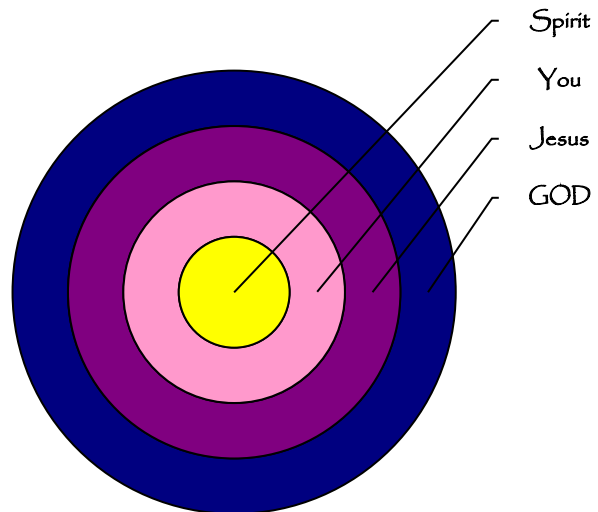
Wearing the Identity: In Christ

(2 Cor. 5:21, Colossians 3:3, Col. 1:23-24)



Surrounded inside and out with
God's presence and Christ's righteousness

(John 14:20, Romans 8:15-16)



Week Three:

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In You

“The Lord who created you says: ‘Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are Mine. When you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.’ “

- Isaiah 43:1-2 (NLT)

Discovering the Father's Heart

Day One: In My Father's Lap

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*



Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.

What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?

Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Open your Bible and read Isaiah 43:1-10 slowly. Stop anywhere you find yourself struck by something you've read. Record your thoughts here:*



Now read it in this translation (**NLT**) and insert your name into the blanks. Spend time with it; listen to what is going on inside of you.

(vs. 1) "But now, [_____], the Lord who created you says: "Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are Mine." **Your God speaks your name.** He calls to you; you are His. He has created you and then willingly bought you back from Death's hold. **You are His good creation and He wants you. What happens within you as you consider this?**

[vs. 2] "[_____], when you go through deep waters and great trouble, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you." **In John 16:33, Jesus Himself says, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." "The world doesn't get to win," says Jesus. "I do!" Sweet sister, you**

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*will have trouble, but it does not ever have to win! **What trouble in your life has been threatening your sense of security or hope?***

[vs. 3] “For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of [_____], your Savior. I gave Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba as a ransom for your freedom.” *God gave more than these for your freedom. He gave His precious Son **so you could know the sweet fellowship with His Father that Jesus Himself knows!** He is YOUR Lord, YOUR God, YOUR Savior, and YOUR ransom. **Which one resonates most strongly with you right now?***

[vs. 4] “[_____], you are precious to Me. You are honored, and I love you.” *Take that in: **you are precious to your God. What happens within you as you consider this?***

[vs. 5] “Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I will gather you and your children.... I will bring my sons and daughters back... from the distant corners of the earth.” *Your **God is pulling together all the broken, lost and stolen pieces of you.** Nothing will be ignored; not one thing will be allowed to be permanently lost if you will cooperate with your God in His process. **What are some of the areas in your heart that have been broken, lost or stolen?***

Have you seen Him beginning to bring those pieces back together in you?

[vs. 7] “All who claim me as their God will come, for I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them.” ***Did you realize your creator receives glory simply through you as His creation?***



We will spend much more time on this concept in the coming weeks, but for now let me give you just a glimpse of what will become a core theme for us through Jesus’ own words. In His final hours on earth, Jesus gave us a tremendous teaching on what our life is to be like when we receive the Holy Spirit. Here is just a short preview of things to come further down the road. John 14:23 - “*If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching...*” John 15:9-10 - “*Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love.*” John 15:5,8 - “*If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit... This is to My Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourself to be My disciples.*” (NIV, all) If you will remain focused on God and respond to the Spirit through obedience, you will grow deeply rooted in God’s love. In time, your life will become a shining

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re-creation that brings your God tremendous glory. *Who you become will bring Him glory. That glory will be multiplied by what He will do through you! **You will become a shining illustration of His goodness to this world and bring glory to Him!***

Your thoughts: _____

[vs. 8] "Bring out the people who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf." *No matter how long your view of God has been dim, and no matter how long your heart has barely recognized His voice, He plans to correct both. **Your God wants you to both see and hear Him.***

[vs. 10] "But you are my witness, [_____]" says the Lord. "And you, [_____], are My servant. You have been chosen to know Me, believe in Me, and understand that I alone am God. There is no other God; there never has been and never will be." *His heart's desire for you here is in plain English: **He wants you to know Him. You; yes, YOU!** Will you commit to expectantly meet Him each day as this process unfolds?*

With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.



God's special gift to me: _____

This Week's Theme: "God is _____ in me."

(already at work)



Take-Away: *I am precious to my God and His work in me brings Him both pleasure and glory.*

God is Already at Work in You

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Day Two: At the Teacher's Feet

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions or feelings that linger.*



Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.

What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?



Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... ***Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.*** As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Genesis 6:5 through chapter 7.**

Now, consider the individuals in the story. *How would each one tell their story? What challenges did they likely face and what feelings?*

Noah might say, "Well...."

Noah's family might say, "We...."

Is there anything added in the text that the individuals would not have known? How might it change their understanding of these events?



From God's point of view: Considering God's perspective, how might this event have impacted Him and what He desired?

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As you consider this story as a significant moment in God's own life, what captures your heart?

So far in our study, we have read that God frequently spoke or interacted with individuals. He was with them and they believed it. Somehow, they recognized God's presence and understood His communication. These folks were just like you and I; they were bound by the same limitations. Perhaps their hearts were simply attuned to Him, expecting Him to interact with them as they purposed to walk with Him. ***Do you believe God will speak to you in a way you can clearly understand and respond to?***

Please read Hebrews 11:7. Do you ever feel God's warning within you? How do you generally respond?

Now consider your own life and its challenges. Think about how hard it must have been for Noah to do what God asked Him to do. Is there anything you feel God may be prompting you to do that feels frightening or doesn't make sense? _____

Does it in any way conflict with Scripture or what you know about God?



Consider sharing this prompting with another Christian woman who you believe has spiritual wisdom. Ask her to pray with you and seek God on this matter. Sweet Sister, this is a gentle reminder that God will never ask you to do anything that is contradictory to His character or the Scripture.

Noah's entire world was about to be shaken up – quite literally. The ground beneath his feet was about to give way and torrential rains would soon darken the sky above. His world would literally flood from both above and below. ***Have you ever been following God when His path led you smack- dab into chaos and upheaval? _____***



Were the circumstances that led you there beyond your control? You can set your heart to trust that God has you safely in the palm of His hand and that nothing can diminish your security in Him. That doesn't mean you'll always ***feel secure***. You are not always guaranteed all the props and comforts you believe are essentials. However, Sweet Sister, *you will have the security of knowing you are squarely in the midst of His plan. A situation that may look like chaos to us is actually the God of the universe wielding and working within our lives to grow us into completion.* Remember what we learned about

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creation? None of it was done until all creation was completely finished. It was a process. **Even the plants had to wait a bit for the sunshine they would need to grow. Choosing to trust means bowing your will past your fears and setting your heart and mind soundly on His goodness.** If He created every detail of this world, surely He can handle the details concerning you. ***What do you think?***

Noah and his family were living in ***“The Land of In-Between”***. It is that place in your life where you can never again return to what once was, but neither can you safely plant your feet on solid ground. Living “In-Between” is a truly difficult place to be, tossed and turned by all sorts of circumstances and emotions. Thankfully, it will not last forever. If this is especially true for you right now, consider spending a few minutes reading Ecclesiastes 3:1-11. It ends with this thought: ***“He has made everything beautiful in its time.”***

There are seasons for everything, but they are only seasons. The new challenge may be with you forever but the turmoil doesn’t have to be. When the world feels upside down, you can know this:

***“[He] will keep in perfect peace
[she] who trusts in [Him], whose thoughts are fixed on [Him]!”
- Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)***

Stretch your heart just a little now. How do you need to respond to and cooperate with God?

With what new hope or insight do you close today’s study? Write it here as God’s special gift to you and keep this thought before you.



God’s special gift to me:

This Week’s Theme: “ _____ me.”



Take-Away: Trust means harnessing my will, walking through my fears and refusing to take my eyes off God.

Discovering the Father's Heart

Day Three: Just Between You and Me

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*



Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.

What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?

Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Now please read the following:*



God created you for an interactive, engaging relationship with Himself. Hopefully by now you are beginning to really believe that for yourself, not just for your pastor or for teachers. He wants *you* to hear Him, recognize His fingerprints, and actively respond to Him.

God has already been at work on your behalf. He has been at work to bring you into His very own presence. ***Our God has come not only to save us from an exhaustingly futile struggle against sin; He has come to save us for an astonishingly vibrant life of communion with Him!*** How will you respond to this extravagant offer?

How often do we say, "Yes God, I really want to know You. I will do what You say and prepare for You to show Yourself in my life." Then sadly, ***we rethink it.*** Maybe we don't make the time. Maybe it gets uncomfortable. Maybe we are fooling ourselves. Maybe, just maybe, we don't really want to have God shake us up. ***Maybe we actually like a little distance between our self and God.***

We were made for a relationship with God. Many times though, we will use any substitute we can find to keep Him at arm's length. We often think we can control the substitutes; that we can use them when we want to and ignore them when it is convenient. Yet it does not really work like that. We need to realize that ***we can be controlled by anything we use as a substitute for authentic communion with God.*** For our relationship with God to be authentic and free, God gives us the power to either choose Him or reject Him. ***For love to be real, it must have the freedom to choose.***

We are God's chosen people. We have accepted His divine rescue and have made a break with our bondage to sin. We have accepted God's gift of salvation and have become His

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children. Do we really want to know God, to interact with Him, or do we primarily want what He can give us? ***Many of God's children want what He can do for them if it is comfortable and safe, but not to really know who He is up close and personal.***

While God is light, the journey to knowing Him is one step at a time through the darkness of our limited ability to see. Early one morning, my walk began in the darkness of the fading night, before the morning sun had lightened the sky. As I watched the sun's rays begin to penetrate the veil of darkness, I was struck by the enormous beauty of those moments. Immediately I wondered how many others were viewing the same spectacular sight. Then I remembered that the sun is always constant, in one place essentially, and that our earth is what revolves around its giant mass. While it seemed that the sun was just making its first appearance of the day, it had, in fact, been in exactly the same spot all along. It was the earth, my little section of the world to be exact, that was just now turning to face the sun in this way. Even a few miles farther down the road, they were viewing the sun through their own clouds and atmosphere. They were not seeing exactly the same thing at the exact same moment as me. Why? ***Perspective.*** They were in a slightly different position than me.

Although you may not have always known it, God has always been with you. He has never stepped back from you, never turned His back on you, and never looked away, not for one single second. He has always been with you but you may not have always been able to see Him clearly. As we turn our hearts expectantly towards Him, and as we begin to try to see all the events of our life through the framework of God's presence, we will be *positioned* to see Him far more vividly. Our perspective of Him will change as we learn to look for Him. ***You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with your whole heart.*** -Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)

The journey to knowing God is one step at a time through the darkness of our limited ability to see. We will not be able to see *everything* clearly, only the next step right in front of our feet. In our hearts, we really know this about God and it scares the daylights out of us. Why do we sometimes have to go through the dark places with God? Why does He ask so much of us? *Why make it so hard, God? Why?*

"And I will give you treasures hidden in the darkness – secret riches. I will do this so you may know that I am the LORD, the God of [_____], the One who calls you by name."

- Isaiah 45:3 (NLT)

Our existence here in this world is that of darkness and we must learn to rely on the light of God's Presence to guide our way. The more we come to know our God, the brighter His light grows within us and through us. For our own steps forward, we must depend upon the light of His presence to guide us. While the light within us will draw others to Him, it will not always light the path before us. It will, however, provide the calm assurance and confident expectation that our God is *indeed with us*, He is *indeed in us*, and that we are thoroughly safe *within His care*. This does not mean we won't have suffering; it means that any harm we experience will not have the final say in our lives. Dallas Willard says it like this: ***"Irredeemable harm does not befall those who willingly live in God's hand."***

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“And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. This is the new, life-giving way that Christ has opened up for us through the sacred curtain, by means of His death for us. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s people, let us go right into the presence of God, with true hearts fully trusting Him. For our consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have, for God can be trusted to keep His promise.” - Hebrews 10:19-23 (NLT)

Your redeemer and savior, Jesus Christ, has forever secured your welcome in God’s intimate presence. The Holy Spirit who dwells within your heart (or your heart-house) provides a continuous connection between you and God and an active relationship of guidance, leadership, teaching and fellowship. ***Today, will you take one step closer to God, with your heart trusting that He wants you in His Presence?***

What area of your own heart and life resonates with what you have considered here?

With what new hope or insight do you close today’s study? Write it here as God’s special gift to you and keep this thought before you.



God’s special gift to me: _____

This Week’s Theme: “ _____.”



Take-Away: *I am invited to come as close to my God as I am willing to be.*

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Day Four: At the Teacher's Feet

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions or feelings that linger.*



Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.

What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?

Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.* As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Genesis 8 and 9:1-17.**



Consider the individuals in the story. *How would each one tell their story? What challenges did they face and what feelings?*

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Noah might say, "Well,

His family might add, "And...."



From God's point of view: Considering God's perspective, how might this event have impacted Him and what He desired? _____

As you consider this story as a significant moment in God's own life, what captures your heart? _____

Please note what day it was that the flood began (Gen. 7:11): _____

Let's pause here and say that while we don't know exactly what year it was B.C., God clearly kept track of the time period. God had these details recorded for us using Noah's life as the calendar. *If you are using the New Living Translation (which I often use as well), you may miss some of the specific wording the other translations capture.* If you have another translation handy, this would be a good time to compare the texts.

On what day did that storm-tossed boat rest on ground? (Gen. 8:4) _____

Did you notice that it was five months to the day? Now look at Gen. 8:13. *"By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry."* (NLT) God tells us exactly what day Noah was allowed to remove the covering from the ark. ***In Noah's life, what day was it?*** _____

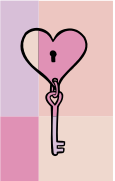
Did you catch that? We can't be sure if it was New Year's Day (as God was counting it) or if it was *Noah's birthday*. Either way, it was a banner day! Did you know your God is often that specific? (We'll see this trend in other times and places.) ***Noah had a new birth of sorts with a whole new world before him and a whole new future.***

Gen. 8:14 tells us exactly when the earth was dry. ***When was it?*** _____

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Look back at Gen. 7:11. Do the math... **How long were they cooped up in that "Land of In-Between"?** _____

Now consider your own life and point of view. Keep in mind those issues you laid before His feet before studying today. **Are you in a "Land of In-Between"? In what way?**



Did you notice that in Gen. 8:9 the dove could not land because water still completely covered the ground, yet in just seven more days (Gen. 8:11) it returned to him with a leaf? Since when can a ground that has been completely churned up by the "fountains of the deep" and the "flood gates of heaven" dry out enough to receive a seed, germinate a seed, grow a good seedling and then even have a recognizable leaf in seven days? All I am suggesting is that God was as busy recreating the earth as He had been in cleansing and purging it. God's heart will always be for restoration and re-creation. You can trust this: **before God brings you into full recognition of the fact, He has already been thoroughly occupied with creating a flourishing new life for you. We are often the last to know what God has really been up to.** And I, for one, love a surprise party.

What now looks like an impossible mess may settle into an extraordinarily beautiful picture in just a little more time. **What feels like total destruction by our enemy can become a fertile garden with God's miraculous touch.** This is what you can pursue - the touch of God on every aspect of your life. The way to receive that energizing, restorative touch is to push past your fears and come to Him, with an attitude of surrender and cooperation. **He will not fail you, my Sweet Sister. When others are not faithful, He is utterly faithful to you.**

God gave Noah signs of progress along the way, beginning exactly five months after the chaos began. (Gen. 7:24 even goes so far as to say 150 days. Exactly 150 days...not 151, but 150. Your God keeps track.) **In what way is God sending you signs of progress as you wait for Him to bring new life from a place of chaos or loss?**

How is God asking you to respond to and cooperate with Him? _____

With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.



God's special gift to me: _____

This Week's Theme: " _____."



Take-Away: My God has already been thoroughly occupied with creating a flourishing new life for me.

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Day Five: What He's Singing Over Me

Make your whole self available to God. Rest quietly now, reflectively. *As you reflect on yesterday's events, what made an impact on you? Name here any thoughts, questions, or feelings that linger.*



Ask God where He may be moving in these things and include that reflection here.

What does your heart desire for God to do for you in these unfinished situations?

Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.* Open your Bible and read Psalm 13 slowly. Stop anywhere you find yourself struck by something you've read.



Record your thoughts here: _____

Now look at verses 1-2 in the NLT: *"O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand?"*

Are you in a time of saying, "How long, God, how long?" If not, thank Him humbly and reflect on the last time you were in that state of mind. ***Openly write to your God here, either telling Him what you are still waiting on or what you learned from the last time you were waiting on Him.***

It is a terrible time of struggle when it seems that God has not moved on our behalf in any discernable way. It is time spent in "The Land of In-Between." The verses above capture the desperate tone of a troubled King David. He was a man after God's own heart, according to 1 Samuel 13:14. David's example shows us that we can be this honest with our God, even while we are still in midst of a deeply distressed state. The longer you walk intimately with God, the more convinced you will become of His direct involvement in your life, whether or not His activity is visible.

Now please turn to Psalm 3 and read it. Record your thoughts here.

Discovering the Father's Heart

Now reread this text carefully, stopping at these check points:

(vs. 2) **Do you struggle with a fear that God isn't going to move on your behalf?** _____

Rest assured that Scriptures tell us that God is ***always acting*** on our behalf. We often think God is inactive when we expect God to act in a specific way and He doesn't. While you may not see the **result** you desire, your God ***is*** actively at work in that area of need within you. Focus your attention on the tender area within your heart that is hurting and you'll begin to see God's movement in all sorts of ways. God is not as much concerned with immediately fixing your circumstances as He is concerned about the rooms in your heart that are connected to those circumstances. As a matter of fact, most of the struggles God allows into our lives are designed to bring understanding and healing to a room in our heart that has faced this type of struggle before. The circumstances may look different, but their impact on our heart may be hauntingly familiar. ***Name here any room in your heart that is feeling tender right now.***

While we do not know when David wrote Psalm 13, David noted in Psalm 3 that he wrote this at the time he was at war with his very beloved (but rottenly spoiled) son, Absalom. This occurred in the later years of David's life, and by that time he had wrestled with many a foe, and many a desperate situation. Yet God had proven faithful to bring David through each trouble. David clearly displays passionate emotions here in this song, yet his heart takes refuge in one thought - ***David knew he could trust His God. He knew He was safe in His God's love for Him and watch-care over him. How does David refer to God's role in verse 3?***

(vs. 5-6) **David demonstrated his great faith in God's attention to his every detail by doing what?** _____

Because he believed what? _____



How might it change your ability to sleep tonight if you focused on believing that God is attentively watching over you, even as you rest tonight?

If you struggle with worry or anxiety, consider writing verse 5 on an index card. Keep it prominently displayed where you will see it most often. Perhaps you can put a second copy on your nightstand. Recite it to yourself and then read it to God as the prayer of your heart, making it first person. (*"I will lay down and sleep and I will wake up in safety, for You, Lord, are watching over me."*)

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(vs. 7) As we will frequently see in David's songs, he was thoroughly transparent with his God. I love that about him. His boldness has given me the courage to learn to be transparent with God myself. We are thoroughly transparent to Him already, yet it changes everything when we learn to live and communicate freely with Him in that transparency, assured of His understanding and acceptance in the midst of our turbulent emotions. I expect God to act on my behalf, both through healing and through vindication. Still, it is helpful to see that God was not offended by David's anger or desire for justice. David was, in fact, forced into war with his own son. Sometimes other people, even people we love very much, can position themselves against us in a posture of animosity. While we don't want to be an enemy towards others, there will be some who will be enemies towards us. **Trust your God, even if surrounded on all sides, that He is right there in the middle of it all, in you and with you.**

With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.

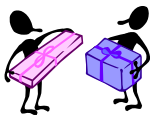


God's special gift to me: _____

This Week's Theme: " _____ ."



Take-Away: Whether surrounded by enemies or tucked safely in bed, my God is always with me.



Gathering together with other believers and sharing with one another is vital for a flourishing relationship with God. Even in our study of Adam and Eve we see the dynamic that humans need other humans. **Spend a few minutes looking back over your week's entries. As you think back on all that has happened in this last week, where do you recognize God's fingerprints, whispers, or guidance?**

What is your most significant "take-away" this week? Prayerfully consider how you can share this with someone this week.