

I PRAISE YOU BECAUSE I AM *fearfully & wonderfully made*

CHANGING  HEARTS

For You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well.

—Psalm 139:13-14 ESV

As Christians, we believe life begins at conception. Psalm 139 reminds us of our Lord's wonderful design in our lives, beginning when we were woven together by Him in our mothers' wombs. Jesus knows what it is to be human. His love for us throughout His life on earth, His death, and His resurrection is evident. This love we receive from Christ helps us love others and see them as fearfully and wonderfully made.

My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

—Psalm 139:15-16 ESV

God knew us before we were intricately woven in the depths of the earth. We are wonderfully made for each season of our lives. We were created to interact with each other in relationship no matter what obstacles or human frailties occur. God created us with purpose; how great it is to know our Lord knows our names and is with us our whole lives.

How precious to me are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with You.

—Psalm 139:17-18 ESV

In the spring of our lives, we are born into this world to earthly families we did not choose. It is a world full of challenges and blessings where we learn our first lessons about community. In the spring of our faith lives, we are adopted into the family of God through baptism. We receive new life in Christ and forgiveness for all of our sins.

- Reflect upon baptism: What does it mean to you? How does it feel to belong to the family of God? How does it feel to receive the gift of forgiveness?

In the summer of our lives, we grow in age and wisdom, and we experience both joy and pain. In the summer of our faith lives, we also grow. We grow in our understanding and relationship with our Lord, and we learn to live among our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is here we experience more growth in community, participation and service.

- Reflect upon growth: How does it feel to be included in community? How do you participate? How do you serve? Do you allow others to serve you?

In the season of fall the colors of the earth change, and in the fall of our lives our own bodies change. We age and begin to wonder about the legacy we will leave our families; we might begin preparations for when we are no longer here. In the fall of our faith lives we can also prepare and teach others. It is a time to share our knowledge and tell our experiences so we can help those in the earlier seasons of their lives.

- Reflect upon preparation and teaching: How have you passed on your knowledge to others? Are their people in your life you still need to reach? What are you waiting for?

In the winter of our lives we slow down; we reflect and rest in the Lord. In the winter of our faith lives we can also rest. We rest in God's grace and love as our Creator and Savior. We are anxious for Him to come again; we are thankful for our eternal home.

- Reflect upon rest: Do you rest in the knowledge of God's grace? Why or why not? Do you feel the desire to help others know of God's grace?

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! —Psalm 139:23-24 ESV

Think about people with disabilities. Our Lord created everyone fearfully and wonderfully to live in community with each other through all of life's seasons. Our Lord created everyone in His image; He created us all to love and participate and to serve. As leaders and teachers in the *Body of Christ*, think about the seasons of our faith lives.

- How can you support people with disabilities through the seasons of their lives?
- How can you support people with disabilities through the seasons of their faith lives?

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for the seasons of our lives and for being with us through all of them. Grant us eyes to see the gifts in all those around us. Help us love and serve each other with gladness. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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