



*Katy Matchette*

A wall plaque I saw recently reads: “Jesus knows me; this I love.” The thought resonates. Sometimes even we seniors aren’t quite sure who we are—and often I’m sure that others don’t know either. I know there are sides of me that casual acquaintances do not know. Some of them I keep hidden to “protect the innocent (and the guilty).” What a comfort to remember that Jesus knows who I am even when I’m not sure. Because of him we, his people, will at last discover ourselves as individuals and members of his family. This week I am looking at varied ways that Jesus and the Father know us. Enjoy the journey.

I live in a fifth-wheel RV with my husband, Dennis, and our fifty pound boxer. Albany, Oregon, is our physical home, although we have strong connections to Philomath and Corvallis.

*BIBLE READING: Psalm 139:1-6*

My college roommate used to call herself an “accident” because she came from an unplanned pregnancy. She seemed to think that God wasn’t aware of her. Thank God she has since learned better! God’s Word assures us that God has always known about us. He knows our particular weaknesses and strengths.

Many of us do not know ourselves, but God knows us in all ways. God cares enough to search us out and search our being and thoughts (v. 1).

God knows what we do (v. 2). The psalmist finds comfort in these truths. Isolation and insignificance are agonizing experiences, however God knows who we are, even when we do not. He sees whatever we do (v. 3). He understands our frantic attempts to effect significance and stability for ourselves.

God also knows what we will say before we say it (v. 4). Sometimes I find this truth scary, for God holds us accountable before him. But the psalmist’s purpose is to demonstrate how God cares for his people as individuals.

Like a mother bird, God shelters us in all directions. His concern and protection extend through *all* the times of our lives. The word *beset* (v. 5 KJV) has a connotation of confrontation and challenge. God can and will get our attention when we transgress, and he will call us to return. God’s lofty wisdom, his intimate knowledge, is beyond human minds and hearts.

*SONG: When the Mists Have Rolled Away*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Father, thank you for knowing us—and loving us anyway.*

—Katy Matchette

*BIBLE READING: Jeremiah 1:4-10*

God's call to Jeremiah points out that God has a grand purpose for our lives. Verse 5 reveals God's purpose for Jeremiah. In a particularly bad time, this verse reinforced my own call as a writer. God's call reminds us that God has a purpose for each life; he knows who we are when he calls us. Knowing Jeremiah, God set him apart as his prophet before birth. What a testimony of God's attention to detail! We can count on his protection when we gear into his design for our lives.

Jeremiah's call is only one example of God's careful preparation for each of us. God chose Paul before the apostle's birth (Galatians 1:15). God showed this misguided zealot the real truth—something Paul would never have thought of on his own. No doubt God had prepared him for his mission by placing him in an environment where he could thoroughly learn and understand the Old Testament Scripture. His purpose for Paul: to proclaim the good news to the Gentiles.

We can count on the same loving attention from our God. His prior knowledge precedes each of us! "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 139:16 ESV). All we have to do is learn to listen.

*SONG: Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Thank you for the sure knowledge that you notice us and know us intimately. Thank you for designing significance for each life.*

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*BIBLE READING: Psalm 139:13-16*

Sometimes I feel like shouting, “Help! I’m falling apart!” The complexities of old age remind one of a fundamental truth: We are “fearfully and wonderfully made!” I’m noticing the marvelous complexity of my body. As the psalmist looked at his fully functioning body and mind he credited God for the design and construction. I too thank God for his wisdom that designed my body.

God created us humans, but he pays more attention to us than that. He puts together each fetus in the mother’s womb. We can rejoice because he even knows our weaknesses. How much better than merely putting the whole cycle of reproduction into motion! We rejoice because God knows all about us!

“Fearfully and wonderfully made” applies to more than interlocking body parts. Consider God’s intent at creation: He “created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him” (Genesis 1:27).

David rejoiced because God knows us, even before we appear on time’s stage (v. 15). God allotted days for our lives. He knew what they would be—even before conception (v. 16). What reassurance! We are not random pixels dancing across a disorganized screen. God cared enough about each of us to anticipate the life he wanted for us. He created us for a reason.

*SONG: Farther Along*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Father, thank you for knowing me. I am awed that you wove all my intricate parts into a person who fits into your scheme and your kingdom.*

—Katy Matchette

*BIBLE READING: Isaiah 41:9-13*

Have you discovered the difference between loneliness and solitude? I have. We all need solitude at times, however loneliness and isolation cripple us. I have felt paralyzed and have longed to be known, and not be a misfit. In such times we can survive. Our God knows our situation. He promises, “I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you” (v. 10), and he provides relief in ways we can access. (See 1 Corinthians 10:13.) In my case God sent a pastor’s wife into my life with a personality assessment test. For the first time I could understand why I didn’t quite mesh with the world around me. Just knowing started me on the road to healing. Another encouragement for me: she also knew who I am!

God gave me that friend—my evidence I could trust his promise, “For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you’” (v. 13 ESV).

God knows we never outgrow the need for a hand we can hold and he supplies that need. He does not forget us. “Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me” (Isaiah 49:16 ESV).

*SONG: O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Father, thank you for staying with us at all times—especially when we are down. I welcome your hand in mine.*

—Katy Matchette

*BIBLE READING: Psalm 103:13-18*

God remembers our frailty. Our temporary lives give us limited chances to change or grow (Psalm 78:39). However, God shows compassion to us even when we rebel.

A loving father feels it when his children hurt. He himself hurts with them when their actions bring consequences. Without his compassion, he would not temper or withhold discipline.

There is nothing permanent about us or our tenure on this earth (v. 16). Compared to the eternal God we humans wax and wane with alarming speed (v. 15). Wind and drought destroy plants; our lives are equally fragile.

God extends patience to his children because he understands our frailty. He created us from dust—earth's basic component. He knows that dust falls apart and flies off in all directions. Because he understands us better than we understand ourselves, he is willing to show mercy. We see this in the story of Peter's denial. Jesus knew Peter's weakness and tried to warn him, but also assured Peter that he would return to him (Luke 22:31-34). And Jesus received him back.

In contrast to our transitory lives, God's love for us endures. He extends that love to our descendants, wooing them to follow him. God shows great love and compassion to those who guard and honor his covenant—and remember and obey God's commandments (v. 18).

*SONG: Only Trust Him*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Father, thank you for knowing me—and showing compassion anyway.*

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*BIBLE READING: Revelation 2:17*

Names matter. In L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Windy Poplars*, Anne meets a girl named Elizabeth. Elizabeth's approach to names shows how important identity is to each of us. Depending on her mood, Elizabeth might call herself Betty, Beth, or some other variation of Elizabeth. Her names told who she was and how she felt.

When Abram reached ninety-nine, God appeared to him and renewed his covenant. He promised Abram. "Kings shall spring from you." God sealed the covenant with a name change: "Your name is no longer Abram (high father)," God said. "From now on you will be known as Abraham (father of nations)." (Story from Genesis 17.)

We read in Genesis 32 that later, God gave a similar gift to Jacob. Faced with meeting his brother who had reason to hate him, Jacob was afraid. A man accosted Jacob while he waited and the two wrestled until daybreak. Jacob hung on. "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

"What is your name?" the man asked. "Jacob (supplanter)," Jacob replied. The man told him, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel ('God strives' and 'he will rule as God')." (Genesis 32:22-28).

God has a special name for each of us because he knows who we are. "To the one who conquers I will give...him a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it" (Revelation 2:17 ESV).

*SONG: He Knows My Name*

*PRAYER SUGGESTION: Father, thank you so much for knowing me. Your knowledge brings coherence to my chaotic life.*

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