

# Bad news – Good news

“You know when I sit down and when I rise  
you perceive my thoughts from afar...you are familiar with all my ways.”

Psalm 139:2-3

I wish to show how the thoughts in our verse today are amazingly comforting as we see how much benefit can come from the knowledge that God knows everything.

I recall a story from my youth when I was swimming in the ocean's surf at Long Beach Island, New Jersey. As a young man I was a relatively strong swimmer and had, upon occasion, been able to swim several miles in fresh water lakes in Canada.

The time I was first in the ocean's surf was in New Jersey. It was a wonderful summer day and I was with family and friends enjoying the beach and swimming. I headed out alone to swim over the surf and well out from shore. That was my first mistake. You never swim alone in the ocean. My second mistake was my inexperience with strong winds and the undertow that they can create.

I was able to get past the breakers and enjoyed a time of just swimming around some distance from the shore. After a while I decided it was time to rejoin my friends on the beach. I swam toward shore and toward the top of the surf. Each time I was near the top of the surf I felt myself being pulled

back out to sea.

I recall the panic that I was fighting as I sought to swim as powerfully as I could up and over the crest of the breakers but could not. Each time the undertow easily pulled me back out to sea. Finally I realised that I was unable to win the battle with the waves and so rolled over on my back to float and refresh my strength.

I wondered when I would be missed on shore. The sun beat down on me and kept me warm. Having exhausted my own resources I started to pray and ask the Lord for help. I believed that the Lord saw me in my predicament. But I was in trouble through my own foolishness. The Lord owed me nothing. I certainly did not deserve His help.

Although I could not tell the Lord that I was in this mess because of obedience to Him and His will, I still knew He was a gracious God and so pled for His help in spite of myself. I had no idea what would happen. Time went on and I was floating for an hour or so when I discovered myself in the breaker and going over it onto the shore.

I was the most surprised person on the beach. The wind

was coming on shore at an angle and so the breakers were as well. I had floated down to where the breaker was right at the shoreline and so I washed up on the beach. The Lord had seen me floating helplessly and arranged for me to float to shore. I have never since doubted that God sees me wherever I am whatever I am doing. This knowledge is most comforting to me, especially when I am in a helpless position and with nothing to do but wait on the God who made me to do what He wants to rescue me.

If you are troubled by the fact God sees you then it is certain you are aware that the situation you are in is displeasing to Him. That is bad news. On the other hand if you find yourself helpless and unable to assist yourself then it is immensely reassuring to say “you are familiar with all my ways.” That is good news. God is tender hearted and merciful, He is called the “Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.” (2 Cor. 1:3). You may come with all your issues and be certain He will meet you and take care of you. Come to Him and come today.

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