

# Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

*A Discipleship Journey*



## **God Loves Us Passionately**

Week 2

God's Pursuit of You

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Pray the Reflection on God's Pursuit of You.
- ❖ Reflect on Psalm 139.
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

---

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, we praise you. Your love is infinite. You lovingly seek and find each one of us, no matter where we are or what we have done. Forgive us for the times we've doubted or failed to be moved by your love for us. In your Scripture you tell us, "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love." (John 15:9) Thank you for loving each of us personally and deeply, and inviting us to live in your love. Help us to know, not just with our head but with our whole being, that you love us. Lord, help us to allow your love for us to transform everything. Jesus we trust in you. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

## Reflection

God, the Creator of the universe, has fallen deeply in love with you. Since the beginning of time, God has been completely in love with you. Throughout history, and through every day of your life, God has been pursuing you and expectantly longing for you to love Him in return.

There is nothing we can do to make Him stop loving us. There is no place we can run that He can't find us. There is nothing we can do to earn His love – it is His free, undeserved gift.

When in your life have you felt close to God?

Have there been moments when you've had a hard time imagining knowing God, or had a hard time believing God accepts you and loves you?

Many of us have a hard time believing God could really love us. We focus on our failures, our brokenness. The rejection and judgment of others have left us wounded. We fear that anyone who really knew the things we have done, or thought, would turn us away. We believe we could not possibly do enough to become worthy of love. Overwhelmed by our shortcomings, we may be tempted to hide our brokenness, or hide ourselves, in shame.

You are dear to God. God created you in your mother's womb, fashioned you in His very likeness, and continues to create you every day of your life. No matter where you are right now on your journey, no matter what you may have done or not done in your life, no matter who you are, where you have been or what you have – God is seeking you. God is loving you deeply and personally – and calling you by name.

## REFLECTION ON PSALM 139

Preparation: Let yourself become aware of God's presence in your life. Recall and reflect on the gentleness with which God has led you all during your lifetime, and that God continues now to hold you tenderly, wanting you to listen and to respond.

First read Psalm 139 to God (Traditional version, see below)....and then let God say it to you (Adapted version, see below). After praying through the psalm in the manner indicated, and when you are quiet and at peace:

Ask God to bring to your mind one incident from your past when you were aware of:

- + God's presence
- + God making something clear to you
- + Your response of YES

Gently allow the memory to surface.

Relive the experience now.

Remember the qualities of that experience.

Recall and reflect on the peace

harmony

trust

freedom

conviction of being loved

which you associate with prior experiences of God.

Gratefully and simply rejoice

in the reliving of one of these experiences

in the resurfacing of the feelings it evoked.

Ask for the grace to hear God's Word again now

and to be able to respond with the same YES

that will bring once again

those same feelings of peace

harmony

trust

freedom

conviction of being loved.

## PRAYING WITH PSALM 139 (Traditional)

LORD, you know me through and through;  
you know when I sit and when I stand,  
you understand my thoughts from afar.  
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize;  
with all my ways you are familiar.  
Even before a word is on my tongue  
behold, O Lord, you know the whole of it.  
Behind me and before, you hem me in  
and rest your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your spirit?  
From your presence where can I flee?  
If I go up to the heavens you are there;  
if I sink to the nether world you are present there.  
If I take the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall guide me,  
and your right hand hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me,  
and night shall be my light..."  
for you darkness itself is not dark, and night shines as the day.  
darkness and light are the same.

Truly you have formed my inmost being;  
You knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made;  
wonderful are your works!  
My soul also you knew full well;  
nor was my frame unknown to you when I was made in secret,  
when I was fashioned in the depths of the earth.  
Your eyes have seen all my actions;  
in your book they are all written;  
my days were limited before one of them existed.

How weighty are your designs, O God;  
how vast the sum of them!  
Were I to recount them, they would outnumber the sands,  
if I reached the end of them, I would still be with you.

Probe my heart O God, and know my thoughts;  
see if my way is crooked, and lead me in the ways of old.

PSALM 139 (ADAPTED)

My child, I know you through and through;  
I know when you sit and when you stand;  
I understand your thoughts from afar.  
Your journeys and your rest I scrutinize;  
with all your ways I am familiar.  
Even before a word is on your tongue  
I, your God, know the whole of it.  
Behind you and before, I hem you in  
and rest my hand upon you.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for you,  
too lofty for you to attain.

Where can you go from my Spirit?  
From my presence where can you flee?  
If you go up to the heavens, I am there;  
if you sink to the nether world, I am present there.  
If you take the wings of the dawn,  
if you settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there my hand shall guide you,  
and my right hand hold you fast.  
If you say, "Surely the darkness will hide me,  
and night shall be my light..."  
for me darkness is not dark, and night shines as the day.  
(Darkness and light are the same.)

Truly I have formed your inmost being;  
I knit you together in your mother's womb.  
Give thanks to me that you are fearfully, wonderfully made;  
wonderful are my works!  
Your soul, also, I knew full well;  
nor was your frame unknown to me when I made you in secret;  
when I fashioned you in the depths of the earth.  
My eyes have seen all your actions;  
in my book they are all written;  
your days were limited before one of them existed.

How weighty are my designs, I your God;  
how vast the sum of them!  
Were you to recount them, they would outnumber the sands.  
If you reached the end of them, you would still be with me.

I, your God, will probe your heart and know our thoughts;  
I will see if your way is crooked, and I will lead you in the ways of old.

## Closing Prayer

O God,  
You are our Creator,  
You are good and Your mercy knows no bounds.  
To you arises the praise of every creature.  
O God, You have given us an inner law by which we must live.  
To do Your will is our task.  
To follow Your ways is to know peace of heart.  
To You we offer our homage.  
Guide us on all the paths we travel upon this earth.  
Free us from all the evil tendencies which lead our hearts away from Your will.  
Never allow us to stray from You.  
O God, judge of all humankind, help us to be included among  
Your chosen ones on the last day.  
O God, Author of peace and justice, give us true joy and authentic love,  
and a lasting solidarity among peoples.  
Give us Your everlasting gifts.  
Amen!  
May the God of mercy, the God of love, the God of peace bless each of you  
and all the members of your families!

*Saint John Paul II*