

## Loved by God

Who can know the thoughts of God, and who can know His dwelling place? In our thoughts, we picture heaven as a place beyond imagination, filled with richness and splendor beyond human comprehension. In my imagination, this holy place exists somewhere in the sky, or perhaps beyond the reaches of space, invisible to the human eye. Amidst all that glory is a throne where the eternal, Holy God resides, with His Son, Jesus Christ, by His side. Their presence is surrounded by many angels, awaiting His commands. There is a continual coming and going of these messengers as they are dispatched to fulfill the Father's will throughout the world. Who truly knows the nature and location of heaven or the joys that await those who enter its gates?

In that scene, I imagine angels flowing back and forth like a shimmering river. I imagine the Father beckoning a shining one to come near. As the angel approaches, the Father says, "Do you see that lonely, heart-broken child of mine down there? The one struggling with pain and regret? I want you to go and tell them that I love them. Make them feel My love and take away the heavy burden they carry."

"Yes, Father," replies the angel. "I will go. And Jesus—will He come with me?"

"Yes," says the Father, "He will come. In fact, He has already been there. My Spirit is already with them, whispering into their ear, inviting them to let go of their troubles and rest in My love."

In an instant, God's messenger is at the side of the struggling soul. Oh, but the burden is a severe one. The groanings of the soul and intense emotions grip the individual until they can see and hear nothing beyond their misery. They have ceased praying, there are no words left to say. The only sound is the silent cry of their soul, which God hears. Silently, quietly, God's messenger begins to soothe their heart, assuring them that hope is not lost and that their heavenly Father sees their suffering. As the angel continues ministering, peace replaces the agony of their mind and soul. Soon, a quiet haven of love pours into their wounded heart, and they become still. Much like a child who has cried itself to sleep in their mother's loving arms, so the love of the Father soothes His child, bringing them comfort and peace.

We often think of God as a distant being, uninterested in our lives. But who tells us this? Who has the authority to convince us that God is indifferent toward us? The culprit is Satan! He works to separate us from God. If he cannot accomplish this through sin, he tries to make God seem unreachable, distant, and unconcerned with our existence. He whispers lies, seeking to convince us that God does not truly care. But is that true? No! The Bible is full of verses that tell us otherwise.

Have you ever considered that the Lord actually delights in you? If you are like me, that thought might be difficult to grasp. "You mean that God thinks about me and even likes me?" No! More than that! He loves me! He loves you and me so much that He wants to dwell in our hearts. Imagine that! First, God thinks about us, and then He desires to live within us.

“But” you might say, “I thought He lived far away in heaven!” That is true, but our minds cannot fully comprehend God. His love surrounds everyone, everywhere, all the time. He is like the air we breathe, encompassing us, filling us, and giving us life. The real problem is Satan, our enemy and God’s enemy. He wants to possess us, to pull us away from God, making us feel abandoned while whispering ugly lies into our hearts—lies about who we are, lies that strip us of hope. He constantly shames us, pointing out our flaws and weaknesses. He tells us we can never be good enough to live for God. If that does not work, he reminds us of all the shameful and embarrassing things we have done: “Look at the fool you made of yourself!” And our hearts tremble, because we know it is true—we have made mistakes and done things we regret. The longer we listen to him, the deeper we sink into despair and hopelessness.

This thinking may seem true, but it is not. It is the voice of Satan, whispering lies into our minds. God’s Word tells us a different story. It says He thinks pleasant thoughts about us and desires to give us the deepest longings of our hearts. He is ready to forgive our sins and wash us clean. Not only that, but He wants to live within us. Imagine that! The high and holy God desires to dwell in your heart and mine! He calls us His temple. If we are His temple, then we hold immense value to him, as He would not dwell in a place unworthy of His presence. A Holy God would not dwell in a place He did not deem worthy of His presence. But that is precisely what He says in His Word! He longs to dwell in our hearts. This means we are worthy of Him! And if He chooses to make His dwelling in us, then we should treat our bodies as His sacred temple, being careful of what we think and say about ourselves, His temple, His house. If God comes to live inside of us, we cannot think of ourselves as a bad, terrible person, after all we are His creation. We may have made mistakes and sinned, but God forgives us, and we must forgive ourselves like we do others. If we are God’s dwelling place, we need to make it a place He will be delighted to live in. Our hearts must be, by His grace and strength, clean and free from sin. It is imperative to guard the gates of that temple so nothing enters that would defile His Holiness. This entails being careful of what we see, what we hear, what we do, and where we go, ensuring that we provide a worthy place for Him to reside.

God placed us here to enjoy life. He gave us senses to delight in His creation. Take a moment to consider your surroundings, what brings you happiness and pleasure? Think about all your senses. We like a soft blanket, a warm bed, a cup of coffee as we read God’s Word. We savor the flavor of a good meal, the scent of a baking pie, the crisp smoke of a campfire. We treasure the feeling of love, the warmth of peace, and the joy of being with family and friends. We marvel at a brilliant sunset, the blue of a summer sky, the soft rays of sunlight as they slip through the canopy of leaves, the golden glow of wheat fields, the vibrant hues of flowers. God created us with these senses because He cares about us. He could have made us without them. He could have made us without emotions, but He knew that would not bring us joy. God designed us to enjoy what He has given us. He truly cares about each and every one of us.

If you ever feel forgotten by God, stop and reflect on the gifts He has given you. If you are honest, you will not have to look far before you see that you yourself are a miracle of His creation; you will see that He really does care.

Some concluding thoughts.

God created our senses: God took special care creating us with senses so that we can have a happy, joyful experience in life.

He thinks about us: When He looks at us it gives Him pleasure and happiness. We are not just a number to Him, but a true individual that He has created and gave life. One day He wants us to come and live with Him for all eternity!

He dwells in our hearts: When we give our lives to Him, His presence, His Holy Spirit comes and lives in our hearts. He delights in this, and He desires it! When He cleanses our lives from sin, we are worthy of His presence because He makes us worthy.

We are created, valued, thought about, and loved by Him! So much so, that His precious son Jesus died for us! Imagine that! A God who dies to redeem unworthy, sinners, so they can walk on streets of gold! That is the kind of God we serve!

The following are some scriptures that I have referred to in the text.

*17 How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. Psalms 139:17-18 KJV*

*11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Jeremiah 29:11 KJV*

*23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. John 14:23 KJV*

*1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. Isaiah 66:1-2 KJV*

*16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 KJV*

*20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Revelation 3:20 KJV*

*14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14-16 KJV*

*26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Romans 8:26-28 KJV*

*4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5 They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. 6 This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. 7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. 8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalms 34:4-8 KJV*

*9 Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. 11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation. Psalms 91:9-16 KJV*

*13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Hebrews 1:13-14 KJV*

*17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. James 1:17-18 KJV*

Faith, Feathers, & Dust - Jeff Goertzen

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