

"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well." - Psalm 139:14

"I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" – how many of us think that about ourselves? Looking in the mirror, first thing in the morning – do it lead us to praise God? The phrase "Wonderful are your works" is often associated with the wonder of the whole creation. Seeing the vastness of the universe, of the beauty of the planet, it is easy for us to recognise the wonder in His works – but how about when we look at ourselves?

Read Psalm 139:1-18

1. Wonderful are your works

We can look across society, and see varying degrees of ability. There are children and adults with severe learning needs, severe physical disabilities – and this phrase still holds true. Verses like this cannot be read without considering the world we live in, but this verse is still true even in this – we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

'I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made' - what can prevent us from praising God for how we are made? 'Wonderful are Your works' – how can we struggle with this statement, considering the struggles many face?

2. Lies at the Extremes

There are two lies at the extremes, which we can be tempted to believe. The first is that we have no purpose or meaning. Everything has happened by chance, and so we have no value. If life is meaningless, then I will do whatever I want. I will live how I want to live – because there is no reason not to.

The second lie we can be tempted to believe, and a lie that society screams at us, is that you are perfect just as you are. There is no need to change, no need to seek improvement or development. I am perfect and no-one has right to tell me otherwise, or to expect anything else of me.

This psalm confronts these lies. We are not without purpose – we have been formed by God, and He has a perfect plan for us. However it looks now, our lives are not an accident or mistake – we have been made on purpose, for purpose. Nor are we perfect – but we worship, and made by, and formed by the One who is perfect. Although we are not perfect now, we will be made perfect by Him. We can know, and not fear, that we will be with Him in glory.

How do we see these lies portrayed in society around us? How can we be tricked into believing these lies?

3. Fearfully and Wonderfully Made New

We can immediately read this psalm to speak of the way that God has created and formed us – interested in us from our very beginning. The Hebrew word for 'wonderfully made' in this psalm also has the link with being made set apart. This passage can also be read regarding our salvation. As Christians, we can praise God that we have been fearfully and wonderfully made, and also that we have been fearfully and wonderfully re-made through Christ.

"The two greatest days in a life are the day you were born, and the day you knew why." – William Barclay. We have been fearfully and wonderfully set apart – knitted in the womb, and raised together with Christ. That we have been saved from a life that glorifies nothing, to one that glorifies Christ for eternity. This is a reason to worship and praise our Creator and our Saviour.

Why does God's involvement in our creation and our salvation lead us to praise Him?

Why does God's involvement in our creation and our salvation remind us of our purpose and meaning?

4. Good News for All

Our greatest need is not material. The greatest need of our friends and family is not healing – but that their souls would know their creator. There is no barrier for the gospel – nothing can prevent it from being good news. For the poor, there appeared to be no good news – and yet the Gospel is still good news, as something that will not perish. The Gospel is good news for the blind, who will one day see Jesus face to face. The Gospel is good news for the deaf, who will one day hear God welcome them home.

We can set our own criteria for what people need to be saved. The need to fully understand and comprehend. The need to explain why they need God. The Gospel does not set this same criteria. The thief on the cross had a small mustard seed of understanding, and the Gospel was good news for Him. Children came to Jesus, unable to comprehend – yet still the Gospel welcomed them in. We need to learn to share the Gospel with the same accessibility – available to all.

How can we limit the Gospel, preventing the truth and good news being shared with those who need it?

5. Good News that Uses All

"I am fearfully and wonderfully made. There is a greater purpose to my life. I am here for a reason. Sure, I didn't get a miracle; I believe in a God who can do miracles, I have a pair of shoes in my closet. Why? I've seen the blind see and the deaf hear. It's fine if you don't believe me, I've got it on camera. But I realised something, if God doesn't change my circumstance he'll use me to be a miracle for someone else."

- Nick Vujicic, Life without Limbs (TED talk)

God can save anybody, and God uses everybody. Nick Vujicic is an example of someone who could easily be written-off; he was born with phocomelia - characterised by the absence of arms and legs. Despite the challenges, Nick has not let life stop him. Instead, he now helps to lead churches in America, travels as an evangelist, and regularly prays for people to be healed. Nick believes in a God who can do miracles, and yet his faith is not dependant on healing. Whatever we live with, our need is that our souls are made new in Christ, and with that truth we can all be used by God.

How can we be tempted to let circumstances prevent us from being used by God?

How does the Gospel bring hope to those who feel they have no purpose or meaning in society?