

Made for Something More



Who are you—really?

“Identity” is a buzzword in our world—answering that question of what makes us who we are. The world tells us our identity is determined by a bunch of different factors, including:

- » How we see ourselves,
- » How we feel, and
- » What others expect us to be.

But if you’ve tried to define yourself based on those factors, you know they’re ultimately hollow; they shift around like sand, leaving us with nothing solid to hold on to.

So, we get back to the basic question: who are we—really?

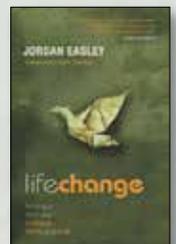
Thankfully, there is an answer: we are who God says we are! And when we come to Christ, our identity is shaped—reshaped—into the image of Christ. He brings us back to what He intended us to be in the first place.

In these six sessions, we’ll gain a deeper understanding of who we are in Christ, why we’re here in this world, and what our purpose is supposed to be. Far from how the world wants to define us, we’ll see that we were made for something more.



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Made for Something More

Session 1 ***I Am Wonderfully Made*** Psalm 139:1-6,13-18

Session 2 ***I Am a Child of the King*** Galatians 4:1-7

Session 3 ***I Am a Minister*** 2 Corinthians 3:4-12

Session 4 ***I Am a Priest*** 1 Peter 2:4-10

Session 5 ***I Am Just Passing Through*** 1 Peter 2:11-17

Session 6 ***I Am a Light*** Ephesians 5:8-14

I Am Wonderfully Made



What is something you've made with your own hands?

QUESTION 1

#BSFLmore

Every life counts—including mine.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

We love our freedom of choice. That's true whether we're choosing a restaurant, an outfit to wear, or a person to spend our life with. Nobody wants to be forced to do something. We like our freedom. But freedom has its limits.

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court ruled that freedom included the right to have an abortion. Many hailed this as a freedom for choice, while others criticized it as the license to take a life. The focus of this debate centers on whether or not a fetus—an unborn child—has any value.

But who assigns a person's value? Isn't it the One who created us? If you've ever made something with your own hands, you likely assigned value to that object or project. It was important and valuable to you, even if others did not see it that way. God our Creator sees us with great value, and it's a value others may dismiss or ignore. But every person matters—you matter—and we honor God when we value life as He does.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Psalm 139:1-6 (CSB)

¹ LORD, you have searched me and known me. ² You know when I sit down and when I stand up; you understand my thoughts from far away. ³ You observe my travels and my rest; you are aware of all my ways. ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue, you know all about it, LORD. ⁵ You have encircled me; you have placed your hand on me. ⁶ This wondrous knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to reach it.

Psalm 139 shows us who God is in relation to His creation. God is more than our Creator. He is the God who knows us intimately and values us completely.

We live in a culture where we are accustomed to hiding. We disguise who we really are and what we really think. We take cover behind positions, platforms, and personalities. We conceal the parts of our lives that cause us shame or embarrass us. We hide behind social media posts and pictures, attempting to show the world the identity we want them to see.

We might be able to disguise portions of ourselves from the world around us, but in Psalm 139, David made it clear we have no masks when it comes to God and how He sees us. We can't hide from God or convince Him we are something we're really not. He has searched us and knows us.

- » **God knows us better than we know ourselves.** "You understand my thoughts from far away" (v. 2). God doesn't plant the thoughts in our mind, but he does understand what we're thinking.

Most parents know their children well. If I placed one plate with chocolate cake in front of my eleven-year-old daughter and another plate with a T-bone steak, I know without hesitation she'd choose the plate with cake. If I made the same offer to my ten-year-old son, however, I know he'd choose the steak.

What's your reaction to God's awareness of every aspect of your life?

QUESTION 2

I didn't plant those thoughts in their minds; nor did I force them to choose one over the other. But as their father, I know my children—their hearts, their desires, and their tastes. I understand the way they make decisions.

In the same way and even more, God knows each of us. He has *always* known us. When our tastes or preferences change, God knows that. In fact, God knows His children better than we know ourselves.

- » **God knows what we're going to do before we do it.** "You observe my travels and my rest; you are aware of all my ways" (v. 3). We can never do something that catches God off guard. We can't surprise God.
- » **God knows what we're going to say before we say it.** "Before a word is on my tongue, you know all about it, LORD" (v. 4).

God is all-knowing (omniscient). That truth is hard to comprehend, but nothing is outside of God's awareness and knowledge. Just as Jesus knew Judas was going to betray Him before he actually betrayed Him (Matthew 26:23-25), God knew about our sins before we ever committed them. God loving us seems so much more amazing when we know that fact. In fact, He loved us so much He sent Jesus, His one and only Son, to save us (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).

Psalm 139:13-16 (CSB)

¹³ For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well. ¹⁵ My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began.

The psalmist described us with a beautiful phrase: "remarkably and wondrously made" (v. 14). The Hebrew word translated "remarkably" expressed great reverence or awe. It reminds us of our connection to the all-powerful Creator of the universe.

Where in our culture do we see life being devalued or disrespected?

QUESTION 3

"The LORD, your Redeemer who formed you from the womb, says: I am the LORD, who made everything; who stretched out the heavens by myself; who alone spread out the earth!"

ISAIAH 44:24

WE ARE HIS



Circle a phrase from Psalm 139:1-6 that gives you a sense of God's love and personal knowledge of you.

1 LORD, you have searched me and known me.

2 You know when I sit down and when I stand up; you understand my thoughts from far away.

3 You observe my travels and my rest; you are aware of all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue, you know all about it, LORD.

5 You have encircled me; you have placed your hand on me.

6 This wondrous knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to reach it.



How does this passage support the truth that our lives count?

QUESTION 4

You and I were made by God, in the image of God, for the purpose of glorifying God. People are created as either male or female, in all shapes and sizes, with different appearances, and a wide variety of ethnicities. But God didn't create us to look like Him physically. He created us to be like Him spiritually. And that is remarkable!

In addition, we are “wondrously made” (v. 14). God created every person walking the face of the earth as a unique individual, distinct and set apart. That doesn't mean we're born perfect according to the world's standards, but the world's standards are ultimately unimportant. We can rest assured that no matter what flaws, ailments, or challenges we may have, God loves us. He has a purpose for us.

When my wife and I found out she was pregnant with our first child, we couldn't wait to become parents. The anticipation was almost unbearable. When that day finally arrived, we discovered an entirely new kind of love. From that very first moment, we loved our daughter—deeply. Yet, no matter how much we love her, God's love for her will always be far greater. And even though we loved her from the first moment we laid eyes on her, it's amazing to realize God's love goes back even further than that.

Some people believe life begins the day a child is born, but Psalm 139 paints a different picture. Before the parts of your body were completely formed, you were already a person in the eyes of God.

Psalm 139:17-18 (CSB)

17 God, how precious your thoughts are to me; how vast their sum is! 18 If I counted them, they would outnumber the grains of sand; when I wake up, I am still with you.

I was a huge baseball fan growing up, and my favorite player was George Brett. One day our family was checking into a hotel a few hours before a game, and who did I see standing in the lobby? George Brett! Leaving my parents, I walked up and said, “Mr. Brett, I’m a huge fan. Congratulations on three thousand hits and three hundred home runs and being the only player to win the batting title in three different decades.” I was showing off, but in the middle of reciting everything I knew about him, George Brett simply walked away. I never got to ask for his autograph. I was devastated!

My dad consoled me and tried to explain, saying, “I know you love George Brett and know a lot about him, but you’ve got to realize: George Brett doesn’t know you.”

One-sided relationships rarely work out. For that reason, our relationship with God was designed to be two-sided. God knows us. He knows everything about us and He loves us. In the same way, He also wants us to know Him. God has pursued us from the beginning, and He wants us to pursue Him. We are to turn from our own ways and turn to Him, the great, powerful, all-knowing God.

That idea can be overwhelming—getting to know God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. After all, God is totally beyond our comprehension. Yet David viewed that knowledge as “precious.” He used a word that literally means “heavy” or “costly.” David saw the thoughts of God as weighty and highly valuable.

Verse 18 mentions waking up. This could be a literal reference to sleep, or David may have been referring to awaking from death. Earlier, David marveled at God’s knowledge about him from the very conception of his life. And now David noted that, even at the end—“when I wake up”(v. 18)—he would still be with God. When we look to God with worship and awe because He knows and values us, our response is to enter into a relationship with Him. By trusting Him, we can say with David, “When I wake up, I am still with you”(v. 18).

What actions can we take that reflect our belief in the value of all human life?

QUESTION 5

LIVE IT OUT

Your life matters. Let that truth make a difference in your life this week.

- » **Memorize Isaiah 44:24.** Meditate on this verse at the beginning of each day this week and thank God that you are uniquely and wonderfully made.
- » **Evaluate your typical week.** Who is regularly undervalued or dismissed? Ask God to help you see them as He does. Be ready to demonstrate with your actions how valuable they are.
- » **Get involved.** As a group, volunteer with an organization actively working to help those who cannot protect or take care of themselves. Contact a local crisis pregnancy center, children's home, homeless shelter, or nursing home for a list of current needs.



Each of us has been uniquely created by God. **There's no greater value than being known and loved by God—the One who knew us and loved us before we were ever born.**

My thoughts