

¹ *O LORD, you have searched me
and you know me.*

² *You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.*

³ *You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.*

⁴ *Before a word is on my tongue
you know it completely, O LORD.*

⁵ *You hem me in—behind and before;
you have laid your hand upon me.*

⁶ *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain. Ps. 139:1-6 NIV*

What do others see when they see us? What do we want others to see when they see us? The image we show to others can be a couple of possibilities. The first is the image people see is a real reflection of who we are deep down inside. The other is a carefully crafted image that we **want** people to see. Too often we gravitate to the latter out of fear, lack of trust of others because we may be saying deep down inside “if people really knew who I was, they wouldn’t like me or associate with me”. There is a 90’s British sit-com called “Keeping up Appearances”. The humor comes from the main character Hyacinth Bucket who feels that she must show an image of upper society manners even to having people pronounce her last name “Bouquet” rather than Bucket. Obviously the humor in the show comes from her attempts to continually maintain that image which always seem to backfire.

The psalmist tells us that there is one who knows us inside out, God. Maybe that can sound threatening, but it is really one of the greatest most positive things to motivate us positively rather than negatively. You see even though God knows all, ‘sees it all’, God is not in the business of routinely “punishing us” if we don’t “measure up”.

The great message of the Bible is that God in “knowing it all” sent Jesus to die on the cross then rose from the dead precisely because he loves us and he sees it all.

When you think about it, in the great scheme of things isn’t that what counts in the long run?

So perhaps it’s time to stop living under the unbearable tension of the image we’re trying to put out there, knowing that the one who really counts, God, knows it all in the first place, and as we put our faith even with our fears through his son Jesus, “nothing can ever separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. As the old children song states so simply and wonderfully:

Yes Jesus loves me

Yes Jesus loves me

Yes Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so!

Pr. John Van Haneghan