

It is great to share in this Baptism service this morning and it is always good to hear people's stories. To hear this morning how Vicki and Ben were brought up in Christian homes and as Paul might say "how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim 3:15)

However we all have our story if we have come to faith and many are different. But in all there are two sides to the story.

There is our side, our story of what we did or what happened to us but then there is God's side, God's story of what he has done for us.

The Psalm we read earlier can be seen as a testimony to God. In one sense it could be seen as his testimony as to why he was a man of God. In it we clearly see both sides of the story and yet even just a cursory reading by someone not greatly familiar with the Bible can see that the main thread of the story here is about God. Just think with me for a few minutes as to what the Psalmist says about God

1. God is my creator

"For you (that is God) created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb." (v13)

Friends this was not a naïve idea from an unsophisticated person from an earlier age. This was a considered statement of faith which many of us here would agree with. God is our creator and the Psalmist says more than that for he recognises not just God there at the beginning of his life but all the way through, "all the days ordained for me were written in your book." (v16)

What he was saying is God is my creator and as such he rules over the whole of my life.

Now I don't know how that sits with you. I'm sure with Vicki and Ben they would agree with the Psalmist. You may disagree but let me ask you to stick with me as I continue.

2. God knows me

The second thing I'd want to say from this Psalm is that the Psalmist believed that God knew him. "You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts" (v2) "Before a word is on my tongue, you know it completely O Lord." (v4) His understanding was that God knew everything about him, his actions, his thoughts and his words.

I became a Christian when I was 21. I was eager to explain it to my parents, what it meant to me and how it had changed my life. But they didn't understand. Then we God called me to leave teaching and train to be a Vicar my Dad said he could not understand why I would leave a well paid career to be a Vicar. Do you have times like that when you feel people don't understand me? The Psalmist says that God understands us and so he should he made us.

Back in Nov 2014 Rachel Matthews, one of our young people, was part of the team from Robert May's school which won the F1 in Schools world final, held in Abu Dhabi. For two years the team had worked on a project which involved designing, manufacturing and racing scaled down F1-style model cars. During the world finals, Colossus F1 claimed a new world record with the team's car sprinting along the 20-metre race track in a time of 1.003 seconds. Now having made the car I would be surprised if the team didn't understand the car. They made it they know it.

Can you see my point God has made us the Psalmist says and he knows us.

3. God wants us

The Psalmist takes us a step further in that his understanding was that God our creator didn't just know us he wants us to know him. He wants us to be in a relationship with him as

our heavenly Father. In v5 he said “you hem me in – behind and before”. Then goes on to show that there is nowhere he could go to get away from God. “If I go to the heavens you are there, if I make my bed in the depths you are there.” (v8) In other words there was no place he could escape God. God was there and v5 “you have laid your hand on me.” That is God as it were had got a grasp on his life wanting the Psalmist to accept him as his God and to live his life with rather than against God.

Now what does all this mean for us probably around 3,000 years after The Psalmist wrote these words and no I didn’t know him personally!

Well many of us like Vicki and Ben would agree with the Psalmist and if that’s you then:

a. praise God because we are “fearfully and wonderfully made; “your works are wonderful” (v14).

The Psalmist was not praising God for creation in general but for the creation of himself. “I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” the emphasis is upon the “I”. The challenge for us is to look at ourselves, to recognise that God has made us and he has known us from our very conception and to praise him because I, because you are fearfully and wonderfully made. I am not just talking about our bodies which for some of us we may not see as fearfully and wonderfully made through disability or something else. I am speaking of the totality of our being, of who we are. We are God created and yes because we live in a fallen world there are flaws but we are God created and as such we are wonderful. Tell yourself that when you get home and tell yourself that tomorrow morning! I am wonderful and then praise God for his creation.

b. praise God that he knows us completely and that he understands us. Take comfort in that even if as the Psalmist says “such knowledge is too wonderful for me” (v6) as in too hard to really grasp.

c. praise God that wherever we are our creator God is there for us and “your hand will guide me your right hand will hold me fast” (v10). God’s right hand is a symbol used for his power and while at times we may feel as if we are falling from a great height God’s hold on us is sure.

But perhaps some here or some listening on download are not so sure. Perhaps for some of us this is new or strange.

Friends let me try and explain to you what I think God wants to say to you. Afterwards you are welcome to talk with about it even if you disagree in fact especially if you disagree.

What God is saying to us through his word the Bible is that he is our creator God and as such he has a claim on our lives. As our creator he knows us and as our creator he wants us. Now actually that is a bit of a surprise because we are not all that desirable. Oh yes we may look nice and smell nice but to God well we may not look quite so good. Remember he knows us fully. He knows those secret things. He knows our attitude to him and so much more about us that is not good. Yet he still wants us which I find pretty amazing. It is a bit like the parent who looks at their child who may be grubby and smelly and yet amazingly picks up that child and holds him or her tight. That is the love of a parent for their child.

Friend God’s love for you is even greater. He has made you and knows you and wants you. He wants you so much that he sent his only son Jesus into this world. Jesus came and he died a dreadful death on a cross to pay the penalty we deserve as a result of our sin and our rejection of God. We don’t deserve that but God in love has done it for us and he wants us to respond to that love.

I once heard the story of a boy who built a model boat. It was a very splendid yacht with sails and rigging. He was very proud of it. He had made it and it was his. He took it to the

river to sail it. All was well until a strong gust of wind took the boat off into the middle of the river and carried it away. The boat was gone and needless to say the boy was heart broken. It was some months later that the boy was in a nearby town and could hardly believe his eyes because there in the window of a shop was a boat. But not just any boat it was his boat. The price on it was quite steep but he had to have his boat back. So he went home and got the money he'd been saving and rushed back to the shop and bought his boat and carried it home. It was his boat. It was twice his because he had made it and he had bought it.

Friends we are made by God and bought by God and yet still he will not force us to accept him but he asks us to accept him and he is asking us today. That's the two sides of the story God has made us and wants us and even searches for us to come to him.

Way back down the centuries a Christian writer called Augustine of Hippo wrote this, "Thou hast made us for thyself O Lord and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you." Let me today as we celebrate with Vicki and Ben their life with God, encourage you to take a step towards God who has made you and bought you through the death of Jesus.