

## God Cares For You

**1 Peter 5:6-7 HCSB** Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time, (7) casting all your care upon Him, because He cares about you.

**God created you.** (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 5:1; Deuteronomy 4:32; Psalm 100:3)

- **Genesis 1:26-27 HCSB** Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." (27) So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.
- **Genesis 2:7 HCSB** Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being.
- **Genesis 5:1 HCSB** These are the family records of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God;

Since humans are made in the image of God, every human being is worthy of honor and respect; he is neither to be murdered<sup>1</sup> nor cursed.<sup>2</sup>

"Image" includes such characteristics as "righteousness and holiness"<sup>3</sup> and "knowledge".<sup>4</sup> We are to be "conformed to the likeness of Christ,"<sup>5</sup> but someday, we will reach what is not fully attainable in this life; someday, we will actually "be like Him."<sup>6</sup>

In Deuteronomy, Moses asked the rhetorical question:

- **Deuteronomy 4:32 HCSB** "Indeed, ask about the earlier days that preceded you, from the day God created man on the earth and from one end of the heavens to the other: Has anything like this great event *ever* happened, or has anything like it been heard of?"

"I created you. I formed you out of the dust of the earth and made every aspect that is required for life available for you." Who else in our lives can make such a claim? We get all excited about humanity's little tricks, but how often do we stand in awe, ooing and aahing over what Elohim has done?

King David urged:

- **Psalms 100:3 HCSB** Acknowledge that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are His--His people, the sheep of His pasture.

The ancient pagan world had different gods for different peoples, different geographical areas, different cosmic regions (heaven, earth, netherworld), and different aspects of life (e.g. war, fertility, crafts). In contrast, God's people should praise the Lord because He is above all gods, and there is no corner of the universe that is not in His hand. We must submit to the Lord with obedient **hearts** – a bent knee is not enough. We must acknowledge Him in all our ways. Those who do are assured that He will acknowledge us before the angels of God and the Father Himself.<sup>7</sup> We must admit that He owns us. We are His sheep, His slaves. He can do with us as He wishes. The good thing is that His wishes for us are beneficent.

**God knows you.** (Psalm 139:1-6)

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 9:6

<sup>2</sup> James 3:9

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:24

<sup>4</sup> Colossians 3:10

<sup>5</sup> Romans 8:29

<sup>6</sup> 1 John 3:2

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8

- **Psalms 139:1-6 HCSB** For the choir director. A Davidic psalm. 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* extraordinary knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to *reach* it.

God knows us perfectly, far beyond our knowledge of ourselves: our every action (v.2a), our every undertaking (v.3a), and the manner in which we pursue the business of life (v. 3b), even our thoughts before they are fully crystallized (v.2b), and our words before they are uttered (v. 4).

Truly His is a wonderful knowledge, far beyond any human capacity. The Hebrew term here translated “extraordinary knowledge” regularly applies to God’s wondrous acts.<sup>8</sup>

### **God loves you.** (Romans 5:5-8)

- **Romans 5:5-8 HCSB** This hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (6) For while we were still helpless, at the appointed moment, Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For rarely will someone die for a just person--though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. (8) But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us!

Our hope is not to be equated with unfounded optimism. With all due respect to Mr. Kierkegaard, our faith is not a “blind leap in the dark”. On the contrary, it is the blessed assurance of our future destiny and is based on God’s love, which is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit and objectively demonstrated to us in the death of Christ.

Through the Holy Spirit, God has poured out His love in our hearts, and His love for us continues to dwell IN us.

Christ’s love is grounded in God’s free grace and is not the result of any inherent worthiness found in its objects (mankind). In fact, it is lavished on us in spite of our undesirable character. We are neither righteous nor good, but sinners, and yet Christ died for us. What greater love can anyone demonstrate than that they lay down their lives for us?<sup>9</sup>

### **God wants to adopt you.** (Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7)

- **Romans 8:14-17 HCSB** All those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. (15) For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" (16) The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, (17) and if children, also heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ--seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

God is the Father of all in the sense that He created all and His love and providential care are extended to all.<sup>10</sup> However, not all are His children. Jesus said to the unbelieving of His day “You belong to your father the devil.”<sup>11</sup> People become children of God through faith in God’s unique Son,<sup>12</sup> and being led by God’s Spirit is the hallmark of this relationship.

The underlying word, which is here rendered correctly by the translators of the HCSB, is “adoption.” It occurs four other times in the New Covenant.<sup>13</sup> Adoption was common among

<sup>8</sup> Psalm 77:11, 14, “miracles”; Exodus 15:11

<sup>9</sup> John 15:13

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 5:45

<sup>11</sup> John 8:44

<sup>12</sup> John 1:12-13

<sup>13</sup> V.23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5

the Greeks and Romans, who granted the adopted son all the privileges of a natural son, including inheritance rights. Christ is Elohim's natural Son, His only "*begotten*" Son; but by the Lord's special grace and favor, we can attain all the rights and privileges that He has. Everything really belongs to Christ, but by grace we get to share in what is His.

- [Galatians 4:4-7 HCSB](#) But when the completion of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. (6) And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" (7) So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

As in the passage, in Romans 8, we see the "spirit of sonship" implicitly contrasted with the "spirit of slavery."<sup>14</sup> God takes into His family as fully recognized sons and heirs both Jews (who had possessed the advantage of the Torah before us) and the Gentiles who believe in Christ.

As a result, we have gained a new "Guardian" (v.2), identified as the "Spirit of God" in Romans 8:9.<sup>15</sup> This "Guardian" in us, marks us as distinctly Elohim's. The Spirit is, in a sense, the marking brand of God upon the hearts of His sheep. This Spirit further helps us by crying out "Abba! Father!" This term is expressive of an especially close relationship to God, and the Greek for the phrase "cry out" is a vivid verb often used of an inarticulate cry. In Matthew 27:50, it is the term used for Jesus' last cry on the cross.

Under Roman law, an adopted child was guaranteed all legal rights to his father's property, even if he was formerly a slave. He was not a second-class son; he was equal to all other sons, biological or adopted, in his father's family.

So, we who were once slaves are now God's very own children and have an intimate relationship with Him. Because of Christ, there is no reason to be afraid of God. We can now come boldly into His presence, knowing that He will welcome His family. As adopted children of God, we share with Jesus all rights to God's resources. As God's heirs, we can claim what He has provided for us – our full identity as His children.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Cf Ephesians 1:5

<sup>15</sup> See also Romans 8:2; Ephesians 1:13-14

<sup>16</sup> Romans 8:15-17