

“Are You Wonder Full?”

Psalm 139

Series: The Rest of the Story

The Rev. Dr. Douglas C. Hogle

The Woodside Church

August 16, 2015

Welcome to the world little one. You arrived on a Summer Sunday morning, just like your daddy. As I cradle you in my arms I marvel at your ten tiny perfectly formed fingers and toes. With eyes shut tight, you gently gather each breath through your minute nose. Your belly swells and falls in a rhythm interrupted only by a full-body yawn or an irritating hiccup. And those cheeks! With sandbags so heavy it's amazing you can lift your head at all.

Your Mom and Dad gave you a wonderful name: Isaac. Long ago there was an old couple who thought they would never have a child. Yet God kept His promise and gave Abraham and Sarah a son. He filled them with such joy they named him Isaac. It means “laughter.” His mother Sarah cradled him in her arms and sang, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me” (Genesis 21:6). So many rejoiced when they heard about you Isaac...especially on Facebook (I'll explain what that is when you're older).

You are the second son of Peter and Jacqueline. By now you've met your big brother Benjamin. He could not wait for you to arrive. Months before your birth he was so excited he accidentally revealed your first name to me and Grandma. On the morning you were born I lifted Ben up to look in the nursery window. When Ben saw you crying he said, “Isaac wants to be with his big brother.” He loves to hold and kiss you. I hope you two will always be best buddies. But I also am the second son in my family and I know how brothers tend to battle. So here is a tip: If Ben suggests taking one of your toys apart to see how it works, pick it up and run! Beyond that I'm sure you'll always be pals.

Isaac, at the dawn of your days, I hope you know more than anything else that **You Are A Wonder**. There once was a great king named David who wrote a song called a psalm. He thanked God for making him a wonderful miracle.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be (Psalm 139:13-16).

Isaac, the very fingers of God molded and made you, formed and framed you, wove you together and worked out all the kinks. We live in an age when we can watch in wonder as God molds each little miracle. Before you were born, your Mom and Dad glimpsed your frame, heard your heartbeat, beheld your face. Your Mom made plenty of room for you but near the end your little face was so squished and squeezed it was clear you were ready to move out and join us in God's wonderful world.

Isaac you are not an accident, an assembly line product, and you are certainly not a mistake. You are wonderfully made by God. He created a calendar for all the days of your life. Each day in that datebook is clean, fresh and ready to be filled by you. I can't wait to see what you will do in each one. You'll learn to laugh and giggle, take your first step, and speak your first word. There will be T-ball games, birthday parties, family trips, and graduations. You'll fall in love, maybe get married and have a little child of your own. Yes, some of those days will be wonderful.

But some will not. As a pastor I see the laughter and the pain of life, the joy and the sorrow, the wonderful and the awful. In the date books of those I know there are days full of worry, heartache, anger, frustration and fear. There are days when mommies and daddies don't get along, when families fall apart, when money runs out, when sickness comes in. There will be people who may try to make you feel hopeless, worthless, useless.

But you are not. You must always remember you are a wonder. You were shaped and molded by a God who loves you, who watches over you with delight in His eyes, who thinks you are wonderful. That is the way He feels about all His beautiful creations. Everyone is a wonder. The world would be an entirely different place if everyone realized how much they are loved by the Lord, if every day was full with the wonder of His love.

I wish I could protect you from the heartache and pain that will fill some of your days Isaac. But your grandparents, your Mom and Dad, even your big brother Ben can't always be with you. Still, you are not alone. You will never be alone. **You Are Surrounded by Our Wonderful God.** King David could not get away from God if he tried.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast (Psalm 139:7-10).

God is always with you. If you fly up to the sky, God will be there. If you soar from east to west, He'll be waiting when you arrive. Journey to the center of the earth? He even descended down there. David started to feel God was too close for comfort.

You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand on me (v.5). He felt that God was seizing him and squeezing him. You remember how that felt before you were born. But then David discovered that the God who molded him is also the God who holds him.

...even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you (Psalm 139:10-12).

The hands he thought were pressing in on him were in fact protecting him. Instead of crushing him, they carried him. Instead of rejecting David, God rescued him.

Isaac, when your Daddy and Aunt Kristin were little, Grandma and I would read them a Bible story, say our prayers and tuck them in bed. They had their favorite stuffed animals and blankies by their side. We kissed them, said, "Good night," and often left the hall light on. But still, as I was about to leave the room I'd often hear a little voice say, "Stay with me." It was a request I couldn't refuse. So there, in the dark, I nestled close until they went to sleep. One day there may be worries which keep you awake at night. Instead of trying to sleep with the light on, it's better to know there is Someone by your side through the night...especially Someone who's not afraid of the dark, Someone who will be up all night. "When I awake," David said to God, "I am still with you." Don't worry about today, Isaac, God is with you. Don't worry about tomorrow, God is already there.

As you go through each day Isaac, I hope you will **Be Wonder Full**. Open your eyes and see God's majestic mountains, His vast rolling seas, His thick dense forests and His endless starry skies. Open your ears and hear the song and symphony of His countless creatures. Open your mind and explore His mysteries and miracles. Open your mouth to sing His praises and tell others His glory. Let His wonder fill you up. David did.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand (Psalm 139: 6, 17-18).

Though he didn't always understand it, David never stopped wondering about God's world. Always be wonder full.

Finally Isaac, **Be Worry Free**. David's last request in this prayer is:
Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)

When you are older Isaac, I hope you will memorize these words and hide them in your heart. Make this your prayer every day. When you pray this prayer, do not be surprised if the hands that molded you and hold you start to exert some pressure on you. Not one of us is the way God intended us to be. We all make mistakes. And sometimes worries and fears fill us up. Instead of running from the Lord or resisting His touch, David finally gave in and asked God to open him up and look inside. And when the Lord did, this is what He found:

If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty! Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you? I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies. (Psalm 139:19, 21-22)

When God opened up David, He found a lot of ugly feelings inside. David was filled with so much anger, hatred, fear and worry there was little room for God's wonder in his life. There will be times Isaac when you feel mad or sad, worried or afraid. When you fill up

with those feelings, don't burn up or blow up – give them up to God. Ask God to open you up and clean them out. Live worry free and let the Lord lead you in the way everlasting.

Isaac, my dear, sweet wondrous child, your parents named you well. For you fill our hearts with wonder, laughter and joy. But they also gave you another name: Kye su. There may come a day when you wonder why your Mom and Dad gave you a name that is hard to spell and pronounce. Kye su is a Korean word. It means “a strong and mighty oak tree.” It was the name given to my dear friend Steve Yi by his parents when he was born. Steve and his dear wife Gloria are pastors and dear friends. He was a mentor and guide to your parents. He taught them about the Lord Jesus and helped them walk on the way everlasting.

True to his name Kye su, Steve was a strong and mighty oak. He had solid and sturdy roots that burrowed deep into God's Word and drew nourishment from the living water of the Holy Spirit. His arms were like mighty branches providing shade and shelter to heart-broken and hurting teens and adults. He lifted his hands in praise to the Lord who led him all the way. Though the winds and storms of life blew and battered him, Steve remained firm and faithful. And like every mighty oak, he scattered and planted seeds of faith in the lives of everyone who came near.

On the day you were born, your Mom and Dad told the world. “We chose this to honor our dear friend, Steve K. Yi. Steve was a wonderful mentor and friend – we were blessed to know him. We desire to honor Steve's memory and pray that Isaac will live a life of Faith that is as unwavering as the mighty oak.”

Isaac, child of laughter, tiny seed of faith, let the wonder begin.

