



# GPS GUIDE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2022 G r o w . P r a y . S t u d y .

**Series: Inside Out**

**Sermon: Holy Creation**

## **Psalm 139: 1-6; 13-18**

YHWH, you've searched me, and you know me. You know if I am standing or sitting, you read my thoughts from far away. whether I walk or lie down, you are watching; you are intimate with all of my ways. A word is not even on my tongue, YHWH, before you know what it is: you hem me in, before and behind, shielding me with your hand. such knowledge is too wonderful for me, a height my mind cannot reach! You created my inmost being and stitched me together in my mother's womb. For all these mysteries I thank you—for the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works—my soul knows it well. My frame was not hidden from you while I was being made in that secret place, knitted together in the depths of the earth; your eyes saw my body even there. All of my days were written in your book, all of them planned before even the first of them came to be.

Daily Prayer – At the conclusion of each day's meditation offer this as your prayer

I breathe in God's grace.  
May it transform my insecurities  
So that I breathe out God's love  
I breathe in God's love  
May it transform my fears  
So that I breathe out God's hope  
I breathe in God's hope  
May it transform my doubts  
So that I breathe out God's faithfulness  
I breathe in God's faithfulness  
May it transform my heart  
So that I breathe out the Good News of Christ Jesus  
I breathe in the Good News of Christ Jesus  
May it transform me  
So that I breathe out God's grace...

**Monday: Read Genesis 1: 26-28**

"Where are you from?" "Where is your home?" "Who are your people?" We answer questions like these – we tell our stories to identify our origins. This week's reading from Genesis is an origin story — the origin story of humankind — and as such, it offers us surprisingly rich soil in which to root our identities. You come from the likeness of God. We all come from the likeness of God – the *Imago Dei*. Biblical scholars don't know for sure what the *Imago Dei* of Genesis means. Are you like God in your spiritual traits? Are you like God in your physical form? Are you like God in your consciousness or creativity? No one can say for sure, but the possibilities are breathtaking to imagine! If nothing else, the creation story insists that God's mark is imprinted on our very beings. We might ignore or distort it, but the mark is always there. Whether we acknowledge it or not, we all reflect something of God's joy, God's intentions, God's love, and God's beauty just by virtue of existing on the earth. We are God's, and so God is ours. What do you think is meant by the *Imago Dei* – the likeness of God – in Genesis? What does feel like for you to identify yourself as being from God? This week as you look in the mirror give thanks to God that you were made in God's likeness.

**Tuesday: Read Psalm 16**

Psalm 16 is a song of trust in God is a way of acting and living. The psalmist is talking about trust in *God*. The psalmist is talking about *faith*. The psalmist makes it clear that trust in God is not a right belief, a warm feeling, or an impulse in times of trouble. Trust is a way of acting and living that opens the self to God as the most important reality in life. We do not take drastic action because we necessarily feel trust; our actions are a way of maintaining or cultivating our trust in God. According to Psalm 16, we cultivate trust in God by keeping God as the focus of our undivided attention, worshiping God, being attentive to God's counsel, recognizing God as our one and only LORD, and receiving good things as coming from God as tokens of our destiny in God. Cultivating trust in God by living and acting in these ways, we may find ourselves responding to God's call. Psalm 16 overwhelms us with the good news that God does not abandon us to the grave but shows us the path of life in God's presence. How do you cultivate your trust in God? What practices help you keep your focus on worshiping God? Read the psalm again and notice some ways that you can cultivate deeper trust in God through your living.

**Wednesday: Read Matthew 4: 18-22**

I am always amazed at the disciples who just dropped their nets to follow Jesus in an instant. I believe in what is called the priesthood of all believers – that each one of us is called to participate in ministry. What about you? When did you first decide to follow Jesus? When did you hear, or feel, or sense a call to discipleship? Was it an immediate *yes*? Or did it take time to decide to follow? It is sometimes hard to believe that Jesus calls us as his disciples. But one thing is for sure - Jesus named and claimed you and KNOWS you—intimately. You are worthy of God's call! You can do what I did for so long - you can run or try to hide, but ultimately you cannot hide from the one who desires a relationship with you, who loves you, and who has promised to teach you to do his work in this world. Maybe you said yes to following Jesus at an early age. Maybe you are worried that you are not worthy to follow Jesus as a disciple. Know this – you were created in God's image to bear the light of Christ in the world! When you think about how Jesus might be calling you to do ministry today, how does it make you feel? What gifts do you

have to contribute to God's work in the church? In your family? In the community? In the world?

**Thursday: Read Ephesians 2: 1-10**

The Christian life, it turns out, is how we say *Thank You*, how we show we understand that the grace of God - that new life in Christ - it's all a gift. Gratitude is a big deal because when you realize that you were raised back to life by the grace of God in Christ, then you also realize that the entirety of your life from that point forward is one big hunk of gratitude, one big ongoing way of saying *Thank You!* to God. That's why in many languages the word for grace is usually related to the word for gratitude. In Greek *charis* is "grace" and *eucharis* means "thanksgiving." In English the word "grace" is related to the word "gratis," which means something that is free, and from that it's a quick jump from "gratis" to "gratitude." Our lives are one big overflow of grace-i-tude, of God's grace spilling out over the edges and enabling us to accomplish everything we do in our studies, our work, our families, our churches, our careers. What we do, how we live, what we accomplish matter but only because they flow out of God's grace. Take away grace, and we're still dead no matter how busy and alive we seem to be from the outside looking in. Throw grace into the mix, however, and we are alive in a way that means we can never be dead again. When a grace powerful enough to raise the dead gets deep down inside you, it is going to bubble up in the rest of your life! You can't hold it in. It's like shaking up a bottle of Coke—once you take the cap off, it's going to explode with energy because the fizz was already in the bottle to begin with. In what ways do you experience the amazing gift of God's grace that gives you new life? How do you use your life to say *Thank You!* To God?

**Friday: Read 1 Peter 2: 2-10**

Taking up words spoken by the prophet Hosea centuries earlier to express God's forgiveness of God's people (see Hosea 1–2), Peter affirms that his hearers are now part of the people that God chose to be the primary witness to God's love in the world. This is true not because of their merits, but solely on account of God's compassion, shown in tangible fashion by the coming of Christ for all. For Christians, the location of the divine presence is not a geographical location or a building but human beings. First of all, Christ, described here as the "cornerstone" of the Temple. His disciples are the living stones who cluster around him to form the house of God. In other words, it is by the life of the Christian community, when it remains faithful to its founder, that the world will discover the true identity of God and enter into a relationship with the Holy. That is why it is so important for Christians to live in such a way that they reveal an authentic image of the invisible God. We do this above all by our mutual love, open to all. What can we do to root our lives more deeply in gratefulness to God "who has called us out of darkness into his wonderful light"? How can you be a sign of the presence of the invisible God? How is FCC a sign of the presence of the invisible God?

**Saturday: Read 1 John 3: 1-10**

John's letter spoke to believers facing the false teaching that some "enlightened" Christians were "above" ways of thinking and behaving the "unenlightened" might need. John said the real division was between those who obeyed God and those who didn't. He could not have meant the sharp line he drew to say that any slip or sin means you're not God's child (cf. 1 John 1:5-10, Romans 7:14-25). He used Greek verb tenses

pointing to a person's overall life direction, not each individual act. Rev. Earl Palmer wrote, "John is not saying Christians do not sin. Chapters 1 and 2 have made his teaching on that clear ... when we ethically choose to do what is harmful there is a double result: first, the actual harm, and second, our captivity to the way of harm. We become what we do." But we were made of and for much more than that. In verse 9, John used a Greek phrase that the *Common English Bible* translates like this: "Those born from God don't practice sin because God's DNA remains in them." What does it mean to you to have God's DNA in you? In what ways does God's love and mercy, which drew you to God to begin with, remain with and in you? How does that shape the way you live your life?

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**HOMECOMING**  
Sign Up at [fcc-bhm.org](http://fcc-bhm.org)  
Sunday, September 25  
Lunch Adults - \$8.50 | Kids - \$6

Young Adult Gathering  
Saturday, September 17  
5-8pm at On Tap Inverness