

**ChristianityWorks**  
**Personality GPS – Living Life to the Full by Knowing**  
**Who I am**  
**062-1**  
**Handcrafted in the Heart of God**

You are who you are, not only because that's how He made you, but that's how He deliberately, purposely dreamt of making you and then He handcrafted you to be who you are.

**Who Am I?**

When we talk about being 'the me I was meant to be', first we have to understand 'who' I was meant to be and who you and I are meant to be, is what God made us to be. Who am I?

I'm always excited when we start a new series and that's exactly what we are doing on the programme today. This is the first programme in a four part series that I've called "Living Life to the Full by Knowing Who I am."

Often we live life, day to day, without thinking too much about it. We just go along and do the things we always do. We get up, we go to work, we go to school, whatever it is we do, we do it over and over and over again. But for a lot of people, bubbling away deep inside somewhere, is this sense of 'What's this all about? Why am I doing this? What's the point?'

And the reality is this: we get to live just one life on this earth. It's not a dress rehearsal; it never is. We can't hit the rewind button and replay bits the way we would have preferred them to go the first time around, you know. When today is gone, it's gone and that's it. Every year, every week, every day, every moment that you and I have lived up to this point, is gone and we can never get it back. The only thing left in our time here on earth is the time between right now and when we breathe our last breath. It's a sobering thought!

Most people have a sense of destiny, whether or not they believe in Jesus, they believe in things that are meant to be. How often have you heard someone say, 'Well, I think that was just meant to be,' or, 'If it's meant to be, it'll happen.' Whether it's karma or whether it's a kind of "'c'est sera, sera; whatever will be, will be" thing, we have a sense of destiny to fulfil and I believe that's because you and I, we are all made in the image of God.

Not everybody knows Him; not everybody has a relationship with Jesus Christ but because each one of us is made in the image of God, there's something inside us that says, 'Hang on a minute, I think there's a plan for my life.' And when we look at the time we have left, a profound question of life emerges: 'Am I living my life to the full? Am I being the person I was created to be? Do I really know who I am?' These are huge questions! And it's not about 'having' things, it's about 'being'; it's about living out that destiny.

The turning point of my life came when I was thirty six years old. I was reading a book and the author ask a question, "**Do you want to 'be' or do you want to 'have'?**" I'll say that again, "Do you want to 'be' or do you want to 'have'?" And I realised, very clearly at that point in my life, I wanted to 'have' more than I wanted to 'be'.

And having things, having money and buying new things and all that stuff is not 'being'; it's not 'living' as much as the world and the television will blare at us, that having this 'thing' will make us happy. We just know it doesn't work that way.

**'Having'** is about the next car or the next sound system or the next pair of shoes – **'being'** is a profound sense of joy and contentment, being really happy with who we are, enjoying the relationships that we have and the life that we have.

Let me ask you something – as you contemplate the time that you have left on planet earth, when you ask yourself the question: 'Am I living my life to the full?' What's the answer, 'Yes' or 'No'? If it's 'Yes' we are talking about a profound sense of joy and peace and contentment that I was talking about just before. And if the answer is 'No' then we are talking a nagging sense that 'I'm missing out on something. Is this all there is? Surely there must be something more.'

My experience is that most people, by far the majority, are in the 'No' category, or at least to the 'No' end of the spectrum. And that's why we are going to be doing this series, "Living Life to the Full by Knowing Who I Am". To help us get the whole foundation of life sorted out ... come on, we've got just one chance at this. Let's get it right; let's live it out; let's get our lives on track – live it out to the full.

Let's live a life, that when we are on death's doorstep, we can look back with a deep and a profound sense of satisfaction, and say to ourselves, 'You know, I lived it to the full. I became the person that I was meant to be, now I am ready for my eternity with God.'

*Father, I pray as we spend some time in Your Word together today and over the next few weeks, You will just open our hearts to the wonder of creation; to the wonder of how You made us – each one of us so different and yet, each one in Your image. And show us Lord, the 'me' that we are meant to be ... the life that we are meant to live to the full. We ask that in Jesus name. Amen.*

You know, for me, the starting point of living life to the full, is knowing where I've come from and who I am. So many people in the midst of life aren't really comfortable with whom they are and when that's the case you don't have a real sense of security. You are like a cork bobbing around in a stormy ocean.

I'm going to explore that today and have a look at Psalm 139. So if you have a Bible, grab it, open it up with me. This is a Psalm that I come back to again and again and again in my own life because it reminds me of who I am. And what I love about this Psalm is the writer starts in the middle of the dilemmas of his life and works his way back to God, to discover who he is. Have a listen. We'll look at the first part – have a listen:

*"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.  
You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.  
Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.*

*You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.  
Such a knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*

*Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?  
If I go up to the heavens, you are there, if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the farthest side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.*

*If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light will become night around me,"*

*even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day,  
for the darkness is as light to you."*

That is awesome, isn't it?

### **A Different Perspective**

I love that Psalm that we just read before because it's all about life. It's about someone - probably King David - looking at their lives from God's perspective. I love it so much, you're going to have to excuse me; we are going to read it again, because I love it.

*"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.  
You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.  
Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.*

*You hem me in - behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.  
Such a knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.*

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If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.  
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the farthest side of the sea,  
even there your hand will guide me, and your right hand will hold me fast.*

*If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"  
even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day,  
for the darkness is as light to you."*

See, God knows what we are thinking. He knows when we come in and go out. He knows when we are lying down and when we are standing up. He knows before a word is even on our tongue, exactly what it is that we are going to say and what we are going to feel and what we are going to ask Him for. Exactly what we're thinking; exactly what the needs and the cries of our hearts are. Wherever

you go; wherever I go, He hems us in, in the heavens, in the depths, on the farthest side of the sea. And when life is pitch black and dark, even there His light will shine.

See, King David is writing about life. I mean, we all travel through darkness and sometimes life can feel so empty and hollow and it's like 'going nowhere'. Have you ever woken up on Monday morning and contemplated the week ahead and just wished that it would go away and you think, 'I just can't face another week of this'?

And David starts off his Psalm with a profound understanding that it doesn't matter where he goes, what he does, how dark it feels, *"God, if I rise up on the wings of the dawn; if I settle on the farthest side of the sea; even there your hand will guide me and your right hand will hold me fast."* Even if it's so black and I'm afraid that the darkness is going to hide me, even then – *"the darkness isn't dark to You, God; the night will shine like the day because the darkness is as light to you."*

Something that I really used to struggle with, especially after I became a Christian, is that, somehow, my faith; the sacred things of life, seems to be such a long way apart from life itself. When I became a Christian I was in the Information Technology Industry. I ran a successful consulting firm and I'd go and deal with organisations and their issues and their technologies and their projects and their project plans and their system architectures – all that stuff that was my work life. And I thought what's that got to do with my faith? What's all this stuff got to do with God? There was this huge disconnect between what I saw as God stuff and what was work stuff; the sacred stuff and the profane stuff.

And this Psalm helped me to see that God was in every part of my life. Not just in the holy, sacred bits; not just at church during worship; not only in the sacred zone but in every bit of my life. With the mum who's got a lounge room full of wet nappies drying and a crying baby and feeding it in the middle of the night. With the elderly widow who's in a residential aged care facility and the body is not what it used to be and you don't have the mobility and the flexibility any more. At work and at school and in life! Do you get it?

God is there every minute of every day. God is in that place with you and with me, every minute of every day – His love pours out from heaven to you and to me. He has searched us and He knows us. He knows when we lie down and when we stand up and even before a word is on our lips, He already knows it. God is smack bang in the middle of our lives – every bit of our lives.

Now that casts life in a whole new light. Even though now I am in full time ministry I still, every now and then, do a bit of Information Technology consulting and it's a bit like the Apostle Paul with his tent ministry; it helped fund our ministry here at Christianityworks for quite a while. And I can be sitting in meetings, talking about technologies and projects and stuff and today, I have this sense of depth and meaning for me because I know, even when my mind is focussed on those mundane things, God is still in that place – He's still there with me – everything I do; everything I say is for His glory.

But the Psalmist takes it to a much deeper level - he tells us why. And that's the heart of today's message – why does life have meaning for David? Why is it that he can know that God is in this place with him? Why is that knowledge of God just too wonderful for him – too lofty to attain? We are going to look at the 'why' in the second half of this Psalm, so if you have a Bible, grab it. We are going to be looking at the second half of Psalm 139 next.

That's something I truly encourage you to do if you can. Get a Bible, open up Psalm 139 – there is something amazing, wonderful and powerful that happens when we open up God's Word and let Him speak to us direct. Somehow His Spirit lifts the words up off the page and drops them in our hearts and we are never the same again. Everything becomes new!

### **Where Am I Going?**

Okay, why is it that David can be so profoundly delighted and confident that God is in the middle of his life? Let's have a look at the second half of this Psalm 139 and see what lies behind David's over-the-top exuberance. Let's begin at verse 13. This is what it says:

*"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

*My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in the secret place.  
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body.  
All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

*How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!  
Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand.  
When I awake, I am still with you."*

I love this!! We all started life off in our mother's womb; in that dark hidden place as a little speck in the depths of the earth and God created our innermost being; He knit us together in our mother's wombs. We can praise Him because we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God made me who I am and God made you who you are. We are His choice.

Now there are some bits that we like about ourselves and I guess there are some bits that we don't. And not only did He make us who we are; each strand of our DNA according to the blue print of His great and mighty heart, for you and me, not only did He do that, but He planned every day of our lives.

*"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before even one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand."*

You see when we talk about living life to the full and being who God made us to be, first we need to understand who we were meant to be and who you and I were meant to be, is what God made us to be – our looks, our abilities, our personality type, the things that fire our hearts; our imaginations, the things that we like and the things that we don't like.

You know, I grew up as a kid, not liking beetroot – I still don't much like beetroot; it's just something in me – I don't like beetroot. Why is that? Why is it that I don't like beetroot and maybe you do? I don't know but that's how God made me – it's just what He does – He makes each one of us so wondrously different. The 'me' that I was meant to be is the 'me' that God created me to be and the same is true of you.

It's not just karma; it's not just the luck of the draw; it's not just some vague notion of chance or destiny. Your DNA; all the strands that scientists have spent trying to discover how we are made up; all that stuff was laid down according to God's blueprint ... a blueprint that He crafted in His heart before time began – a blueprint for your DNA and mine; who we are and a plan for our days – who we are and what would happen.

He knows every hair on our head, every thought, every desire, every dream, every hope and every hurt. Why? Because He knit us together in our innermost being; He was there when we were formed in our mother's wombs. You are who you are, not only because that's how He made you but that's how He deliberately, purposely dreamt of making you and then He handcrafted you to be who you are.

Is your heart delighted? Are you excited by what God planned for you before time began? See, so many people spend so much of their lives, not liking themselves but the truth about who we are is profound – it's wonderful, it's beautiful.

All the time when we don't like who we are; all the time when we are trying to be someone else, because you want to look like that person or you want to be able to do what they can do – all that time, we are fighting against God. We are who we are because He, in His infinite wisdom and mercy and creativity, handcrafted us, He planned us, He knew us and all the days were planned in His heart before time began.

Let me challenge you today; let me get right in your face with this. Are you prepared to live every minute of every day in the wondrous knowledge that God handcrafted you and all of your days? If I want to be the 'me' I was meant to be, if I want to live my life to the full, I need to accept what God meant me to be and what plan He had for my life.

Let me say it again because this is so important. If I want to live my life to the full, I have to accept what God meant me to be and the plan He has for my life. He loves us just the way we are and for some of us, it's time to do exactly the same thing – to love ourselves just the way He made us.

Some people can never be the 'me' that they were meant to be because they haven't accepted what God meant them to be. You know, I may want to be a basketball player but I have to tell you, just quietly, between you and me, I'm not tall enough; I'm vertically challenged. It doesn't matter how much I want to be a basketball player, I would never be a basketball player – I am just the wrong shape.

Sure we have all made mistakes and there are consequences that we are living out of those mistakes and people have scars and people have broken relationships. We'll talk about some of those things next week on the programme. But fundamentally, we are who we are because God made us that way. We are no surprise to

God and what we are going to do is no surprise to God either. And in the middle of that ... in the middle of that He wants to break in – He wants to help us to change and to help us to deal with the hurts and the scars and the things of the past and to bring us a peace and a rest.

And you know something? There's going to be no peace and no rest for you and for me until we just accept who we are. When we know deep inside 'I am who He made me to be - this day, no matter what it brings; no matter how much it hurts, this day was set apart by Him for me before any day yet existed. It is time to love who we are, to honour God, to thank Him and to praise Him.

*"I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Your works are so wonderful, I know that full well."*

See, the Psalmist when he looked up at God and realised that God had made him; handcrafted him; that God had given him every day – the Psalmist was gob smacked; the Psalmist was in awe. He said, "God, this is too wonderful for me." God was there, He saw my unformed substance, He made me. *"I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are so wonderful, I know that full well."*

He saw my unformed substance and the problem is, that while we are living a life where we forget that, we can never live out to the full what God made us to be. We forget how His heart beats for us. His heart is to see us, you and me, take His Scripture - His Word - into our hearts today. Don't just leave it there – grab your Bible, spend some time in Psalm 139, with the Lord over this coming week. Let Him transform you.

For me this is at the centre of who I am. I come back here to this Psalm ... Psalm 139 again and again and again because in this Psalm I experience a healing stream – of God's love.