

Rev. Janet Doyle
Elmer Presbyterian Church
Mother's Day
May 8, 2022
Scripture: Psalm 139

Sermon: Woven Together

In John Ortberg's book, **The Me I Want to Be**, he writes, "People who give life to us are people who notice us. They know what we love and fear. When we work to truly notice someone else, love for them grows. When we work to truly observe another person, in that self-forgetfulness our own soul flourishes.

'If you can't do great things,' Mother Teresa used to say, 'do little things with great love. If you can't do them with great love, do them with a little love. If you can't do them with a little love, do them anyway.'" (p. 187)

"People who are socially disconnected are between two and five times more likely to die from any cause than those who have close ties to family, friends, and other relationships. We were designed to flourish in connectedness. In the circle of connectedness, we learn what a good thing joy is. Joyful people make us come alive." (p. 188-190)

When we are loved, we belong to someone, and we are connected to them; someone like a mother who knows her child by spending time with him or her. The child belongs to the family. Belonging is God's gift to us. When you belong to someone or to a community you are known and loved for who you are. You can only be loved to the extent that you are known. You cannot be fully loved unless you are fully known.

We are looking at Psalm 139 this morning. It is a very special psalm that speaks to us about the love of God for each one of us because we are created by God, known by God and loved by God.

Psalm 139 reflects David's prayerful meditation that God is all-knowing and is everywhere. We can all relate to this Psalm as David shares about his journey with God, through the good, the bad, and the challenging times.

Psalm 139:13 says, “For you created my inmost being; you wove me together in my mother’s womb.”

When I was pregnant with Sarah and Andrew, I kept thinking about this verse and I would read it over and over knowing that God was forming our child and knew them before we did; before they were born.

God knew each of us before we were known to our mothers. God was forming every intricate detail and fabric of who we are. Each one of us is unique and special in the eyes of God. Nothing about us is accidental.

Women carry the babies into the world, but God gives them life. We are all loved by God and belong to his family and God knows everything about us. God is our Creator and as a Creator, He knows every detail of our bodies. He knows every beat of our heart, even when we are just a few weeks old in the womb. The stages of growth in the womb are a miracle each time a baby is being formed by God.

We all are fearfully and wonderfully made by God, and we are to praise him.

We were made with a purpose, to bring glory to God. Each talent and gift we have from God is to be used in the work of his Kingdom building.

The word “wonderfully” means “to be distinct, marked out, be separated, to be distinguished.” We have been intentionally set apart from the world. Because all humanity is fearfully and wonderfully made, all life is sacred, and all humanity should be treated with dignity and respect.

The word “fearfully” here doesn’t mean scary. It means “to cause astonishment and awe, to inspire reverence or godly fear.” It is the same word that the Bible uses when we are told to fear God. It means to treat with wonder and reverence.

Even though David wrote this psalm before Jesus walked the earth, everything in scripture points to God’s greatest expression of love for us and that we belong to God and have a purpose in this life. God is our shepherd and our guide.

God is in control even though it seems like the world is out of control. There is infinitely more happening in the world and in our lives than we can see. God's view is limitless and transcends time and space. God has numbered our days, and he has a plan for our lives.

“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” Psalm 139:7

One of the biggest tricks and deceits of our enemy is to isolate and convince us we are alone. Especially in today's society and during this world pandemic, isolation has become a reality we experience. But even when the physical presence of other people is absent from our lives, we are never alone. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are always with us. We cannot hide or escape from God. Even though Adam and Eve tried to hide, God knew where they were. God is always there for us even when it doesn't feel like it. We cannot flee from God, but many don't listen to God's guidance. God wants us to turn to him.

In Genesis 1:27 it tells us that “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” And so we are people created in the image of God. We have personality; we have the gift of speech; we have morals. God created our soul and our spirit as well.

We are woven together by God. God designed the womb as a place of nurture and protection. “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place.” (verse 15)

There was a time when the physical form of the child in the womb was hidden from everyone but God. But we've come a long way with ultrasounds and 3D-scans, and we can now see for ourselves what God has seen all along; that the child within the womb is human life.

At 18 days after conception, the baby has a heartbeat. At 6 weeks following conception, the baby's brain waves can be measured. At 8 weeks the stomach, liver, and kidneys of the baby are functioning; and fingernails have formed. At 9 weeks the unborn child can feel pain. God sees everyone of us in the womb.

The phrase “woven together” is a single word which means “to skillfully weave” to carefully choose and mix the colors so as to produce a

beautiful product. God skillfully weaves us together into a beautiful creation.

Today being Mother's Day, we remember that mothers are an instrument in God's hands to bring us into this world. What a joy and a blessing when we are placed into the arms of our mother at birth, and what a joy and a blessing it is for a mother to hold her child's hand as they grow and are taught about the love of God that created them.

Throughout the Bible, we can find a variety of women who dealt with motherhood's struggles. Eve: the first mother who lost one child at the hands of another; Sarah: who longed for years to have her own child; Rebekah: Isaac's wife who struggled with favoritism of her son Jacob over Esau; Jochebed: a caring mother who had to give up her son Moses.

These stories remind us that life and relationships aren't perfect and that God is at work even in the difficult situations of life and that he loves everyone he has created.

The Bible talks frequently about the fatherhood of God, but scripture also describes God in ways that reflect the love and care of a mother.

In Matthew 23:37 Jesus says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

My husband and I walk our dog, Annie, around a lake in Audubon and this time of year we see all the baby geese and ducks and the mama geese and ducks are very protective of their babies.

God is like that for us as well. He is like any mother that stands watch over her children and loves and guards them with her life. As 1 Corinthians 13 says, "Now abide faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love."

God loves you and me and wants all to believe in him and come to him. We belong to God and are members of his family.

Remember we are not alone in this world.

God knows us and like a beautiful tapestry has woven us together with his love. Amen.